

Philosophy and Race (Fall 2012)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For much of American history, black Americans were treated very poorly relative to white Americans. The effects of this treatment are ongoing today. This empirical claim will serve as a point of departure for the philosophically interesting issues that we will cover in this class. We will discuss five contentious issues pertaining to race in public policy. These issues are slave reparations, the policy of affirmative action, the practice of racial profiling, hate speech laws, and hate crime laws. Rather than focusing on the legality of these policies, we will be concerned with their moral permissibility. We will investigate whether, morally speaking, each of these policies is permissible, impermissible, or obligatory.

REQUIRED READING

Should Race Matter? Unusual Answers to the Usual Questions, David Boonin (2011). Other readings are located on the course website as pdf files.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (8/27-8/31)

Mon., 8/27: Introduction and Overview

Unit 1: What is race?

Wed., 8/29: Taylor, "Three Challenges to Race Thinking"

Fri., 8/31: Haslanger, "Gender and Race: (What) are they? (What) Do We Want Them To be?"

Week 2 (9/3-9/7)

Mon., 9/3: Labor Day

Unit 2: Reparations for slavery

Wed., 9/5: Boonin, pp. 1-23

[Blacks and Hispanics Hit Hard by the Recession](#) (NY Times)

The Unjust Enrichment Argument:

Fri., 9/7: [Randall Robinson, "America's Debt to Blacks" \(2000\)](#)

Boonin, pp. 24-33

[Wilton D. Alston and Walter E. Block, "Reparations, Once Again" \(2008\)](#)
(Optional)

Week 3 (9/10-9/14)

Mon., 9/10: Boonin, pp. 33-41

[David Horowitz, "Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Blacks is a Bad Idea for Blacks - and Racist Too" \(2001\) \(reason 2\)](#)

The Compensation Argument:

Wed., 9/12: Boonin pp. 41-61

Horowitz (reasons 1-4)

Fri., 9/14: Horowitz (reasons 6 and 8)

Boonin, pp. 77-94

Week 4 (9/17-9/21)

The Non-identity Problem for the reparations position:

Mon., 9/17: Boonin, pp. 106-112

Wed., 9/19: David Boonin, "How to Solve the Non-identity problem" (2007)

Fri., 9/21: Harman, "Can We Harm and Benefit by creating?" (2004) (sections 1 and 2)

Week 5 (9/24-9/28)

Mon., 9/24: The Welfare Argument

Boonin pp. 123-134

Unit 3: Affirmative Action

Wed., 9/26: Background

[Robert Fullinwider, "Affirmative Action" \(2001; revised 2005\)](#) (Sections 1 and 2)

Summary of Duflo et al, "[Leading by Example: The presence of female politicians boosts aspirations, educational achievement of young women](#)"

Boonin, pp. 135-146

Fri., 9/28: (The unfair disadvantage argument):

Kenneth Einar Himma, "Discrimination and Disidentification: The Fair-Start Defense of Affirmative Action" (2001)

Boonin, pp. 146-155

Week 6 (10/1-10/5)

Mon., 10/1: (The compensation argument):

Valls, A. "The Libertarian Case for Affirmative Action" (1999) (Gale)

Boonin pp. 155-160

Wed., 10/3: (The appeal to diversity):

Joseph LeFevre, "The Value of Diversity: A Justification of Affirmative Action" (2003) (Wiley InterScience)

Boonin, pp. 160-164

Fri., 10/5: (Bias-elimination and race as a qualification): Boonin, pp. 166-174

Week 7 (10/8-10/12)

Mon., 10/8: (The right to be judged on one's individual merits):

[Louis Pojman, "The Case Against Affirmative Action" \(1998\)](#) (Section II, pp. 20-28).

Boonin, pp. 175-179

Wed., 10/10: (The right to equal treatment):

[Cohen, "Preference by Race in University Admissions and the Quest for Diversity"](#)

Boonin, pp. 179-188

Fri., 10/12: (Reverse Discrimination):

Lisa Newton, "Reverse Discrimination as Unjustified" (1973)

Boonin, pp. 191-194

Hand out paper topics and discuss how to write a philosophy paper

Week 8 (10/15-10/19)

Mon., 10/15: (Further objections to affirmative action):

Boonin, pp. 188-191 and pp. 194-203

Wed., 10/17: Open/catch-up

Unit 4: Hate Speech Restrictions

Fri., 10/19: Boonin, pp. 203-217

[Kevin Boyle, "Hate Speech -- The United States Versus the Rest of the World?" \(2001\)](#)

Optional: [First Amendment Center, "Hate Speech and Campus Speech Codes"](#)

Week 9 (10/22-10/26)

Mon., 10/22: Boonin, pp. 217-225

Wed., 10/24: Boonin, pp. 226-236

Fri., 10/26: Boonin, pp. 236-249

First paper due

Week 10 (10/29-11/2)

Mon., 10/29: Altman, "Liberalism and Campus Hate Speech: A philosophical Examination" (1993)

Wed., 10/31: Open/ catch up

Unit 5: Hate Crime Laws

Fri., 11/2: [Anti-Defamation League, "Hate Crime Laws"](#)

Boonin, pp. 250-256

Week 11 (11/5-11/9)

Mon., 11/5: Christopher Heath Wellman, "A Defense of Stiffer Penalties for Hate Crimes" (2006)

Wed., 11/7: Susan Gellman, "Hate Crime Laws Are Thought Crime Laws" (1992/3) (HeinOnline)

Boonin, pp. 256-273

Topic suggestion and reading for that topic due today

Fri., 11/9: Claudia Card, "Is Penalty Enhancement a Sound Idea?" (2001)

Boonin, pp. 274-283

Hand out topics for paper #2

Week 12 (11/12-11/16)

Mon., 11/12: [Heidi M. Hurd, "Why Liberals Should Hate 'Hate Crime Legislation' "](#) (2001)

Boonin, pp. 283-287

Wed., 11/14 (Further objections): Boonin, pp. 287-299

Fri., 11/16: Open/catch up

Fall/Thanksgiving Break: November 19th-23rd

Week 13 (11/26-11/39)

Unit 6: Racial Profiling

Mon., 11/26: [Department of Justice, "Fact Sheet: Racial Profiling"](#) (2003)

[Heather Mac Donald, The Myth of Racial Profiling"](#) (2001)

The Rationality of Racial Profiling:

Wed., 11/28: Boonin, pp. 300-309

Fri., 11/30: Boonin, pp. 310-326

Week 14 (12/3-12/7)

The Morality of Racial Profiling:

Mon., 12/3: Tracey Maclin, "Fourth Amendment on the Freeway," (2001) (read pp. 117-30)

Boonin, pp. 327-333

Wed., 12/5: [Dinesh D'Souza, "When Discrimination Makes Sense" \(1999\)](#)

Boonin, pp. 333-337

Fri., 12/7 (further objections): Boonin, pp. 337-350

Week 15 (12/10-12/14)

Mon., 12/10: Guest lecture by David Boonin

Second paper due

Wed., 12/12: Class-chosen topic

Fri., 12/14: Review for Final Exam

Final Exam: December 18th 7:30-10:00 PM
