

Soc. 131AC
UC Berkeley
Spring, 2018

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The Sociology of Race and Ethnicity in the United States

This course examines the role of race and ethnicity in the making of United States society, and the efforts to achieve social justice in the United States. The course revolves around several questions:

- What is race? What is racism?
- What is ethnicity? How are ethnic communities organized?
- How does racism intersect with other social dynamics of inclusion, domination and subordination in the making of U.S. society? How does anti-racism intersect with efforts to liberate people from class, gender, sexual, religious and national oppressions?
- What are the impacts of historical racism on U.S. society today?
- How have neo-liberalism and globalization altered the dynamics of race and racism in American society?
- What has been done to advance social justice in various social arenas?
- What are realistic strategies for social justice in this era?

This course introduces students to the study of race and ethnicity as social processes, and examines the formation and transformation of racial systems throughout American history. Throughout the course, the dynamics of race and ethnicity are located in relationship to class, gender, sexuality and nationality, and are examined in the context of global socio-economic processes. Sociological theories are used to identify important themes, which are then studied through an examination of history, institutional dynamics in the present, and consideration of strategies for social justice.

Course requirements include class participation (15% of course grade); five posts responding to course readings, lectures and discussions (15% of course grade), a midterm exam (20% of course grade), a final exam (25% of course grade), and a ten to twelve-page final paper (25% of course grade). For the final paper, students will utilize the concepts, issues and data addressed in this course to investigate a specific barrier to equal opportunity involving race and/or ethnicity, and to critically assess efforts made to overcome this barrier.

Unlike ‘traditional’ lecture courses, this course requires all students to actively participate in the teaching and learning process. All students are strongly encouraged to come to class meetings having done the reading assigned for that day, with the expectation that everyone will be actively engaged in critical discussion of the readings and lecture material. If you are having difficulty keeping up with the course work for any reason, immediately bring this to my attention. I am here to support your learning and success!

Assigned Course Readings:

- Noguera, Pedro, City Schools and the American Dream New York: Teachers College Press, 2003.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi We Were Eight Years in Power New York: Norton, 2016.
- Nicholls, Walter J., The DREAMers: How the Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed the Immigration Debate Stanford University Press, 2013.
- All other readings are PDFs on the course website (b-course.berkeley.edu)

Topics and Readings

Introduction to the course (January 16)

I. Race and Ethnicity

a. The Social Construction of Race (January 18)

American Sociological Association, “The Importance of Collecting
Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race” [PDF]

U.S. Census: Race and Ethnicity 2010 [PDF]

Eddo-Lodge, Reni, “What is White Privilege?” in Why I am No Longer Talking to
White People About Racism London: Bloomsbury Circus, 2017 [PDF]

b. Ethnicity (January 23)

Bedolla, Lisa Garcia “A Thin Line Between Love and Hate” in Fluid Borders: Latino
Power, Identity, and Politics in Los Angeles Berkeley: UC Press, 2005 [PDF]

II. Sociological Theories of Race and Ethnicity

a. Order theory and social justice (January 25-January 30)

Alba, Richard and Victor Nee, Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation And Contemporary Immigration, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003, Ch. 6, pp. 215-270) [PDF]

Thernstrom, Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom, America in Black and White N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1997, pp. 183-202 [PDF]

Shelby Steele The Content of Our Character N.Y.: Harper, 1990, pp 111-125 [PDF]

b. Internal colonial theory and social justice (February 1)

Malcolm X “The Black Revolution” [PDF]

Coates, We Were Eight Years in Power “The Legacy of Malcolm X, pp. 85-105

c. Group conflict theory and social justice (February 6-February 8)

Collins, Patricia Hill “Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination” from Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment, Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990 pp.221-238 [PDF]

Ruby Sales “Where Does It Hurt?” [Podcast]

<https://onbeing.org/programs/ruby-sales-where-does-it-hurt-aug2017/>

III. The Enduring Significance of Race

a. Slavery and the origins of race (February 13-February 15)

Fredrickson, George “The Social Origins of American Racism” [PDF]

Coates, We Were Eight Years in Power pp.61-82

b. Jim Crow, Westward Expansion and Immigration (February 20-February 22)

Almaguer, “They Can Be Hired in Masses” from Racial Fault Lines

c. Racial structuring in the 1950s-1960s (February 27)

Coates, We Were Eight Years in Power “The Case for Reparations” pp.151-208

IV. Contemporary Issues of Race and Ethnicity

- a. Globalization, Neo-Liberalism and Race (March 1)

Barlow, Andrew L., "Globalization, Race and the Politics of Fear" in Michelle Bertho, Globalization Comes Home Vol. II, N.Y.: Praeger Publishers, 2009 [PDF]

MIDTERM EXAM: MARCH 6

- b. Criminalization (March 8-March 15)

Wacquant, Loic "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration" New Left Review 13, (January-February 2002) [PDF]

Black Lives Matter

Presentation: UCB Underground Scholars Initiative

- c. Immigration, Race and Ethnicity (March 20-April 3)

Nicholls, Walter, The DREAMers

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 27-March 29

- d. Education (April 5- April 12)

Noguera, Pedro City Schools and the American Dream Chapters 1-3

Video: Making the Grade

V. Strategies for social justice

Student Presentations on Social Justice Movements (April 17-April 26)

FINAL PAPER DUE ON MAY 3 at 3:30PM

(Late papers lose one grade for each calendar day late)

REVIEW CLASS: MAY 3

FINAL EXAM GROUP 20: MAY 11 7:00 PM-10:00 PM