

**IML 295: Race, Class + Gender in Digital Culture (37418)**  
**Spring 2018 | 4 units | SCIL105**  
**Thursday, 4:00 – 6:50 pm**

Professor: Vicki Callahan  
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Office: SCI Building 101G  
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:00 -1:00 pm, Wednesday 3:00 – 4:00 pm

Teaching Assistant: Noa Kaplan

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

IML 295: Race, Class and Gender in Digital Culture, we explore the complex issues of race, class and gender in digital culture within the United States and the global community. In particular, we will examine the differences between structural power differentials and individual experience, questioning the ways in which digital media serve to complicate, diversify, deconstruct and recreate cultural and social boundaries in the understanding of difference, as well as how concepts of race, class and gender are embodied in digital technologies. While our explorations will go through the genres of sci-fi and design fiction, we understand that you can only imagine the future once you have understood the histories, visible and hidden, that shape our present worldviews. To write history is to inscribe the possibilities for today and tomorrow so as we explore contemporary issues of race, class, and gender, we look for fissures and gaps in the storyline that will foster an equitable future. We will explore these issues using the registers of word, sound, and image, creating multimedia projects in groups and individually.

## **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

**Available at USC bookstore or at online vendors via e-book or paper/hardback**

*Future Texts: Subversive Performance and Feminist Bodies*, Callahan + Kuhn, Parlor Press, 2016.

*Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation* by Damian Duffy and John Jennings, Abrams Comic Art, 2017

*Students will be required to do some online viewing, most are available free but a few will require streaming from Amazon.*

## **Grading Breakdown:**

**10% Peer Review of Colleagues' Work**

**20% Posts, Presence, and Participation**

**60% 3 Projects: 20% each**

**10% Final Reflection**



## **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION POLICY**

No late work is accepted beyond the stated deadlines unless there is a documented excuse.

**Attendance and Participation:** This class depends on group work and community building, which makes your attendance vital. Come to class. If you must miss a class, please notify your teaching staff via email (with IML295 in the subject line) and be sure to get any notes and assignments from a colleague. This allows us (your professor and TA) to engage with you intellectually rather than logistically. Please exchange contact information with at least two other students. We also cover subject matter that is often provocative, and can challenge our worldviews. Thus, while lively debate is encouraged and all points of view are welcome, you will be expected to be back your claims with evidence and to maintain respect for your interlocutors.

**Online, In-Class Etiquette/Presence:** It is very important that our class time is quality time and that you are an engaged presence so we can work as a focused collaborative unit. While we often work online as part of our class, we will have policy a no laptop or mobile phone use unless for class assigned purpose. Do not use any online time in class for personal communication not related to class – no messaging, mail, Facebook updates, cell phones etc. If for some reason you feel some urgent need to do this or have an emergency message (this includes calls), please step out of the classroom.

**Statement on Fair Use:** Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. MA+P projects are produced with fair use doctrines in mind using its four pillars: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. Generally speaking, this means you must only use as much of a copyrighted work as is necessary to make your point, and you must cite your sources accordingly.

**Citation Guidelines:** We assert that work produced in MA+P classes is covered under the Doctrine of Fair Use. In order to make this claim, however, all projects must include academically appropriate citations in the form of a References section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The References section is either included in the project itself or as a separate document, as appropriate. We follow the *Kairos Journal of Rhetoric, Technology and Pedagogy* style guide <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/styleguide.html> for citation purposes; Kairos uses a modified APA format, whose general guidelines and specific examples may be found here: <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/styleguide.html#apa>

## **Course Schedule**

**Please note: schedule is subject to change; please see wiki for latest schedule**

**Week 1: Jan 11: Introduction to class**

In Class:

View: *Get Me Roger Stone*, 2017

**For Week 2:**

**Read:**

Jason Steinhauer, "Of Fake News and Fake History" *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, June 22, 2017. <https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/06/fake-news-fakehistory/>

Michael Lissack, "What if it is all FAKE":

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-if-it-is-all-fake\\_us\\_5a4ba2d9e4b0df0de8b06d06](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-if-it-is-all-fake_us_5a4ba2d9e4b0df0de8b06d06)

**View:**

"Confederacy: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver":

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5b\\_-TZwQ0I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5b_-TZwQ0I)

Meet Tarana Burke, Activist Who Started MeToo Conversation on Sexual Assault":

[https://www.democracynow.org/2017/10/17/meet\\_tarana\\_burke\\_the\\_activist\\_who](https://www.democracynow.org/2017/10/17/meet_tarana_burke_the_activist_who)

**Week 2: Jan 18: Sci-Fi and Social Commentary**

In class viewing : "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street" (Twilight Zone episode):  
"Arkangel" (*Black Mirror*, Season 4)

**For week 3**

**Read:**

Beverly Daniel Tatum, "The Complexity of Identity: Who am I?" and  
Gwyn Kirk and Margo Kazawa-Rey: "Identities and Social Locations: Who am I?  
Who Are my People?" (pdf on wiki)

Graham Davey, "Social Media, Loneliness, and Anxiety in Young People,"

*Psychology Today*: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/why-we-worry/201612/social-media-loneliness-and-anxiety-in-young-people>

**View:** Dollhouse, "Man on the Street" (Amazon streaming)

**Week 3: Jan 25: Identity in a Networked World**

In class viewing: *Black Mirror*, "Fifteen Million Merits"

Intro to Project 1 (LAB)

**For week 4**

**Read:**

*Ytasha Womack: Introduction and Chapter 1, Afrofuturism The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture (online reserve)*

Amy Harmon, "Making Friends With a Robot Named Bina48" July 4, 2010:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/05/science/05robotside.html>

Shelleen Greene, "The New Material Girls" (in *Future Texts*)

Octavia Butler (Jennings/Duffy) *Kindred: Prologue and The River*

**View:**

Madonna, "Vogue," <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/05/science/05robotside.html>  
"Express Yourself"

and

"Express Yourself: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsvUzP\\_O\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsvUzP_O_8)

**Week 4: Feb 1: Afro-futurism**

**Guest Shelleen Greene**

In class viewing *Space Traders*, 1994

**For Week 5:**

**Read:**

*Womack, Chapters 2 and 4*

*Callahan, "A Window Seat to History: Erykah Badu's Dealey Plaza Remix*

*Butler Kindred: The Fire*

**View:**

*Erykah Badu, Window Seat*

*Space Is The Place* (Sun Ra, 1974) *Pumzi* (Wanuri Kahiu, 2010)

**Week 5: Feb 8, Afro-futurism's Counter History**

in class viewing: *Get Out* (Jordan Peele, 2017)

**Week 6: Feb 15 Project 1 Due**

**Lab -- Project 2 handout**

*For Week 7:*

**Read:**

*Kindred, The Fall*

*Audre Lorde, The Transformation of Silence into Action*

*And*

*A Litany for Survival*

*Adrienne Rich, Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence*

*Listen: "Houston, Houston, Do You Read"*

[https://archive.org/details/Sci-fiRadio/Sci-fiRadio2021-](https://archive.org/details/Sci-fiRadio/Sci-fiRadio2021-HoustonHoustonDoYouReadByJamesTiptreeakaAliceSheldonplay.mp3)

[HoustonHoustonDoYouReadByJamesTiptreeakaAliceSheldonplay.mp3](https://archive.org/details/Sci-fiRadio/Sci-fiRadio2021-HoustonHoustonDoYouReadByJamesTiptreeakaAliceSheldonplay.mp3)

**Week 7: Feb 22 Lesbian Feminist Futures**

View in Class: *Born in Flames*, (Lizzie Borden, 1983)

**For Week 8**

**Read:**

*Butler, Kindred, The Fight*

*Moira Weigel, We Live in the Reproductive Dystopia of "The Handmaid's Tale,"*

*The New Yorker, April 26, 2017*

**Week 8: March 1 Reproduction and Motherhood**

**Lab**

In class viewing: *Handmaid's Tale*

**For Week 9**

**Read:** *Butler, Kindred: The Storm, the Rope and Epilogue*

**Week 9: March 8 Project 2 Rough Cuts**

Screening: "Things Which Have Never Yet Been Done" and "By Means Which Have Never Yet Been Tried" episodes from *Orphan Black* (2013-present).

**For Week 10:**

**Project 2 final cut**

*And*

**Read:**

*Nettrice Gaskins, Re-creating Niobe (in Future Texts)*

## March 11-18 Spring Break

### Week 10: March 22 Project 2 Due

View in class: HERAdventures

#### Lab – Project 3

**Guest: Elizabeth Galoozis (4 pm)**, Head, Information Literacy, USC Libraries: discussion of Visions & Voices panel [Talking Race: Social Media and Social Justice](#) on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at 7 pm at Doheny Memorial Library

*It is strongly encouraged you attend V+V and extra credit will be given for the event*

#### For Week 11:

##### Read:

“Twine the Video Game Technology for all,

“[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/23/magazine/twine-the-video-game-technology-for-all.html?ref=magazine&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/23/magazine/twine-the-video-game-technology-for-all.html?ref=magazine&_r=1)”

##### View:

*Howling Dogs* by Portenpine Heartscape, <http://slimedaughter.com/games/>

and

*Queers in Love at the End of the World*, Anna Anthropy, <http://www.auntiepixelante.com/games/>

And

*Virginia Kuhn, Sucker Punch and the Aesthetics of Denial (in Future Texts)*

### Week 11: March 29: Interactive Storytelling

Discuss work by Heartscape and Anthropy

View clips from *Sucker Punch*

#### For Week 13:

##### Read:

Joanne Meyerowitz, “How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the US”

Allie Lie, “Passing Realities”

Jamison Green, “Look! No, Don’t! The Invisibility Dilemma for Transsexual Men

Evin Taylor, “Cisgender Privilege: On the Privileges of Performing Normative Gender”

Kai Green, “Navigating Masculinity as a Black Transman”

### Week 12: April 5: Trans-history

Screening: *Transparent*

#### For Week 13,

##### Read:

Micha Cardenas, “Shifting Futures: Digital Trans of Color Praxis” 2015:

<http://scalar.usc.edu/works/shifting-futures-micha-cardenas/the-flicker?path=index>

Francesca Coppa, “Women, *Star Trek*, and the Early Development of Fannish Vidding” (2008).

Nina Bradley, “The Possibilities of Liminality” (Future Texts)

##### View:

“The City on the Edge of Forever” and “Mirror, Mirror” from *Star Trek* (1966-69);

and fanvids “Closer” (T. Jonesy, 2004) and “Us” (Lim, 2007).

### **Week 13: April 12: Trans and Queer of Color Futures**

#### **Lab**

In class Screenings:

“Many Moons” (Janelle Monáe, 2010) and “Prime Time” (Janelle Monáe, 2013)

Rose Troche, *Eliot is Third*, 2013

“The Host” from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987-94) and “Rejoined” from *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-99).

#### **For Week 14:**

#### **Read:**

Cáel Keegan, “Tongues without Bodies: The Wachowskis’ *Sense8*” (2016)  
and

Angela Jones, *Queer Heterotopias: Homonormativity and the Future of Queerness*:  
[http://www.interalia.org.pl/en/artykuly/2009\\_4/13\\_queer\\_heterotopias\\_homonormativity\\_and\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_queerness.htm](http://www.interalia.org.pl/en/artykuly/2009_4/13_queer_heterotopias_homonormativity_and_the_future_of_queerness.htm)

### **Week 14: April 19: Future Kinship Structures**

In class viewing: “What’s Going On” and “Demons” episodes from *Sense8* (2015-present).

**For week 15: Final Project due**

### **Week 15: April 26: Final Project Due**

**Exam Week: Final Reflection due May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30 pm (exam time)**

#### **Additional Course Policies and Resources**

**Statement on Academic Conduct:** Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

**Statement for Students with Disabilities:** Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Emergency Plan:** In the event of an emergency, all attempts will be made to continue MAP courses as usual. If we cannot meet synchronously, we will continue with our asynchronous work. In addition, all course materials are backed up on a

secondary site (usually Blackboard) in the event that the primary wiki site should go down.

**Support Systems:**

*Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class.

<https://equity.usc.edu/>

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

*USC Emergency Information*

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible,

<http://emergency.usc.edu>

*USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.*  
Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>