RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS

Fall 2003
Sociology 277
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Office hours:
Mon. & Wed. 3:30-4:30 p.m.
Tues. & Thurs. 1:30-3 PM or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The objective of this course to introduce and review the nature of relationships between racial and ethnic groups and what consequences these have for their relative positions and behavior in society. This is approached in several different ways. First, we explore the concepts, perspectives, and research traditionally identified with majority and minority group relations in sociology. Secondly, we examine the nature of intergroup attitudes and discrimination and their role in the creation and maintenance of majority-minority relations in society. Thirdly, we explore the above within the contexts of historical and institutional experiences (e.g., political, educational, economic, cultural, etc) of selected racial and ethnic groups in the United States.

COURSE GOALS:

Goal 1: Developing a Sociological Imagination: In contrast to our personal view of the social world, the course seeks to broaden our understanding of the dynamics associated society as it relates to racial and ethnic relations. In doing so, students will be challenged to develop a “sociological perspective” to explain and analyze social relations. This is not to say, however, that other perspectives and ways of viewing these relations will not be observed.

Goal 2: Understanding and Utilizing Theoretical Approaches: The objective here is for students to explore and gain an understanding and appreciation of the various sociological theories (explanations) developed on race and ethnic relations and their application.

Goal 3: Understanding the Complexity of Racial and Ethnic Relations: In our best efforts to understand the nature of race and ethnic relations in its simplest terms sometimes we have to remind ourselves that social relations is a complex process. Racial and ethnic relations is no different. It is because of this complexity that it makes it such a difficult process explore.

Goal 4: Appreciation for Diversity: In the process of exploring the experiences and conditions of racial and ethnic groups in our world, an objective for you is gain a greater understanding, appreciation, and respect for what these groups have to offer to you and to society.
COURSE FORMAT:

This course will be organized around lectures, and discussions. Generally, lectures will be
given introducing or extending information on the topic of concern. Discussions will be based
on assigned readings, project presentations, and films.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class Participation: Class attendance and participation in class discussions is expected on a
regular basis. Because discussion is an integral part of the course, your presence during
discussions is imperative. Attendance and participation in discussion groups will be monitored.
Class participation is worth 10% of your final grade.

Readings: There will be assigned readings from the books listed below and from readings on
reserve in the main library. Readings for a specific section/week are listed in the topic section
of this syllabus (pp. 4-7). Each member of the class is expected to read the material and be
prepared to discuss it in class. Modifications may occur during the semester as new material is
added and/or previous reading need to be removed.

List of required books to be purchased are below (Most of these books are also on reserve in
the reference room at the Mudd Library):

1. Joseph Feagin and Clairee Feagin, Racial and Ethnic Relations (7th Ed), New
2. Roberto Suro, Strangers Among Us: Latino Lives in a Changing America
3. Fergus M. Bordewich, Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinventing Native Americans
5. Alex Kotlowitz, The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns, A Death, and

Critical Review: Each student will be ask to write a 3-5 page paper critically evaluating Alex
Kotlowitz's, The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns, A Death, and America's
Dilemma. In this paper, you are asked to summarize the contents as well as critique in what
ways this contributes to our knowledge and understanding of race and ethnic relations.
Specific details on the assignment are attached to the syllabus (see page 8). The critique is due
Friday, September 26.

Project/Paper: The goal of this project is to gain some direct experience in an area of race and
ethnic relations that interests you. The range of topics can include a focus on race and ethnic
relations at any level (e.g., focus on a group or relations between groups; an issue). The topic
should be approved by me via a proposal prior to starting (one or two paragraphs outlining the
project). The final paper for this work should be informed by insightful literature on the
subject and the completed version must not exceed fifteen pages. See attached description for
more details (see page 9 & 10). The final paper is due Friday, December 12.
Group Facilitation, Presentation and Discussion: Each student will work within a group of students exploring research and issues relating to the experiences of one of seven communities listed below. Assigned readings will provide a focal point for each group's presentation and discussion. The research may cover any issue or a variety of issues (such as intergroup attitudes, stereotypes, discrimination, institutional racism as experienced in the residential, political, educational or economic realm, family, religious, cultural, and gender issues within or between the groups and social policy) as they relate to one of the communities. Each group will serve as a "panel of experts" that will be responsible for providing information on the racial/ethnic group of interest. Moreover, this presentation is to be used to facilitate discussion on the topic for the rest of the class. Each student is expected to participate in conducting research and preparing for the presentation and discussion. Two weeks prior to each presentation, I will meet with the group to discuss the presentation content and outline. A week before the presentation the group is expected to provide an outline of their presentation and content to be covered to be distributed to the class. For this to be successful it is important for students to work cooperatively.

1. Euro-American and other Immigrant groups
2. American Indian/Native Americans
3. Blacks/African-Americans
4. Latino/Hispanic Americans (Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, Cubans, etc.)
5. Jewish Americans
6. Asians and Pacific Islanders (Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, etc.)
7. Arab Americans

Upon completion of the project, the group is to provide a written summary of their presentation. This summary should be no more than ten pages in length, typed and double-spaced. Title, references and footnotes or endnotes are to be included. At least three sources should be consulted and included in the references. Please follow the approved American Sociological Review (ASR) format for references/bibliography. (Refer to any recent ASR journal issue). **Summaries are due a week after the groups presentation.**

**Exams:** There will be two examinations. The first exam is a **mid-term take home exam**, which is to be handed in by 4:30 p.m. on **Friday, October 10**. The mid-term questions will be distributed at least a week in advance of the due date. The second exam is a two-hour take-home. Like the mid-term, questions will be given a week in advance of the due date. The exam is to be completed by **12 noon on Wednesday, May 15**. Both exams are to be delivered to the administrative assistant in the department in sociology (305 King). Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. Exams will cover material from readings, lectures, presentations, and in-class discussions.

**Grading:** Final grades will be assessed as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm &amp; Final Exams</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critique Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Research Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project/Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS
(*Indicates reading is on reserve at Mudd Library AND/OR on ERES; PC = Photocopy)

WEEK 1: September 3, 5: INTRODUCTION TO RACE & ETHNIC RELATIONS:
Sociology and the study of race/ethnic relations; Focus on concepts

Readings:
3. Alex Kotlowitz, *The Other Side of the River, all*

WEEK 2: September 8,10,12: INTRO. CONT'D/DYNAMIC PROCESS OF MINORITY AND MAJORITY RELATIONS(MODELS / PERSPECTIVES):
Integration approaches: Assimilationism, Pluralism, and Class

Readings:
*2. John Stone, *Racial Conflict in Contemporary Society*. Chapters 3 & 4

WEEK 3 September 15,17,19: MODELS/PERSPECTIVES CONTINUED: Racial Formation, Interlocking system of race, gender and class, critical race theory and other approaches to race and ethnicity

Readings:

WEEK 4 September22,24,26: RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP ATTITUDES:
Prejudice and Stereotypes

Readings:
*2. Elliot Aronson, "Causes of Prejudice" (PC)
**CRITIQUE PAPER DUE: September 26****

**WEEK 5**

September 29, October 1,3: DISCRIMINATION: INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL Focus on discrimination in education, employment, residential segregation, environmental racism.

Readings:

*Residential Segregation*
*5. Reynolds Farley et al., "Stereotypes & Segregation". (PC)

**** PROJECT SUMMARY DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3****
(ONE PAGE SUMMARY OUTLining PROJECT)

**WEEK 6**

October 6,8,10: Institutionalized Racism Cont’d

Readings:

*Environmental Racism*

*Employment Discrimination*
*2. K. Neckerman & Joleen Kirschman, "We’d Love to Hire Them, But…”(PC).

*Educational Racism*
*3. Joe Feagin, " The Continuing, Significance of Racism: Discrimination Against Black Students in White Colleges"

**** MID-TERM EXAMINATION DUE Friday, October 10.  ****

**RACIAL/ETHNIC COMMUNITIES: HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

**WEEK 7**

October 13,15,17: IMMIGRATION & EUROETHNICITY:

Readings:

*2. Alejandro Portes et al., *Immigrant America: A Portrait*, Chapts 1

**WEEK 8**

October 18-26 Fall Recess
WEEK 9  October 27,29,31:  AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY

Readings:
2. Fergus M. Bordewich, *Killing the White Man's Indian: Reinventing Native Americans at the end of the Twentieth Century* (all)

WEEK 10 November 3,5,7:  AFRICAN AMERICANS

Readings:
1. Feagin and Feagin, *Racial and Ethnic Relations* Chapter 7
*2. Mel Oliver and Thomas Shapiro, "Introduction" and "Story of Two Nations" (PC)
*4. Gretchen Reynolds, "Rising Significance of Race". (PC)

WEEK 11 November 10,12,14:  AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

Readings:
*3. Milton Morris et al., "The Turbulent Friendship: Black Jewish Relations in the 1990's" (PC)

Video: TBA

WEEK 12 November 17,19,21:  LATINO/HISPANIC AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Readings:
1. Feagin and Feagin, *Racial and Ethnic Relations* chapters 8,9
*2. Alejandro Portes and Cynthia Truelove, "Making- Sense of Diversity" (PC)
*4. Marta Tienda, "Puerto Ricans and the Underclass Debate" (PC).

WEEK 13 November 24,26:  ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES.

Readings:
WEEK 14: December 1, 3, 5: ARAB AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Readings:
1. Feagin and Feagin, Racial and Ethnic Relations, Chapt 12

WEEK 15: December 8, 10, 12: RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Readings:
1. Feagin and Feagin, Racial and Ethnic Relations. Chapters 13

***** WRITTEN PROJECT DUE: Friday, December 12th *****

WEEK 16: December 13-15: Reading Period

FINAL EXAMINATION DUE: DECEMBER 16TH AT 12 NOON

Research Project Proposal

This is simply a summary of what it is you plan to study and how you plan to carry it out. It should be no more than two pages in length. Identify the topic that you will be investigating, the sources you will use, and the criteria by which you will judge the results of your investigation. Also identify the potential uses of the material you are going to have access to as a way to further develop your knowledge of this subject. The proposed project might also justify its importance to why this subject is important and worth investigating. The proposal will be due on Friday, October 10.

Research Project

Introduction

Here you simply introduce the topic and explain what it is that you are investigating and why. What is the most important question you are hoping to answer? What is the purpose of the research? What are the results of the research?
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Guidelines for Book Critique

Essentially, in this project you are required to review and critique Alex Klotowitz's book *The Other Side of the River*. The purpose of this paper is to get you to think about complex nature of racial and ethnic relations through the eyes of two communities. In writing the review/critique, the paper should contain the following:

1. Develop a short summary of the book, including a discussion of the intent of the book and a description of what issue(s) is (are) raised in the book about race and ethnic relations (e.g., prejudice and discrimination).

2. What criticisms do you have of the book? Here you should explore some of the positive and negative aspects of the book. This can relate to issues of content, method of approach to the investigation, accessibility, value as a book in illuminating certain sociological concepts and ideas on race and ethnicity.

3. Based on the issues and conclusion presented, what is your overall opinion of the book? Explain and support your answer with instances/examples in the book or other research. Be sure to cite or document any quotes and ideas from the book and other resources. What if anything did you learn from this book?

The paper should be 3-5 pages in length (no more than 5). Papers will be due Friday, September 26. Late papers will be graded accordingly (a letter grade is deducted for everyday the paper is late).
Race and Ethnic Relations - Research Project

The goal of the project is for you to explore issues of race and ethnic relations that is of great interests you, whether it is related to any of the issues we have discussed in class or to some others that are not been mentioned thus far. The range of topics can focus on race and ethnicity at any level, from racial attitudes to institutional discrimination, from immigration to specific racial and ethnic group experiences and issues, and specific racial/ethnic conflicts in the United States.

Once you have chosen a general topic or issue, the next step is to decide how you would like to learn more about this: i.e., library research, observation, etc. This can include observing race and ethnicity issue in a local community setting (e.g., volunteering in a community agency, surveying individuals, observing racial interaction in for example, schools, public settings) seeking out individuals who are involved in the issue you are investigating and interviewing them or merely focusing an indepth exploration through library research.

Before you begin, however, you should have a sense of what it is you are interested in seeing. While at first, you may have a vague notion of questions for which you would like to find answers for, as you get more involved in the project, you may have to and should narrow the focus of your search. This is crucial. The most advanced research projects are usually limited to the attempt to answer a single question. If you can whittle the focus of the project down to a single question, then you are on the right track.

The following is a brief description of how you might approach each of the sections of the project. Please remember that this is only meant to serve as a general guide to help you if you have not done something like this before. An alternative strategy is fine, provided that you let me know in advance or outline this method in your project proposal. For a more general and useful guide on conducting social research I would recommend that you review a copy of The Craft Of Research(2nd) by Wayne Booth et al. (2003).

The Research Project Proposal

This is simply a summary of what it is you plan to study and how you plan to study it. It should be no more than two pages in length. Introduce the topic that you will be investigating and describe how you expect to approach this inquiry. In this proposal, you should identify a single question that highlights the focus of your investigation. Also specify the general areas of literature you intend to look into as a way to further develop your knowledge of this subject. The proposal might also include a statement as to why this subject is important and worth investigating. This proposal will be due on Friday, October 10

The Research Project

Part 1 - Introduction

Here, you simply introduce the topic and explain what it is that you were looking for in your experience. What is the main question you were hoping to answer? What are some of the common conceptions or misconceptions surrounding this issue? Your task here is to basically bring the reader up to speed on the subject, providing any background information you feel is essential to a solid understanding of the topic.
Part II - Literature Review

While your conclusions may be based on your own observations, you will initially want to find out what else has been written on this particular question in order to challenge these ideas or build on them. This means going to the library and finding recent articles or books on the issue you will be considering. You are not expected to engage in a comprehensive search of everything that has been written on the subject, but you should try to find about four or five current articles that are directly relevant to the issue you have chosen. Ideally, you will want to find authors whose work represents some of the main ideas that are circulating on this subject today. The idea is to get a sense of what the existing positions and debates are on this issue, and to see what may be lacking in contemporary discussions of this topic.

Once you have read these articles, review and develop your own critique of them. Your task here is to first to briefly state the main argument of each author, ultimately describing to the reader the basic positions that are out there on this topic. This does not mean that you are expected to restate every detail in each article. Your task in this regard is instead to simply extract from these writings the primary line of reasoning underlying the work of each individual you have studied. You may find that a few of the articles espouse a similar viewpoint, and you can group them accordingly, or you may find that each has a slightly different take on the issue, and you can convey that in your review as well.

Secondly, included in this portion of the project should be your reaction to these articles. Do they capture the aspects of your issue in an insightful way, or are they lacking in some respects? What do you feel can be added to the research that has been done thus far on this topic?

Part III - Observations

After you have spent some time gathering information and observations on this subject, your task is then to write these down in a way that hopefully sheds some light on the question you were asking. You may want to begin this section of the project by stating what your initial ideas were and by explaining why you chose to approach the inquiry the way you did. Then simply convey to the reader what it was that you saw or what your responses were if based on interviews. You are not expected in this section to draw any conclusions on this issue, but only to describe the aspects of your experience that were relevant to your topic.

Part IV - Analysis and Conclusion

In this section, you can finally explain what you have found in a way that goes beyond merely describing your observations. Here, you want to develop some sort of an assessment of what these observations mean. What insights did you gain from this experience? Did you find that your initial assumptions were validated, or did you encounter some unexpected findings? What conclusions can you draw from this?