

Sociology 3AC

INTRODUCTION to SOCIOLOGY

Spring 2019

University of California, Berkeley

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Tuesday/Thursday: 9:30 – 11:00
A1 Hearst Field Annex

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This course provides an introduction to the field of sociology through engagement with major contemporary issues. The underlying objective is for students to develop their “sociological imaginations” in relation to the world around them. The course is structured in three parts that each raise a major contemporary social issue: Mass Incarceration; Surveillance; and “Illegal Immigration”. We begin each section by reflecting upon the “common sense” that shapes our understandings of these issues: what are the ideas, perspectives and underlying assumptions that we, often unconsciously, hold? Having excavated this “common sense” we then turn to sociology to develop radically new ways of approaching these issues. The goal is to utilize sociology, with its emphasis on analytic, theoretical and critical thinking, to disrupt our “common sense” and enable us to develop new ways of understanding the major political, economic and social issues of our time.

INTRODUCTION – *What is Sociology?*

1/22 Course Introduction: *Sociology as the Disruption of “Common Sense”*

In Class Viewing of Documentary *13th* (2016)

PART 1: MASS INCARCERATION

“Mass Incarceration is the New Jim Crow” Michelle Alexander

1/24 Mass Incarceration

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press, 2012. Introduction (Pp.1-19)

1/29 Mass Incarceration as a Racial Caste System

Alexander, Ch.1 “The Rebirth of Caste” (Pp. 20-40)

1/31 The Historical Evolution of Racial Caste Systems

Alexander, Ch.1 “The Rebirth of Caste” (Pp. 40-57)

2/5 “War on Drugs”: *The “Engine” of Mass Incarceration*

Alexander, Excerpts of Ch.2 “The Lockdown” (Pp.58-83; 92-94)

2/7 Beyond the Prison Walls

Alexander, Excerpts of Ch.4 “The Cruel Hand” (Pp.137-164)

In Class Viewing of *Do Not Resist* (2016)

2/12 The “New Jim Crow”: *Historical Parallels & Divergences*

Alexander, Excerpts of Ch.5 “The New Jim Crow” (Pp.173-202; 206-208)

2/14 The Economies of “Peculiar Institutions”

Waquant, Loic. "From slavery to mass incarceration: Rethinking the ‘race question’ in the US." *New Left Review* 13 (2002): 41-60.

2/19 “Colorblindness” and the Limits of Civil Rights Advocacy

Alexander, Excerpts of Chapter 6 “The Fire this Time” (Pp.221-244)

2/21 The Dialectic of Resistance & Repression: *Mass Incarceration as Counterinsurgency*

Murch, Donna. “Ferguson’s Inheritance.” *Jacobin*. (2015)

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/08/ferguson-police-black-lives-matter/>

2/26 Conclusion: *Three Approaches to Mass Incarceration*

Viewing Assignment: *Spying on the Homefront* (2007)

[\(https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/homefront/\)](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/homefront/)

*Watch the documentary above **BEFORE** today’s class. *How does the documentary present the problem of surveillance?*

MIDTERM Exam distributed during class on 2/26

MIDTERM EXAM DUE on Sunday 3/3 by 9pm

PART 2: SURVEILLANCE

“To be governed is to be watched...” Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

2/28 Surveillance

Foucault, Michel. 1978. *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. (Pp.3-11; 135-138)

3/5 Surveillance as a “Technology of Power”

Foucault (Pp.170-177; 195-205)

3/7 The Plantation Surveillance System

Parenti, Christian. 2003. *The Soft Cage: Surveillance in America from Slavery to the War on Terror*. New York: Basic Books. Ch.1 “Life in the Glass Box” and Ch.2 “Antebellum ID: Genealogies of Identification and Registration” (Pp.1-32)

Hadden, Sally E. *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001. Excerpt of Ch.4 “In Times of Tranquility: Everyday Slave Patrols” (Pp.105-111)

3/12 The “Accumulation of Bodies”, Chinese Exclusion, & the “Eye of Justice”

Parenti, Ch. 3 “The Accumulation of Bodies, Part I: Identification and Photography” and Ch. 5 “Cruel Gam Saan: Surveillance and Chinese Exclusion” and Ch. 12 “The Eye of Justice” (Pp.33-42; 61-76; 169-182)

3/14 Surveillance in the “War on Terror” & the Right to “Privacy”

Parenti, Ch. 14 “Fear as Institution: 9/11 and Surveillance Triumphant” (Pp.199-212)

Marx, Gary T. 2007. “What’s new about the ‘new surveillance’? Classifying for change and continuity” in *The Surveillance Studies Reader*. Ed. Sean P. Hier and Josh Greenberg. New York: Open University Press. (Pp.83-89)

Schuilenburg, Marc. “The Securitization of Society: On the Rise of Quasi-Criminal Law and Selective Exclusion” *Social Justice* 38(1-2): 71-89. (Read only Pp. 72-74)

3/19 Discrimination by Design: Risk Assessment

Ferguson, Andrew Guthrie. 2017. *The Rise of Big Data Policing: Surveillance, Race and the Future of Law Enforcement*. New York: New York University Press. Excerpts of Ch. “Big Data’s Watchful Eye” and Ch.3 “Whom We Police: Person Based Predictive Targeting” (Pp.7-12; 34-40; 42-44; 47-52)

Angwin, Julia, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner. 2016. “Machine Bias:

There's software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks." *ProPublica*. May 23.

(<https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing>).

Guzik, Keith. 2009. "Discrimination by Design: predictive data mining as security practice in the United States' 'war on terrorism'" *Surveillance & Society* 7(1):1-17. Excerpt (Pp.3-12)

3/21 Predictive Policing

Ferguson, Excerpts of Ch.4 "Where we Police: Placed-Based Predictive Policing" (Pp.62-67; 72-76; 88-95)

Lum, Kristian and William Isaac. 2016. "To Predict and Serve?" *Significance* 13(5): 14-19. (<https://hrdag.org/publications/to-predict-and-serve/>).

Alexander, Michele. 2018. "The Newest Jim Crow." *The New York Times*. November 8. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/08/opinion/sunday/criminal-justice-reforms-race-technology.html>)

In Class Viewing of *Do Not Resist*

3/26 Spring Break

3/28 Spring Break

PART 3: "ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION"

"Illegality' is lived through a palpable sense of deportability" Nicholas DeGenova

4/2 The State's Monopoly of the "Legitimate Means of Movement"

Torpey, John. 1998. "Coming and Going: On the State Monopolization of the Legitimate 'Means of Movement'" *Sociological Theory* 16(3): 239-259.

4/4 The Historical Origin of the "Illegal Alien"

Ngai, Mae M. 2005. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. "Note on Language and Terminology," Introduction "Illegal Aliens: A Problem of Law and History," and Preface to Part 1 "The Regime of Quotas and Papers" (Pp. xix-xx; 1-20)

4/9 The Quota Act and the Reconstruction of Race through Immigration Law

Ngai, Ch.1 “The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 and the Reconstruction of Race in Immigration Law” (Pp.20-55)

4/11 Deportation Policy and the Racialized Production of the “Illegal Alien”

Ngai, Excerpts of Ch.2 “Deportation Policy and the Making and Unmaking of Illegal Aliens” (Pp.55-77; 82; 84-90)

4/16 “Imported Colonialism”: *Braceros*, “Wetbacks” and Mexican Agricultural Labor

Ngai, Preface to Part 2 “Migrants at the Margins of Law and Nation” and Excerpts of Ch.4 “Braceros, “Wetbacks,” and the National Boundaries of Class” (Pp.93-95; 127-158; 165-166)

4/18 The Production and Political Economy of Migrant “Illegality”

De Genova, Nicholas. “The Legal Production of Mexican/Migrant ‘Illegality’” in *Governing Immigration through Crime: A Reader*. Eds. Julie A. Dowling and Jonathan Xavier Inda. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (Pp.41-55)

In Class Viewing of *Beyond Borders: Undocumented Mexican Americans* (PBS)

4/23 Mass Incarceration & Mass Deportation

Golash-Boza, Tanya Maria. 2015. *Deported: Immigrant Policing, Disposable Labor, and Global Capitalism*. New York: New York University Press. Preface & Introduction “Mass Deportation and the Neoliberal Cycle” (Pp.vii-x; 1-23)

4/25 The Racialized Targeting of Deportation

Golash-Boza, Excerpts of Ch.3 “Becoming (Black and Latino) American” and Ch.5 “Targets of Deportation Policy”. (Pp.94-97; 102-108; 124-129; 131-133; 167-169; 173-178; 185-188)

4/30 “Global Apartheid”: *Immigration Detention & Mass Deportation*

Golash-Boza, Excerpts of Ch.6 “Behind Bars,” Ch.7 “Back Home,” and Conclusion “Global Apartheid”. (Pp.199-203; 209-220; 245-247; 256-265)

In Class Viewing of *Punishment and Profits: Immigration Detention* (2012)

5/2 CONCLUSION: *From “Common Sense” to Sociological Analysis*

*****Final Exam** distributed during class on 5/2

FINAL EXAM DUE on Monday 5/13 by 3pm

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

25% Pop Quizzes

35% Midterm Exam (*Due 3/3*)

40% Final Exam (*Due 5/13*)

Students are expected to thoroughly and carefully read the course policies below.

DO NOT email me with questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is not mandatory for this course, however it is crucial for performing well on exams and pop quizzes (see below). Please note that I **do not distribute lecture slides or notes**. Therefore, I suggest that all students find a fellow classmate from whom you can obtain notes in case you are absent. While I do not require attendance, I aim to make lectures both informative and enjoyable. Regular attendance will not only improve your performance in the class, it will also hopefully make the course a much more enjoyable experience for you.

Class begins promptly at 10 minutes after the scheduled hour. If you choose to attend lecture, you must be **present on time** (as late arrivals disrupt the class) and you are expected to remain in the classroom until the conclusion of the lecture. Students should **never leave class early** without discussing this with me prior.

Pop Quizzes will be administered at the **beginning of class**. Students who are present to take pop quizzes but do not wish to attend the remainder of class are asked to leave the classroom immediately after the conclusion of the quiz so as to minimize any disruption to our class.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Our primary work as sociologists involves reading – this course requires extensive and careful reading. The assignments listed for each class meeting are to be read **prior** to that scheduled class. The expectation is that students allocate the necessary time to undertake a **thorough and careful reading**. The examinations for this course consist of take-home essays which students will have a limited time to complete. Thus highlighting, underlining and notetaking throughout the semester will prove highly beneficial for these exams.

All readings listed on the syllabus are included in the **course reader, available at *Replica Digital Ink*** (510 549-9991) at 2138 Oxford Street (by the Center Street entrance to campus near the Downtown Berkeley BART station and around the corner from Starbucks). Course readings are **also available on bCourses**. If you choose to use these digital copies rather than the course reader, be sure to refer to the syllabus for exact page assignments as some of the texts are uploaded to bCourses in their entirety (while only portions are assigned).

While students may choose to utilize these digital copies, I highly recommend using a course reader which I think will be advantageous for the take-home, open book exams (you'll have all your notes, underlining, marked passages, etc. easily accessible). More generally, extensive research has indicated that students absorb content more thoroughly when working with hard copies of text.

Whether you choose to purchase the course reader or utilize the digital copies on Bcourses, you are expected to **bring the assigned readings to every class** meeting (as we will be doing extensive readings of the texts together in class).

READING GUIDES:

Included in the course reader (and available on bCourses) are reading guides for all of the assigned readings. You should always **refer to the reading guides before beginning the assigned readings** as they are intended to make the process easier (especially for the more difficult theoretical texts). Utilizing these guides will enable you to focus on the most important issues and help clarify your reading. Paying careful attention to the questions/issues/concepts listed in the guides is crucial for doing well on the pop quizzes.

POP QUIZZES:

To ensure that students keep up with reading assignments, **7 pop quizzes** will be given throughout the semester at unannounced times. The quizzes will be quick and short and will assess basic comprehension of the assigned readings. You don't have to fully understand the readings to do well on the quizzes (we will make full sense of them together in class), but they do require that you read the assigned texts *fully and carefully*. They also require that you pay careful attention to the reading guides provided as pop quiz questions may be drawn from them.

Out of the 7 pop quizzes given, **only 5 will count** towards the final grade. This accommodates for any students who miss pop quizzes due to absences (**there are no make-ups for pop-quizzes**). For students who complete more than the required 5 pop quizzes, the lowest grades will be dropped. Given that this policy enables students to miss (or fail) almost 1/3 of the total pop quizzes, no further accommodations or exceptions will be made. I have purposely set this generous allotment for missed quizzes to accommodate for any/all situations and thus to relieve myself of the extensive work of dealing with individual requests for accommodations.

EXAMS:

The midterm and final for this course will be **take-home, open book examinations** that consist of short essays that assess students' mastery of the course materials. Essays will be geared towards asking students to synthesize the scholarship covered in each part of the course. Please note that exams will require thorough citation of course materials, thus it is to your advantage to underline and make notes in your texts throughout the semester.

NO EXTENSIONS will be given for the exams. The distribution and due dates for the exams are listed on this syllabus. Students are expected to be aware of these dates and to schedule and prepare accordingly. It is your responsibility to check these due dates at the beginning of the semester and ensure that you are able to meet them alongside your other academic obligations. **Please do not contact me with requests for extensions because of other academic obligations.** Students may submit their exams late but a grade penalty will be imposed.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

Please notify me immediately if you require any special accommodations for the course. If you are registered with the DSP program, please ensure that your authorization letter is forwarded to me at the beginning of the semester. Students who wish to utilize DSP accommodations for the midterm or final exams are required to contact me about this well *in advance*. Students who need accommodations for the pop quizzes are required to discuss this with me in the *beginning* of the semester.

STUDENT ATHLETES:

Student athletes who have away games or other team obligations should contact me if necessary. While there is no need to notify me of absences (given that attendance is not mandatory), you should find a fellow classmate to obtain notes from and feel free to come to my office hours to discuss what you've missed. If team related absences create a problem for you in terms of pop quizzes, please contact me.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

All written work must be your own. Any words, or even *ideas*, drawn from another source (even if paraphrased) must be appropriately cited. Be aware that all submissions for this class are routinely checked for plagiarism by bCourses. The system will automatically compare your submitted document with all other student submissions on bCourses (including previous years), academic sources and all other publicly available documents on the internet.