

Sociology 445: Sociology of Race Relations

Spring 2009

Instructor: Aaron Gullickson

Time: Tuesday and Thursday 2-3:20pm

Location: 112 Esslinger Hall

Office Hours: 719 PLC, Thursday 11:30-1:30pm

Ultimately we care about the concepts of race and ethnicity because of their deployment in struggles over power and resources. This class focuses on how racial and ethnic inequality is generated and maintained. The readings will cover theoretical perspectives on racial/ethnic stratification and empirical findings. The course will cover a wide time period, but will focus primarily on contemporary issues in the United States.

Course Requirements

Session Memos

Several questions about each week's readings will be posted to Blackboard, along with the readings. You should post your responses to these questions on Blackboard by 10am on Tuesday of that week. Responses should be succinct and limited to 1-3 paragraphs per question. Memos will be graded as "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." You may skip two memos during the quarter.

Paper

The paper should be a thorough literature review of some topic we have covered in class. Students are expected to do further reading on this topic and the paper should cover the theoretical perspectives, current debates, and empirical findings on the topic as it stands today. I expect that the papers will be between 8-12 pages long, double-spaced.

Students are responsible for determining what further readings are necessary, but it is important that this bibliographic search be comprehensive and focuses exclusively on academic texts, and not popular press references. I will discuss the paper in more detail mid-way through the quarter.

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class regularly and should also regularly contribute to class discussions on the topics we have read.

Course Evaluation

Grading for the course will be determined by three factors: (1) final paper, (2) weekly memos, and (3) class participation. The grade on the final paper will constitute the

“baseline” grade. Students who have completed all of their memos will receive a one-grade increase from this baseline grade. Students who have not completed all of the weekly memos will not receive a grade boost and may receive a grade penalty, depending on how many memos were missed. Students who have been active participants in classroom discussion will also receive a one-grade boost.

Readings

Most of the readings are articles or extracts from books and are available as PDF files on Blackboard. In addition, we will read three books in their entirety:

Ignatiev, Noel. 1995. *How the Irish Became White*. New York: Routledge.

Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wilson, William Julius. 1978. *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

These texts are not available at the UO Bookstore. Please acquire them from the online vendor of your choice.

Schedule

Week 1: Classic Assimilation Theory

- Park, Robert E. 1914. “Racial Assimilation in Secondary Groups.” *The American Journal of Sociology* 19(5): 606-23.

Week 2: Conflict/Competition Approaches

- Bonacich, Edna. 1972. "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market." *American Sociological Review* 37:547-559.
- Olzak, Susan. 1986. “A Competition Model of Ethnic Collective Action in American Cities, 1877-1889.” In *Competitive Ethnic Relations*, edited by Susan Olzak and Joane Nagel, pp. 17-46. New York: Academic Press.

Week 3: Boundary Formation

- Lamont, Michele and Virag Molnar. 2002. “The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 28-167-195.
- Brubaker, Rogers, Mara Loveman, and Peter Stamatov. 2004. “Ethnicity as cognition.” *Theory and Society* 33:31-64.
- Wimmer, Andreas. 2008. “The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries: A Multilevel Process Theory.” *American Journal of Sociology* 113(4): 970-1022.

Week 4: Historical Perspectives

- Wolfe, Patrick. 2001. "Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race." *The American Historical Review* 106:866-905.
- Ignatiev, Noel. 1995. *How the Irish Became White*. New York: Routledge.

Week 5: Post-Civil Rights Changes

- Wilson, William Julius. 1978. *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bobo, Lawrence. 2001. "Racial Attitudes and Relations at the Close of the Twentieth Century." In *America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences*, edited by Neil J. Smelser and William Julius Wilson, pp. 264-301. DC: National Academy Press.

Week 6: Segregation

- Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 7: Immigration and Assimilation Theory, reloaded

- Portes, Alejandro, and Min Zhou. 1993. "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530:74-96.
- Massey, Douglas S. 1995. "The New Immigration and Ethnicity in the United States." *Population and Development Review* 21:631-652.
- Alba, Richard. 1999. "Immigration and the American Realities of Assimilation and Multiculturalism." *Sociological Forum* 14(1): 3-25.

Week 8: Educational Inequality

- Jencks, Christopher and Meredith Phillips. 1998. "The Black-White Test Score Gap: An Introduction." In *The Black-White Test Score Gap*, edited by Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips, pp. 1-51. DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Alon, Sigal and Marta Tienda. 2007. "Diversity, Opportunity, and the Shifting Meritocracy in Higher Education." *American Sociological Review* 72(4): 487-511.
- Downey, Douglas B. 2008. "Black/White Differences in School Performance: The Oppositional Culture Explanation." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 107-126.

Week 9: Labor Market Inequality

- Weter, Bruce and Becky Pettit. 2005. "Black-White Wage Inequality, Employment Rates, and Incarceration." *American Journal of Sociology* 111(2): 553-78.
- Pager, Devah and Hana Shepherd. 2008. "The Sociology of Discrimination: Racial Discrimination in Employment, Housing, Credit, and Consumer Markets." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 181-209.
- Conley, Dalton. 1999. "Getting Into the Black: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy." *Political Science Quarterly* 114(4): 595-612.

Week 10: The Future?

- Gans, Herbert J. 1999. "The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy in the 21st Century United States." Pp. 371-390 in *The Cultural Territories of Race: Black and White Boundaries*, edited by Michele Lamont. Chicago and New York: University of Chicago Press and the Russell Sage Foundation.
- Warren, Jonathan W., and France Winddance Twine. 1997. "White Americans, the New Minority? Non-Blacks and the Ever-Expanding Boundaries of Whiteness." *Journal of Black Studies* 28:200-218.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2004. "From Bi-Racial to Tri-Racial: Towards a New System of Racial Stratification in the U.S.A." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27:931-950.