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Meeting Critical Race Theory and Postcolonial Studies
Professor Watson & Parikh

While Postcolonial Studies and Critical Race Theory developed as separate fields with discrete genealogies, both have been crucial to current paradigms in literary and cultural studies in terms of attention to the social formations, political movements and cultural practices by which racial, national, ethnic, sexual, and gendered differences arise and are lived. “Meeting Critical Race Theory and Postcolonial Studies” will introduce students to both fields and consider the extensive impact that their “meeting” has had on recent literary/cultural studies and critical theory. We will first engage with seminal texts in each field, and then move to key works that take up questions of racial difference, national formations, (post)colonialism, American exceptionalism, and migration in relation to one another. Finally, we will consider how the meeting of Postcolonial and Critical Race Studies has given rise to a powerful field of humanistic study for the examination of diasporas, borders, globalization and transnationalism. Likely readings include works by Michael Omi and Howard Winant, Lisa Lowe, Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, David Goldberg, Walter Mignolo, Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, Paul Gilroy, Aiwha Ong, Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins.