This course is a comparative sociohistorical inquiry into the bases and mechanisms of racial domination as a “disguised form of ethnicity” anchored in culturally salient (putative) physical differences. It is organized in three parts.

First, we examine the epistemological obstacles standing in the way of an adequate grasp of “race” as a principle of social vision and division (including the confusion and conflation of folk with analytical notions, the uncontrolled universalization U.S. national experience, and the hold of the logic of the trial) and review fundamental concepts needed to formulate and tackle the question: ethnicity, honor, closure, and naturalization and the diagonal of racialization.

Second, we probe the peculiar social (il)logic and implications of “race” as a form of classification--a manner of dividing and ranking human beings and groups with (overt or covert) reference to their biological makeup. We contrast and compare the bases, structure, and implications of the racial taxonomies evolved by different societies with an eye towards understanding how these both reflect and predetermine patterns of group relations. We pay special attention to the role of the state in validating and inculcating these classification.

Third, we consider the conversion of classification into stratification, that is, how various societies have drawn, enforced, conjoined or dissolved ethnoracial boundaries, focusing on five elementary forms of racial domination: categorization (prejudice, stigma, implicit bias), discrimination (differential treatment based on imputed group membership), segregation (differential allocation or disparate impact in physical and social space), ghettolization (the forced development of parallel institutions), and violence (ranging from intimidation and aggression, to lynching and pogroms, and climaxing with racial warfare and extermination).

Readings include a wide range of sociological, historical, and anthropological studies of ethnoracial vision and division, accomodation, and conflict in Latin America, Asia, Western Europe, the United States, and Africa from medieval times to the present. They are geared toward helping us uncover the social mechanisms that lead to the rise, reproduction, and transformation of ethnoracial inequality, wherever and whenever it is found. This course is problem-oriented, not group-oriented: its purpose is neither to celebrate nor to denigrate the experiences of this or that particular category but to explain and understand them in generic sociological terms.

Requirements: This class is designed for sociology majors and others who have had prior exposure to social science disciplines. It is not an easy class; it demands serious work (reading, thinking, writing): you are to do the readings before class and attend every lecture, as each builds
and extends onto the others. You need to take extensive notes on both the readings and lectures to assimilate the materials we will cover. (You will be instructed as to reading and note-taking techniques). In so doing, you will not only learn dizzying facts are the stupendous way humans ranks and judge each other; you will also learn to compare and explain them.

Most importantly, you must be prepared to approach the subject matter, readings, lectures, and class discussion with a wide open mind and with the firm intention to learn to think about things that may seem familiar in novel and sometimes startling ways. You must be willing to consider new ideas that may unsettle you, facts that may disturb or offend you, and subject your (pre)conceptions and personal experiences to the disciplined scrutiny of critical reasoning and systematic empirical observation.

**Readings:** Required books are available from the usual bookstores. All readings are on reserve at the undergraduate library and on line on the course page on bcourses.

**Grading:** your course grade will come in equal proportions from two exercises that are to be done and turned in ON TIME (no makeup or extension of any sort will be allowed):

1. An open-book mid-term provisionally scheduled for week 9, combining in-class exam and take-home essay; it will cover the first 8 weeks of the course.

2. A final exam taking place on the campus appointed day, covering the entire course but with special emphasis on weeks 7 through 14.

**Required books**


**I. WALKING THROUGH LAND MINES, FUMBLING FOR CONCEPTS (weeks 1-2)**

(17-24 January )

*From explanans to explanandum - epistemological obstacle and epistemological rupture (Bachelard) - folk versus analytic concepts - ethnoracial doxa and episteme - the continuum of ethnicity based on “social estimation of honor” (Weber) - social “principle of vision and division” (Bourdieu) - symbolic power and paramount symbolic agencies (religion, science, state/law) - the subtypes of ethnicity: religious, linguistic, regional, national, racial - race as a subtype of (disguised/denegated) ethnicity - “racial” implies explicit or implicit correspondance between social/historical and natural/biological hierarchies - the diagonal of racialization - to racialize = naturalize, eternalize, homogenize - domination = subordination, exploitation, exclusion - avoid moralism and the logical of the trial - five elementary forms of ethnoracial domination: categorization, discrimination, segregation, ghettoization, violence - illustration: the three bases of ethnoracial division in the Americas: descent, phenotype, sociocultural status (Wagley)*


Difficult texts we will make an effort to work with through the semester:


II. CATEGORIZATION: THE SOCIAL (IL)LOGIC OF RACIAL CLASSIFICATION (weeks 3-4) (weeks of 31 January and 7 February)

Classification struggles - classification machines, symbolic entrepreneurs and the state as “central bank of symbolic power” - Weber and social closure - specificities of social as opposed to natural classifications - identification and categorization – “race” in official census around the world - historical changes in US understandings of race as recorded by the Census bureau – birth of the one-drop rule in the upper South - the battle between the one-drop rule and the Caribbean gradational system - the invention of the Hispanics - how other societies not hung up on “purity” resolve the question of mixed-descent – from descent to phenotype: how people are classified and classify themselves in Brazil - intra and intergenerational mobility along the color continuum - the whitening complex in Latin America - how the South African state under apartheid imposed and recorded racial identities - ethnic divisions and their bases in Japan, a society that likes to pretend it’s “monoethnic” – the invention of tradition, Orientalism - classifying the Roma in three Eastern European societies - variety and illogic of ethnoracial categorization


Telles, Edward. “Racial Classification,” chapter 4 in Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil, pp. 78-106.


III. PREJUDICE, STIGMA, IMPLICIT BIAS (weeks 5-6)
(weeks of 14 and 21 February)
Types and stakes of classification struggles - Monk on color inside race: subcategorical classification and stratification - why no public concern and mobilization? NOSSA, heightism and the predicament of short men - prejudice as “aversive or hostile attitude” (Allport), “denial of humanity” (Dollard) and “sense of group position” (Blumer) - inborn or learned? - how to fight prejudice - unconscious bias: fact or fad? - stigma: Erving Goffman and “discrediting differentness” - three types of stigma - information control - five elements of Link and Phelan, role of power - stigma as negative symbolic capital


Frederickson, Racism: A Short History, Chapter 2, pp. 49-96.


*texts on the Roma in Eastern Europe TBA.

>>EXCURSUS 1: IS RACE THE ROOT OF THE SPAWN OF SLAVERY?

Master status trait (Hughes) - slavery as extreme violent domination - a multifunctional institution - total powerlessness, natal alienation, generalized dishonor - recruitment into slavery, internal relations, manumission – intrusion and extrusion – slave trading systems – the condition of slaves - slavery and ethnicity – manumission and wala - slavery comes to America – why native Americans were not enslaved – transition from European indentured servants to African slaves – racialization of slavery - conflagration slavery/democracy - from bonded labor to caste - historical inversion becomes racial doxa

Orlando Patterson, “The Denial of Slavery in American Sociology” (2019)
Orlando Patterson, “Slavery as a Social Institution” (2004)

Recommended

IV. DISCRIMINATION (weeks 7-8)
(weeks of 28 February and 7 March)
Entering the realm of conduct - confused notion - McIver 1948 - presupposes principle of individual and group equality - disparity, disparate impact, and discrimination – intent, morality, legality - three ways to detect : residuals, audit/testing, subjective report - basis, mechanism, domains - salient and protected categories – psychological (acting out prejudice), economic (pure : Becker, statistical : Phelps), and sociological theories (Barth, Weber, Du Bois) - micro, meso, macro-mechanisms - remedies and dilemmas of preferential programs - historical trajectory of the Burakumin in Tokugawa and Meiji Japan - The Burakumin Liberation League and Dowa policy (1969-2002) - Merging, passing, or (re)claiming a tainted identity?

Recommended
Michael Weiner, Japan’s Minorities. Routledge, 2008, chapters TBA.

MIDTERM TUESDAY 14 MARCH IN CLASS & AT HOME

>>EXCURSUS 2: THE LOGIC OF CASTE, SPECIFIC OR GENERIC?


**Recommended**


**V. SEGREGATION (weeks 9, 10)**

(weeks of 14 and 21 March)

Differential allocation in physical space (residence) and social space (occupation, school, marriage) – “institutionalized form of social distance expressed in physical separation” (Kuper) – moral and technical meaning, forced versus willful – segregation’s opposite is dispersal (NOT “integration”) – two models: human ecology (Park’s Chicago School) versus social closure (Weber) – struggles in space and over space – 4 measures of segregation: dissimilarity, isolation, clustering, centrality – hypersegregation – segregation rates and trends in US, Brazil, France – mechanisms of residential segregation: state mandate, economic operators (banking, realtors, homeowners’ association), violence, ostracism – why segregation matters (how position in social and physical space impacts life chances)


**SPRING BREAK (week of 28 March)**

**V. SEGREGATION (week 10)**

(week of 4 April)

Differential allocation in physical space (residence) and social space (occupation, school, marriage) – “institutionalized form of social distance expressed in physical separation” (Kuper) – moral and technical meaning, imposed versus elective – two models of residential seg: human ecology (Park’s Chicago School) versus social closure (Weber) – struggles in space and over space – why segregation matters (how position in social and physical space impacts life chances) – 4 measures of segregation: dissimilarity, isolation, clustering, centrality – hypersegregation – segregation rates and trends in US (Massey and Denton), Brazil (Telles), France (Pan Ké Shon) – mechanisms of ethnoracial segregation: state mandate and legal restrictions (e.g. restrictive covenants), economic operators (banking, realtors, homeowners’ association), homeowners’ bias, violence, ostracism, class composition, ethnic affinity.


**VI. SECLUSION: CAMPS, GHETTOS, RESERVATIONS (weeks 11-12)**

(weeks of 11 and 18 April)

*Using space as an instrument of group power – sociospatial seclusion and its two dimensions (high/low, imposed/elective) – rural and urban seclusion – plotting key forms: gated community, upper-class district, ghetto, ethnic cluster, jail, camp, reservation – the ghetto as instrument of ethnoracial closure and control in the city, “not exclusion” – breaking with the folk notion (“bad” neighborhood to be avoided) – constructing an analytic concept – four structural components: stigma, constraint, spatial confinement, institutional parallelism – two functions: economic extraction and social ostracization – the Jewish ghetto in Renaissance Europe, the black ghetto in Fordist US - the ghetto as magnet, vehicle for group advancement, and center of cultural production – disentangling ghettoization, poverty, and segregation – verticality and horizontality – paradoxical benefits of ghettoization*


*CAMP*


**Recommended**

VII. EXCLUSIONARY VIOLENCE: INTIMIDATION TO POGROMS TO EXTERMINATION (weeks 13-14)
(week of 18 March)

-pogroms
-ethnic cleansing


>>EXCURSUS 3: SETTLER COLONIALISM


Recommended


VIII. RECAPITULATION: REASSEMBLING RACIAL DOMINATION
(week of 25 April)


To go further


LAST DAY OF CLASS TUESDAY 25 APRIL
EXAM WEEK 8-12 MAY