

Can I look at This: Watching Media of Racial Violence

with Krista Lynes

Keywords: Anti-Black Racism, The politics of violent images, Content Ownership, Media Circulation, Accountability, Vulnerability

Related Course Subjects: Diversity and the Contemporary World, Political Science, Psychology, Communication Studies, Liberal Arts, Journalism, Anthropology.

Krista talks about how being exposed to media of racial violence is a double-edged sword depending heavily on who's the viewer. These videos are often diffused and consumed irresponsibly without contemplation about their potential impact on viewers of specific communities and without conscious awareness of the position of self as a spectator.

Trigger Warning Some themes within this assignment package might potentially be triggering to certain people on the topic of anti-Black violence. By doing assignments or discussing questions, you might stumble upon undesirable and/or triggering content. Please handle this with caution and transparency.

Video URL

https://youtu.be/ftQrkU_Ejw



About The Decolonial Perspectives & Practices Hub

The Decolonial Perspectives & Practices Hub is a student-led initiative to provide a platform for the community to collaborate and develop meaningful solutions to the systemic issues faced by underserved groups in academia. Our mission is to advance knowledge and understanding of these issues and provide a space to engage in research and learning that is open to all experiences each individual brings.

About the Anti-Racist Pedagogy Project

The Anti-Racist Pedagogy Project is a video library that showcases pre-recorded talks by local community activists, students and educators in Montreal and Canada and transforms them into anti-racist educational resources for the classroom. Undergraduate and graduate students from Concordia and McGill University created the content for these course packages. These resources exemplify the power of student leadership and their contribution to advancing antiracist education.

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Goals/Objectives

After watching the video, students will be able to:

- Give examples of the different kinds of advantages/disadvantages of mass sharing media of anti-black violence (For black viewers, non-black people of colour and white viewers)
- Identify differences in instances where violent media was being diffused responsibly vs irresponsibly.
- Describe the intricacies of the interaction between their identity and violent media content.
- Give examples of ways to minimize the negative impact of unregulated access to such images.

Pre-Class Self-Reflection Exercise (Educators)

Fully engaging with antiracist pedagogy starts with self-reflection and accountability. **If you are familiar with antiracist education, you know that the best way to teach antiracist pedagogy is to model antiracist praxis and thought.** As such, we have developed a series of self-reflection questions for you to consider before integrating anti-racist educational materials into your classroom. The night before class or at least a few hours before class, give yourself time, without distractions, to reflect on the questions below - you can write them down or reflect on them with yourself paper free!

Be reflexive

- What does antiracist pedagogy or education mean to you?
- What is the relationship between your identity and antiracist work? How would you describe your role in antiracist work?
- How do you view the mutualistic exchange between yourself and your students? Do you adjust your teaching style accordingly?
- What is the difference between engaging with our repository as a knowledge exchange versus a knowledge extraction?

Be accountable

- To what extent have you engaged with antiracist or anti-oppressive education or philosophies within your life/work? Why or why not?
- What has the silencing or exclusion of another person or group looked like in the environments that you frequent? What have you done, or what could you have done to remedy it?
- Reflect on how you have engaged with literature, presentations and other forms of knowledge led by Queer, Trans, Indigenous, Black, Asian, and other POC in your academic, personal, or professional lives.
- What has been your role in disrupting and mobilizing against racism and oppression interpersonally or in the environments you frequent?



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Guiding Questions

Before watching the video

Pre-Video Questions -Students

- Is visibility inherently good or efficient?
- When you think of violent media, where do you remember seeing it? Who shared it? Which groups of people were involved?
- In which ways have we seen, as a society, historically “consumed” black bodies and for which purposes? (e.g., entertainment, appeal, performative inclusion, etc.)
- Which people are in the position of being oppressors? Does an oppressor perform certain acts? Is oppression expressed in a set of behaviours?
- Do you think you have a choice in the media you consume? If so, do you think such personal choice partially releases platforms responsible for sanctioning or supervising content?

While watching the video

As you watch the video, take note of the following:

- Why do you think Krista refrained from showing most of the violent images she spoke of? What did she replace them with?
- Content is now available to us with the swipe of a finger and follows us wherever we go. It is constantly in our hands, with us in our beds and at the dinner table. Ponder upon the concept of proximity with the content you consume. How intrusive is it? Was it always like that?

Consider the questions Krista herself asks in her video:

- How does media of police violence against black bodies circulate differently than white bodies?
- How can we establish a right to (not) see that media?
- How can seeing (watching) be part of a more significant commitment to anti-racism?

After watching the video

Post-video Questions

- What are the costs of footage circulation?
- Are images of race or racialized peoples represented differently in Canada and the U.S.? Why or why not? Please explain your answer (How are politics of image different in Canada/US than it is in some other countries around the world)
- What are some of the solutions that Krista suggests to protect vulnerable viewers? Can you think of any other ways?
- What kind of images are you protected from seeing (if any)?
- How can images be dehumanizing? When does it become “commercial property”?



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Assignments / Writing topics

- Find a non-violent image related to justice or social change and analyze it by applying The Civil Contract of Photography by Azoulay, A.). Present analysis to the class in an artistic or conventional form or written examination.
- Read the Algorithms of Oppression and make a comprehensive list of ways hyper circulation of certain media reinforces racism and then create a list of potential solutions to address each one. Present to class.
- Create a presentation focusing on “Digitopics” and in which ways it may be beneficial or detrimental to the problem we have at hand. Present to the class.

Taking Action

- Create a Prezi Presentation with different ways to gain autonomy over the media you decide to consume. Have the choice of “not-seeing” some content. (e.g., How to turn off auto-play on Twitter, report videos distributed without the parties’ consent, etc.). Apply it to your media consumption and present it to the class or post on social media.
- Construct a careful letter addressing how a specific platform can be more responsible in its media diffusion and the reasons to do so. Please send it to the concerned party.
- Create a comparative in-depth analysis of the digitization of media and how our consumption and sharing of such media shifted historically. Compare media consumption through national television/newspapers vs social media/internet and discuss the consequences that ensued.
- If you are a professional proficient in “ethnic minority psychology” or in ways ethnic minorities are affected by society, create a free workshop for people of colour to deal with the stress and trauma of being exposed to such content.

Student Group Reflection

1. What is something new that your group learned or began to consider from watching the video?
2. What type of educational videos on systemic racism would you like to see more of?
3. How can you combat systems of oppression and exclusion in your individual lives?
4. Why is having an anti-racist approach to your work/studies important?
5. After today’s exercise, write down two suggestions for your professor on making your class more inclusive.



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Thank you for implementing our resources and supporting anti-racism efforts in education. If you have any questions or feedback, please email us!



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