

**BROWN STUDIES: A TOOLKIT  
FOR AND ABOUT THE MIXED AND MULTIRACIAL  
ANTH 4020/5020-005, Fall 2018**

**Anthropology Department  
T/Th 12:30–1:45 pm, Hale 260**

**Course website:** <https://browndotstudies.wordpress.com/>

**Password** (case sensitive): Roland18Brown

**Professor: L. K. Roland** ([rolandl@colorado.edu](mailto:rolandl@colorado.edu))

Office: Hale 444, ph. (303) 492-8022

Office Hours (email for appointment):

Mon. 12n – 2:00pm; Tue 2–3pm



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What does it mean to be multiracial? How are people of mixed heritage seen throughout the world? Who is mixed? Who is not? In the United States, how does being bi/multiracial play into the narrative of a post-racial society? This course will apply an anthropological perspective to mixed race identities portrayed in popular culture, comedy, ethnography, and academic texts to further study those who live in more than one and between racial lines, who simultaneously are both (or many) and neither. The goal of this course is twofold. First, this course will work as an introduction to critical race theory for students interested in studying race. We will discuss race and racial mixing throughout the world to gain perspective into how we, in our own lives, view race at home. Second, each student in this course will work to create a reflective toolkit. Students who are themselves of mixed heritage will be introduced to a plethora of resources catered to racial dialogue around Mixedness. Each student in the course will work to create a reflective toolkit whether for self-sustenance or intellectual interest. Overall, this course seeks to complicate how we view race, messy the concept of racial belonging, and foster dialogue around the fluidity and permeability of race around the world.

**Safe Space Statement**

Professor Roland makes every effort to ensure that all students experience her classes as a safe space. While we may be discussing difficult issues concerning race, gender, religion, or sexuality, the goal is that all students are able to LEARN in these discussions. Please be sensitive in the language that you use as the opinions that you express may not represent everyone in the classroom. Anthropology seeks to engage and learn from difference rather than judge, disregard, or demean.

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Please see last page for syllabus notes on: *disability statement, religious observances, discrimination/harassment, classroom behavior, laptops/cell phones, & honor code.*

**Course Requirements:**

Class Participation	20 pts
Reflective Toolkit	20 pts
Seminar Papers	60 pts (3 essays, 20 pts each)

Grades are non-disputable and may be tracked throughout the semester via CU's new Canvas learning system (<https://canvas.colorado.edu>). **Prior to Thanksgiving Break** students may conference with the instructor to know her/his overall status and to determine how to improve the final grade.

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**Class Participation (20 points)**

This course will be taught as an advanced seminar. This means that we will cover a large amount of material through reading assignments and class discussion; thus, you will find that your grade for this course will be adversely affected if you are habitually unprepared to participate in class discussions. Students are expected to participate in class discussions at least once a module: this constitutes *an average contribution (B/B+ range grade)*, students who make *better than average contributions will receive better than average grades for contribution (A-/A)*, whereas *students who make less than average contributions will receive lower than average grades (B- etc.)*. The instructor makes note of contributions – and negative participation (i.e., inattentiveness, texting/surfing, sleeping) – after each class and considers them in the final grade tally. Certainly, you cannot possibly do well in this course if you have not gained sufficient information from the readings to meaningfully participate in class discussions. It is self-evident that if you are not in attendance, then you are not able to meaningfully participate in class discussions. Excusable reasons for absences (such as job interviews, illness, etc., NOT weddings, family vacations, or ski days) must be conveyed to the instructor prior to the class, and be accompanied when possible with applicable documentation. **Three un-excused absences will result in a ½ grade deduction** (i.e., B+ to B). In addition, **three tardy arrivals is the equivalent of one un-excused absence. PLEASE NOTE that ten (10) unexcused recitation absences will be regarded as grounds for failing the course.**

One of the goals of this class is to provide those of mixed heritage and those who want to study race with a reflective toolkit for further use. In this course, dialogue is prioritized. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to add to the “Research Library” throughout the semester (via email) to show further engagement with course themes and readings; students will receive participation credit for these contributions.

**Reflective Toolkits (20 points)**

Per the course name, this class will not only look at what it means to be bi/multiracial, but will also provide students with a platform to spend time creating a means of reflecting that they will use in their own studies or personally. Later in the semester, the course readings lessen to give students time each week to work on their reflective toolkits (read light, think heavy). **Reflective Toolkits are due via Canvas no later than our scheduled final exam time, Wednesday, December 19 by 4:30 pm.** These can take many forms from a tab on the “notes” section of your computer with links to helpful websites and blogs to a more formal document with journal-like entries. This is meant to be a digital space that you can use to help others learn about what it means to be bi/multiracial and potentially use it yourself in your own life. This final assignment seeks to bridge the anthropological theory discussed all semester with a real-life application and method for

sharing this information. Students will have time in class throughout the semester to ask questions and work on their reflective toolkits. The toolkit can take multiple forms and may include current events, memories, personal reflexive narratives, research studies, etc. Feel free to consult the instructor for guidance.

**Seminar Papers** (3 papers due on the following dates at the start of class via Canvas, 20 points each)

Each student is also required to submit 3 seminar papers. These papers serve to critically evaluate the readings for the previous section as well as apply the theories and concepts into your own life. Papers should be 5 double-spaced pages each and will be evaluated as follows: (5 points) clarity of argument, writing style, technical writing (correct grammar, terminology, punctuation, pagination, etc.) / (7 points) analysis and demonstrated theoretical understanding of material (does student summarize the material as well as interpret it in her/his own terms?), are the course materials situated within the larger course context? / (8 points) addressing the specific prompt (does student provide personal context in a thoughtful manner during this paper?).

- **Assignment 1** (**Assignment 1 due to Canvas by Thursday, October 4 at 12:30pm**): The first section of this course deals with our construction of race in the United States versus racial constructions in other places around the world. Based on these comparisons, how would you be physically read or understood in these various places? How would that distinction affect how you view yourself or how your family interacted in society? Students must discuss at least two different sites for comparison with racial classification in the United States. Make sure to consider not only physical characteristics, but economic and social ones as well. A successful essay is one that incorporates the intersection of race and class into the paper's analysis.
- **Assignment 2** (**Assignment 2 due to Canvas by Thursday, November 15 at 12:30pm**): Recently, we've been discussing intersectionality and how crucial this perspective is when analyzing identity. How does taking this approach to discussions of race change what is in focus? How does an intersectional approach to race affect how we discuss communities with multi-generational histories of racial mixture the United States like the Creoles and Mexipinos? How does the entertainment industry (including comedy and music) contribute to (or detract from) an intersectional understanding of "brown" raciality? Please include at least 3 course texts in your discussion, at least one of which must be on Creole identity OR Mexipino identity.
- **Assignment 3** (**Assignment 3 due to Canvas by Thursday, December 6 at 12:30pm**): During the semester, we have discussed how bi/multiracial people are seen, understood, and portrayed in various places. For this last writing assignment, please address the following questions. First, what does it mean to be multiracial? Who is mixed? Who is not? In the United States, specifically, how does being bi/multiracial play into the narrative of a post-racial society? Second, what is the role of bi/multiracial individuals in the United States? What can non-mixed individuals learn from their experiences? Lastly, have your thoughts on your own race or that of your family changed during this semester? Do you view race differently now? How can you and will you use what you've learned in this class once this semester ends?

**Readings:**

There are **no required books** for this course; all of the assigned readings are accessible electronically through the course webpage <https://browndotstudies.wordpress.com/course-materials/> using the password Roland18Brown (case sensitive). I strongly recommend downloading and printing the readings at the beginning of the term. Create a computer folder with all the PDFs of the readings, or a printed coursepack.

### Readings and Discussion Schedule:

**NOTE: The reading listed on each date is to be completed for discussion on that date.**

#### **What are Brown Studies?**

Tues., 8/28 Introductions, walk through syllabus

Thu., 8/30 Deconstructing Race

Read: "Racial Formation" by Michael Omi and Howard

Read: "Bill of Rights for People of Mixed Heritage" by Maria P.P. Root in *Race Critical Theories* (1993) (Pg. 355-368).

[*Supplemental Reading*] "Reflections on A Bill of Rights for People of Mixed Heritage" by Maria P.P. Root in *Race Critical Theories* (1993) (Pg. 513-516).

Tue., 9/4 Colonial Histories and Creating "Brown" People

Read: "Chapter 1: Genealogies of the Intimate" in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* by Ann Laura Stoler (2002) (Pg. 1-21).

#### **"What are you?" and the Politics of Being Mixed Race**

Thu., 9/6 Using Society to Answer the Question

Read: "Introduction" in *Anthropology and the Racial Politics of Culture* by Lee D. Baker (2010) (Pg. 1-31).

Read: "(Chapter Three) Race as Nation, Race as Blood Quantum: The Racial Politics of Cherokee Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century" in *Blood Politics: Race, Culture, and Identity in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma* by Circe Sturm (2002) (Pg. 52-81).

Tue., 9/11 Using Science to Answer the Question

- American Anthropological Association: Statement on Race (adopted May 17, 1998).

- American Association of Physical Anthropologists: Statements on Biological Aspects of Race (1996).

SKIM: "The Profession of the Color Blind: Sociocultural Anthropology and Racism in the 21st Century" by Eugenia Shanklin in *American Anthropologist* 100(3):669-679 (1999).

Watch (in class): "True Color"

#### **Context Matters**

Thu., 9/13 Racial Classification in Brazil

Read: "(Chapter 2) Read: Discourses on Color and Race" in *Dreaming Equality: Color, Race, and Racism in Urban Brazil* by Robin E. Sherrif (2001) (Pg. 29-58).

-Possible Guest Speaker? (TBA)

Tue., 9/18 Racial Classification in the Caribbean  
Read: “Ethnography as Politics” in *Decolonizing Anthropology*, Faye V Harrison (1991)  
Read: “T/Racing Belonging Through Cuban Tourism” in *Cultural Anthropology* by L. Kaifa Roland (2013).

Thu., 9/20 Racial Classification in Practice  
Read - “Broken Mirrors and Reflections of One’s Self: Blackness, Indianness, and Hybridity,” by Hershini Bhana in *Blackberries and Redbones: Critical Articulations of Black Hair/Body Politics in Africana Communities*.  
Watch/Discuss (in class): *Little White Lie* (1 hour, 5 minutes)

### **The [Southern] United States and the Role of Economics in Racial Identity**

Tue. 9/25 Southeast US Creoles  
Read: “Chapter 2: Pretty Color 'n Good Hair: Creole Women of New Orleans and the Politics of Identity” by Yaba Amgborale Blay in *Blackberries and Redbones: Critical Articulations of Black Hair/Body Politics in Africana Communities* (Pg. 29-52)  
[Supplemental Readings]  
-“Black and Privileged until Jim Crow Came and Crushed a Sense of Dignity” (Washington Post, 2017)

Thu. 9/27 Beyoncé and Creoles  
Watch: “Formation” by Beyoncé  
READ -“On ‘Jackson Five Nostrils,’ Creole vs. ‘Negro’ and Beefing Over Beyoncé’s ‘Formation’” by Yaba Blay  
-“On Creoles, Colorism, and Confronting our Triggers” on BlackandBlewish: Living “AND” in the Land of “EITHER/OR”  
-“A Creole Perspective on Beyoncé’s ‘Formation’” by Liz Johnston on *The Odyssey*  
Guest Speaker: Bailey Duhé – CU Anthropology Ph.D. Student

Tue., 10/2 Read: Gloria Anzaldua excerpts (chapters 5 & 7)  
Watch/Discuss (in class): “Dear White Girls in My Spanish Class”

Thu., 10/4 **Assignment 1 DUE via Canvas by 12:30pm**

### **Whiteness under Fire**

Tue., 10/9 Whiteness in Question  
Read: (Pg. 8-15) “Reading Trash: Deliverance and the Poetics of White Trash” in *Society for Visual Anthropology Newsletter* 8(2):8-15 by John Hartigan (2008). OR  
(Pg. 316-343) “Unpopular culture: The case of ‘white trash’”, *Cultural Studies*, 11:2, 316-343 by John Hartigan (1997).OR  
(Pg. 11-34) “Remembering White Detroit: Whiteness in the Mix of History and Memory” in *City and Society* 12(2):11-34 by John Hartigan (2008).  
AND “What do White Guys think about Race?”

Thu., 10/11    Whiteness in Question (continued)  
Read: Formanack (TBD)  
Guest speaker: Dr. Allison Formanack (Recent CU Anthropology graduate)

### **Brown-ness without Black or White**

Tue., 10/16    Read: (Pg. 1-40) “Introduction” & (Pg. 41-69) “Chapter 2: The Devil Comes to San Diego: Race and Spatial Politics” *Becoming Mexipino: Multiethnic Identities and Communities in San Diego* by Rudy P. Guevarra (2012).

Thu., 10/18    (Pg. 130-170) “Chapter 5: Filipino-Mexican Couples and the Forging of a Mexipino Identity” & “Epilogue” *Becoming Mexipino: Multiethnic Identities and Communities in San Diego* by Rudy P. Guevarra (2012).

Tue., 10/23    The Fluidity of Race and the Role of Comedy  
- Watch: What It’s Like to Be Ambiguously Ethnic  
- Watch: Why is India so Obsessed with Fair Skin?  
Watch (in class): Hasan Minhaj – Homecoming King (Netflix)

Thu., 10/25    The Fluidity of Race and the Role of Comedy (continued)  
- Watch: Dave Chappelle’s Racial Draft Skit  
- Watch: Clip of Trevor Noah’s You Laugh But It’s True  
- Watch: Key and Peele’s White-Sounding Black Guys Skit  
- Watch: Key and Peele’s Biracial Dating Skit  
- Watch: Key and Peele’s Obama Meet & Greet Skit

### **The Myth of the “Good Mix” & Mixed Race Privileges**

Tue., 10/30    Creating the Good Mix  
- Watch: The Many Problems With “I Want Mixed Babies”  
- Read: “Stop Weaponizing Your Biracial Children” by Lara Witt  
- BROWSE: Check out some of the parenting websites designed for parents of bi/multiracial children in the Research Library  
- Watch in Class: *Light Girls* (85 minutes total – first half)

Thu., 11/1    Colorism and Mixed Race Privileges  
- Your Blackness Isn’t Like Mine: Colorism and Oppression Olympics by Sil Ali Abrams (HuffPost)  
- Yara Shahidi on Colorism (MadameNoire)  
- Listen: T Pain “Mix’d Girl”  
- Watch in Class: *Light Girls* (second half)

### **The “Post-Racial United States” and the Multiracial Citizen**

Tue., 11/6    The Multiracial Citizen  
Read and watch all videos: Voices of Multiracial Americans (Pew Research Center)

Thu., 11/8 The Multiracial Citizen in a Narrative of Black vs. White  
Watch: [The Struggle of Being Mixed Race](#)  
Watch: [Mulatto: Mixed Race in America](#)  
- Read: "[What It Means to Be Mixed Race During the Fight For Black Lives Matter](#)" by Shannon Luders-Manuel (2015)

### **Making the Multiracial Scientific**

Tue., 11/13 Making the Multiracial Scientific  
- Listen: "[How Biracial Identity Affects Behavior](#)" WUNC Interview with Sarah Gaither (Duke University) (17 minutes)  
-Listen: "The Art and Science of Code-Switching: Meet Makeba Wilbourn" (WUNC) (49 minutes – *listen to as much as you can*)  
-Browse: [MixedMarrow](#) website (make sure to look at "Information & Statistics" and the trailer for the film, [Mixed Match](#))

Thu., 11/15 **Assignment 2 DUE via Canvas by 12:30pm (NO CLASS – Prof Roland at AAAs)**

11/20-22 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

Tue., 11/27 The Role of Multiraciality in a Post-Racial United States  
Watch: The Loving Generation (Episodes 101-102; approx. 10 min each)  
Read: "[Why Mixed-Race Americans Will Not Save The Country](#)" by Alexandros Orphanides (NPR)  
Read: "[All Mixed Up: What Do We Call People of Multiple Backgrounds?](#)" (NPR)  
Read: "[What Biracial People Know](#)" by (New York Times)

Thu., 11/29 The Role of Multiraciality in a Post-Racial United States (continued)  
Watch: The Loving Generation (Episodes 103-104; approx. 10 min each)  
Read: "Always ID'ing Meghan Markle as 'biracial' buys into fiction that racial purity exists"

### **Red and Yellow, Black and Brown: Decentering Whiteness in Mixed Race Studies**

Tue., 12/4 Introduction AND Being Mixed Race in the Makah Nation

Thu., 12/6 **Assignment 3 DUE via Canvas by 12:30pm**

### **Where Do We Go From Here?**

Tue., 12/11 Final thoughts  
Read: (Pg. 441-447) "How Bodies Matter: Yesterday's America Today." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7 (1) by L. Kaifa Roland, 2017.  
[Supplemental Readings: Transraciality; I Will Not Call Her Name (ethnopoem)]

Thu., 12/13 Toolkit Conclusions

*Toolkits may be submitted between last class and scheduled final exam*

### **TOOLKIT/FINAL EXAM**

**Toolkit due no later than Wednesday December 19, 4:30pm**

## Syllabus Notes

**Note 1:** If you qualify for **accommodations because of a disability**, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services during the first two weeks of class so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>.

**Note 2:** Campus policy regarding **religious observances** requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, it is required that you notify the professor of any classes, tests, or assignments that will be missed due to religious observance at least two weeks prior to the absence. The instructor and the student can then determine jointly if/when missed material can be made up. See full details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

**Note 3:** The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on **Discrimination and Harassment**, the University of Colorado policy on **Sexual Harassment** and the University of Colorado policy on **Amorous Relationships** apply to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender. Anyone who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Further information can be obtained at: <http://www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment/>. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

**Note 4:** Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such **behavioral standards** may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code)

**Note 5:** It is recognized that many students use laptops in class to take/review notes or to quickly search a topic under discussion. Should it be determined that **in-class laptops** are distracting from, rather than adding to, a productive learning environment (surfing, facebook, myspace, etc.), they will be disallowed for the abusing student(s). In their normal usage, an open laptop may be interpreted as a raised hand (i.e., you may be called on at any time). Please **turn off and/or put away your cell phone** when class begins. If you are expecting an urgent call/ message (job notification, birth/death in family), inform the instructor at the beginning of class, turn your phone on vibrate, then discretely leave the classroom when the call comes.

**Note 6:** I adhere to the **Honor Code** of this University and others (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html>). If I find you plagiarizing or cheating, I will give you an "F" on the assignment and, depending on how egregious the violation, an "F" in the course.