

SOCIOLOGY 130: SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Summer 2012, Monday-Thursday, 8:00am, 122 Barrows

Instructor: Marcel Paret, mparet@berkeley.edu, 410 Barrows Hall

Office hours: Wednesdays, 11:00am-12:00pm, Caffe Strada (corner of College & Bancroft).

This course is an introduction to the study of inequality in the United States. The goal is to expose you to some of the different forms of inequality, and inspire you to think critically about where inequality comes from and why it persists. Each week we will cover a new area of inequality, though each area is diverse on its own. Throughout the course we will pay attention to class, race, gender, and sexuality as interweaving modes of social division. We will also examine the dynamic interplay between the economy and the state, as well as the role of institutions such as schools and the family. The intention of the course is for students to develop their own understanding of what characterizes contemporary American inequality through a dialogue with existing scholarship.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

The classes will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, small group work, videos, and other activities. You are expected to attend and actively participate in every meeting. Attendance will be taken. Active participation means listening to and hearing your fellow classmates, following the lecture, raising comments and questions, and putting effort into class activities. In short, it means being engaged. You should arrive prepared to discuss the reading. This means reading carefully, making a serious attempt to understand the argument, identifying things you do not understand, and developing questions. *I expect each person to speak at least once during class every week.* Attendance and class participation account for 20 percent of the overall course grade.

POP QUIZZES

During the course I will give three OR four pop quizzes. They are "pop" quizzes because I am not going to tell you when they will be. They are designed to be an incentive for you to do the reading before you arrive in class, and to follow what happens in class. They will require you to demonstrate basic comprehension of the course material, rather than memorize minor details or abstract larger themes and comparisons.

If you are not in class on the day of a pop quiz you will be given a grade of 0. There will be no makeup quizzes. I will, however, drop your lowest grade on the pop quizzes when calculating your final grade. The pop quizzes will account for 20 percent of the overall grade.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

There will be three writing assignments, comprising 60 percent of the overall course grade. Below is a brief description of each writing assignment. Detailed descriptions of the assignments will be handed out in class, but I am providing these preliminary descriptions so that you may begin thinking about them and preparing.

I encourage you to use the Writing for Sociology guide, which is available on the Berkeley

Sociology website: <http://sociology.berkeley.edu/> (choose "Undergraduate Program" and find the link to the Second Edition of Writing for Sociology). It is free and has many useful tips, mostly written by the people who grade your papers, about how to approach and carry through sociology writing assignments.

There will not be any extensions. Late papers will be graded down. The papers will be graded by Daniel Laurison (daniel.laurison@berkeley.edu). If you believe that you have been graded unfairly, please contact Daniel first to discuss your concern. If after doing so you would like to have your grade reconsidered, please submit a written request to Marcel explaining the reasons why, along with a copy of your paper. Marcel will re-grade the paper, and your grade may go up or down.

Writing Assignment #1: Personal Reflection

Length: 500-700 words. Due: Friday, May 25, 3:30pm. Grading: 10 percent.

The readings for class 2 (Davis and Moore) and class 3 (Inequality by Design) present two different understandings of inequality. Using a personal example from your own life, you will be required to make an argument for one of the two positions.

Writing Assignment #2: Oakland Assessment

Length: 1000-1200 words. Due: Friday, June 15, 3:30pm. Grading: 20 percent.

This paper will require you to choose from a set of ongoing issues in Oakland. You will be required to identify empirical data (e.g. Newspaper article, YouTube clip) and interpret it using readings from weeks 2, 3 and 4 (classes 6 through 16).

Writing Assignment #3: Final Paper

Length: 2800-3000 words. Due: Friday, June 29, 3:30pm. Grading: 30 percent.

The final paper will be your chance to synthesize what you have learned during the six weeks of the course. Your assignment will be to compile a report for an outsider who is visiting from another world, and wants to know the basics about American inequality. Drawing from the readings of the course, you will be required to summarize the key features of American inequality.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Attendance and participation	20 percent
Pop quizzes	20 percent
Personal reflection	10 percent
Oakland assessment	20 percent
Final paper	30 percent

WEEK 1: HOW TO THINK ABOUT INEQUALITY

Class 1 (5/21). Introduction.

Class 2 (5/22). Functional view of inequality.

Davis, Kingsley, and Wilbert E. Moore. 1945. "Some Principles of Stratification." *American Sociological Review* 10(2):242-249.

Class 3 (5/23). Political view of inequality.

Fischer et al. 1996. *Inequality by Design: Cracking the Bell Curve Myth*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Chapter 1, "Why Inequality," 3-18].

Class 4 (5/24). Class and property.

Wright, Erik Olin. 2007 [1997]. "Class Counts," *The Inequality Reader*, 56-63.

Conley, Dalton. 1999. *Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press. [excerpts from chapter 1, "Wealth Matters," 1-5, 13-16].

DUE DATE (5/25). Personal reflection assignment. Due at 3:30pm in Barrows 410.

WEEK 2: LABOR AND MOBILITY

Class 5 (5/28). Administrative holiday. No class.

Class 6 (5/29). Unions and work.

Fantasia, Rick, and Kim Voss. 2004. "Why Labor Matters: The Underside of the 'American Model,'" Pp. 1-33 in *Hard Work: Remaking the American Labor Movement*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Class 7 (5/30). Working poverty.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 2007 [1999]. "Nickel and Dimed: On (not) Getting by in America." *Inequality Reader* 123-133.

Newman, Katherine. 1999. *No Shame in My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City*. New York: Russell Sage. [excerpt from Chapter 1, "Working Lives: Carmen's World," 13-23.]

Class 8 (5/31). Culture and intergenerational reproduction.

Macleod, Jay. 2007 [1987]. "Aint No Makin It: Leveled Aspirations in a Low-Income Neighborhood." *The Inequality Reader* 468-484.

WEEK 3: GENDER, FAMILY, AND SEXUALITY

Class 9 (6/4). Constructing gender.

Lorber, Judith. 2007 [1994]. "The Social Construction of Gender." *The Inequality Reader*, 276-283.

Hartmann, Douglas. 2003. "The Sanctity of Sunday Football: Why Men Love Sports," *Contexts* 2(4):13-19.

Class 10 (6/5). Gendering labor.

England, Paula. 2007 [1992]. "Devaluation and the Pay of Comparable Male and Female Occupations." *The Inequality Reader*.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2003. *The Second Shift*. New York: Penguin. [excerpts].

Class 11 (6/6). The welfare state.

Fraser, Nancy. 1994. "Reinventing the Welfare State." *Boston Review* February/March.

Class 12 (6/7). Marriage and sexuality.

Josephson, Jyl. 2005. "Citizenship, Same-Sex Marriage, and Feminist Critiques of Marriage." *Perspectives on Politics* 3(2):269-284.

WEEK 4: RACE, SEGREGATION, AND MASS INCARCERATION

Class 13 (6/11). Spatial concentration of poverty.

Wilson, William Julius. 2009. "The Political and Economic Forces Shaping Concentrated Poverty." *Political Science Quarterly* 123(4):555-571.

Class 14 (6/12). Criminalization of Bay Area youth.

Rios, Victor M. 2006. "The Hyper-Criminalization of Black and Latino Male Youth in the Era of Mass Incarceration." *Souls* 8(2):40-54.

Class 15 (6/13). Effects of incarceration.

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press. [Chapter 4, "The Cruel Hand," 137-172].

Class 16 (6/14). Race-making institutions.

Wacquant, Loic. 2002. "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the 'Race Question' in the United States." *New Left Review* 13:41-60.

DUE DATE (6/15). Oakland assessment. Due at 3:30pm in Barrows 410.

WEEK 5: MIGRATION AND ILLEGALITY

Class 17 (6/18). Producing illegality.

Cornelius, Wayne A. 2005. "Controlling 'Unwanted' Immigration: Lessons from the United States, 1993-2004." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31:775-794.

Class 18 (6/19). Criminalizing work.

Bacon, David. 2008. *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants*. Boston: Beacon Press. [excerpts from chapter 1, "Making Work a Crime," and chapter 3, "Displacement and Migration," pages 1-11 and 70-81].

Class 19 (6/20). Undocumented workers.

Gleeson, Shannon. 2010. "Labor Rights For All? The Role of Undocumented Immigrant Status for Worker Claims Making." *Law and Social Inquiry* 35:561-602. [excerpts]

Class 20 (6/21). Undocumented youth.

Gonzales, Roberto. 2011. "Learning to be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood." *American Sociological Review* 76(4):602-619.

WEEK 6: CONSEQUENCES OF INEQUALITY

Class 21 (6/25). Inequality and Community.

Pickett, Kate, and Richard Wilkinson. 2009. *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*. New York: Bloomsbury. ["Community Life and Social Relations", chapter 4].

Class 22 (6/26). Inequality and resistance.

King, Mike. 2011. "The Vacancies of Capitalism: Occupations and the Fulfillment of Human Needs." *Counterpunch* November 30.

Class 23 (6/27). Review session.

Class 24 (6/28). Conclusions.

DUE DATE (6/29). Final paper. Due at 3:30pm in Barrows 410.