

RIGHTING UNRIGHTABLE WRONGS

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School of Architecture
Dept. of Urban & Environmental Planning

*Class Location: Campbell Hall Rm. 108
12:00 noon to 1:50 p.m.*

Whether African-Americans demanding payment for slavery and its aftermath, Native Americans seeking a return of lands, or Japanese-Americans attempting to draw attention to the shame of internment, the United States faces many groups seeking to right past harm and resultant injustices. Can anyone ever make right what appears to be an irreparable wrong? This course will examine that large question within the context of community harms, South African apartheid, Native American forced displacement and genocide, Japanese-American internment during World War II, and reparations for slavery, before turning to the question of African-American history at the University of Virginia.

Unrightable wrongs, for purposes of this class, refer to past injustices that:

- 1) were systematically or intentionally inflicted upon a community or identity group, often shaped by prejudice and discrimination;
- 2) have historic, present and future impacts/consequences for the parties involved and the broader community,
- 3) have come to involve a broad and complex set of issues and stakeholders, thus making efforts at resolution seem daunting or even impossible;
- 4) have spiritual, moral, emotional, social, economic and political aspects and implications.

Financial reparations for slavery may seem an unlikely prospect. But in 1988, Congress apologized to Japanese Americans interned in camps during World War II and authorized payments of \$20,000 each to roughly 60,000 survivors. Canada followed with its own apology and a \$230 million reparations package to Japanese Canadians. The German government has paid \$60 billion to settle claims from victims of Nazi persecution. Various groups of Eskimos, Native Americans, Aleuts, and survivors of a 1923 massacre in a predominantly black Florida town and the 1921 riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma have also received financial restitution.

However, money, apology, and legal rulings may not serve to address such wrongs with integrity. *Truth, understanding, repair, and relationship* are four components of reparation that may be considered in any situation involving what appears to be an unrightable wrong. Drawing upon the reparations literature as well as literature on restorative justice, this course will provide students with the knowledge and skills to articulate, discuss, and facilitate discussion about repairing injustice in a variety of settings. *Righting the Unrightable Wrong* will include a strong skills component, with exercises and role plays designed to encourage critical thinking and dialogue.

Course objectives - Class members will be able to:

- Explain their own views on questions involving reparations for slavery, forced removal from lands, genocide, and other current related issues, including in what circumstances and with what efforts repair may be offered;
- Describe what it means to address unrightable wrongs with commitment and integrity;
- Work effectively in small groups while addressing challenging issues;
- Communicate effectively in interpersonal and small group dialogue;

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- Demonstrate critical thinking skills related to collective injustice.

Course Material

Selected articles and exercises will be provided by the instructor. Readings of current events and other assignments will also be assigned for the students to provide. The following readings will be required as well:

- Barkan, Elazar. *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2000.
- Power, Samantha. 2002. *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide*. New York: Basic Books.
- Robinson, Randall. 2000. *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*. New York: Dutton (Plume paper).
- Matsuda, Maria. 1995. "Looking to the Bottom," in *Critical Race Theory*, eds. Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas. New York: The New Press.

COURSE COMPONENTS:

Each class will generally include four components:

Readings: At least one reading will be assigned each week.

Essays: The class will require 10 weekly essays of approximately 700-900 words in response to the assigned readings. The first essay will be ungraded as will a mid-year course and student evaluation.

Class deliberation: The readings, essays, guest speakers, as well as contemporary events will provide the basis for in-class discussion.

Skills One track will involve the development of the skills of communication and inter-group dialogue for sensitive issues.

The primary learning tools will be readings, class lectures and discussions, exercises (e.g., simulations), and interaction with classmates and invited guests. Your primary requirements to take advantage of these opportunities are attention, initiative, risk and hard work!

GENERAL:

- Attendance and participation in class is very important. Please show up on time, but if you are late don't let that stop you from participating once you arrive! And **please let me know in advance if you will miss a class**. Assignments are often made on a weekly basis, and you will need to make appropriate arrangements.

- A **\$10.00** copy fee is assessed for the reading material and exercises. Please make a check out to the Institute for Environmental Negotiation.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

* Class participation, including attendance.

* The 10 weekly essays with analysis of and reflections upon the reading assignments.

* A final group project to be determined in class with the focus on race at the University of Virginia.

GRADING:

An A is offered for outstanding work; a B is given for work which is truly satisfactory; a C is offered for meeting the basic requirements of the course, and an F for failure to complete the basic course requirements. An incomplete grade will only be allowed for extraordinary circumstances (such as long-term illness).

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Grading will be based on:

50%: 10 written essays.

Each essay will be graded as follows:

- 0** Did not complete or was late with assignment, or no apparent effort or thought.
- 5** Completed assignment. Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.
- 8** Satisfactory effort. Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.
Offers interpretations and analysis of material (more than just facts) to class.
- 10** Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed material exceptionally well, relating it to other readings or material (e.g., course handouts, discussions, experiences, etc.).
Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of readings and case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.

I do give weight to organization, writing style, and mechanics, as well as demonstrated understanding and presentation of issues.

Note: A point is deducted for every day an assignment is late.

30%: Class attendance and active participation.

30% of the grade is based upon attendance and participation. Active participation in class discussions, assignments, and exercises is expected from each student.

Participation is rated on a scale of 0 to 10 using the criteria below. While your participation is important for any class you take, this class by its experiential nature requires considerable involvement, including interaction with your classmates.

We each learn from what you offer to the class. I encourage you to participate fully for your own and others' benefit.

Participation Grade Basis:

- 0** Absent or without contribution.
- 3** Present, not disruptive. Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.
Demonstrates very infrequent involvement.
- 6** Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class). Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.
Demonstrates sporadic involvement.
- 8** Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.
Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.
- 10** Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.
Demonstrates ongoing and very active involvement.

20%: Group Project

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A class project will focus on understanding racial history at the University of Virginia. Details will be determined in class.

Writing Well

Following is more guidance for writing and class discussion from a variety of sources. If you need more, then:

- * Come talk to me – call me at 924-2041 for an appointment, I'm glad to talk.
- * Contact the UVA Writing Center www.engl.virginia.edu/wctr/wcinfo.html – 924-6678. They offer free, individual tutoring and are much better writers and teachers of writing than I am.
- * Buy and read Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* or another good writing guide.
- * Keep working on your writing and don't get discouraged – it will definitely improve with practice and reflection.

Basic Error-Free Writing Tips:**26 Golden Rules for Writing Well**

1. Don't abbrev.
2. Check to see if you any words out.
3. Be carefully to use adjectives and adverbs correct.
4. About sentence fragments.
5. When dangling, don't use participles.
6. Don't use no double negatives.
7. Each pronoun agrees with their antecedent.
8. Just between you and I, case is important.
9. Join clauses good, like a conjunction should.
10. Don't use commas, that aren't necessary.
11. Its important to use apostrophe's right.
12. It's better not to unnecessarily split an infinitive.
13. Never leave a transitive verb just lay there without an object.
14. Only Proper Nouns should be capitalized. also a sentence should begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop
15. Use hyphens in compound-words, not just in any two-word phrase.
16. In letters compositions reports and things like that we use commas to keep a string of items apart.
17. Watch out for irregular verbs that have creeped into our language.
18. Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
19. Avoid unnecessary redundancy.
20. A writer mustn't shift your point of view.
21. Don't write a run-on sentence you've got to punctuate it.
22. A preposition isn't a good thing to end a sentence with.
23. Avoid cliches like the plague.
24. Never start a sentence with a number.
25. Always check your work for accuracy and completeness.

[ANON.]

Guidance borrowed from Prof. Michael Trotti:

1. Keep your audience in mind; know exactly the knowledge level and scope of interest of those who will read your paper. Speak with the appropriate level of technical language while, at the same time, keeping the line of argument clear and simple.
2. Know precisely the conclusions that you want to state. These are the thoughts that you intend to place inside the reader's mind. State them. These points become the question(s) for the line-of-argument that drives the paper.
3. Make sure your paper has a clearly identifiable beginning, middle, and end. The beginning should go from the sweeping and global to the specific concern of this paper.
4. If your paper requires examples, make them vivid and varied.
5. Picture portions of your argument like a funnel, wide on the top, narrowing on the bottom, and write it that way. Structure your argument to move from the macro (general statements), to the medium, to the more micro (the specific issues addressed).
8. Use transitional sentences to link the preceding discussion to a new discussion of very different material that follows. Make it smooth, make it smooth. When in doubt, smooth it out.
9. Keep a sense of rhythm, of flow in your language. Reading your words should be easy and pleasurable, not hard and stiff.
10. Say plainly what you mean, no more, no less. As a rule of thumb, use short words instead of long ones, and use one word in place of several. For example, never say "due to the fact that," say "because." Instead of saying "they interpreted their findings to mean that...", say "they concluded." There should be no unnecessary words, no words that do no work. Keep it sharp, tight, crisp. You get the point.
11. Know your material thoroughly. Each word and each study cited is there because it does a piece of work. If it doesn't, then cut it; it's clutter.
12. Don't say "Second" unless you have first said "First." And Never Never Never say "Lastly" (or "Firstly").

Important Components to Strong and Effective Writing

* **Clarity** Don't try to make your argument or your evidence do tricks, but do follow all rules of grammar and usage. A complicated argument is often less clear and effective than a simpler one. The art of good writing is to play by the rules of grammar and usage, and to be concise. Get a copy of Strunk and White's *Elements of Style* for help with this. I read it regularly, just to remind me of what effective writing consists.

* **Evaluation** As important as getting the facts straight. A paper needs to be accurate, but as important, it needs to show that you see just what is important, what it is connected to, and what evidence best supports that important point. History is about bringing meaning to past events - you do that through how you characterize those events and what you connect them to.

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* **Outline** Before you write, spend time thinking about your argument and how to make it flow logically from one point to the next - what points are connected? what is the most important one and why? Think this through before writing.

* **Short Assignments** If you are feeling overwhelmed, take a small piece of your paper and work on it, get it done, then move on to another small piece. Divide and conquer. You will need to fit these pieces together - a paper of many small pieces is no paper at all. But it is not only OK, it is the best way to write to divide up a larger issue into more manageable smaller ones. After outlining, simply take one point you plan to make and develop it; move on to the next. Before you know it, you have most of a paper written.

"Thirty years ago my older brother, who was ten years old at the time, was trying to get a report on birds written that he'd had three months to write, which was due the next day. We were out at our family cabin in Bolinas, and he was at the kitchen table close to tears, surrounded by binder paper and pencils and unopened books on birds, immobilized by the hugeness of the task ahead. Then my father sat down beside him, put his arm around my brother's shoulder, and said, "Bird by bird, buddy. Just take it bird by bird."

"I tell this story again because it usually makes a dent in the tremendous sense of being overwhelmed that my students experience. . ." -- Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* (Anchor, 1994), 18-19.

* **Speak it** This one sounds weird, but trust me - reading your paper out loud will show you what is not working, where the rough places are. You use a different part of your brain when you hear/speak than when you look, and hearing the words gives you a different perspective.

* **Skim** After you write a paper, read the introduction, the first line of each paragraph, and the conclusion. In a clear, concise paper, this should give you the flow of the argument, and such a skim will reveal where you have problems, where the argument is convoluted.

* **Rewrite** There is nothing that will improve your work more than writing a draft early, letting it sit for a day, then coming back to it and looking at it afresh. If you want to improve your writing, this is how.

Anne Lamott on First Drafts:

"People tend to look at successful writers, writers who are getting their books published and maybe even doing well financially, and think that they sit down at their desks every morning feeling like a million dollars, feeling great about who they are and how much talent they have and what a great story they have to tell; that they take a few deep breaths, push back their sleeves, roll their necks a few times to get all the cricks out, and dive in, typing fully formed passages as fast as a court reporter. But this is just the fantasy of the uninitiated. I know some very good writers, writers you love who write beautifully and have made a great deal of money, and not one of them sits down routinely feeling wildly enthusiastic and confident. Not one of them writes elegant first drafts. All right, one of them does, but we do not like her very much . . ."

So, what is it that I look for when I grade your papers? What I am most eager to find there?

* thesis - have you answered the question clearly and completely?

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- * support - is the essay factually correct and does it refer to the appropriate and relevant names, dates, concepts, sources, and events as needed?
- * argument - is the writing clear, concise, and well-organized around the argument of the thesis?
- * context - does the paper demonstrate your knowledge of the broad range of course materials and concepts relevant to the issue at hand?

Avoiding Gender Bias in Pronouns

Achieving unbiased language so that readers will concentrate on what you have to say rather than how you say it is an admirable goal. It's also, I might add, a necessity. For example, businesses and individuals have been sued because job descriptions used "he" and seemed to exclude women -- whether or not the exclusion was intended. Therefore, gender free language is a requirement of the workplace and the university.

It may be easy to avoid gender-biased nouns by replacing sexist nouns with more neutral ones: chairman with chair, mailman with paper carrier, and congressman with senator or representative. But how can you avoid the pronouns he, him, and his when you refer to nouns meant to include both genders?

The following five options will enable you to revise your writing so that your use of pronouns is both gender-free and correct. As you review this list, compare the biased language of the original sentences with the gender-free phrasing of the revisions.

1. Use the plural form for both nouns and pronouns (preferred).

Biased Language: Studying the techniques by which a celebrated writer achieved his success can stimulate any writer faced with similar problems.

Gender-free Language: Studying the techniques by which celebrated writers achieved their success can stimulate any writer faced with similar problems.

2. Omit the pronoun altogether (also preferred).

Biased Language: Each doctor should send one of his nurses to the workshop.

Gender-free Language: Each doctor should send a nurse to the workshop.

3. Use *his or her*, *he/she*, or *s/he* when you occasionally need to stress the action of an individual. Such references won't be awkward unless they're frequent (less preferred).

Biased Language: If you must use a technical term he may not understand, explain it.

Gender-free Language: If you must use a technical term she or he may not understand, explain it.

If you must use a technical term he/she may not understand, explain it.

If you must use a technical term s/he may not understand, explain it.

4. Vary pronoun choice when you want to give examples emphasizing the action of an individual (less preferred). Ideally, choose pronouns that work counter to prevailing stereotypes.

Growing Child Newsletter (1982) decided to use this strategy throughout its publication, which focused on children's developmental levels.

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Biased Language: Gradually, Toddler will see the resemblance between block creations and objects in his world, and he will begin to name some structures, like "house," "choo choo," and "chimney."

Gender-free Language: Gradually, Toddler will see the resemblance between block creations and objects in her world, and she will begin to name some structures, like "house," "choo choo," and "chimney."
[THE NEXT EXAMPLE WOULD USE "HE" AND "HIS"].

Biased Language: The kitchen can serve as a center for new experiences, an interesting place where important things happen, and where she has a chance to learn about the way big-people things are done.

Gender-free Language: The kitchen can serve as a center for new experiences, an interesting place where important things happen, and where he has a chance to learn about the way big-people things are done.
[THE NEXT EXAMPLE WOULD USE "SHE" AND "HER"].

5. Switch from the third-person (he) to the second-person (you) or a (you) understood when this shift is appropriate for what you're writing. (also preferred)

Biased Language: Each manager should report his progress to the undersigned by May 1.

Gender-free Language: You should report your progress to me by May 1.

Report your progress to me by May 1.

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Original: <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/style/genderbias.html>

Instructor Biography:

As Director of the Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN) at the University of Virginia, Dr. Dukes designs dispute resolution and public participation processes, mediates and facilitates, teaches and trains in the areas of public involvement, mediation, negotiation, and consensus building, and conducts research. He has worked at local, state, and federal levels on projects involving environment and land use, community development, education, health, and racial and ethnic diversity. He also has helped initiate and is a core faculty of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute, a year-long program that brings together representatives from industry, non-governmental organizations, public agencies, and communities to develop collaborative leadership around environmental issues.

As part of IEN's "Collaborative Stewardship Initiative," he initiated the "Community-Based Collaboratives Research Consortium" seeking to assess and understand local collaborative efforts involving natural resources and community development, and the "Best Practices Guidance Project" resulting in the publication of *Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates* in partnership with The Wilderness Society and the Audubon Society in July of 2001.

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His book *Resolving Public Conflict: Transforming Community and Governance* (Manchester University Press and St. Martin's Press, 1996) describes how public conflict resolution procedures can assist in vitalizing democracy, by engaging citizens productively in civic and community affairs, by aiding public entities in developing a responsive governance, and by enhancing society's capacity to solve difficult public problems. With two colleagues he is co-author of *Reaching for Higher Ground in Conflict Resolution* (Jossey-Bass, 2000), which describes how diverse groups and communities can create expectations for addressing conflict with integrity, vision, and creativity.

He received a B.A. from the University of Virginia after spending two years at the United States Air force Academy, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University. He was previously operator of a piano restoration business for over 10 years in Albemarle County. He is a founding member and past chair of the Community Mediation Center of Charlottesville-Albemarle. He also serves as advisor to and trainer for University Mediation Services. He recently served as co-chair of the Environmental/Public Policy Section of the international Association for Conflict Resolution. He has two children. His wife, Linda Hankins Dukes, teaches reading to elementary school students.

Office Hours:

My office is at the Institute for Environmental Negotiation in Peyton House, 164 Rugby Rd. E-mail is not a good medium for questions of any substantive nature. Because of the nature of my work regular hours are not possible; however, students are invited and urged to "drop in" for discussion (you may wish to call ahead at 924-2041 to make sure I am there), or you may set an appointment.

Class Principles and Behaviors

- Show respect for others' opinions while challenging ideas – attach the argument, not the person
- Recognize that there can be more than two sides to issues
- Fully explain your own views, and question what you don't understand
- Try to identify common ground
- Be prepared to swallow your pride – be open to the possibility of being wrong
- Disagreement does not mean enmity
- Share the class time – don't beat a dead horse
- Seek first to understand