

Race, Riots, and Violence in the U.S.

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Course: HIUS 146

Unique #: 818707

Room: Center Hall 113

Time: Tu/Th 2-3:20

Quarter: Fall 2014

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is about race and riots in the U.S. from the labor violence of the 1880s through the violence surrounding immigrant rights protests in the 2000s. It explores why racial violence occurs, how it unfolds, who participates, what its consequences are, and how it has changed over time. We will study why people riot, including labor conditions, access to public space, services, and housing, civil rights and equality, protecting racial, gender, and sexual privilege; what happens when people riot, including inter-racial conflict, the performance of gender and sexuality, and local/regional/global interchanges; and how riots help explain the conditions of U.S. society, including migration/immigration, urbanization, economic change, and political conflict. In addition to learning about the history of race riots in the U.S., our focus on street violence and mob behavior has three big objectives, including: 1) exploring what riots and violence have to teach us about the ever changing meaning of race in American society; 2) considering how riots and violence often illuminate broader economic and political patterns in U.S. history; and 3) considering how riots and violence reveal how ordinary people engage others and the world around them. Given the remarkable frequency of race riots in American history, our job will be to understand this checkered and violent past in order to imagine a different future, one where racial violence is both better understood and, if we're fortunate, less common.

Course Organization:

In the first part of the course we will discuss why race riots are important to study and identify different approaches to studying race riots. The course is then loosely organized into three chronological sections, each designed to explore a particular period in the history of U.S. race, riots, and violence. In section one, Race, Riots, and Exclusion, we will concentrate on the labor and racial violence during industrialization, reconstruction, and World War I. In section two, Race, Riots, and Citizenship, we will interrogate the race, labor, and commodity riots during the interwar period and World War II. In section three, Race, Riots, and Civil Rights, we will consider how the intensification of urban crisis and the Civil Rights Movement spawned race, riots, and violence since the 1950s. This chronology assumes that we will think critically about how each period relates to the others and how race, riots, and violence have been a key feature in American history over the last century.

Classroom Culture:

Although this is a lecture course, it is designed to incorporate your participation and ideas as an important part of every class meeting. We will regularly conduct in-class writing and discussion exercises. Since we will often engage challenging and controversial issues it will be our

collective responsibility to make sure that our classroom interaction is respectful and supportive of the views, experiences, and expertise of others at all times. If you expect people to listen to your ideas, in other words, you have to show respect for their ideas. To create a classroom culture of courtesy, collegiality, and cooperation, let us remember that we know more together than any one of us knows individually.

If you require special consideration regarding seating arrangements, course materials, or written assignments please notify the instructor.

Please turn off cell phones prior to coming to class. Please also refrain from surfing the net and checking email during class.

Course Assignments and Grading:

You are expected to carefully read the assigned material, attend all classes and arrive on time, be prepared to participate in class discussions and activities, and complete all written assignments. You are required to complete all of the following assignments.

- 1.) Document Analysis Essay (500 words), Due October 30, 20% of final grade
- 2.) Take-home midterm (5-6 pages), Due November 13, 30% of final grade
- 3.) Take-home final (6-8 pages), Due December 18, 40% of final grade
- 4.) Class Attendance and Participation (this includes short reaction papers to be written in class), 10%

All assignments will be explained in detail in class meetings. All of your essays should apply the concepts and address the issues introduced in class readings and discussions. All written work must use one inch margins, be typed, double-spaced, and in 12 point font. All assignments must include your name, the course, title of the paper, and the date. The midterm is due at the beginning of class on the due date. The final is due in the history department on the due date. **No late papers will be accepted.**

Your written work must be your own and you are expected to conform to the university's academic honesty code for all assignments. For more information on academic honesty and plagiarism see the history department website.

Required Texts:

Tim Madigan, *The Burning: Massacre, Destruction, and the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921*
Luis Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance during World War II*
Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*
Weekly articles, chapters, and documents available on TED
All books are available at the UCSD Bookstore

Note: The instructor retains the right to alter the syllabus at any point during the quarter.

Course Schedule:

Introduction to Race, Riots, and Violence

Week Zero

October 2: Course Introduction

Read: Madigan 1-46

Week One

October 7: Why Study Riots?

Read: Paul Gilje, “Why Study Riots?”; Madigan 47-103

Section One: Race, Riots and Exclusion

October 9: New York City Draft Riots

Read: Madigan 104-167; Leslie Harris, “In the Shadow of Slavery” (excerpt)

Week Two

October 14: Film, *Strange Fruit*.

October 16: Reconstruction and Lynching

Read: Madigan 168-218.

Documents: “NAACP Report, ‘Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States’”;
“Thomas Dixon’s Preface to his novel, *The Clansmen*”

Week Three:

October 21: Imperialism, Whiteness, and Riots at the Turn of the Century

Read: Madigan 219-270; Victor Jew, “Chinese Demons”

Section Two: Race, Riots, and Citizenship

October 23: The Red Summer and World War I

Read: Alvarez 1-73

Documents: “Cook County Coroner’s Report Regarding the 1919 Chicago Race Riot”; “Final Report of the Grand Jury on the Tulsa Race Riot”; “Southern Black Woman’s Letter Regarding the Recent Riots in Chicago and Washington, November 1919”; “Account of the Riots in East St. Louis, Illinois, July 1917”

***Document Analysis Essay Assignment Distributed in Class**

Week Four

October 28: Zoot Suit Riots

Read: Alvarez 77-112; Cheryl Greenberg, “The Politics of Disorder”

Documents: “Excerpts from the Mayor’s Commission on Conditions in Harlem, 1935”

October 30: Film, *The Zoot Suit Riots*

Read: Alvarez 113-152
***Document Analysis Essay Due in Class**

Week Five

November 4: More Home Front Violence
Read: Alvarez 155-199

Section Three: Race, Riots, and Civil Rights

November 6: Catch Up Day!
Read: Alvarez 200-244; Gail Williams O'Brien, "Return to Normalcy"
Documents: "Report of the Committee to Investigate the Riot Occurring in Detroit on June 21, 1943"; Thurgood Marshall, "The Gestapo in Detroit"
***Take Home Midterm Distributed in Class**

Week Six

November 11: Veteran's Day Holiday. No Class!

November 13: The Origins of Urban Crisis
Read: Sugrue 1-88
***Take Home Midterm Due in Class**

Week Seven

November 18: Civil Rights and Violence
Read: Sugrue 89-152
Documents: "Excerpts from the Moynihan Report, March 1965"

November 20: The Long Hot Summer Riots I
Read: Sugrue 153-178

Week Eight

November 25: The Long Hot Summer Riots II
Read: Sugrue 179-230
Documents: "Excerpt from the Governor's Commission Report on the Watt's Riots, December 1965"; "Excerpts from Cyrus R. Vance's Report on the Riots in Detroit, July-August 1967"; "Excerpts from the Kerner Commission Report, 1968"

November 27: Thanksgiving Holiday. No Class!

Week Nine

December 2: Race Riots in the Post-Civil Rights Era
Read: Sugrue 231-258; Mike Davis, "In L.A., Burning All Illusions" and "Who Killed Los Angeles?"; Jack Miles, "Blacks vs. Browns"

December 4: Film, *Twilight*

Read: Sugrue 259-271

Documents: “The 1992 Los Angeles Riot: Korean-American Dreams in Flames”

Week Ten

December 9: Race, Violence, and the Fourth World War

Read: TBA

December 11: Wrap Up and Final Review

***Take-home Final Distributed in Class**