

Soc 420
Social Inequalities: Race, Class and Gender

Dr. Rick Baldoz
Office Hours: Wed 10:00-11:30
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This course will explore contemporary sociological approaches in the study of social inequality. The enduring structure and reproduction of inequalities along axes of class, race and gender are core problems of sociology. This seminar will examine these issues by first considering various theoretical issues utilized by scholars in the field. We will then examine how different thinkers have implemented of these theories and concepts in a variety of innovative case studies.

Required Readings:

Hacker, J and P. Pierson, *Winner-Take-All-Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer and Turned its Back on the Middle Class*
Sherman, Rachel, *Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels*
Katznelson, Ira, *When Affirmative Action Was White: The Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America*
Gross, Ariela, *What Blood Tell: A History of Race on Trial in America*
Kimmel, M. and Aronson, Amy, *The Gendered Society Reader*
Kimmel, Michael, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*

Course Requirements:

1. Come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and offer constructive/critical comments on the course materials. Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will count against your final grade.
2. There will be one long research paper (20-23 pages). The instructor must approve the topic. The paper will make up 60 percent of your final grade.
3. You are required to bring a one-page response essay to the readings to class each week. You will be graded on your in-class participation and your comprehension of the course materials. Your in-class participation will make up 40 percent of your final grade.

Week 1) Introduction
Feb 7: Basic Concepts

Week 2) Understanding Class
Feb 14: Alejandro Portes, "Social Capital: Origins and Applications" in *Annual Review of Sociology* (on blackboard)
K. Davis & W. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification" in J. Manza (ed), *Inequality and Society: Social Science Perspectives on Social Stratification*, (on blackboard)

T.H. Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class" (on blackboard)

Week 3) Stratification and the New Social Order

Feb 21: B. Western, "Mass Imprisonment and Economic Inequality" in *Social Research* (on blackboard)

D. Peck, "How a New Jobless Era Will Transform America" *The Atlantic Magazine*, 2010, ps. 42-56 (link on blackboard)

Week 4) The Winner Takes All Society

Feb 28: J. Hacker & P. Pierson, *Winner-Take-All Politics*, chapters 1-8

Week 5) Class, Inequality and the Workplace

March 7: R. Sherman, *Class Acts: Service and Inequality in Luxury Hotels*, whole book

Week 6) What is Race?

March 14: S. Cornell and D. Hartmann, "A Constructionist Approach to Ethnicity and Race" (blackboard)

H. Blumer, "Race Prejudice as Sense of Group Position" (blackboard)

H. Gans "Race as Class" (blackboard)

Week 7) Ascriptive Hierarchies

March 21: A. Gross, *What Blood Won't Tell*, chapters 1-4 & 7-8

March 28: **Spring Break**

Week 8) Race and Public Policy

April 4: I. Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: The Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth Century America*, whole book

John Skrentny and Thomas Sugrue "The White Ethnic Strategy" in B. Schulman and J. Zelizer, *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, (blackboard)

Week 9) Post-Racial America?

April 11: J. Lee and F. Bean "Beyond Black and White" (blackboard)

R. Smith and D. King "Barack Obama and the Future of American Racial Politics" (blackboard)

Week 10) The Social Construction of Gender

April 18: M. Kimmel and A. Aronson, *The Gendered Society*, parts 1 (ps. 9-48) & 4 (ps. 165-236)

Week 11) Gendered Institutions

April 25: M. Kimmel and A. Aronson, *The Gendered Society*, parts 5, 8, 9 (ps. 237-296, 387-500)

Week 12) Making and Remaking Masculinity

May 2: M. Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*, whole book

Week 13) Reproducing Gender Hierarchies

May 9: A. Lareau, "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black and White Families" (blackboard)

M. Kimmel and A. Aronson, *The Gendered Society Reader*, part 12 (ps. 605-639)

May 16: Final Paper: **Due Date TBA**

Honor Code: This course will follow the policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please contact me if you have any questions about citation, or the relationship of the Honor Code to your work in this course. For more information on the Honor Code, see http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html.