

**ETHN 106: Life, Death, and the Human**  
**Winter 2017**  
**Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays, 3:00-3:50 pm**  
**Humanities and Social Science Building 2150**

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Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11:30 am and Wednesdays 2-2:50 pm, 252 Social Science Building

Using interdisciplinary approaches (including history, literature, film, and performance), this course examines some of the contexts in which the conditions of life and death become sites of political, economic, and cultural significance. More specifically, we will investigate how histories of colonialism, slavery, and empire mobilized—and continue to mobilize—dehumanizing violence and death in order to legitimate conquest, enslavement, and the uneven distribution of freedom and life chances. Throughout our study, we will consider how the construction of the “human” has not been universally accessible to all peoples, and will pay particular attention to how race, gender, sexuality, and other socially constructed categories of difference impact access to the protections of “humanity.”

**Required Texts**

Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (Vintage). Available at the UCSD Bookstore.

All other course materials will be available through our course TritonEd website and/or library course reserves.

**Assignments and Grading**

- Attendance and Participation 15%  
More than two absences from class will result in a zero for attendance.
- Pop Quizzes 10%  
Short, in-class quizzes will be based on assigned materials and discussion. There will be no makeups for missed quizzes.
- Take-Home Midterm 20%
- Critical Essay (6-7 pages) 25%
- Final Exam 30%

Late work will be subject to penalty except in the case of verifiable emergencies or if arranged with me *prior* to the due date.

Please familiarize yourself with the UCSD Policy of Integrity of Scholarship, if you have not done so already: <http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/policy.html>.

**Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies**

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a college general education requirement. Students often have taken many ETHN courses out of interest, yet do not realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double

major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, public policy, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact Daisy Rodríguez, the Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor (858-534-3277 or [d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu](mailto:d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu)), or visit [www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu](http://www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu).

### **Course Schedule (subject to change)**

All readings should be completed *before* the first class session of each week. Please bring copies of the assigned readings with you to class (reading off your phone is not acceptable).

#### Week 1: Introductions and Foundations

- Dorothy Roberts, “The Invention of Race”
- Anne McClintock, excerpt from *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*

#### Week 2: Racism, Colonialism, Gender

No Class Monday, January 16: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

- Jennifer Morgan, “‘Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder’: Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology”

#### Week 3: Inhuman Violence: Torture, Death, and Colonialism

- Deborah A. Miranda, “Extermination of the *Joyas*: Gendercide in Spanish California”
- Sara E. Johnson, “‘You Should Give Them Blacks to Eat’: Waging Inter-American Wars of Torture and Terror”

#### Week 4: Personhood vs. Property

- Stephanie Smallwood, “Turning African Captives into Atlantic Commodities” and “The Living Dead Aboard the Slave Ship at Sea”
- Dorothy Roberts, “Reproduction in Bondage”

#### Week 5: Gendered Racial Hauntings

**Take-Home Midterm due Friday, February 10**

- Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (Part 1)

#### Week 6: Gendered Racial Hauntings, cont.

- Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (Parts 2 & 3)

#### Week 7: Gendered Racial Hauntings, cont.

No class Monday, February 20: President’s Day

- Sara Clarke Kaplan, “Love and Violence/Maternity and Death: Black Feminism and the Politics of Reading (Un)representability”
- Friday, February 24: Meet at Geisel Library for library research session with Alanna Aiko Moore. Location TBA.

Week 8: The Afterlives of Slavery and Empire

- Dennis Childs, “‘You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet’: *Beloved*, the American Chain Gang, and the Middle Passage Remix”
- Saidiya Hartman, “The Time of Slavery”

Week 9: Indebted to Empire

**Critical Essay due Monday, March 6**

- Film: *Life and Debt* (Dir. Stephanie Black, 2001)
- Jamaica Kincaid, excerpts from *A Small Place*

Week 10: Staging Empire, Performing Anti-imperialism

- Film: *The Couple in the Cage: A Guatinaui Odyssey* (Dir. Coco Fusco and Paula Heredia, 1993)
- Coco Fusco, “The Other History of Intercultural Performance”
- Diana Taylor, “Scenarios of Discovery: Reflections on Performance and Ethnography”

**Final exam: Wednesday, March 22, 3-6pm, Location TBA**