



PhD-Course: Philosophy of Race Summer Seminar

CEPDISC, Aarhus University

Dates for 3-day course: 12, 13, 14 June 2024

Course lecturer: [Desirée Lim](#)

ECTS: 3

Course description:

In this three-day workshop, we will engage in study of the philosophy of race in three parts. We will begin with the metaphysics of “race”: for example, ought race be understood as an bio-behavioral essence, a social construct, or something in-between? To what extent does it make sense to think of “race” as a group category? Next, we will proceed to competing conceptions of racism. Is it most accurate to regard racism as mistaken doxastic belief, a system of willful *ignorance*, or a set of hostile or subordinating attitudes? Finally, we will focus on the literature on racial discrimination: what, exactly, makes racial discrimination wrong, and in which contexts? Does the arbitrariness of racial discrimination drive our intuitions, or should we be more concerned about the demeaning beliefs that are expressed, or ill-consequences exacted by it? What forms have racial discrimination over the years taken? Are the descendants of those wrongfully discriminated against owed reparations? Readings will include theorists like W. E. B. Du Bois, Naomi Zack, Sally Haslanger, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Charles Mills, Deborah Hellman, and Jorge Garcia.

Learning objectives:

1. To gain an understanding of major topics in contemporary debates in the philosophy of race;
2. To familiarize participants with key texts and primary contributions to the field of philosophy of race;
3. To demonstrate that that knowledge of the philosophy of race is essential to one’s study of the topic of discrimination;
4. To give participants the opportunity to engage in close reading and discussion at length of the topics at hand.



Plan for teaching and readings:

12 June 2024: The Metaphysics of Race

- W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Conservation of Races" (18 pages)
- Naomi Zack, "The Philosophical Roots of Racial Essentialism and Its Legacy" (14 pages)
- Sally Haslanger, "Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?" (24 pages)
- Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, selected readings (19 pages)
- Charles Mills, "But What Are You Really?" (25 pages)

Total: 100 pages

13 June 2024: What is Racism?

- Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Racisms" (12 pages)
- Jorge Garcia, "The Heart of Racism" (20 pages)
- Tommie Shelby, "Is Racism in the 'Heart'?" (9 pages)
- Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness As Property" (84 pages)
- Uma Narayan, "Colonialism and its others: Considerations on rights and care discourses" (7 pages)

Total: 132 pages

14 June 2024: Race and Discrimination

- Deborah Hellman, *When Is Discrimination Wrong?*, selected readings (20 pages)
- Owen Fiss, "Groups and the Equal Protection Clause" (17 pages)
- Sahar Akhtar, "Race Beyond Our Borders: Is Racial and Ethnic Immigration Selection Always Morally Wrong?" (29 pages)
- Rufaida Al Hashmi, "Historical Injustice in Immigration Policy" (15 pages)
- Charles Mills, "Racial Exploitation and the Wages of Whiteness" (28 pages)

Total: 109 pages



Description of examination:

A reflection paper (of at least 1500 words) providing a detailed overview of what the participant has learned over the 3-day course (whether it is about a particular topic or broad insight,) identifying which arguments or debates they have found most significant for their research moving forward, and describing new questions or areas of inquiry that have arisen from their study.