1

**COMM -- Winter 2020 Race, Nation, and Violence in Multicultural California FINAL PAPER / PROJECT PROPOSAL**

Submit a proposal that addresses each of the below requirements. You can use bullet points. Also, I understand that your proposed course readings and/or concepts may change as we get towards the end of the quarter and you have completed more readings. This proposal is just a start.

● Object of Inquiry → What media representation of race, nation, and violence in

California are you going to examine (e.g., a film, news segment, social media thread, advertisement, textbook, image, artwork, etc.)?

○ And through which lens: (1) romanticizing of pastoral California, (2) California as pristine wilderness, (3) California as land of opportunity and innovation, (4) California as a site of conflict and/or resistance, or (5) another lens with approval

● Thesis statement → What argument are you making about your object?

● Evidence → What will you use to support your argument?

○ Specifically, what elements of the object will you discuss?

○ And what **three course readings and/or concepts** can you utilize in this discussion?

● So What? → Why is this subject matter important to study?

2

Choose one of the three below prompts:

Ibram X. Kendi, in his book *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (2016)*,* describes a “popular folktale of racism” that claims that ignorant and hateful people produce racist ideas and that these racist people then institute racist policies (p. 9). Arguing that this causal relationship is actually ahistorical, Kendi instead claims that racist ideas do not endure and evolve by a cycle of “ignorance/hate → racist ideas → discrimination” but through an inverse relationship of “racial discrimination → racist ideas → ignorance/hate” (p. 9). As such, racist ideas endure and evolve due to ever changing discriminatory policies based on self-interests (p. 9). Think of an example of a media product about California that either (re)produces or contests this “popular folktale of racism.” Use three course concepts to make your argument.

Jill Lepore, in her book *This America: The Case for the Nation* (2019), claims that, “Nation-states, when they form, imagine a past” (p. 18) because “Nations, to make sense of themselves, need some kind of agreed-upon past” (pp. 19-20). Think of an example of a media product about California that mobilizes racialized rhetoric in ways that help to (re)imagine an “agreed-upon past” about the state of California and/or the nation. Use three course concepts to make a distinct point about the ‘cultural work’ of this media product.

Bruce B. Lawrence and Aisha Karim in their edited anthology *On Violence: A Reader* (2007), claim that we must address the following questions when theorizing violence:

● *Why* focus on violence? Are people inherently violent, and if so, are they more violent now than in prior periods?

● *Where* does violence come from? Does it come from individuals, groups, social structures, or some blind fate?

● *What* counts as violence? Can it be separated from technology or science, or does the very technology of communications replicate violence even while seeming to merely announce it?

● *Who* gets to speak about violence, whether in the academy, the media or in different parts of the globe? How do victim, perpetrator, agency, accountability, and victimization change, and why? Is violence private as well as public? Think of an example of a media product about California that can help us think through ONE of these critical questions about violence (i.e. Why, Where, What, Who). Refer to threecourse concepts in your analysis.