

American Racial and Ethnic Minorities
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Sociology 134, Section 2, Fall 2010
MWF 2:25-3:15 in Social Sciences 6104

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Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30-5:30
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Course Summary:

Sociology 134 provides a sociological understanding of relations among racial and ethnic groups in the United States. The first part of the semester will be devoted to understanding how history, law, social institutions, and personal interactions have socially constructed race and ethnicity in American society and how they continue to do so. I will demonstrate how race and ethnicity are social constructions by showing that: (1) race and ethnicity do not have a firm basis in biology, (2) the definitions of racial categories have shifted over time and are different cross-nationally, (3) racial categorization is often arbitrary, and (4) racial categorizations have been controlled by whites and used as a tool for racial domination.

In the second half of the semester, we will take a closer look at racism. Most people associate racism solely with personal prejudice or racial slurs; this is called interpersonal racism. Another, arguably more influential, type of racism is structural racism. Structural racism is racial favoritism entrenched in social structures, policies, and institutions that may create an intergenerational cycle of disadvantage for racial minorities. We will examine how structural racism affects racial minorities' access to housing, education, the labor market, healthcare, environmental wellbeing, political participation, and criminal justice. We will conclude the semester by discussing the dangers of being "colorblind", as well as strategies for combating interpersonal and structural racism.

Course Readings:

All readings will be available on the course web page on Learn@UW. To access them, go to <https://learnuw.wisc.edu/> and log in with your net ID. Under "2010-Fall," click on the link to the course. At the top of the page, click on the menu item labeled "Content." Links to the readings will be found there. There is no required textbook, though *Rethinking the Color Line*, edited by Charles Gallagher, contains several of the readings we will do. This textbook is available through the library system. The schedule of readings is at the back of the syllabus. **Make sure to check the syllabus to see if there are assignments other than readings (e.g., listening to podcasts or watching YouTube videos).**

Office Hours:

My office hours are on Mondays, 3:30-5:30 p.m. However, if you are unable to make this time because of a scheduling conflict, you may email me to schedule a different time to meet. I encourage you to come and talk to me if you have questions about assignments or are having difficulty with the class.

Class E-mail List:

I have set up a class e-mail list (soc134-2-f10@lists.wisc.edu). This is the e-mail address that you should use to communicate with the group as a whole (e.g., "I need notes from Thursday. Anyone want to trade?"). Please no spam! I will also be communicating to the group through this e-mail address, so check your e-mail.

Email Policy:

Since email now constitutes the bulk of extra-classroom conversation between student and instructor, it must be subject to normal rules of formality. Therefore, all email communication should follow these guidelines: (1) Email should be composed in formal, professional language, and with attention to the propriety accorded to the position of the writer, and the addressee. I will not return emails that do not meet these standards. (2) Email should not ask questions whose answers are contained in the course syllabus. I will not return these emails either. (3) Students should avoid asking questions in email that should be raised either in class, or in individual consultation with the instructor. These include questions of an excessively conceptual nature, and questions that expect an unreasonable amount from the instructor. A good rule of thumb: if your question cannot be answered in two sentences or less, or if it is a question that you should solve on your own through the course of your reading, then it is not appropriate for email. (4) Lastly, though you can expect a 24-hour-turn-around to your email, you cannot expect responses to emails outside of business hours (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

Course Participation through eInstruction:

You will need to purchase an eInstruction clicker to participate in class. I will use the clickers to take attendance, do opinion polls, and administer reading quizzes. At the time of this writing, the clicker unit currently costs \$22.50 from the University Bookstore (\$16.90 used). Once you have purchased the clicker, you need to register it by visiting this website:

http://cpsonlinehe.einstruction.com/source/dspSerialNumberEntry.cfm?SiteAppName=uwmadison&DS=hglevel3_cc2&jkwylzlua=yes&eid=1

You must register the clicker to associate the clicker with the course in which it is being used. I will provide you with the necessary course code. More detailed instructions are available in <http://comets.wisc.edu/clickers/eInstruction/register.html>. The eInstruction clicker will cost you \$13 to register your unit for the semester. You will be able to use the clicker for future or concurrent classes, or you can resell it to the bookstore at the conclusion of the course.

Assignments:

- 1) 3 essay exams—45%
- 2) Connection Paper on Family—15%
- 3) Final Project on Structural Racism—30%
- 4) Attendance and Participation (Uploading your picture to Learn@UW, Class Attendance, Participation in in-class assignments)—10%

Connection Paper on Family: 3-4 pages

Plan for Paper: October 25th

Paper Due: November 5th

How have you and your family been advantaged/disadvantaged by structural racism? Talk to your parents and grandparents about topics like applying for loans, home ownership, inheritance, education, labor market experiences, and segregation. After you have gathered this information from your family, think carefully about how your family's race (or races) has/have affected their life trajectories. How has white privilege or lack of white privilege affected your life? Build your essay around an argumentative thesis statement, which you support by using examples from your life and your family members' lives. Also, cite at least two readings that connect either to examples given in the text of your paper or your overall thesis.

Your plan for this paper, due October 25th, should include the names of family members (or appropriate pseudonyms) with whom you spoke, the topics you covered in your interviews, and a tentative thesis statement. (Note: I am open to the possibility that you will argue that white privilege has not affected your family's trajectory, but if you choose to do so, please present a carefully reasoned argument that is well supported with examples.)

Final Project:

Plan for Project Due: November 10th

Final Project Due: December 10th

This assignment will test whether you understand the material covered in class well enough to explain it to others. For this project, you must devise a way to teach others about structural racism. You should have a specific audience in mind (e.g. peers, elementary school kids, sports team, work colleagues, legislators etc), as well as a specific type of structural racism (e.g. in housing, education, labor market, healthcare, media, or the legal or political sphere). In addition, you should have an objective for your project. What is your project supposed to teach your audience? Your project may take on many forms, including a newsletter, a video for YouTube, a speech, a radio podcast, webpage, a board game, a letter to a senator, etc. You will be required to submit a plan for how you will complete this project on November 10th, which should include discussion of your audience, objective, and a to-do list with self-imposed deadlines. This plan is part of your grade for the project. The final project will be due on December 10th. (Note: I admire humor and think that it can be a very convincing teaching tool. However, please be careful and respectful if you choose to use humor. Remember that there are boundaries to what is appropriate (e.g., blackface is never appropriate. Come talk to me if you are not sure if the humor in your project is offensive or inappropriate.)

Extra Credit Opportunity:

Due: December 6-13

I will give extra credit to those students brave enough to present their final project to the class. I will ask you to sign up for presentations on December 1st. Length of the presentation will depend on the number of volunteers and on the nature of the project itself. If so many students wish to present that we need additional class time, I will set up an optional class in December for presentations.

Late Assignments and Make-up Tests

Your score will drop one letter grade for each day an assignment is late. I will NOT administer make-up exams unless there is a serious illness/injury or family emergency. If you ask for a make-up exam, you must provide evidence of this illness or emergency.

Grades:

Final grades will be allocated as follows:

92-100=A

88-91=AB

82-87=B

78-81=BC

70-77=C

60-69=D

Under 60=F

I reserve the right to modify the distribution at a later date, but I will not do so in a way that lowers anyone's grade.

Expectations:

Being Successful in this Class

This course has a tendency to attract a group of students with widely diverse academic backgrounds, from first year students to seniors. Also, and this pertains largely, but not exclusively, to those who are not Sociology majors, there is typically a wide array of reasons why students enroll in this course, including motives that are personal, social, academic, ideological, and professional. Therefore, it seems wise to lay down a few ground rules and, in a sense, an encouragement:

- Be here. This entails not simply showing your face in class, but attending the entirety of class, listening, and participating. **Arrive on time.** It is very annoying when people arrive late, especially when they climb over three people to get a seat. Once you are here, please don't make it hard for others to concentrate or listen by talking to others, loudly slurping on Jamba Juice, or refusing to participate in group activities.
- Pay attention. You can't easily earn respect if you show up and sleep, read the paper, text, or do other reading. Because of rampant abuse of the internet during prior classes, **use of laptops is prohibited during class lecture.** I realize that you may prefer to take notes on the computer, but taking notes using a pen and paper never hurt anyone. (If you have a McBurney Visa that states your need of a laptop during class that is a different matter. Come see me.) Also, turn off your cell phone or blackberry devices when you enter the room. **I will answer your cell phone if it rings in class!** During exams, you will not be allowed to use the following: MP3 players, cell phones, palm devices, blackberries, PDAs, SPOT Watches, or laptops. **I will give you respect and do my best; all that I ask, is that you do the same.**
- There will be times when you will disagree with me or another student. That's just fine. Speak up! **Your grade does not depend on your agreement with presented material. Your grade depends on your ability to engage seriously with the material.**

Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All work that you submit must be your own and must have been done for this class. This means no recycling of old papers or projects (yours or anyone else's) and ABSOLUTELY no plagiarism. Plagiarism includes more than just buying entire papers online. It also includes cutting and pasting chunks of text from other sources, such as the internet, and presenting it as your own writing. Students will be asked to submit work in electronic form, so that all work can be checked against plagiarism detection software. All incidences of plagiarism will be reported to your Dean and will result in a failing grade for the course.

Ignorance of the policy on academic misconduct is no excuse! I expect you to become acquainted with the University's policy on academic misconduct, found here:

<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>

If You Need Help:

Do not hesitate to contact me if you need assistance. If you cannot meet with me during office hours, we can make an appointment to meet at another time. The key to success is to head off problems before they turn into emergencies. I'm here to help.

If you need accommodations to succeed in this course, let me know at the beginning of the semester, and provide me with the relevant documents, such as a McBurney VISA, so that we can get everything squared away for you as soon as possible.

Class Schedule:

Unit 1: Sociological Theories of Race and Ethnicity

Week 1: What Is Race and Why Is It Important?

Friday, September 3: An Introduction to the Course

Week 2: Does Race Have a Biological Basis?

Monday, September 6: LABOR DAY

Wednesday, September 8: Biology Refutes Racial Myths

- *The Race Myth*, Introduction and Chapter One by Graves
- Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race
http://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-background-01-x.htm
- “How Our Skins Got Their Colors,” Marvin Harris

Friday, September 10: The Power of an Illusion (Note: The readings for today are intentionally light because we are watching a video in class. However, I strongly recommend that you get started on next week’s readings, as they are more difficult and lengthy.)

- “Two Questions About Race,” by Goodman
<http://raceandgenomics.ssrc.org/Goodman/>
- American Sociological Association Statement on Race
http://www2.asanet.org/media/asa_race_statement.pdf

Week 3: The Social Construction of Race

Monday, September 13: Race as a Social Construct

- “Defining Race: Comparative Perspectives,” F. James Davis
- “How Jews Became White Folks,” by Brodtkin
- “Racial Formations,” by Omi and Winant

Wednesday, September 15: Differentiating between Race and Ethnicity

- “Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second-Generation Black Immigrants in New York City,” by Waters
- “Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?” by Waters
- “The Melting Pot and the Color Line,” by Steinberg

Friday, September 17: The Continuous Social Construction of Race: The Role of Inter-marriage, Immigration, and Social Policy

- “Immigration, Inter-marriage, and the Challenges of Measuring Racial/Ethnic Identities,” by Waters
- “The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy in the Twenty-First-Century United States,” by Gans
- “Redrawing the Color Line? The Problems and Possibilities of Multiracial Families and Group Making,” by DaCosta

Week 4: White Privilege, Racism, and Prejudice

Monday, September 20: What is White Privilege? How Does it Relate to the Social Construction of Race?

- “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” by McIntosh
- “Membership has its Privileges,” by Wise
- “White Privilege Shapes the U.S.,” by Jensen

- “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness,” by Lipsitz

Wednesday, September 22: Defending White Privilege through Prejudice and Racism

- *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*, pp. 1-10, 25-48 by Bonilla-Silva
- “Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position or Individual Belief?” by Blumer

Friday, September 24: Test on Unit 1 Material

Unit 2: Racial Domination and White Privilege in the United States— A Closer Look at Conquest, Slavery, and Immigration and How They Have Shaped Today’s Racial Landscape

Week 5--Racial Domination and White Privilege

Monday, September 27: Atrocities Committed by Whites Against Native Americans

- *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, Chapter One by Brown
- “Civilize them with a Stick,” from *Lakota Woman* by Crow Dog

Wednesday, September 29: Continued Discrimination Against Native Americans

- “Red Eyes,” from *Lies My Teacher Told Me* by Loewen
- “Winnebagos, Cherokee’s, Apaches, and Dakotas: The Persistence of Stereotyping of American Indians in American Advertising Brands,” by Merskin
- “Native Images in Schools and the Racially Hostile Environment,” by Baca

Friday, October 1: Slavery and the Creation of the Color Line

- “Drawing the Color Line,” by Zinn
- *Killing the Black Body*, Chapter One by Roberts
- “Forty Acres and a Mule: What if America Pays Reparations?” by Conley

Week 6—Racial Domination and White Privilege

Monday, October 4: Jim Crow, Lynching, and the Eugenics Movement

- *Killing the Black Body*, Intro and Chapter Two by Roberts
- LISTEN: Strange Fruit: Anniversary Of A Lynching by RADIO DIARIES (NPR), Broadcast on All Things Considered August 6, 2010, (about 12 minutes) found at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=129025516>
- LISTEN: American RadioWorks Documentary: *Remembering Jim Crow* (about 50 minutes) http://download.publicradio.org/podcast/americanradioworks/2001/remembering.mp3?_kip_ipx=701656351-1283182119

Wednesday, October 6: Who Immigrates to the United States and Why?

- *A Portrait: Immigrant America*, pp 1-36 by Portes and Rumbaut
- “Five Myths About Immigration,” by Cole

Friday, October 8: Theories of Immigrant Assimilation

- “Theoretical Perspectives in Racial and Ethnic Relations,” by Feagin and Feagin
- “The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants,” by Portes and Zhou

Week 7—Racial Domination and White Privilege

Monday, October 11: Ethnic Enclave and Immigrant Exploitation

- “Can’t Afford to Lose a Good Job”
- *Domestica*, pp. 3-9, 13-19 by Hondagneu-Sotelo

- “Sweatshops in Sunset Park: A Variation of the Late-Twentieth Century Chinese Garment Shops in New York City,” by Bao

Wednesday, October 13: Civil Rights Movements: Accomplishments and Shortfalls

- “A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks,” pp. 1-14 by Morris
- *The Asian American Movement*, Chapter One and Conclusion by Wei
- *Latino USA: A Cartoon History*, by Stavans
- “Directions in People’s Programs,” by Mohawk

Friday, October 15: Test on Unit 2 Material

Unit 3: Interpersonal Racism

Week 8-- Understanding Stereotypes

Monday, October 18: What is Interpersonal Racism? How is it related to Structural Racism?

- (Note: your plan for the Connection Paper on Family is due in a week and requires you to submit notes on interviews you’ve conducted with your family. Plan accordingly!)
- “Defining Racism: Let’s Talk,” by Tatum
- “Blaming the Victim,” by Ryan
- “The Problem: Discrimination,” by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
- WATCH: “How to Tell People They Sound Racist” at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0Ti-gkJiXc>

Wednesday, October 20: Interpersonal Racism and Self-Fulfilling Stereotypes

- “The Causes of Prejudice,” by Aronson
- “Self-Fulfilling Stereotypes,” by Mark Snyder
- *Streetwise*, pp. 163-168; 182-189 by Anderson

Friday, October 22: Comedy and Interpersonal Racism

- LISTEN: NPR’s Comedy and Race in America Series, Michelle Norris’ interviews with Bernie Mac, Margaret Cho, and Paul Rodriguez
<http://www.npr.org/programs/atc/features/2002/dec/comedians/>

Unit 4—Structural Racism

Week 9—Housing and Neighborhoods: Segregation and its Impacts (Power of an Illusion, Episode 3, Scenes 11-16-about 20 minutes)

Monday, October 25: Housing Segregation

- Due: Plan for Connection Paper on Family
- *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*, Excerpts, by Massey and Denton
- *The Truly Disadvantaged*, Excerpts, by Wilson

Wednesday, October 27: The Consequences of Segregation on Wealth Accumulation and Education

- *Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality*, Excerpts, by Oliver and Shapiro
- *Black Picket Fences*, Excerpts, by Patillo-McCoy
- *Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America*, Excerpts by Conley

Friday, October 29: The Consequences of Segregation on Education and Health

- “Racial Residential Segregation: A Fundamental Cause of Racial Disparities in Health,” by Williams and Chiquita
- “Environmental Justice in the 21st Century: Race Still Matters,” by Bullard
- “Why are there no Supermarkets in my Neighborhood? The Long Search for Fresh Fruit, Produce, and Healthy Food?” by Zenk et al.

Week 10— Schools and Education

Monday, November 1: First and Second Generation Segregation

- (Note: Your plan for the final project is due in one week. Plan accordingly!)
- *Savage Inequalities*, Excerpts, by Kozol
- *Hitting them Hardest When They’re Small*, Excerpts, by Kozol
- *Multiplying Inequalities: The Effects of Race, Social Class, and Tracking on Opportunities to Learn Mathematics and Science* by Oakes

Wednesday, November 3: The Achievement Gap and its Causes

- “Sociological Perspectives on Black-White Inequalities in American Schooling,” by Hallinan

Friday, November 5: Affirmative Action

- DUE: Connection Paper on Family
- “Keep Away from Radical Diversity,” Op-Ed Published in *The Badger Herald*
- “Affirmative Action at School and on the Job,” by Harper and Reskin

Week 11—The Labor Market

Monday, November 8: Getting Hired

- “Kristin v. Aisha; Brad v. Rasheed: What’s in a Name and How It Affects Getting a Job,” by Braverman
- *Race and the Invisible Hand: How Networks Exclude Black Men From Blue-Collar Jobs*, p.xi-13; 179-192; 16-36, by Royster

Wednesday, November 10: Income and Types of Employment

- DUE: Plan for Final Project
- “When the Melting Pot Boils Over: The Irish, Jews, Blacks, and Koreans of New York,” by Waldinger
- “Hispanics in the American South and the Transformation of the Poultry Industry,” by Kandel and Parrado

Friday, November 12: Causes of Labor Market Disparities

- “Jobless Poverty: A New Form of Social Dislocation in the Inner-City Ghetto,” by Wilson
- “A Theory of Antagonism: The Split Labor Market,” by Bonacich

Week 12—The Legal Sphere

Monday, November 15: Racial Profiling

- “On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto,” by Goffman
- “Racial Profiling and Immigration Law Enforcement: Rounding Up of Usual Suspects in the Latino Community,” by Romero

- “Race and Civil Rights Pre-September 11, 2001: The Targeting of Arabs and Muslims” by Akram and Johnson

Wednesday, November 17: Racial Bias in Sentencing

- “No Equal Justice: The Color of Punishment,” by Cole
- “...and the Poor Get Prison,” by Reiman

Friday, November 19: Effects of Incarceration on Employment and Family

- “The Mark of a Criminal Record,” by Pager
- “The Black Family and Mass Incarceration,” by Western and Wildeman

Week 13– The Political Sphere

Monday, November 22: Voting and Disenfranchisement

- “Criminal Disenfranchisement,” by Uggen, Behrens, and Manza
- *Counting on the Latino Vote*, Chapter One by DeSipio

Wednesday, November 24: Representation Among Appointed Officials

- “From Radical to Electoral Politics: The Asian American Odyssey for Empowerment,” by Wei
- “Change Or More of the Same? Evaluating Racial Attitudes in the Obama Era,” by Hutchings

Friday, November 26 (THANKSGIVING)

Week 14– Media and Art

Monday, November 29: Portrayal of Race on Television and in the News

- “Television and the Politics of Racial Representation,” by Lewis and Jhally
- “Broadcast News Portrayal of Minorities: Accuracy in Reporting,” by Klein and Naccarato
- “Distorted Reality: Hispanic Characters in TV Entertainment,” by Lichter and Amundson

Wednesday, December 1: Cultural Appropriation, White Aesthetic, and Racist Nostalgia in Music and Visual Art

- “Madonna: Plantation Mistress or Soul Sister?” by Bordo

Friday, December 3: Portrayal of Race in Advertising

- “Racial Ideology, Model Minorities, and the “Not-So-Silent Partner:” Stereotyping of Asian Americans in U.S. Magazine Advertising,” by Paek and Shah

Unit 5: Moving Forward

Week 15/16 --What can we do about interpersonal and structural racism?

Monday, December 6: Seeing the Big Picture and How To Use Policy To Fight Racism

- “An Overview of Trends in Social and Economic Well-Being, by Race,” by Blank
- “Policy Steps Toward Closing the Gap,” by Lui et al.

Wednesday, December 8: What YOU Can Do (Extra Credit Opportunity: Presentations of Final Projects)

- “Ten Things You Can Do to Improve Race Relations,” by Gallagher
- “How White People Can Serve as Allies to People of Color in the Struggle to End Racism,” by Kivel
- “Breaking the Silence,” by Tatum

Friday, December 10—Catch-up Day (Extra Credit Opportunity: Presentations of Final Projects)

- DUE: Final Project

Monday, December 13—Concluding Thoughts (Extra Credit Opportunity: Presentations of Final Projects)

FINAL: Monday, December 20 at 12:25PM - 2:25PM, Location TBA-The Final Exam Will Be A Cumulative Essay Exam