

Critical Race & Digital Studies Syllabus

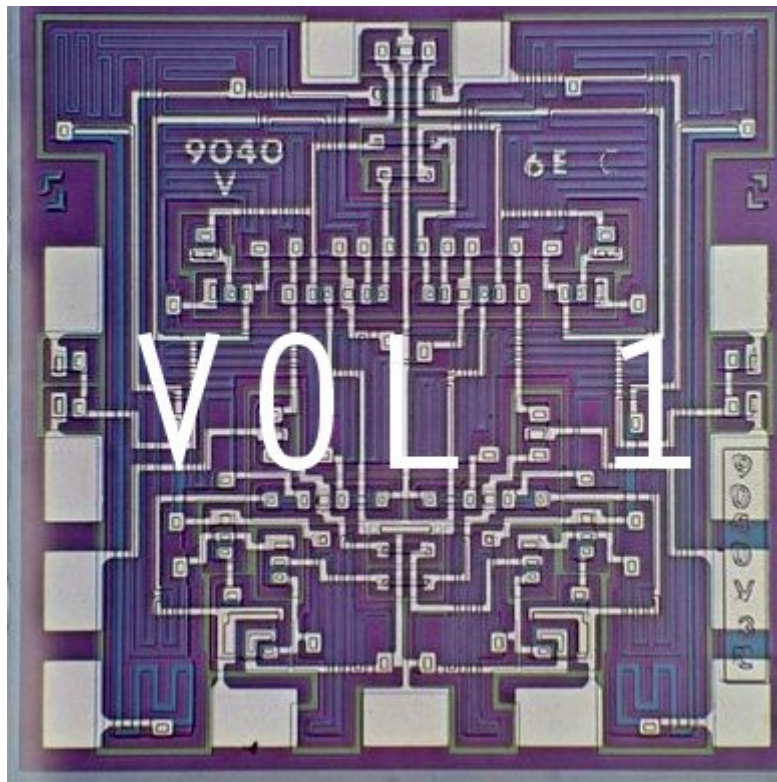


Image from Computer History Museum
via Lisa Nakamura (2014) Indigenous
Circuits: Navajo Women and the
Racialization of Early Electronic
Manufacture

Edited & compiled by Lori Kido Lopez & Jackie Land

As scholars of color we know that understandings of race and racial inequalities have always been at the center of debates about technology, politics, and power. We designed this syllabus to provide a broader context for understanding current conversations around technology and democracy by centering the voices and scholarship of people of color. The set of readings included here focus primarily on racial formations in a U.S. context and provides curated introduction to the myriad ways that race has shaped aspects of our digital world—from the infrastructures and policies that support technological development, to algorithms and the collection of data, to the interfaces that shape engagement.

We then highlight the vast body of scholarship on how communities of color have deployed new media in ways that expand the public sphere, contest the status quo, and give voice to their creativity, passion, and desires. This syllabus represents research that has been foundational in developing the field of critical race and digital studies since its origins in the 1990s and cutting edge scholarship that can help us to tackle emerging changes and shifts in the media landscape. We invite anyone who is interested in the topic to check out the readings on the list.

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Week 1: Early Internet Studies on Cyber-Race

- Burkhalter, Byron. 1999. "Reading race online: Discovering Racial Identity in Usenet Communities." In *Communities in Cyberspace*,

edited by Peter Kollack and Marc Smith, 60-75. London: Routledge.

- Clack, Doris Hargrett. 1995. "Subject access to African American studies resources in online catalogs: issues and answers." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 19, no. 2: 49-66.
- Mitra, Ananda. 1997. "Diasporic Web sites: Ingroup and outgroup discourse." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 14, no. 2: 158-181.
- Everett, Anna. 2002. "The Revolution Will be Digitized: Afrocentricity and the Digital Public Sphere." *Social Text* 71, no. 21: 125-46.
- Fair, Rhonda S. 2000. "Becoming the White Man's Indian: An Examination of Native American Tribal Web Sites." *The Plains Anthropologist* 45, no. 172: 203-213.
- Kang, Jerry. 2000. "Cyber-race." *Harvard Law Review* 113, no. 5: 1130-1208.
- Nakamura, Lisa. 2002. *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*. Routledge.
- Nakamura, Lisa. 2008. *Digitizing Race: Visual Cultures of the Internet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kendall, Lori. 1998. "Meaning and identity in 'cyberspace': The performance of gender, class, and race online." *Symbolic Interaction* 21, no. 2: 129-153.

Week 2: Foundations in Critical Race Theory and Media

- Omi, Michael, and Howard Winant. 1994. *Racial formation in the United States*. New York: Routledge.

- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.
- hooks, bell. 1992. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston: South End Press.
- Shohat, Ella and Robert Stam. 1994. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, Stuart. 1997. *Representation: Cultural representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage.
- Entman, Robert, and Andrew Rojecki. 2001. *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gray, Herman. 2004. *Watching Race: Television and the Struggle for Blackness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Week 3: The Power of Technology and Infrastructure

- Coleman, Beth. 2009. "Race as Technology." *Camera Obscura* 24, no. 170: 177-207.
- Christian, Barbara. 1987. "The Race for Theory." *Cultural Critique* 6: 51-63.
- Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong. 2009. "Race and/as Technology, or How to Do Things to Race." *Camera Obscura* 24, no. 1: 7-34.
- Duarte, Marisa Elena. 2017. *Network Sovereignty: Building the Internet Across Indian Country*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- McPherson, Tara. 2012. "U.S. Operating Systems at Mid-Century: The Intertwining of Race and UNIX." In *Race After the Internet*,

edited by Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow-White, 21-37. New York: Routledge Press.

- Aouragh, Miriam. and Chakravartty, Paula. (2017) "[Infrastructures of Empire: Towards a Critical Geopolitics of Media and Information Studies.](#)" *Media, Culture and Society*, 38 (4): 559-574.

Week 4: Bias in Algorithms, Interface, and Design

- Friedman, Batya, and Helen Nissenbaum. 1996. "[Bias in computer systems.](#)" *ACM Transactions on Information Systems* 14, no. 3: 330-347.
- Keeling, Kara. 2014. "[Queer OS.](#)" *Cinema Journal* 53, no. 2: 152-157.
- Sweeney, Miriam. 2016. "[The Ms. Dewey 'Experience': Technoculture, gender, and race.](#)" In *Digital Sociologies*, edited by Jessie Daniels, Karen Gregory and Tressie McMillan Cottom, 401-420. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Boyd, danah. 2012. "[White Flight in Networked Publics?: How Race and Class Shaped American Teen Engagement with MySpace and Facebook.](#)" In *Race After the Internet*, edited by Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow-White, 203-222. New York: Routledge Press.
- Broussard, Meredith. 2018. [Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World.](#) Boston: MIT Press.
- Korn, Jenny Ungbha. 2018. "[Equitable Cities Instead of Smart Cities: Race and Racism Within The Race For Smart Cities.](#)" *Journal of Civic Media* 1, no. 1: 34-45.
- Noble, Safiya Umoja. 2018. [Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism.](#) New York: New York University Press.

- McIlwain, Charlton. 2017. "Racial formation, inequality and the political economy of web traffic". *Information, Communication, and Society* 20, no. 7: 1073-1089.

Week 5: Digital Methodologies and the Collection of Racial Data

- Brock, Andre. 2016. "Critical technocultural discourse analysis." *New Media & Society* 20, no. 3: 1012–1030.
- Bonilla, Yarimar and Max Hantel. 2016. "Visualizing Sovereignty: Cartographic Queries for the Digital Age." *sx:archipelagos* 1, no. 1.
- Chow-White, Peter. 2012. "Genomic Databases and an Emerging Digital Divide in Biotechnology." In *Race After the Internet*, edited by Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow-White, 291-309. New York: Routledge Press.
- Sutherland, Tonia. 2017. "Making a Killing: On Race, Ritual, and (Re)Membering in Digital Culture." *Preservation, Digital Technology and Culture* 46, no. 1: 32-40.
- Williams, Stacie M. and Jarrett M. Drake. 2017. "Power to the People: Documenting Police Violence in Cleveland." *Critical Archival Studies* 1, no. 2: 1-27.
- Benjamin, Ruha. 2016. "Racial Fictions, Biological Facts: Expanding the Sociological Imagination through Speculative Methods." *Catalyst* 2(2).

Week 6: Critical Race Approaches to Digital Humanities

- Bailey, Moya Z. 2011. "All the Digital Humanists Are White, All the Nerds Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave." *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, no. 1
- McPherson, Tara. 2012. "Why Are the Digital Humanities So White? or Thinking the Histories of Race and Computation." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, edited by Matthew K. Gold, 139-160. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lopez, Lori Kido and Konrad Ng. 2016. "Building Digital Bridges: Digital Humanities and the Transformation of Asian American Studies," In *The Routledge Handbook of Asian American Studies*, edited by Cindy I-Fen Chen, 305-317. New York: Routledge.
- Bailey, Moya. 2015. "#transform(ing) DH Writing and Research: An Autoethnography of Digital Humanities and Feminist Ethics." *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly* 9, no. 2.

Week 7: Bringing in Intersectional Approaches to Race, Gender, and Sexuality Online

- Noble, Safiya Umoja and Brendesha Tynes. 2016. *The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Class and Culture Online*. New York: Peter Lang
- Korn, Jenny Ungbha. 2017. "Expecting penises in Chatroulette: Race, gender, and sexuality in anonymous online spaces." *Popular Communication* 15, no. 2: 95-109.
- McGlotten, Shaka. 2016. "Black Data." In *No Tea, No Shade: New Writings in Black Queer Studies*, edited by E. Patrick Johnson. Durham: Duke University Press.

- McGlotten, Shaka. 2013. *Virtual Intimacies: Media, Affect, and Queer Sociality*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Magnet, Shoshana. 2011. *When Biometrics Fail: Gender, Race, and the Technology of Identity*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 8: Activism and the Politics of Digital Difference

- Nelson, Alondra. 2016. *The Social Life of DNA: Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation after the Genome*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Bonilla, Yarimar and Rosa, Jonathan. 2015. “#Ferguson: digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States.” *American Ethnologist* 42, no. 1: 4–17.
- Cho, Alexander. 2018. “Disruptive Joy: #BlackOutDay’s Affirmative Resonances.” In *A Networked Self and Love*. Ed. Papacharissi, Zizi. New York: Routledge. pp. 189-201.
- Jackson, Sarah J. and Foucault Welles, Brooke. 2015. “Hijacking #myNYPD: Social Media Dissent and Networked Counterpublics.” *Journal of Communication* 65, no. 6: 932-952.
- Korn, Jenny Ungbha. 2015. “#FuckProp8: How Temporary Virtual Communities Around Politics and Sexuality Pop Up, Come Out, Provide Support, and Taper Off.” In *Hashtag Publics: The Power and Politics of Discursive Networks*, edited by Nathan Rambukkana, 127-138. New York: Peter Lang.
- Lindsey, Treva. 2015. “Post-Ferguson: A ‘Herstorical’ Approach to Black Viability.” *Feminist Studies* 41, no. 1: 232-237
- Martineau, Jarrett. 2015. “Rhythms of Change: Indigenous Resurgence, Technology and the Idle No More Movement” in *More*

Will Sing Their Way to Freedom: Indigenous Resistance and Resurgence.

Week 9: Conversation and Networks on Twitter

- Brock, Andre. 2012. "From the Blackhand Side: Twitter as a Cultural Conversation." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 56, no. 4: 529–549.
- Clark, Meredith. 2015. "Black Twitter: Building Connection through Cultural Conversation." In *Hashtag Publics: The Power and Politics of Discursive Networks*, edited by Nathan Rambukkana, 205-217. New York: Peter Lang.
- Florini, Sarah. 2014. "Tweets, Tweeps, and Signifyin': Communication and Cultural Performance on 'Black Twitter'." *Television and New Media* 15, no. 3: 223-37.
- Maragh, Raven. 2016. "Our Struggles are Unequal": Black Women's Affective Labor Between Television and Twitter." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 40, no. 4: 351-369.
- Jackson, Sarah. 2016. "(Re)Imagining Intersectional Democracy from Black Feminism to Hashtag Activism." *Women's Studies in Communication* 39, no. 4: 375-379.
- Kuo, Rachel. 2016. "Racial Justice Activist Hashtags: Counterpublics and Discourse Circulation." *New Media and Society* 20, no. 2: 495-514.
- Sharma, Sanjay. 2013. "Black Twitter? Racial Hashtags, Networks and Contagion." *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics* 78 (1): 46–64.

Week 10: The Labor of Blogging as a Person of Color

- Lopez, Lori. 2014. "Blogging while Angry: The Sustainability of Emotional Labor in the Asian American Blogosphere." *Media, Culture & Society* 36, no. 4: 421-436.
- Pham, Minh-Ha T. 2015. *Asians Wear Clothes on the Internet: Race, Gender, and the Work of Personal Style Blogging*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Steele, Catherine Knight. 2018. "Black Bloggers and their Varied Publics: The Everyday Politics of Black Discourse Online." *Television and New Media* 19, no. 2: 112-127.
- Brock, André, Kvasny, Lynette, Hales, Kayla. 2010. "Cultural Appropriations of Technical Capital: Black Women, Weblogs, and the Digital Divide." *Information, Communication & Society* 13, no. 7: 1040–59.
- Cho, Alexander. 2017. "Default publicness: Queer youth of color, social media, and being outed by the machine." *New Media and Society* 20, no. 9: 3183-3200.

Week 11: Remediating Video through YouTube, Netflix and Digital Television

- Christian, Aymar Jean. 2017. "The Value of Representation: Toward a Critique of Networked Television Performance." *International Journal of Communication*, 11: 1552–1574
- Day, Faithe and Aymar Jean Christian. 2017. "Locating Black Queer TV: Fans, Producers, and Networked Publics on YouTube."

Transformative Works and Cultures no. 24.

- Havens, Tim. 2017. "The Algorithmic Audience and African American Media Cultures." *FlowTV*.
- Rodriguez, Vittoria and Mary Beltran. 2016. "From the Bronze Screen to the Computer Screen: Latina/o Web Series and Independent Production." In *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Media*, edited by Maria Elena Cepeda, Dolores Inés Casillas, 156-170. New York: Routledge.
- Zimmerman, Arely. 2016. "Transmedia Testimonio: Examining Undocumented Youth's Political Activism in the Digital Age." *International Journal of Communication* 10: 1886-1906.

Week 12: Embodiment and Interaction in Video Games

- Nakamura, Lisa. 2009. "Don't Hate the Player, Hate the Game: The Racialization of Labor in World of Warcraft." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 2, no. 2: 128-144.
- Higgin, Tanner. 2009. "Blackless Fantasy: The Disappearance of Race in Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games." *Games and Culture* 4, no. 1: 3-26.
- Gray, Kishonna. 2012. "Deviant bodies, stigmatized identities, and racist acts: examining the experiences of African-American gamers in Xbox Live." *New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia* 18, no. 4: 261-276.
- Gray, Kishonna. 2012. "Intersecting Oppressions and Online Communities." *Information, Communication and Society* 15, no. 3: 411-428.

- Behm-Morawitz, Elizabeth and David Ta. 2014. "Cultivating Virtual Stereotypes?: The Impact of Video Game Play on Racial/Ethnic Stereotypes." *Howard Journal of Communications* 25, no. 1: 1–15.
- Shaw, Adrienne. 2012. "Do you identify as a gamer? Gender, race, sexuality, and gamer identity." *New Media & Society* 14, no. 1: 28–44.
- LaPensée, Elizabeth. 2017. *Thunderbird Strike*. (Game)

Week 13: Diaspora and Minoritized Populations Across the Globe

- Amrute, Sareeta. 2016. *Encoding Race, Encoding Class: Indian IT workers in Berlin*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Lee, S. Heijin Lee. 2016. "Beauty Between Empires: Global Feminism, Plastic Surgery, and the Trouble with Self- Esteem." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*. 37(1): 1-31.
- Royston, Reginold. 2017. "At Home, Online: Affective Exchange and the Diasporic Body in Ghanaian Internet Video." In *Migrating the Black Body: Visual Culture and Diaspora*. Raphael-Fernandez, H. and L. Raiford eds. Seattle: University of Washington Press
- Mallapragada, Madhavi. 2014. *Virtual Homelands: Indian Immigrants and Online Cultures in the United States*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Jacobs, Katrien. 2012. *People's Pornography: Sex and Surveillance on the Chinese Internet*. Intellect.

