

First Year Seminar  
Comics and Social Diversity: Black Panther  
Fall 2019  
Meredith 236  
TTH 12:30-1:45  
Dr. Jeff Karnicky

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271-2135

316 Howard Hall

Office Hours: T 11:00-12:15; W 11:30-1:00; TH 8:15-9:15; 11:00-12:15

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- UNDERSTAND THE HISTORY OF COMICS AS IT RELATES TO RACE, ETHNICITY, CLASS, GENDER, NATION, AND OTHER FORMS OF IDENTITY
- BECOME CLOSE READERS OF COMICS
- USE RESEARCH TO SUPPORT AND INFORM YOUR WRITING
- ENGAGE IN CLASS DISCUSSION IN A FOCUSED, SERIOUS MANNER
- EXAMINE THE RACIAL AND GENDERED STEREOTYPES THAT MID-20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY COMICS EMPLOYED, AND THINK ABOUT HOW THESE COMPARE TO CONTEMPORARY COMICS
- THINK ABOUT THE WAYS COMICS HAVE ENGAGED SOCIAL ISSUES AND INSTIGATED FOR CHANGES IN SOCIAL NORMS
- EXAMINE HOW THE COMICS INDUSTRY HAS BECOME MORE DIVERSE IN ITS CREATORS AND ITS AUDIENCE, AND THINK ABOUT HOW THIS AFFECTS THE PRODUCTION OF COMICS

#### Required Texts

Christopher Priest, *Black Panther: The Complete Collection, Volume 2* (2015, collects *Black Panther* #18-35 1998) ISBN: 0785192670

Reginald Hudlin, *Black Panther: The Complete Collection, Volume 1* (2017, collects *Black Panther* 1-18, 2005, *X-Men* 175-176, 1991) ISBN: 1302907719

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Black Panther: A Nation Under our Feet* (2016, collects *Black Panther* 1-4, *Fantastic Four* (1966) 52) ISBN: 1302900536

Nnedi Okorafor, *Wakanda Forever* (2018) ISBN: 1302913581

#### Course Policies

Attendance is required. Missing a significant number of classes will detrimentally affect your final grade. Doing non-class related things in class—including, but not limited to, surfing the web, texting, tweeting, snapchatting, instagramming, reading other texts, doing other work, writing in your daily planner, sleeping, nodding off—will also have grade-related consequences. Please remember that English classes are small, and it is obvious to the professor and your classmates when you are present in body but not in mind.

Participation is required. I will do my best to facilitate discussion, and I expect that all students enrolled in the class will do their best to actively participate in class discussion. If you are not willing to participate in class discussion, this class may not be for you. In order to be prepared for class discussion, you must do the assigned readings.

The College of Arts and Sciences' "Academic Dishonest Policy" can be found here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/studentresources/policiesandregulations/>

Here is their definition of "academic dishonesty."

"Academic dishonesty is an all encompassing term involving any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism - The misrepresentation, either by intent or negligence, of another's ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one's own.

Cheating - the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations.

Fabrication - intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic sense in any academic exercise.

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty - intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty."

Any suspected case of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to the College's procedures and penalties, which can be found on the website linked above.

Michelle Laughlin ([michelle.laughlin@drake.edu](mailto:michelle.laughlin@drake.edu), 271-1835) is Drake's Student Disability Services Coordinator. If you have a disability and will require academic accommodations in this course, please let me know. Accommodations are coordinated through Student Disability Services.

## **Assignments and Grades**

### *Assignments*

### Research Assignment Presentation

Research a Marvel comic character who has appeared in a comic with Black Panther. (Note: Nearly every Marvel character, from the Avengers to the X-Men, has appeared alongside Black Panther.) Your research should focus on this character's role in the Black Panther universe. You will then do a 10-minute in class presentation (using PowerPoint or some other visual aid) on your findings.

You should talk about some of the following, depending on what is most relevant.

- What is this character's history? When did the character first appear?
- Who has written and drawn this character?
- How has this character changed over the years?
- What are some different versions of this character?
- What social issues has this character addressed?

After discussing the above questions, you should develop an argument that answers the following.

- What does this character say to you about social and cultural values? Why is this character interesting to you? Why should we care about this character?

You can earn 0-10 points for your research presentation.

### Research Assignment Essay

For the end of the semester, you will turn your research presentation into an essay of at least 1200 words. You should focus your essay with a thesis statement. That is, you should make a claim about how you see your character relating to a specific social and/or cultural value. Your essay should be organized coherently and clearly written. You should use and cite sources correctly. You can earn 0-25points for your research assignment essay.

### Discussion leader for Comics

Twice during the semester, you will lead 10-minutes of class discussion on a specific aspect of a comic we are reading. You will sign up for these assignments during the first week of classes. You can earn 0-5 points for each discussion leader assignment.

### Close Reading Essays

You will write a 500-word close reading for each comic collection we read. I will give you a prompt for each book. Detailed assignment sheets will be given for each essay. You can earn 0-10 points for each essay,

### Participation on discussion boards and in class

Class participation is expected of all students. We will have full class discussions, small group discussions, and do other in class activities. I will ask you questions and have you ask questions about our readings. I will occasionally ask you to post a short response or a question to the discussion board. You are also expected to be prepared to talk about your discussion board posts. In order to participate in class discussion, you should do the reading and pay active attention in class. You can earn one participation point each week of class, up to a total of 15 points.

### *Grading*

Research Assignment Presentation: 0-10 points

Research Assignment Essay: 0-25 points

Discussion leaders for comics 1: 0-5 points

Discussion leaders for comics 2: 0-5 points

Close reading Essay 1: 0-10 points

Close reading Essay 2: 0-10 points

Close reading Essay 3: 0-10 points

Close reading Essay 4: 0-10 points

Participation on discussion board and in class: 0-15 points

You can earn up to 100 points. Your final grade will correlate to points earned.

A: 93-100 points

A-: 92-90 points

B+: 87-89 points

B: 83-86 points

B-: 80-82 points

C+: 77-79 points

C: 73-76 points

C-: 70-72 points

D+: 67-69 points

D: 63-66 points

D-: 60-62 points

F: 0-59 points

### *Assignment Submission*

Please submit your assignments by email to me: [jeff.karnicky@drake.edu](mailto:jeff.karnicky@drake.edu). Submit your assignments as an attachment, preferably as a Microsoft Word document. (If you don't use Word, be sure to submit your paper as a readable document, such as an .rtf, .pdf, or .html document.) **Please use your last name as the first word of your document title**; if your name is Joe Jones, your attachment should be named "Jones.docx" (or "Jonespaper1.docx" or something similar, as long as "Jones" is the first word. This makes filing and grading much easier for me.) Papers should be emailed before the class period in which they are due. I will email students whose papers I have not received.

## Course Schedule

Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class

Aug 27	Course introduction; look at <a href="https://www.marvel.com/characters/black-panther-t-challa/in-comics">https://www.marvel.com/characters/black-panther-t-challa/in-comics</a>
Aug 29	Read "What's in a Page? Close Reading Comics," from Karin Kukkonen <i>Studying Comics and Graphic Novels</i>
Sep 3	Read <i>Fantastic Four</i> #52 (in <i>Black Panther: A Nation under our Feet</i> )
Sep 5	Lund, "Introducing the Sensational Black Panther," Hudson, "It's Time to Get Real"
Sep 10	Meet in Cowles Library
Sep 12	Adilifu, chapter 2 from <i>Super Black</i>
Sep 17	Priest 26
Sept 19	Priest 27
Sep 24	Priest 28, 29
Sep 26	Priest 30
Oct 1	Presentations 1-6; <b>Close reading #1 due</b>
Oct 3	Hudlin 1-3
Oct 8	Hudlin 4-6
Oct 10	Hudlin 14-15
Oct 15	No Class—Fall Break
Oct 17	Presentations 7-12
Oct 22	Hudlin 16-18
Oct 24	"Negotiating Life Spaces: Has Marriage Marginalized Storm?," <b>close reading #2 due</b>
Oct 29	Adilifu, chapter 4 from <i>Super Black</i> ; Coates 1
Oct 31	Coates 2-3
Nov 5	Coates 4
Nov 7	Presentations 13-16; <b>close reading #3 due</b>
Nov 12	Okorafor 1
Nov 14	Okorafor 2
Nov 19	Okorafor 3-4
Nov 21	Presentations 17-20
Nov 26	Okorafor 5
Nov 28	No Class—Thanksgiving Break
Dec 3	Presentations extra day; class wrap up; <b>close reading #4 due</b>
Dec 5	<b>Final Essay due</b>