

Combating Otherness in the Digital Age

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Office hours: Mondays 1:30-3:00 and by appt. in Worrell Hall 305

I. Course Description

Throughout history, human beings have reduced entire groups of people as ‘inferior’ while proclaiming others as superior. This dichotomy includes moral, physical, and intellectual inferiority or superiority. With these distinctions, come great struggles such as war, enslavement, ostracization, murder, etc. Our knowledge of such occurrences has been greatly influenced by the communication technology used to share knowledge and information. In this course we will objectively examine core components of ‘Othering’, while comparing our own digital culture with their antecedents. Today’s age of the digital revolution has allowed for online media such as social networking, blogs, and livestreaming to shape the world around us. We will view civilization through the lens of the digital revolution, learning both about past issues, and what our experiences with modern technology lead us to discover about them. At first glance, our reading list may appear intimidating, but each class session will include the essential dialog to help you succeed in this course. However, I cannot stress enough the importance of setting aside the allotted time necessary to dedicate yourself to the assigned texts. Wikipedia or other such internet conveniences will NOT be reliable substitution for actual reading. Our readings will pair great works of literature, history, and philosophy with current digital texts and tools, exploring common themes that include the structure of knowledge, principles of awareness and participation, and the power of knowledge in the digital age.

II. Required texts (links provided in Calendar):

Plato, *Allegory of the Cave*

Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*

Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphoses*

Ernest Hemingway, *A Clean, Well-Lighted Place*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

George Orwell, *1984*

Carol Anderson, *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide*

III. Course Requirements

Students in this course will be expected to complete readings before class and participate in class discussions and activities. Grades for the course will be earned by accumulating points in the following manner:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. 1 Essay | 200 points | (200 points total) |
| 2. 10 Pop Quizzes | 20 points each | (200 points total) |
| 3. Assignments | point variation | (200 points total) |

Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and The Disabled Student Services Office at The University of Texas at El Paso

V. Calendar

Subject to change at the instructor's discretion:

January

22 - Course Introduction

27- Emerging Out of 'Darkness': [Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*](#), Critical Thinking Tools: Logical Fallacies and Unsound Arguments

29- Emmanuel Levinas and ['The Other'](#)

February

3- [Lewis Vaughn: Subjectivism, Relativism, and Emotivism](#)

5- Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*, pg. 1-87 (The Chichimec Wars)

10- pg. 87(The Chichimec Wars)-pg. 196 (Ch. 8: Missions, Presidios, and Slaves)

12- pgs. 196 (Ch. 8)-pg. 246 (American Ranchers)

17- pgs. 246 (American Ranchers)-end

19- Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*, Chpts. 1-4, Focus: Speciesism

24- pg. 4-Ch. 19

26- *The Jungle*, Chpts. 19-26

March

2- *The Jungle*, Chpts. 27-end

4- **Exam 1**

9- Franz Kafka- *The Metamorphoses* (full), Ernest Hemingway, [A Clean, Well-Lighted Place](#) (full)

11- Introduction to *Frankenstein*, Volume I-Chapter IV (end at: "Thus ended a day memorable to me: it decided my future destiny.")

16- Spring Break

18- Spring Break

23- Chapter IV-Volume II (end at: "...the first hapless victims to my unhallowed arts.")

Volume II-Volume III

25- Volume III-end

30- Begin George Orwell, *1984*, One: I-VII

April

1- One VII-Two: VI

6- Two: VI- Three

8- *1984*, Three-End

13- Film: Black Mirror, Ep. 5 Se.3

15- **Exam II**

20- Carol Anderson, *White Rage*, Prologue- pg. 22

22- *White Rage*, pg. 22- Three

27- *White Rage*, Three - Five

29- *White Rage*, Five - Afterword- After the Election: Imagining

May

4- VICE News: Charlottesville: Race and Terror

6- **Final Presentations, Essay due**

15- **Final Exam**, 1 pm -3:45 pm

April 3rd - Drop Deadline