We meet on Tuesdays, 3-5:40PM. Complete assignments as scheduled below, and prepare to participate in lively conversations of same. You’ll also arrange to complete your placement assignments at one of three local high schools--Hermitage, Huguenot, or Manchester, but possibly at an alternative selected by Dean Soderlund. Classes will start at your sites after Labor Day. Whether you’re working with special needs youngsters, AP and IB courses, ESL programs, or guidance counselors, your challenge at each site is to be useful but also to experience at street level, so to speak, the ways student and faculty colleagues are coping with scarce resources, demographic changes, cultural differences, and the need to increase access to higher education. You’ll be checking The Economist regularly (with links to the contents on the class website). The point here is to see how folks, institutions, and territories other than those you’ll meet in your assignments or at placement sites are formulating and addressing related problems--cultural assimilation, refugees, racial and ethnic diversity, educational improvements, and the establishment and maintenance of a just and civil society.

Requirements and grading: You’ll write three position papers, 2+/- typescript, double-spaced pages each. At least one--but no more than two--should be submitted by Spring Break. Each paper will express and relate your positions on two of three components of this course, namely, (1) reading assignments / class discussions of same; (2) experiences and observations at your placement sites; (3) developments reported in The Economist.

Grades on those papers will count as 30% of the final grade (10% each); only hard copy submissions--and, yes, grammar and syntax are important, as they’ll be on your position paper on perception (see the calendar below, Sept 15), which counts 15%. A late fee of 5% per day will be assessed. The final examination, scheduled by the university, counts 40%. 15% of the final grade for the course will reflect your lively, participation at your placement sites.

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BOOKS (available at the student book store)

Susan Sontag, REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS

J.M. Coetzee, WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS
Mai Ngai, IMPOSSIBLE SUBJECTS; ILLEGAL ALIENS AND THE MAKING OF MODERN AMERICA

Beverly Tatum, WHY ARE ALL THE BLACK KIDS SITTING TOGETHER IN THE CAFETERIA?

Paul Cuadros, A HOME ON THE FIELD

Assigned articles listed below are available on the UR library’s e-reserve. You can link to them directly or from the course page where you’ll find articles from THE ECONOMIST along with other links to assignments.

The what-and-when of it all (please note--and reserve Sunday October 18th, 3-4:15PM for an added session, our conversation with Media expert / political scientist Ruth Capriles of Caracas on Hugo Chavez AND Sunday November 22nd, 3-4:15PM, our discussion with journalist Paul Cuadros, author of our assigned text that week--this session replaces the scheduled class just before thanksgiving, November 24, which will let you flee early for turkey.)

August 25 -- welcome; what’s ahead-- and a discussion with Al Sharpton and Barak Obama on race in America.

September 1 -- Please read Sontag’s REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS and visit the websites, www.janetjarman.com (click on “Dream of the Rich North” and “Mexico Issues” to view her photographs) and www.andreabruce.com (click on “Iraq” and, from there, “Iraq Scars”).

September 7-11 Placements at Huguenot, Hermitage, and Manchester High Schools begin this week--contacts and orientations will be provided. You are responsible for carpooling arrangements.

September 8 -- Please read Peter Sacks’ “A Dangerous Man” copied into e-reserves from his book, TEARING DOWN THE GATES (pp. 195-224).

September 2-15, You’ll be reading--in addition to the Sacks chapter--Coetzees novel, WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS. ALSO watch the film, DRY WHITE SEASON along with ONE--only ONE--of the following three films: CRASH, GRAN TORINO, and THE VISITOR (all on reserve).

September 15 -- Discussion of your papers on perception, due today, accompanied by a 3-4 sentence abstract, please. The papers should run 4-6 double-spaced pages in length, insightful, well-crafted pages comparing the novel with its unnamed barbarians and its
ambiguity (?) about villainy to the films. How do the impresarios, actors, directors, screenwriters, novelist play with your perceptions of difference and bias?

September 22 -- Read Ngai’s IMPOSSIBLE SUBJECTS, pp. 1-90 and Philip Gleason’s article, “The Odd Couple: Pluralism and Assimilation.”

September 29 -- Read Ngai’s IMPOSSIBLE SUBJECTS, pp. 127-166 and Samuel Huntington’s “The Hispanic Challenge.”

October 6 -- Read Ngai, IMPOSSIBLE SUBJECTS, pp. 202-270 and George Lakoff and Sam Ferguson, “The Framing of Immigration.”

October 18 -- 3-4:15: Conversation with Ruth Capriles. Please read Riordan Roett and Francisco Gonzalez, “The Role of High Stakes Politics”

October 20 -- Class discussion of “High Stakes Politics.”

October 27 -- Please read Tatum’s CAFETERIA, pp. 3-28; James Barrett and David Roediger, “Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality, and the New Immigrant Working Class,” and Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”


November 3 -- Please finish Tatum’s CAFETERIA.

November 10 -- Prepare for today’s discussion of Affirmative Action in higher education by googling “Bakke” to get to Wikipedia’s summation of Allan Bakke’s complaints--and by reading Justice Marshall’s dissent from the Supreme Court’s decision in Regents of the University of California v Bakke,


November 22 -- Discussion with Paul Cuadros; please read Cuadros, A HOME ON THE FIELD. 3-4:15PM, Sunday, 11/22. No class 11/24.

December 1 -- pp. 33-44, Tracy Kidder’s MOUNTAINS BEYOND MOUNTAINS will be on reserve--your last assignment.