

## PLAP 4500—The Political Psychology of White Supremacy Spring 2025

Monday 2:00–4:30pm  
Nau Hall 241

**Professor Nicholas Winter**  
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Real office: S385 Gibson Hall  
Zoom “office”: <https://virginia.zoom.us/my/nwinter>

### office hours

Wednesday 12–2pm & by appointment  
(in-person unless you email in advance to arrange Zoom)

This course explores White supremacy in the contemporary United States using the lens of political psychology. We will cover research on group identity, prejudice and stereotyping, and implicit bias. In addition, we will examine the production of White supremacy in politics, society, culture, and history, with focus on interactions between macro-level structural and individual-level psychological forces and the role of power. Throughout the course we will consider ways that White identity and racialized politics intersect with gender and sexuality, and will consider the ways that using a purely individual-level psychological approach to understand race and racism can render White supremacy invisible.

### Syllabus change log

V25.0.0–13JAN2025	Initial syllabus—beta release
V25.1.0–27JAN2025	Updates for 1/27
V25.2.0–31JAN2025	Added missing week to the syllabus (!)

## Course Structure

This class will be primarily synchronous and in-person, but will include some asynchronous activities.

### Asynchronous

**Reading:** Every week. In advance of each class meeting, you are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the material on the syllabus for that date.

**Online discussion:** Prior to most class meetings, we will begin with an asynchronous discussion:

- Each week, **several assigned students** will each post a “QQC” (Quotation, Question, or Comment) about that day’s reading on Canvas. These are due by **midnight on Saturday night**.
- **All students** will then read and reply to each of the day’s QQC’s by **midnight on Sunday night** before class, and read the other replies before class on Monday. This will lay the groundwork for our in-class discussions.
- You should read all of the comments on the week’s thread before class meeting on Monday.

**Midterm exam:** you will complete an open-book, open-note, essay-based midterm exam. You can work on the exam for up to eight hours total (broken into two or three sessions if you like).

**Final research project:** You will write a final paper that connects course material with research you conduct on a topic of your choice. As the term progresses, you will submit and receive feedback on a research proposal and an annotated bibliography/research sources document. I will provide additional information about this project as the term progresses.

### Synchronous

**Class discussion:** We will hold class meetings in person. Most synchronous classes will involve a combination of whole-class discussion, mini-lecture, and small-group discussion.

I do not distinguish “excused” and “unexcused” absences. If something comes up that you cannot attend class, my expectation is that you will contact me in advance if possible, and that you will consult with your peers about what you miss. If something major comes up in your life, let me know!

**UVA Tour:** As detailed below, we will tour UVa Grounds with Prof. Kirt von Daake.

**Visit to UVa Library Special Collections:** As detailed below, we will meet at the Small Special Collections Library for an introduction to the collections.

## Grading

Course grades will be based on the following breakdown:

Asynchronous discussion	15 percent
Synchronous discussion	25 percent
Midterm exam	20 percent
Final paper	40 percent
Proposal	5 percent
Annotated bibliography/sources list	10 percent
Final presentation	5 percent
Final paper	20 percent

I expect work to be submitted on time. If something comes up that prevents that, please contact me as far in advance or as soon afterwards as possible. That said, if something comes up that prevents you from completing an assignment on time, I am happy to work with you.

## Readings

The required books are listed below. All are on order at the UVa bookstore and are of course available from the usual online sellers. Some are available electronically through the library as well. All other materials are on Canvas and/or linked from the syllabus.

Catte, Elizabeth. 2021. *Pure America: Eugenics and the Making of Modern Virginia*. Belt Publishing.

ISBN-13: 978-1953368195

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1953368190>

Hagerman, Margaret A. 2018. *White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America*. New York: New York University Press. ISBN-13: 978-1479802456.

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/147980245X>

**Important note on online resources:** Many linked resources on the syllabus are available because the UVa Library subscribes. If you are not on Grounds, they may not be automatically available when you go to the relevant website. This page has instructions for using EZProxy or either of two UVa VPNs to access these materials: <https://www.library.virginia.edu/services/off-grounds-access/>.

### Quotation, Question, Comment

Most synchronous class meetings will include a prior asynchronous reading based discussion in advance of our class meeting. The reading-based asynchronous discussion will be structured as follows:

- Three or four students will be assigned to submit a Quotation, Question, or Comment (QQC) through the Canvas “Discussion” tool by **11:59pm Saturday before class**.
- Your QQC should begin with a quotation from the reading, a question you would like to discuss, or a comment about the reading. Then you should, in 2-4 paragraphs, explain why you chose it: what did you find interesting, confusing, thought-provoking, etc.
- All students will read the three or four QQCs and reply to each (and/or reply to the replies) by 11:59pm Sunday night.
- All students will read the other replies before class begins at 2pm on Monday.

The syllabus reading schedule indicates which days will have QQC; we may adjust this somewhat as the semester progresses. I will randomly assign students to the classes for which they will complete their QQCs.

## Other Policies

I respect and uphold University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to students with physical, visual, hearing, and other disabilities or impairments; plagiarism; racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, or religious discrimination; and all forms of harassment.

If you have (or suspect you have) a learning or other disability that requires academic accommodations, you must contact the Student Disability Access Center (<https://www.studenthealth.virginia.edu/sdac>) as soon as possible, at least two to three weeks before any assignments are due. I take learning disabilities very seriously and I will make whatever accommodations you need to be successful in this class. However, they must be properly documented by the SDAC and I must have enough notice to make appropriate arrangements. 123

Plagiarism, or academic theft, is passing off someone else's words or ideas as your own without giving proper credit to the source. You are responsible for not plagiarizing and are expected to abide by the University of Virginia Honor Code (see <https://honor.virginia.edu/academic-fraud>).

## Note on Course Content

At times this semester we will read and discuss work that touches on a number of sensitive, controversial, and difficult topics that may be disturbing to some students. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, I'd be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with me individually afterwards, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork.

If you ever feel the need to step away during a class discussion you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the class for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see me individually to discuss the situation.

January 13: Welcome	
Synchronous: 2:00–4:30	
January 20: No class – MLK Holiday	
January 27: No class	
<b>Asynchronous:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read chapter</li> <li>• Watch documentary</li> <li>• Participate in first online discussion on Canvas by Friday 1/31</li> </ul>	<p>Saini, Angela. 2019. “It’s a Small World.” In <i>Superior: The Return of Race Science</i>, Boston: Beacon Press, chapter 2 (25-37).</p> <p>Watch the documentary film, <i>A Dangerous Idea: Eugenics, Genetics, and the American Dream</i>. Available to stream through the UVa Library:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://search.lib.virginia.edu/sources/uva_library/items/u10794894">https://search.lib.virginia.edu/sources/uva_library/items/u10794894</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://docuseek2-com.proxy1.library.virginia.edu/cart/product/1508">https://docuseek2-com.proxy1.library.virginia.edu/cart/product/1508</a></li> </ul> <p>As you read the chapter and watch the documentary, think about these questions and post on Canvas Discussions on at least two of them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What each is saying about the relationships among economic &amp; power relations, science, and politics?</li> <li>2. Were there elements of the story that are new to you? That you’ve heard a million times?</li> <li>3. Were there things you found particularly compelling? Particularly far-fetched?</li> <li>4. What other questions does this raise for you?</li> </ol>

February 3: The invention of “race” and its role in American history	
<b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight  <b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight  <b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm	<p>Salter, Phia S., Glenn Adams, and Michael J. Perez. 2018. “Racism in the Structure of Everyday Worlds: A Cultural-Psychological Perspective.” <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> 27(3): 150–55.</p> <p>Smedley, Audrey. 2007. “The History of the Idea of Race ... And Why It Matters.” Presented at the Conference, “Race, Human Variation and Disease: Consensus and Frontiers,” Warrenton, VA.</p> <p>Brodkin, Karen. 2004. “How Did Jews Become White Folks?” In <i>Off White: Readings on Race, Power, and Society</i>, eds. Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, Linda Powell Pruitt, and April Burns. New York: Routledge, 17–34.</p> <p>King, Desmond S., and Rogers M. Smith. 2005. “Racial Orders in American Political Development.” <i>The American Political Science Review</i> 99(1): 75–92.</p> <p>Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2017. “The First White President.” <i>The Atlantic</i> (October). (Reprinted in <i>We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy</i>. New York: Random House, 341–68.)</p>

February 10: White racial socialization	
<b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight  <b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight  <b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm	<p>Hagerman, Margaret A. 2018. <i>White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America</i>. New York: New York University Press.</p>

February 17: The production and measurement of modern White racism	
<p><b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight</p> <p><b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight</p> <p><b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm</p>	<p>Trawalter, Sophie, D-J Bart-Plange, and Kelly M Hoffman. 2020. “A Socioecological Psychology of Racism: Making Structures and History More Visible.” <i>Current Opinion in Psychology</i> 32: 47–51.</p> <p>Kinder, Donald R., and Lynn M. Sanders. 1996. “Subtle Prejudice for Modern Times.” In <i>Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals</i>, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 92–127.</p> <p>Petrella, Christopher, and Justin Gomer. 2019. “‘Not a Racist Bone in His Body’: The Origins of the Default Defense against Racism.” <i>Washington Post</i>. <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/04/11/not-racist-bone-his-body-origins-default-defense-against-racism/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/04/11/not-racist-bone-his-body-origins-default-defense-against-racism/</a>.</p> <p>Pierce, Jennifer L. 2003. “‘Racing for Innocence’: Whiteness, Corporate Culture, and the Backlash Against Affirmative Action.” <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> 26(1): 53–70.</p>

February 24: Hands-On Historical Research!	
<p><b>Visit to Special Collections:</b> 2:00–3:30pm</p>	<p><i>We will meet at the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library for a session on UVA’s collections relevant to research on white supremacy. There will be time for individual research after the group session.</i></p> <p><b>Reading TBA</b></p>

March 3: The (changing) uses of race in electoral campaigns	
<p><b>QQC:</b> due Sunday 5pm</p> <p><b>QQC response:</b> by Monday midnight</p> <p><b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm</p>	<p>Mendelberg, Tali. 2001. <i>The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality</i>. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (selections)</p> <p>Nteta, Tatishe M., Rebecca Lisi, and Melinda R. Tarsi. 2016. “Rendering the Implicit Explicit: Political Advertisements, Partisan Cues, Race, and White Public Opinion in the 2012 Presidential Election.” <i>Politics, Groups, and Identities</i> 4(1): 1–29.</p> <p>Valentino, Nicholas A., Fabian G. Neuner, and L. Matthew Vandenbroek. 2018. “The Changing Norms of Racial Political Rhetoric and the End of Racial Priming.” <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 80(3): 757–71.</p> <p>Suhay, Elizabeth. 2015. “Explaining Group Influence: The Role of Identity and Emotion in Political Conformity and Polarization.” <i>Political Behavior</i> 37(1): 221–51.</p>



**March 10: No Class—Spring Break**

**March 17: Whiteness as investment**

**Synchronous:**  
2:00–4:30pm

(no QQC this  
week)

**We will divide and conquer the chapters of this book:**

Lipsitz, George. 2018. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics*. Twentieth anniversary edition. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

[https://search.lib.virginia.edu/sources/uva\\_library/items/u8361717](https://search.lib.virginia.edu/sources/uva_library/items/u8361717)

Strolovitch, Dara Z., Janelle S. Wong, and Andrew Proctor. 2017. “A Possessive Investment in White Heteropatriarchy? The 2016 Election and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Sexuality.” *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 5(2): 353–63.

**March 24: Asynchronous Midterm**

**Asynchronous**  
Online midterm  
via Canvas

Exam will be posted by 9am on Monday, March 24 and is due **by 5:00pm on Wednesday, March 26**. You may work on it for up to eight hours (in two or three sessions if you wish).

March 31: The University of Virginia: How built space shapes & is shaped by ideas about race & power	
<p><b>Class 2–3:30pm</b></p> <p><b>Tour 3:30–5:00pm</b></p>	<p>Walking tour of Grounds, led by special guest Kirt von Daacke, Associate Professor of History and Assistant Dean.</p> <p>Please take the Enslaved African Americans Walking Tour of UVa Grounds, using the smartphone app: <a href="https://www.library.virginia.edu/map/walking-tours">https://www.library.virginia.edu/map/walking-tours</a>. (Once you install the app on your device, you can select the Enslaved African American Tour. I encourage you actually to walk the tour if you can; if you cannot, you can read the material about each stop on the tour. If you do not have a device you can use to install the app, let me know and we will work out an alternative.)</p> <p>Nelson, Louis P., and Maurie D. McNinnis. 2019. “Landscape of Slavery.” In <i>Educated in Tyranny: Slavery at Thomas Jefferson’s University</i>, eds. Maurie D. McNinnis and Louis P. Nelson. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 42–74.</p> <p>Schmidt, Ashley, and Kirt von Daacke. 2019. “UVA and the History of Race: Blackface and the Rise of a Segregated Society.” <i>UVA Today</i>. <a href="https://news.virginia.edu/content/uva-and-history-race-blackface-and-rise-segregated-society">https://news.virginia.edu/content/uva-and-history-race-blackface-and-rise-segregated-society</a>.</p> <p><i>Optional/supplementary:</i> UVA Today has a series, “UVA and the History of Race”: <a href="https://news.virginia.edu/news-category/uva-and-history-race">https://news.virginia.edu/news-category/uva-and-history-race</a></p>

April 7: Building & defending White identity	
<p><b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight</p> <p><b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight</p> <p><b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm</p>	<p>Reicher, Stephen, and Yasemin Ulusahin. 2020. "Resentment and Redemption: On the Mobilization of Dominant Group Victimhood." In <i>Resentment and Redemption: On the Mobilization of Dominant Group Victimhood</i>, ed. Johanna Ray Vollhardt. New York: Oxford University Press, 275–94.</p> <p>Phillips, L. Taylor, and Brian S. Lowery. 2018. "Herd Invisibility: The Psychology of Racial Privilege." <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> 27(3): 156–62.</p> <p><b>Optional:</b> Reicher, Stephen, and S. Alexander Haslam. 2016. "The Politics of Hope: Donald Trump as an Entrepreneur of Identity." <i>Scientific American</i>.</p> <p><b><u>We will divide and conquer the following studies:</u></b></p> <p>Goff, Phillip Atiba, Jennifer L. Eberhardt, Melissa J. Williams, and Matthew Christian Jackson. 2008. "Not yet Human: Implicit Knowledge, Historical Dehumanization, and Contemporary Consequences." <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> 94(2): 292–306.</p> <p>Branscombe, Nyla R., Michael T. Schmitt, and Kristin Schiffhauer. 2007. "Racial Attitudes in Response to Thoughts of White Privilege." <i>European Journal of Social Psychology</i> 37(2): 203–15.</p> <p>Phillips, L. Taylor, and Brian S. Lowery. 2015. "The Hard-Knock Life? Whites Claim Hardships in Response to Racial Inequity." <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology</i> 61: 12–18.</p> <p>Onyeador, Ivuoma N. et al. 2020. "Disrupting Beliefs in Racial Progress: Reminders of Persistent Racism Alter Perceptions of Past, But Not Current, Racial Economic Equality." <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i>.</p> <p>Kachanoff, Frank J., Nour Kteily, and Kurt Gray. 2022. "Equating Silence with Violence: When White Americans Feel Threatened by Anti-Racist Messages." <i>Journal of Experimental Social Psychology</i> 102: 104348.</p>
April 14: Scientific Racism, Eugenics, & UVa	
<p><b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight</p> <p><b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight</p> <p><b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm</p>	<p>Catte, Elizabeth. 2021. <i>Pure America: Eugenics and the Making of Modern Virginia</i>. Belt Publishing.</p> <p>Additional reading TBA</p>

April 21: (White) Masculinity and (White) feminine protection	
<p><b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight</p> <p><b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight</p> <p><b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm</p>	<p>Bederman, Gail. 1995. “Remaking Manhood through Race and ‘Civilization.’” In <i>Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917</i>, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 1 (1-44).</p> <p>Driver, Justin. 2018. “Of Big Black Bucks and Golden-Haired Little Girls: How Fear of Interracial Sex Informed Brown v. Board of Education and Its Resistance.” In <i>The Empire of Disgust</i>, eds. Zoya Hasan, Aziz Z. Huq, Martha C. Nussbaum, and Vidhu Verma. New York: Oxford University Press, 41–61.</p> <p>McMahon, Jean M., and Kimberly Barsamian Kahn. 2018. “When Sexism Leads to Racism: Threat, Protecting Women, and Racial Bias.” <i>Sex Roles</i> 78(9): 591–605.</p> <p>Romano, Aja. 2016. “How the Alt-Right’s Sexism Lures Men into White Supremacy.” <i>Vox</i>. <a href="https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/12/14/13576192/alt-right-sexism-recruitment">https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/12/14/13576192/alt-right-sexism-recruitment</a>.</p> <p>Kimmel, Michael, and Abby L. Ferber. 2000. “‘White Men Are This Nation:’ Right-Wing Militias and the Restoration of Rural American Masculinity.” <i>Rural Sociology</i> 65(4): 582–604.</p>

April 28: Policing and the Carceral State	
<p><b>QQC:</b> due Saturday midnight</p> <p><b>QQC response:</b> by Sunday midnight</p> <p><b>Synchronous:</b> 2:00–4:30pm</p>	<p>Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2017. “The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration.” In <i>We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy</i>, New York: Random House, 223–84.</p> <p>Ortner, Sherry B. 2020. “Racialized Patriarchy: Lessons from Police Brutality.” In <i>Gender, Considered: Feminist Reflections Across the US Social Sciences</i>, eds. Sarah Fenstermaker and Abigail J. Stewart. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 137–64.</p> <p>Additional reading TBA</p>

Saturday, May 3: Presentations (during final exam slot)	
2:00pm–4:00pm	You will give a brief presentation to the class on your final research project.