

INTRODUCTION TO FEMINIST AND SOCIAL JUSTICE STUDIES

DR. ALEX KETCHUM

Fall 2022

Lecture on Race, Racism, and Anti-Racism (for October 3, 2022)

Bell Sound

Hi class. Today's lecture is a bit different because I am just sharing this lecture in podcast format, with a transcript. The reason why we are having our lecture in this format is due to lectures being canceled due to the Quebec Election. We will not be having class during reading week. This means that the next time that I will see you in class is on Monday, October 17th. I will be speaking about colonialism and decolonization AND global and transnational feminisms.

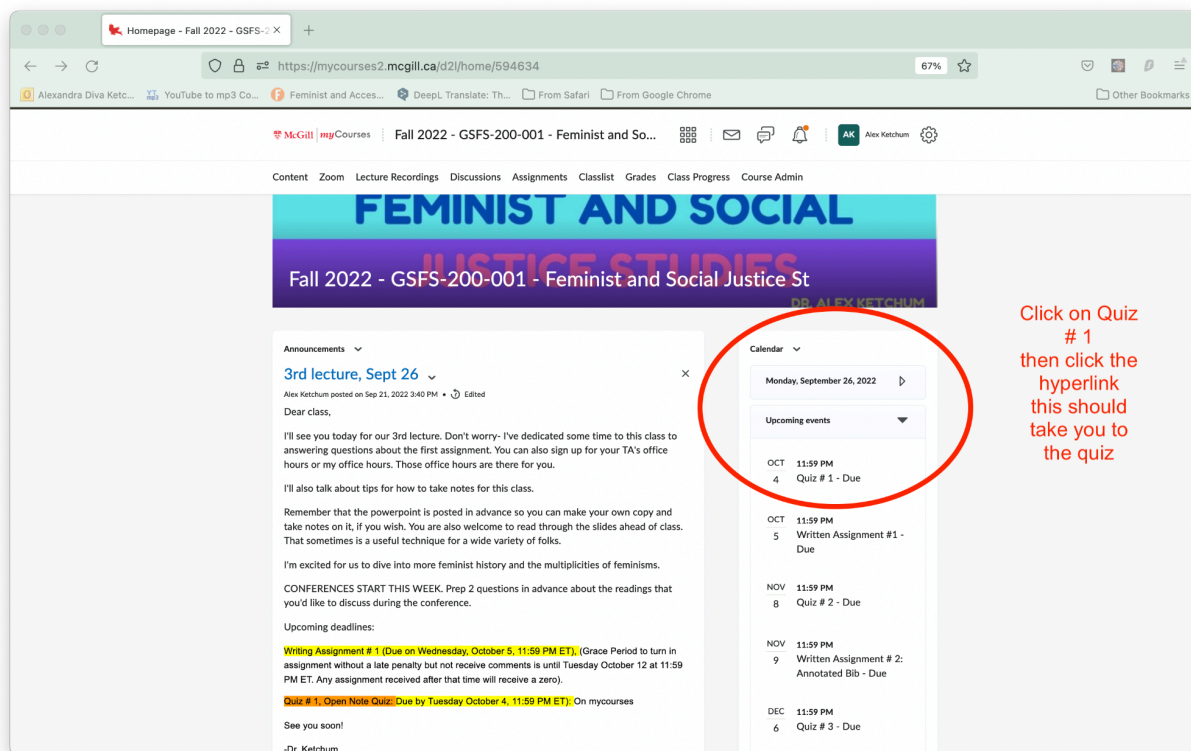
Between now and then you have a few things due.

This week listen to the online lecture and/or read the transcript. Next remember that the first written assignment is due on **Wednesday, October 5, 11:59 PM ET.** You can make use of the grace period, but you won't get comments on your assignment- just the rubric. If you have questions about the assignment, schedule a time to meet with your TAs during office hours. I also have office hours this week and on October 5th— and of course I have office hours scheduled throughout the semester.

You also have a quiz due **by Tuesday October 4, 11:59 PM ET.** It's an open note quiz. Feel free to use the slides from class, your own notes, and the readings— just make sure

not to talk to your classmates about the quiz until the 5th. You can find the link to the quiz by going to mycourses and clicking on GSFS 200. On the main page you will see a sidebar on the right that says “calendar.” Click on quiz # 1 and it will bring you to the quiz. Then you can click on the hyperlink Quiz # 1 to begin. There is no time limit. Just make sure to finish it before the due date.

If you are confused about how to find the Quiz # 1 button, you can check out the screenshot I pasted into the transcript:



After this week, you will have completed the first quiz of 3 and the first major written assignment of 2. You can also do your IGSF event attendance. On October 4th Gynepunk will be talking about DIY/ DIT gynecology. The event will be in Spanish with English interpretation and CART captioning.

I've posted the link to sign up for events into the transcript:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/the-feminist-and-accessible-publishing-communications-tech-series-31133534805>

In the last lecture I did a brief overview of 100 years of feminist activism and went over some of the different kinds of feminisms. I wanted to say more about indigenous feminisms.

Indigenous feminisms show that colonialism is intricately tied to social injustice and ties together intersectional feminisms with de-colonialism and Indigenous sovereignty.

Indigenous feminism is an intersectional theory and practice of feminism that focuses on decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty. The focus is upon empowering Indigenous women and two spirit folk in the context of Indigenous cultural values and priorities, rather than mainstream, white, patriarchal ones.

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson of the Anishinaabe nation writes, (start quote) “I think it’s in all of our best interests to take on gender violence as a core resurgence project, a core decolonization project, a core of any Indigenous mobilization...This begins for me by looking at how gender is conceptualized and actualized within Indigenous thought because it is colonialism that has imposed an artificial gender binary in my nation.” (end quote)

However, as Paula Gunn Allen wrote “Beliefs, attitudes, and laws such as these became part of the vision of American feminists and of other human liberation movements around the world. Yet feminists too often believe that no one has ever experienced the kind of society that empowered women and made that empowerment the basis of its rules of civilization. The price the feminist community must pay because it is not aware of the recent presence of gynarchical societies on this continent is unnecessary confusion, division, and much lost time.

We as feminists must be aware of our history on this continent. We need to recognize that the same forces that devastated the gynarchies of Britain and the Continent also devastated the ancient African civilizations, and we must know that those same materialistic, antispiritual forces are presently engaged in wiping out the same gynarchical values, along with the peoples who adhere to them, in Latin America.”

It is because of these histories and present colonialism within feminist movements that some Indigenous activists reject the term “feminism” and Indigenous feminisms.

Alivia Moore, a two-spirit member of the Penobscot Nation and co-founder of Eastern Woodlands Rematriation movement, says that while she isn’t antagonistic to feminism, she doesn’t self identify with the term “feminist” as she views mainstream feminism as too focused on individualism. Alivia Moore discusses how her culture already has a

different model of being in the world than the patriarchal Western capitalist systems. She is invested in matriarchy- which is not a power swap of women to men in the current power system. Rather matriarchy is about nurturing and interdependence. She states, "Matriarchy is not about flipping patriarchy. It is not about all of the power coming into the hands of women. It is about valuing and nurturing regeneration and centering nurturing in all decision making." She further states, "All social, political, and economic community activities respect regeneration, including childbearing, childrearing and the child themselves. Regeneration is also seed keeping and respectful hunting of animal relatives and gathering of plants. Regeneration is burning land as a management tool. Rematriation values regeneration and nurtures the power and gifts that we each innately carry. That value is extended to all of our relatives - human and more than human."

Indigenous feminisms and the critiques and/or choice to not invest in feminism due to the dominance of the white Western lens are not alone.

I also wanted to say a few more words about Crenshaw's work on intersectionality. I know many of you are familiar with the term, which is why I spoke about it a bit quickly, but I wanted to draw your attention to a TED Talk of Black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw -- the woman who coined the term "intersectionality" in her insightful 1989 essay, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" and built upon by "Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color."

So I had included the TED talk as an optional viewing on the syllabus.

Crenshaw begins her TED Talk by drawing attention to how the audience overall knows the names of Black men killed by police but not Black women.

She states, "I mean, there are two issues involved here. There's police violence against African-Americans, and there's violence against women, two issues that have been talked about a lot lately. But when we think about who is implicated by these problems, when we think about who is victimized by these problems, the names of these Black women never come to mind."

She says that the way we frame these issues leave Black women out.

Crenshaw says that without frames “that allow us to see how social problems impact all the members of a targeted group, many will fall through the cracks of our movements, left to suffer in virtual isolation.”

This brings us to her coining the “term “intersectionality” to deal with the fact that many of our social justice problems like racism and sexism are often overlapping, creating multiple levels of social injustice.”

This leads us to think about her work “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics” and how the case of Emma DeGraffenreid was key to her coining the term. The court would only see gender or racial discrimination but did not have a frame to understand the racialized gender discrimination she was facing and the gendered racial discrimination she experienced.

As Crenshaw states, “Why wasn't the real unfairness law's refusal to protect African-American women simply because their experiences weren't exactly the same as white women and African-American men? Rather than broadening the frame to include African-American women, the court simply tossed their case completely out of court.”

In her paper she urges us not to treat race and gender as mutually exclusive categories.

Her talk continues to speak to the way that the violence against Black women has been rendered invisible. She talks about the Say Her Name movement, begun in 2014. We can since 2020 the way that we talk about Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old African-American emergency medical technician, who Louisville Metro Police Department police officers fatally shot and murdered on March 13, 2020 while she was sleeping in her bed.

Crenshaw argues that intersectionality provides a framework in order to see the intersection of the racism and sexism Black women face.

In her talk, Chrenshaw also states “I would go on to learn that African-American women, like other women of color, like other socially marginalized people all over the world, were facing all kinds of dilemmas and challenges as a consequence of intersectionality, intersections of race and gender, of heterosexism, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, all of these social dynamics come together and create challenges that are sometimes quite unique.”

Now we are going to get into the material I primarily prepared for this lecture.

Today's lecture will discuss:

- 1) Privilege, through the lens of race
- 2) Racism and Anti-racist work in Canada and the United States
- 3) Black feminist thought
- 4) Asian American feminism and Asian Canadian feminism
- 5) An introduction to Police Abolition and Defund the Police Movements

This is a lot to cover and there is so much to explore. As you know we have been discussing race and racism as part of the discussion in most lectures and that will continue. Today's lecture will include multiple sound audio clips because it is important to centre the voices of the people being most affected by the topic we are discussing. I can only play segments of the clips due to issues of copyright. However, I have provided links to the full clips in the transcripts so that you can listen to the full clips.

Let's get started.

Segment of song plays:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxWxXncl53U&frags=pl%2Cwn>

Bomba Estéreo- Soy Yo (Official Video)

(34 seconds to 1 min mark)



(alt image caption: 4 image stills from the music video of the young girl dancing around her neighborhood)

Today's song is Bomba Estéreo's "Soy Yo."

Bomba Estéreo is a Colombian band founded in the capital, Bogotá, in 2005. According to Mejía, the band's name is a Colombian term for "a really cool, awesome, bad ass party." If you have never seen this music video, I recommend watching it.

The song focuses on overcoming criticism and being true to oneself. It's about going against the current and being true to yourself. There is a celebration in one's resilience.

I chose this song for today's lecture because of its joyfulness. Celebrating joy is part of the toolkit needed in the work in overcoming racist forces.

Black lesbian feminist poet Audre Lorde wrote about how caring for oneself is an act of resistance, while she lived with breast cancer. There's also the Black Joy movement, which works alongside Black Lives Matter, which celebrates the happiness, playfulness,

and freedom that undergird social justice. Adrienne Maree Brown's 2019 anthology, *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*, also speaks to the power inherent in being delighted. Joy and pleasure are important to remember.

Anti-racist activism is not just about fighting against. It is fighting for. It is fighting for the kinds of worlds and futures that we want.

This is an idea we will discuss more during the lecture on technology. It will come up when we discuss Ruha Benjamin's work and how she looks to Afro-futurism to emphasize the importance of imagination and dreaming of possible futures. Right now, she argues, most of us are trapped in the visions of the future of a few millionaires and billionaires. Anti-racist activism involves imagining and working towards new futures.

Black feminism is not alone in wanting to celebrate joy and imagine new futures-- and reclaim the past.

One of the barriers to creating these new visions of the future for oppressed groups is that there is a drain on their resources in having to educate people with privilege about their oppression.

In her work *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Audre Lorde writes, (start quote)

"Black and Third World people are expected to educate white people as to our humanity. Women are expected to educate men. Lesbians and gay men are expected to educate the heterosexual world. The oppressors maintain their position and evade their responsibility for their own actions. There is a constant drain of energy which might be better used in redefining ourselves and devising realistic scenarios for altering the present and constructing the future."

Lorde here discusses the way that people with privilege demand the energy of oppressed peoples, in demanding that they be educated about the oppressions, rather than educate themselves. Spending the time educating the privileged group ends up disadvantaging the oppressed group more as it steals energy from other kinds of worldbuilding. Lorde published this work in 1984, thus the use of the term "Third World people." While there were plenty of resources available in 1984 for people to educate themselves about oppression, today especially it is possible to educate oneself, based on all of the books, videos, and resources that have been assembled about anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-heterosexist work. This spring and summer we have seen many of these book/ reading lists circulated.

I've just said the word **“privilege”** a lot. **But what do I mean by privilege?**

Privilege is a special right or advantage available only to a particular person or group of people. When we are talking about inequality, it means that some people are treated better or have more access to resources based on their race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or able-bodiedness.

Privilege DOESN'T MEAN that your life is problem free. Privilege means that you have systematic advantages over others because of a factor like your race, gender, or class. Even if you have privilege, you can still feel hardship. However, if you are a white person, the hardship that you are experiencing is not because of your race. Life is full of pain and suffering. People you love will die. Your heart may get broken. You may experience physical pain and injury. Privilege doesn't mean that your life isn't hard. Just one of the factors that makes your life harder won't be based on your privileged identity.

You may be privileged in one area of your life but not the other. A white woman will experience racial privilege but also face oppression based on her gender. If she is rich she will experience class privilege. If she is queer, she will experience oppression based on her sexual orientation. Intersectionality allows us to think through not only these privileges and oppressions but allows us to think about how her gendered experiences in the world will be racialized and her experiences of being white will also be gendered- and so forth.

We all have different forms of privilege. White people have racial privilege in our society. Men have gender privilege. Rich people have class privilege. Straight people have privilege because we live in a heteronormative society (which is a society that privileges straight people). People have privilege based on their able-bodiedness.

There is a video clip that I actually recommend that you watch all 5 minutes of: the Decoded video on Privilege, which I have linked to in the transcript:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeYpvV3eRhY&frags=pl%2Cwn>

In it, Franchesca Ramsey, host of MTV's Decoded (1:04 mark to 1:25), says:

“As an able bodied person, I've never had to struggle to find a bathroom that I can comfortably access or gone out to lunch with friends to find out that I can't find a parking spot at the restaurant or even fit through the door. When I turn on my favourite show, I can watch and enjoy with ease, because I don't require captions or descriptive narration, which too many shows don't have.”

These are also things an able bodied person might not notice. Because of able bodied privilege, unless you are aware of these issues, if they don't affect you, you might not realize that these barriers exist for some people.

As Ramsey says, "Acknowledging privilege isn't about shame. It's about challenging the system that perpetuates inequality... Ignoring the problem or refusing to acknowledge that it exists just allows it to continue and thrive."

She adds, "Privilege doesn't mean that you are a bad person or that you've had everything handed to you or have never had challenges or struggles. It just means that there are some challenges and struggles that you won't experience because of who you are. So when you have lived your whole life with something, it can be hard to understand what it is like for those without."

This is why it is important to think about the privileges that we may not see.

This brings us to **Peggy McIntosh's classic text, "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"** from 1989. In this text, McIntosh is particularly concerned with white privilege.

She writes, "White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools , and blank checks. White people are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow "them" to be more like "us.""

She continues, "Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress, and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit, in turn, upon people of color. For this reason, the word "privilege" now seems to me misleading. We usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned or conferred by birth or luck. Yet some of the conditions I have described here work systematically to over empower certain groups. Such privilege simply confers dominance because of one's race or sex. Since racism, sexism, and heterosexism are not the same, the advantages associated with them should not be seen as the same. In addition, it is hard to disentangle aspects of unearned advantage that rest more on social class, economic class, race, religion, sex, and ethnic identity than on other factors. Still, all of the oppressions are interlocking, as the members of the Combahee River Collective pointed out in their "Black Feminist Statement" of 1977."

Here McIntosh, like Ramsey, speaks to the way that privilege is not always visible to those who have privilege.

The rest of the document functions like a worksheet.

The examples of privilege that she lists vary from small to large things.

Some are “I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.” and “When I am told about our national heritage or about “civilization,” I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.” and “I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.” and “If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.” and “I can be pretty sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race.” and “I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.”

Here she speaks to economic, social, and cultural examples of privilege.

These examples speak to the ways that privilege, and particularly white privilege, mean that one’s voice is heard, one’s stories are told, and one has access to resources. They may be things that a white person has taken for granted.

One of the examples that seems to stick out a lot for many students is the example McIntosh gives for Band-aids. That a skin coloured Band-aid matches white skin. The idea of a “skin coloured” label as being for white people. The example of the Band-aid is so powerful because it is on the one hand something so small but also shows how pervasive privilege is.

McIntosh’s list is powerful because it points to very overt situations and microaggressions.

Microaggression is a term used for brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups. To put it another way- microaggressions are the kinds of remarks, questions, or actions that are painful because they have to do with a person's membership in a group that's discriminated against or subject to stereotypes. A key part of what makes them so disconcerting is that they happen casually, and frequently. Yet a lifetime of microaggressions add up.

The band-aid example also points to the ways in which the people with privilege's needs are prioritized.

We can see this in the ways which we have talked about in class so far of how white women would use their white privilege to dominate some feminist activist groups and prioritize their own needs. Racism and white supremacy existed and still exist in some feminist organizations and organizing.

We can also see examples of gender privilege within anti-racist movements. As I mentioned previously, the work of Sara Evans' *Personal Politics* talks about the sexism women experienced within civil rights organizations. We can see this in the way that Cesar Chavez's work gets far more attention than Dolores Huerta's work in the United Farm Workers movement. Both were important civil rights activists and labor leaders but because of the way that gender privilege functions, Chavez's work is celebrated more. We can see the ways in which women of colour, facing gender and racial discrimination have had to fight oppression on multiple fronts and the ways that their contributions have been minimized or written out of historical accounts of activism. The histories of the movements then become stories of great men.

We can see this in the way that civil rights activist Ella Baker, a national officer and key figure in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, one of the founders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and a prime mover in the creation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, is not discussed in schools, while children learn the names of male leaders in the movement such as Martin Luther King Jr.

We can see this in the way that histories will celebrate or focus on the image of mostly male Black Panthers of the Black Power Movement with machine guns and not on the Black Panther Breakfast Program that fed thousands of Black children before school and focused on education and was run primarily by women.

It is from these conditions that we see the creation of the work by Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, the Combahee River Collective, Audre Lorde, Kimberle Crenshaw, bell hooks, and as we will discuss today: Patricia Hill Collins, Alicia Garza, and Robyn Maynard.

I have also included a link in the transcript to the Black feminism resource guide by the New York Public Library if you are looking for more texts:

<https://libguides.nypl.org/blackfeminism/home> and a link for the Black History Month Library which contains more resources:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1XrcBXvrLH35lrbKoLle_nkF0gXcsYVRv?fbclid=IwAR17G7M8s1V9whNfklUoZ18TCaUYgXV2niSqadsPG5F4rciRY3gcsRnwaHc

Patricia Hill Collins is a Distinguished University Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is also the former head of the Department of African American Studies at the University of Cincinnati, and the past President of the American Sociological Association Council. In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins explores the words and ideas of Black feminist intellectuals as well as those African-American women outside of academia. She provides an interpretive framework for the work of such prominent Black feminist thinkers as Angela Davis, bell hooks, Alice Walker, and Audre Lorde.

She writes, (start quote), “Black feminism remains important because U.S. Black women constitute an oppressed group. As a collectivity, U.S. Black women participate in a dialectical relationship linking African-American women’s oppression and activism. Dialectical relationships of this sort mean that two parties are opposed and opposite. As long as Black women’s subordination within intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation persists, Black feminism as an activist response to that oppression will remain needed.”

Patricia Hill Collins, like the other Black feminists whose work we have read, utilizes a framework emphasizes the idea of the multiplicity of oppressions and she does this in order to, as she writes, foster, “both Black women’s empowerment and conditions of social justice.”

In the text, of which I assigned the introduction, she reclaims Black women’s history and emphasizes the important intellectual contributions made by Black women intellectuals, all the while reminding readers of the exploitation of Black women’s reproductive and productive labour.

There are two sections that I want to emphasize in particular.

The first is when she writes about how this book has changed over the years, as she has released newer additions. She writes, “This book reflects one stage in my ongoing struggle to regain my voice. Over the years I have tried to replace the external definitions of my life forwarded by dominant groups with my own self-defined viewpoint. My analysis of oppression is also more complex in this edition, in part because neither empowerment nor social justice can be achieved without some sense of what one is trying to change. Whereas both editions rely on a paradigm of intersecting oppressions

to analyze Black women's experiences, this edition provides a more comprehensive treatment. Race, class, and gender studies were being established when I wrote the first edition. Just as this area of inquiry has greatly expanded since that writing, so has my treatment of this framework. For example, in this edition, I broaden my analysis beyond race, class, and gender and include sexuality as a form of oppression." (end quote)

So here, Patricia Hill Collins points readers to the ways that the analysis of power within Black feminist thought has developed over time to take into account other axes of power, building upon the idea of intersectionality.

She also writes about how this text may look different from other academic texts.

She writes, (start quote) "Oppressed groups are frequently placed in the situation of being listened to only if we frame our ideas in the language that is familiar to and comfortable for a dominant group. This requirement often changes the meaning of our ideas and works to elevate the ideas of dominant groups. In this volume, by placing African-American women's ideas in the center of analysis, I not only privilege those ideas but encourage white feminists, African-American men, and all others to investigate the similarities and differences among their own standpoints and those of African-American women." (end quote)

I wanted to highlight this quote in particular because here she draws our attention to the power of the voice. If you remember in the first lecture I discussed the idea of the power of the voice by bell hooks. What is the voice of power and how is it conveyed? Here Collins pushes back on dominant writing conventions- she wants to emphasize a different kind of voice- her voice. She also acknowledges that this voice may not be legible to certain power structures. It might not be taken as seriously. But she no longer wants to translate her voice so that privileged groups may find it more accessible and palatable. In this quote she also speaks towards the idea of standpoint theory-- something we will discuss in more detail if you take GSFS 300 Feminist Methods with me next term.

How does this idea of the voice and whose voices are listened to relate to the current **Black Lives Matter movement?**

Let's start with "What is Black Lives Matter?" I want us to listen to part of a 2014 video with Alicia Garza discussing "what black lives matter is."

I've included the link to the clip here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5WeJaNtMQs> which has closed captions.

So I decided to play this clip because 1) it is from 2014, I want us to remember that while the Black Lives Matter movement is being discussed a lot in 2020, it is not new. 2) I also want us to think about who the media puts forward as the leaders of Black Lives Matter and who is invited to speak.

Alicia Garza is the co-founder of Black Lives Matter and the Black Lives Matter hashtag in 2013. She is a Black Jewish queer woman. She started the movement and hashtag with two other Black women Opal Tometi and Patrisse Cullors (who also identifies as queer) after the July 2013 acquittal of George Zimmerman of murder in the death of Trayvon Martin. On July 13, 2013, she wrote on Facebook, "stop saying we are not surprised. that's a damn shame in itself. I continue to be surprised at how little Black lives matter. And I will continue that. stop giving up on black life. Black people. I love you. I love us. Our lives matter."

So this movement was started over 7 years ago by 3 Black and queer women. However, as Crenshaw discussed, so often Black women's lives are pushed to the side in the most dominant activism of the movement. Black cis women's and Black trans women's lives are so often not included within the dominant thread of the movement. This is where the #SayHerName movement comes in. #SayHerName pushes back on misogynoir.

Misogynoir is misogyny directed towards Black women where race and gender both play roles in bias. The term was coined by queer Black feminist Moya Bailey. In her 2021 book *Misogynoir Transformed*, she writes " Misogynoir is a term I created in 2008 to describe the anti-Black racist misogyny that Black women experience, particularly in US visual and digital culture" (1).

A side note: Moya Bailey SPOKE as part of the Disrupting Disruptions, Feminist and Accessible Publishing, Communications, and Technologies Practices Speaker and Workshop Series on September 15th, 2021 about her new book *Misogynoir Transformed* and the recording ARE available on the series website: <https://www.feministandaccessiblepublishingandtechnology.com/p/schedule-of-events.html>

Moya Bailey's work is a great way to tie into the work of Dr. Catherine Knight Steele who writes on Digital Black Feminism. Catherine Knight Steele uses this term "digital

Black feminism” to center Black women’s experiences. She draws on the work on Moya Bailey and Patricia Hill Collins, as well as Joan Morgan’s work on “hip hop feminism,” which moves away from a politics of respectability– or as Britney Cooper names it, “beyond respectability.” Hip Hop feminism for Joan Morgan, as Catherine Knight Steele describes it, “describes a generation of Black feminists that live within the seemingly contradictory space of abhorring patriarchy while embracing hip hop culture” (page 57 of Digital Black Feminism). This work serves as a reminder of the ways that ideas of feminism must be visited and revisited as new generations work to utilize these terms to disrupt power.

Catherine Knight Steele also explains why she prefers the term “matrix of domination” which comes from Patricia Hill Collins, over Crenshaw’s “intersectionality.” When she spoke as part of the speaker series, she said that “matrix of domination” keeps us talking about power. It is a term that is harder to water down and appropriate.

You can watch the video recording of Catherine Knight Steele’s talk also on the series website. I’ve dropped the link in the transcript:

<https://www.feministandaccessiblepublishingandtechnology.com/p/videos.html>

In the forthcoming lecture on popular culture, beauty, and sports, I will briefly touch on the topic of skin bleaching and the harmful promotion of light skin beauty standards. That topic relates to the larger topic of **colorism**. As defined by sociologist Margaret Hunter, “Colorism, or skin color stratification, is a process that privileges light-skinned people of color over dark in areas such as income, education, housing, and the marriage market.” Understanding colorism is an important component of discussions around race.

For more information on this topic, see Margaret Hunter, “The persistent problem of colorism: Skin tone, status, and inequality.” *Sociology compass* 1.1 (2007): 237-254:

https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00006.x?casa_token=-zOlqCXwRCwAAAAA%3AYM7QOTnbz9U43dg1sG-BVtIVUJ2ITTCRCTBksuavtknZ9dKGW_BnUF2icQnqxj-u6ceO7R74pCbF

I want us to also look at racism and anti-racism, particularly within the Canadian context.

This is why I have assigned the chapter **“On State Violence and Black Lives”** from **Robyn Maynard’s *Policing Black Lives* of 2017**. This is one of the books you can write your first assignment about.

Robyn Maynard is active in the Black Lives Matter Toronto protests and is currently doing a PhD at the University of Toronto. She was formerly based in Montreal. Maynard has a long history of involvement in community activism and advocacy. She been a part of grassroots movements against racial profiling, police violence, detention and deportation for over a decade and has an extensive work history in harm reduction-based service provision serving sex workers, drug users, incarcerated women and marginalized youth in Montreal.

I assigned her book because a story we often hear in Canada is that racism is something that happens in the United States, but not here in Canada. That Canada is made up of the multicultural salad rather than the melting pot of the United States. This myth allows certain Canadians, particularly white Canadians, to forget or not acknowledge or not learn about the history of slavery in Canada; the segregation of Canadian schools; the obliteration of Africville, the predominately Black community in Halifax, Nova Scotia during the 1960s movement of “urban renewal” that razed similarly racialized neighbourhoods across Canada; and ongoing violence against Black communities in Canada. James McGill, for which this university is named, enslaved Black and Indigenous people. These histories continue to affect our current realities.

Maynard’s *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to Present* peels back Canada’s veneer of multiculturalism and tolerance traces the violent realities of anti-blackness from the slave ships to prisons, classrooms and beyond. Robyn Maynard provides readers with the first comprehensive account of nearly four hundred years of state-sanctioned surveillance, criminalization, and punishment of Black lives in Canada.

The book traces the still-living legacy of slavery across multiple institutions, shedding light on the state’s role in perpetuating contemporary Black poverty and unemployment, racial profiling, law enforcement violence, incarceration, immigration detention, deportation, exploitative migrant labour practices, disproportionate child removal, and low graduation rates.

Emerging from a critical race feminist framework that insists that all Black lives matter, Maynard uses an intersectional approach to anti-Black racism through which she addresses the unique and understudied impacts of state violence as it is experienced by

Black women, Black people with disabilities, as well as queer, trans, and undocumented Black communities.

Robin Maynard has given a lot of interviews and continues to do so. In 2017 she did an interview with CBC that explains the impetus for her writing the book. I've included a link to the 9 minute interview in the transcript. The video includes captions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iL9oqSoctAo> I do want to note that if you watch the video there are images of police violence beginning at the 3:50 mark to 4:05 and also around the 8 minute mark.

(playing 35 seconds until 4:50).

In this section of the interview, Robin Maynard discusses the history of slavery, the history of school segregation, and the history of Black children being forcefully removed from their families.

She also speaks to the phenomenon of "Brown or Black faces in high places" which is the phenomenon where you have a few individuals who can rise through the ranks, but if you look to the levels of poverty and structural oppression, the racism within Canada is quite apparent.

This also speaks to the question of tokenism.

Tokenism is the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce. This does not result in structural change.

The Black Lives Matter movement in the United States and Canada build upon understanding these histories, seeking to create a more socially just world.

A key focus for this movement since 2013 has been on police violence and the disproportionate surveillance, arrest, assault, and killing of Black people by the police. Black Lives Matter protests have focused on policies such as Stop and Frisk in New York where police could stop anyone on the street and frisk them, focusing particularly on Black and Brown communities. In Toronto, there was organizing against the practice of carding where police officers would force Black and Brown people to produce identification. In Montreal, police officers have arrested and killed Black people at rates higher than white people.

In 2020, after police officers killed George Floyd, we have seen a rise of demonstrations against police violence-- with less attention given to the killing of emergency medical technician, Breonna Taylor.

The Defund the Police movement has gained more popularity as more people are made aware of the gigantic budgets of police departments and the militarization of police departments, when schools, healthcare, libraries, and other programs that could lead to safer communities where people can thrive are underfunded.

I have included a link in the transcript to Minneapolis based organization MPD 150's zine which explains the movement to defund the police in more detail:

<https://www.mpd150.com/faq/>

I have also included a link in the transcript to [TransformHarm.org](https://transformharm.org/), which provides more resources about transformative justice.

One key point made by scholar **Dorothy Roberts**, author of *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (amongst other important works) is that in the move to defund police, we must be careful to not glamorize child protective services, social work, medicine, and educational institutions, because these very institutions have also been used as sites of control, surveillance, and policing. She warns that if we are not careful we can shift policing from the police to these other sites.

Ruha Benjamin, Yeshe Miller, Sofiya Noble, Meredith Broussard, Virginia Eubanks, Joy Buolamwini, Mimi Onuoha, and others also warn about the ways that technology and data collection can be used as forms of surveillance and policing, even without the police.

Angela Davis, a long time Black feminist activist, philosopher, and abolitionist speaks to the current phenomenon in this clip:

<https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1270434723064696835>

She asks us to consider how we might imagine justice in the future and to imagine new forms of community safety. She states that "I don't know if we have ever experienced this kind of global challenge to racism and to the consequences of slavery." Angela Davis says anti-racism protests around the world are "a very exciting moment".

The Defund the Police movement is also tied to the Prison Abolition movement.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore is a leading prison abolitionist. Gilmore discusses how like the defund the police movement, abolition is not about getting rid of prisons to save money, but rather to invest in people and community, into education, into community support, and the kinds of programs that help people thrive.

There is significant overlap between the Defund the Police and Prison Abolition movements, including their focus on racism; needing to invest in communities; and also the ways that people with disabilities are oftentimes targets of police violence.

Black women have been leading the charge in much of this work.

Here, too, we can see the difference between not being racist and choosing to be **anti-racist**: choosing to invest in and commit oneself to the process of anti-racist work.

Of course, when we discuss issues of race and racism in Canada and the United States, we need to look at the racism against other communities of colour.

Since the pandemic, we have seen an uptick in the amount of racism and hate crimes against East Asian communities within Canada and the United States.

The **Asian American Feminist Collective** has released multiple zines to talk about Asian American feminist experiences.

In their first zine, they write: “Drawing from the 1977 Combahee River Collective Statement, a document written by a collective of Black socialist feminists, we believe that the “personal is political.” Our politics are grounded in our experiences as Asian/Americans.

We seek to address the multi-dimensional ways with which the Asian/American community, particularly women, queer, and/or trans and gender-nonconforming people, confront systems of power. Transnational cultural, economic, and geopolitical configurations of racism, capitalism, and colonialism position us differently in relation to each other and to other communities of color.

We are indebted to ways Black feminist thought, Third World feminist movements in the late 60s and 70s, and Women of Color feminism enable us to think and act critically through our own positionalities to address how systems of global racial capitalism, anti-Black racism, settler colonialism, and xenophobia impact our communities. We are both vulnerable and complicit within these structures, and Asian/American feminism is our ongoing orientation and reorientation towards a politics that can account for and address the perpetuated historical legacies of racialized, gendered, and colonial violence.

Because we bring our histories to feminism, an Asian American feminist movement allows us to draw upon our own lived experiences, material conditions, and historical contexts to move beyond narrow bids for national political and economic inclusion and instead push towards other pathways for justice.” (end quote)

Here they draw on the legacies of Black feminism and take an intersectional approach to their work. I recommend looking also at their most recent zine about “Care in the Time of Corona,” which focuses on this particular moment. I have linked in the transcript to their resource page: <https://www.asianamfeminism.org/resources>

While Asian American and Asian Canadian women experience differences, there are also similarities in the kinds of racism they experience, in part due to the intertwined racist immigration histories within the United States and Canada which include Chinese exclusion acts, Japanese internment, and more. It is because of these connected histories that Dr. Jo-Anne Lee from University of Victoria, teaching in Women/Gender Studies talks about how she pioneered the term: North American Asian Feminism and elaborates on the histories of the involvement that Asian women had in Western Feminisms.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQGXcfFLUsU>

In this clip she speaks about the usefulness of this term to hold up for question and interrogate what it means to be “North American;” what it means to be “Asian;” and what it means to be “feminist.” She also discusses the contention around this category. She received pushback as some women of colour saw this term as breaking solidarity, by some South Asian women seeing this term as homogenizing experiences, and what the reliance on or disruption of the nation state means for building solidarity with Indigenous communities and against the project of empire.

I bring in this clip because it is important to acknowledge that there are also issues of racism within communities of people of colour.

Koreangry is the pen name for the comic artist/cartoonist who is a self identified Korean-American immigrant woman. She addresses issues of racism and sexism within her puppet based comics. She writes the captions in English and Korean. I've included a link to her instagram in the transcript: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CCNlj3hjbs3/>) as well as one image from the comic I will discuss.

On July 3, 2020 she posted a comic about why the Black Lives Matter movement matters to Korean Americans.



(alt image: Koreangry puppet talking about the Black Lives Matter movement. Puppet holds a pointer, pointed at a sign).

She discusses the issue about racism within her own community and how it is important to address this and commit oneself to anti-racist work.

Let us remember that race is a social construct. But it is a social construct that has wide ranging implications. It is a social construct that affects peoples' access to healthcare, access to education, safety, access to clean water, air, and food. In future lectures we will talk about environmental racism. Race and anti-racist work will continue to guide our discussions.

Koreangry is one of many artists who discusses issues of racism. Art is an important medium for communication about racism. Art and music enable us to hear a wider range of different voices-- it is one of the reasons I play a clip of a song in each lecture.

Today I talked about a large range of topics and there are still so many components we have yet to address. Learning about anti-racism and unlearning the racism that we are socialized with takes a lifetime of work.

This is the last lecture for Unit 1. We look forward to reading your first assignments. Please remember that there will be no extensions granted for the quiz. I hope you have a nice day. I look forward to seeing you again on October 17th for another in-class lecture.

All the videos, songs, images, and graphics used in the podcast and transcript belong to their respective owners and I do not claim any right over them.

The opening bell sound is School bell.wav from 13FPanska_Stranska_Michaela and the closing bell is from InspectorJ's "Bell, Counter, A.wav" of Freesound.org.

Fair Dealing is an exception in the Canadian Copyright Act that outlines the permitted unauthorized use of copyrighted materials for specific, mandated purposes. In Canada, these purposes include: research, private study, education, parody, satire, criticism, review, or news reporting. For research and private study, education, parody and satire, no special requirements are required. For criticism, review, and news reporting, the source and author must be named to constitute fair dealing.

This is an advertisement free podcast, used for educational purposes.

Bell Sound

All lectures' audio and transcripts are the intellectual property of Alex Ketchum, PhD, written and recorded in 2021. No portion of this lecture or transcripts may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the author.