

**AML 4170: Studies in American Literary Forms**  
**Hidden Histories: U.S. Historical Fiction and Race**

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Section 09H7  
Period 6 MWF  
Room NRN 0331

Online Syllabus: Canvas

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Nobel Prize winning author Toni Morrison contends: “if we understand a good deal more about history, we automatically understand a great deal more about contemporary life.” Recent historical novels by African American, Asian American, and American Indian authors like Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Julie Otsuka, uncover lesser-told U.S. histories across the lines of race and gender. Our course asks: How can historical fiction highlight otherwise neglected or repressed histories? Can fiction address comparative histories across racial and ethnic lines? Following Morrison, these texts reframe our understanding of history and race so that we might better understand our present.

This course surveys historical fiction that engages multiple sites of colonial and racial subjugation, and includes texts by African American, American Indian, and Asian American authors. For instance, Morrison's *A Mercy* recounts simultaneous histories of African and American Indian slavery; Jessica Hagedorn's *Dream Jungle* reads U.S. imperialism in the Philippines in conjunction with the Vietnam War; and LeAnne Howe's *Miko Kings* portrays African American and American Indian students under racialized education at the Hampton Normal School. In addition to literary texts, we will view two films and a videogame to discuss historical fiction and race broadly across multiple forms of media. We will also use archival research to include photographs, historical records, and educational records from each historical period alongside articles from History, Sociology, Afro-Native studies, and Education.

Key concepts include: race, empire, settler colonialism, gender and sexuality

### **OUTCOMES**

By the end of AML 4170, students will be able to:

- Read, write, and think critically about historical fiction, race, and race-relations
- Discuss the historical and critical context of various texts and mediums
- Establish and support significant historical, literary, and critical or theoretical claims
- Conduct formal research on literature, race, and history

## REQUIRED TEXTS

### Novels

Bacho, Peter. *Entrys* (2005)  
Hagedorn, Jessica. *Dream Jangle* (2003)  
Howe, LeAnne. *Miko Kings* (2007)  
Morrison, Toni. *A Mercy* (2008)  
Otsuka, Julie. *When the Emperor was Divine* (2002)  
Silko, Leslie Marmon, *Ceremony* (1977)

### Film

*Apocalypse Now* (1979)  
*Playing Pastime* (2006)

### Video Games

*Never Alone* [\$10 at <http://neveraloneygame.com/>]

Note: All secondary readings will be posted to our Canvas course page. When required texts are available online, I will also provide links to these texts on our Canvas site.

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS (Total Points Possible: 500 points)

### *Participation* (50 points)

Because this course is largely discussion-based, students will be asked to participate in all class discussion sections. Participation includes completing all assigned readings and viewings before class, paying attention during our class periods, and contributing your own insights to our discussion sections. If you are naturally quiet or shy student, feel free to come talk to me during office hours for tips on how to participate in class.

### *Panel Papers* (100 points)

For each major text, 3-4 students will write and present panel papers to help guide our course discussion. Your presentation can provide background information on a text, or issue, explore one theme in the text, or perform a close reading of a scene, passage, image, etc. Presentations should be 5 minutes long (-2.5 pages of writing, double spaced) and will be read out loud to the class. Each group of students will share their paper topics to avoid repetition and overlaps. Each student will email me ([ahunziker@ufl.edu](mailto:ahunziker@ufl.edu)) a copy of their essay by noon the day before their presentation. Panel papers provide students with an opportunity to get early feedback on their writing in preparation for the final paper.

### *Digital Archive Paper and Presentation* (100 points)

For each unit, several students will examine one corresponding digital archive and present on two archival items to historically ground our class discussion. Students can choose from archives on Japanese Internment, El. S. colonialism in the Philippines, or archived newspapers from the Hampton Normal School. The presentations will give students an overview of what materials each digital archive contains and will provide students a chance to conduct archival research. Students will also write a 3-4 page paper on their archival findings.

### *Paper Proposal* (50 points)

Each student will submit a 1 ½ -2 page (double spaced) proposal for their final paper. The proposal should serve as a summary of your overall argument, main claim (thesis), and key examples of evidence or secondary claims. Each proposal should include bibliographic material for two secondary sources you will use for your final paper. The paper proposal will help students to think through their paper ideas in advance, and allows students to receive feedback from their instructor before writing the final paper.

### *Final Paper* (200 points)

The final paper will be our major writing assignment this semester (but don't worry—you will get feedback on your writing before this point, and you will have all semester to come to office hours). Your essay can be on any text, film, game, etc. we discussed this semester and should be 10-12 pages, double spaced. Consider some of the critical lenses we used throughout the semester as you think through your paper topic. Your essay should not be a regurgitation of our discussion sections, though you can use our conversations as a starting point as you brainstorm ideas.

\*Note: We may have reading quizzes during the semester if students have not completed assigned reading. These quizzes will be unannounced and will occur in the first few minutes of class. Quizzes will be worth only 10 points, and I will drop your lowest score at the end of the semester.

## **TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE**

### **UNIT 1: SETTLERS, INDIANS, AND SLAVES**

#### **Week 1: What Are Hidden Histories?**

8.21 Course Introduction, Brainstorm “What Are Hidden Histories?”

8.23 Read: Georg Luckacs, *I’he Historical Novel* (excerpt)

Read: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples ’ History of the United States* (excerpt)

8.25 Read: Lorenzo Veracini, “Introduction to settler colonial studies”  
Frank Wilderson, *Red, Black, and White* (excerpt) (pg 1-6)

#### **Week 2**

8.28 Read: Tiya Miles and Kiara M. Vigil, “At the Crossroads of Red/Black Literature”  
Toni Morrison, *A Mercy*

8.30 Read : Toni Morrison, *A Mercy*

9.1 Read: Toni Morrison, *A Mercy*

### Week 3

- 9.4 NO CLASS; Holiday
- 9.6 Read: Toni Morrison, *A Mercy*  
Due: Panel Papers on A Mercy
- 9.8 Read: Keavy Martin, "The Sovereign Obscurity of Inuit Literature"  
Play: *Never Alone*

### Week 4

- 9.11 Play: *Never Alone*  
Due: Panel Papers on Never Alone

## UNIT 2: BOARDING SCHOOL BLUES: Racialized Education for African Americans and American Indians

- 9.13 Lecture: Racialized Education for African Americans and American Indians  
Read: Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation*
- 9.15 Archive Day: Visit Smathers Special Collections: A. Quinn Jones Collection, Education in Florida Collection  
Read: Le Anne Howe, *Miko Kings*

### Week 5

- 9.18 Read: Le Anne Howe, *Miko Kings*
- 9.20 Read: Le Anne Howe, *Miko Kings*
- 9.22 Read: Le Anne Howe, *Miko Kings*

### Week 6

- 9.25 Read: Le Anne Howe, *Miko Kings*  
Due: Panel Papers on Miko Kings
- 9.21 Archive Presentation: A. Quinn Jones Collection or Education in Florida Collection  
Watch: *Playing Pastime: American Indian Fast-Pitch Softball and Survival*
- 9.29 Watch: *Playing Pastime: American Indian Fast-Pitch Softball and Survival*  
Due: Panel Papers on Playing Pastime

### **UNIT 3: TRANS-PACIFIC COLONIALISMS: AMERICAN INDIANS AND THE PHILIPPINES**

#### **Week 7**

- 10.2 Read: Walter L. Williams, “United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation”  
Anne Paulet, “The Use of American Indian Education in the Philippines”
- 10.4 Digital Archive Presentation: Philippines (Michigan: U.S. Philippine Archive)  
Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*
- 10.6 NO CLASS; Homecoming

#### **Week 8**

- 10.9 Read: Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*  
Sean Kicummah Teuton, “The Indigenous Novel”
- 10.11 Read: Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*
- 10.13 Read: Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*  
*Due: Panel Papers on Ceremony*

### **UNIT 4: THE PHILIPPINES TO VIET NAM: COLONIALISM IN THE HEART OF DARKNESS**

#### **Week 9**

- 10.16 Read: Richard Drinnon, *Facing West* (excerpt)  
Richard Slotkin, *Gunnfighter Nation* (excerpt)

10.18 Smathers Library Visit: Viet Nam

- 10.20 Read: Peter Bacho, *Entrys*

#### **Week 10**

- 10.23 Read: Peter Bacho, *Entrys*
- 10.25 Read: Peter Bacho, *Entrys*
- 10.27 Archive Presentations: Smathers  
Read: Peter Bacho, *Entrys*

## **Week 11**

- 10.30 Read: Peter Bacho, *Entrys*  
*Due: Panel Papers on Entrys*
- 11.1 Read: Jessica Hagedorn, *Dream Jungle*
- 11.3 Read: Jessica Hagedorn, *Dream Jungle*  
PAPER PROPOSALS DUE

## **Week 12**

- 11.6 Read: Jessica Hagedorn, *Dream Jungle*
- 11.8 NO CLASS; Instructor Away at Conference
- 11.10 NO CLASS; Holiday

## **Week 13**

- 11.13 Read: Jessica Hagedorn, *Dream Jungle*  
*Due: Panel Papers on Dream Jungle*
- 11.15 Watch : *Apocalypse Now*
- 11.17 Watch : *Apocalypse Now*  
*Due: Panel Papers on Apocalypse Now*

## **UNIT 5: RESERVATION BLUES: AMERICAN INDIANS, JAPANESE INTERNMENT, AND THE ATOM BOMB**

## **Week 14**

- 11.20 Read: Richard Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps* (excerpt).  
Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor Was Divine*
- 11.22 NO CLASS; Thanksgiving
- 11.24 NO CLASS; Thanksgiving

## **Week 15**

- 11.27 Digital Archive Presentations: Japanese Internment
- 11.29 Read: Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor Was Divine*

- 12.1 Read: Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor Was Divine*  
*Due: Panel Papers on When the Emperor Was Divine*

## Week 16

- 12.4 Optional Conferences

- 12.6 Course Wrap-Up  
FINAL PAPERS DUE @5PM

## GRADING AND COURSE CREDIT POLICIES

If an assignment illustrates disregard for spelling, grammar, citation guidelines, or a general carelessness in the writing, the assignment will fail. Do not rely on your instructor for copyediting, even on drafts, but please do come to office hours to discuss paper ideas.

### Grading Scale

Letter Grade	GPA	Percentage (Point %)
A	4.0	93-100 (98)
A-	3.67	90-92 (91)
B+	3.33	87-89 (88)
B	3.0	83-86 (85)
B-	2.67	80-82 (81)
C+	2.33	77-79 (78)
C	2.0	73-76 (75)
C-	1.67	70-72 (71)
D+	1.33	67-69 (68)
D	1.0	63-66 (65)
D-	0.67	60-62 (61)
E	0.00	0-59 (0)

### Grade Meanings

- A Student did what the assignment asked at a high quality level, meeting all of the composition objectives required of the assignment. Additionally, his or her work shows originality, creativity, and demonstrates that the student took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors.
- B Student did what the assignment asked at a quality level, meeting most of the composition objectives required of the assignment. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

- C Student did what the assignment asked, but overlooked some of the composition objectives. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.
- D Student neglected some basic requirements of the assignment, and completed it at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.
- E An E is usually reserved for students who do not do the work or do not come to class. However, if work is shoddy, shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, and/or an inability to meet the composition objectives, he or she will receive a failing grade

## **CLASSROOM POLICIES**

### *Attendance and Tardiness*

Attendance is required to succeed in this class. Each student is allowed three absences with no penalty. For each subsequent absence after three, you will incur a half letter grade deduction from your final grade (i.e. from an A to an A-). If a student misses more than six periods during a semester, he or she will fail the course. Only absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays will be exempt from this policy. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed. Students are responsible for keeping track of their own attendance records. The instructor is not responsible for informing students of their attendance record; however, students are welcome to ask how many absences they've accrued.

Note: If a student is absent, it is the student's responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a university-sponsored event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

Tardiness: Students who enter class after the start of class are late and are marked as tardy. Three instances of tardiness count as one absence. Additionally, if you arrive more than 15 minutes later to class, you will be counted as absent for the period.

### *Late Work*

Late work will not be accepted. Any other work that is not turned in by class time on the due date will not be accepted and will automatically count as a zero. Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### *Participation*

Everyone is expected to participate in class. Be prepared to discuss the readings, answer questions about them, and ask questions about parts you did not understand. If a student comes to class unprepared (e.g. without required materials) and unable to participate, his or her participation grade and/or attendance grade will be penalized.

### *Classroom Disruptions*

Common courtesy is mandatory in our classroom. Silence all cell phones, pagers, alarms, and so on when you enter the classroom; noise distractions are rude and interrupt everyone's learning. If a student is found text messaging in class, he or she will be asked to leave and will receive an absence for the day. Sleeping, talking in private conversations, and reading other material are also inappropriate behaviors during class time. Disciplinary action (dismissal from the classroom, grade deduction, etc) will be taken if a student disrupts the learning environment in any way.

### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

"Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the Internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student."

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Important Pickle: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

### *Students with Disabilities*

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office in Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.