

Sociology 8700/5700: Seminar in Social Inequality, Fall 2017

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Class meetings: Tuesday, 5:00-8:20 Classroom: State Hall, room 214
Office Hours: Wednesdays/Fridays (varies by week, so schedule appointment (2265 FAB))

“One of the first things we force upon the child’s drawing consciousness is the fact that he is a boy or that she is a girl, and that, therefore, each must regard everything from a different point of view.”

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1898
Women and Economics

“The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.”

Gloria Steinem

“The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line -- the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.”

W.E. B. DuBois

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Martin Luther King, 1963

Course Description:

This course uses a sociological lens for analyzing race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality inequalities in contemporary society. These are more than individual characteristics; they are socially constructed systems of inequality that intertwine with each other, and with other social inequalities like age, ability, and nationality, for example. Sociologists argue that differences are not “natural” or innate but respond to structures and cultural norms in society, and are reproduced as we go about our daily lives, distinctly shaping our experiences.

This course broadly focuses on race/ethnicity and gender, but also highlights the intersections with other forms of inequality. We consider the following: (1) changing social constructions of race/ethnicity and gender over time and space, (2) gender and race/ethnicity as macro-level structures of privilege and oppression as well as micro-level social locations, (3) theories of inequality, and (4) methodological dilemmas that arise during research on inequalities. Course topics include: identities, bodies, masculinities, poverty, work, work & family, families, and global and transnational issues. We cover these topics through ethnographies and/or collections of articles. Students are required to read the assigned material, pose questions about the topics, and actively participate in class discussions. Students will submit book reviews, a blog, and a literature review designed to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. For PhD students in the social inequality specialization in sociology, this course is mandatory.

A note on class interactions: We may read texts that explore sensitive topics. The materials and our discussions may make you uncomfortable. Students must be ready to keep an open mind, engage thoughtfully with written and lecture material, be willing to struggle with the material and its implications, while also treating one another with respect. We will work to create a space to think about serious and difficult questions together in a respectful manner.

Learning Objectives:

When you have successfully completed this course, you will be able to:

- ✓ Understand and analyze the *complex nature* of race/ethnicity and gender inequalities within the U.S. and global context;
- ✓ Comprehend *both macro- and micro-level analyses* of these inequalities;
- ✓ Critically analyze the *intersections* of race/ethnicity, gender, and other social inequalities;
- ✓ Apply *theoretical and methodological knowledge* to explain and understand race and gender inequalities;
- ✓ Identify *structure and agency* when examining race/ethnicity and gender inequalities; and
- ✓ Evaluate published research and relate it to concepts in course to help students prepare for the PhD preliminary examinations on social inequality in the Department of Sociology.

Required Readings: There are ten required books, available online or at WSU bookstore.

Texts:

- Grusky, D., & Szelenyi, S. (Eds.). 2011. *The Inequality Reader: Contemporary and Foundational Readings in Race, Class, and Gender*. 2nd edition. Westview Press.

Ethnographies:

- Bettie, Julie. 2014 (2002). *Women without Class: Girls, Race, and Identity*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- Bourgois, Phillippe. 2002 (2nd Edition) (1995). *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Desmond, Matthew. 2017. *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. New York: Penguin Random House.
- Duneier, Mitchell. 1992. *Slim's Table: Race, Respectability, and Masculinity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Harvey Wingfield, Adia. 2014. *No More Invisible Man: Race and Gender in Men's Work*. Temple University Press.
- Hochschild, Arlie. 1997 (1989). *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*. New York, NY: Viking.
- Moore, Mignon. 2012. *Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships, and Motherhood among Black Women*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Pande, Amrita. 2014. *Wombs in Labor: Transnational Commercial Surrogacy in India*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Plankey-Videla, Nancy. 2012. *We are in this Dance Together: Gender, Power, and Globalization at a Mexican Garment Firm*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

All other readings are journal articles which can be downloaded through the WSU library article databases; some will be posted on the blackboard.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation: Class participation is essential to student success. This is a seminar course; I expect students to be engaged in discussions and demonstrate an understanding of readings and concepts. Active classroom participation means voicing ideas, asking questions, and carefully listening. I expect students to respond to questions I ask in class. Students should try to create an environment that encourages everyone's participation, regardless of ideology or personality. Your deeply held beliefs may be challenged by what you read and hear. I ask that you are non-judgmental towards others who may have different perspectives, are open to new ideas, and thoughtfully consider ways of expressing your ideas that are respectful of those who may disagree. Disrespect of the professor, students, or the academic environment will not be tolerated. To promote discussion, students select 3-4 readings on designated weeks (9/5, 9/26, and 10/17) and write two discussion questions for each (due on Sundays by 5:00 p.m.).

A note on attendance – Students must make their own decisions about learning. I think student learning improves when attending class regularly and actively participating in conversations. Excessive absences, tardiness, and leaving early will jeopardize students' participation grade.

Lead Discussion: Working in pairs, students facilitate at least one class session (likely two). This includes presenting a short (about 5 minutes) orientation to the week's readings and writing a list of questions focused on key themes and concepts to promote discussion. Your role is not to lecture, but to facilitate a thoughtful and active discussion on the week's readings, while also connecting to previous material discussed in class. Students are encouraged to think of innovative ways to create discussion in large or small group activities (see "Guidelines for Facilitating Group Discussion" at end of syllabus).

Students must meet/consult with me regarding plans for class by the Friday before their facilitation day. Joint discussion leaders should meet prior to touching base with me on the plans so that there is no overlap and a logical flow to the class (whoever emails me must cc the other student). A draft list of **7 discussion questions and a general class outline** is due by Fridays at 5 p.m. I will review your class plan and send comments via email. I expect students to be attentive to feedback and make appropriate changes. Students are evaluated on substance as well as process (in preparing and running the discussion); students are penalized if they do not submit the class plan in advance and/or do not address my feedback;. The final class plan is due on Tuesdays by 9 a.m.

Blogs: Students write one blog entry based on an article read for class (see articles on these dates: 9/26 and 10/17), but not articles for which students write their DQ). Blogs are about 500-800 words, and include a short, catchy title and at least one visual like a graph, chart, or free-for-use pictures. Write in non-academic language for readers with a high school education. The goal is to "popularize" the main points of the empirical article. See examples: <https://gendersociety.wordpress.com/>. Note: students in 8700 write one blog; students in 5700 write two. Blogs are due the day we read the article and will be shared with the class.

Book review: Students write three reviews based on books we read for class. There are 9 books to choose from, but students cannot write on the book for which they facilitate discussion. The book reviews are 750-1000 word essays, briefly describing the main argument, and critically evaluating it, noting strengths and weaknesses. See examples in *Contemporary Sociology* and *Gender & Society*. Review is due the day we read the book.

Final paper/manuscript: Students enrolled in 8700 will write a final paper on the state of the literature on a topic that is closely related to their thesis or dissertation research question. This paper must conform to expectations for a journal manuscript in *Sociology Compass*. Manuscripts will be about 4000 words in length (about 12-15 pages), not including references. See: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1751-9020/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1751-9020/homepage/ForAuthors.html). If you are a PhD student, I expect that you will not simply recycle your thesis literature review; now is the time to push beyond that initial project. If you are a MA student, think of this assignment as the introduction/literature to your thesis (and a significant expansion on what you wrote in proseminar, if you are a sociology graduate student). Students will turn in an outline on October 31st. Final papers/manuscripts are due on the last day of class, December 12th.

Students enrolled in 5700 will write a much shorter essay-type paper that responds to a set of questions that I will provide in advance. Essays are due on the last day of class, December 12th.

Grades for 8700:

1. Class participation (and discussion Qs)	10 points
2. Lead discussion (on books)	5 points
3. Blog entry	10 points
4. Three book reviews	30 points (10 points each)
5. Final paper/manuscript	45 points
TOTAL	100 points

Grades for 5700:

6. Class participation (and discussion Qs)	10 points
7. Lead discussion (on books)	5 points
8. Two blog entries	20 points (10 points for each blog)
9. Three book reviews	40 points (10 for review 1; 15 for reviews 2 & 3)
10. Final essay	25 points
TOTAL	100 points

Grade Chart:

100% = A+	88-89% = B+	78-79% = C+	68-69% = D+	0-59% = F
94-99% = A	84-87% = B	74-77% = C	64-67% = D	
90-93% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-	60-63% = D-	

Course Policies:

Course policies are designed and implemented to ensure a quality learning environment. As your professor, my responsibility is to create an environment so students can learn; students are responsible for respecting policies and completing all assignments.

1. **Blackboard communication:** All course information is managed through Blackboard. Assignments and course syllabus are posted on Blackboard. Not checking Blackboard regularly is not an excuse for missing assignments or information relevant to this course. **There is a WSU Blackboard app.** See: <http://computing.wayne.edu/blackboard/>
2. **Email etiquette:** All students have a WSU email account. If you use a different account, forward the WSU email to that alternate account, or minimally make sure my emails are forwarded. **I only use WSU email for communicating.** Emails should be professional, including punctuation, full sentences, correct spelling and grammar. Do not email as if you were sending a text message. Please indicate your name and what course you are enrolled in so I know who is sending the email. Do not address me as “Ms.” or “Mrs.” – these titles are for teachers in K thru 12. Use “doctor” or “professor.” I will not engage in discussions of substance via email, particularly grades. It is too easy for emails to be taken out of context; the “tone” and meaning received may not be what the sender intended.
3. **Cell phones:** Please turn them off in class. If you have specific needs (i.e., child care or elder care), set your phone to vibrate and simply walk out to take the call.
4. **Grades:** For most assignments, there are grading rubrics. Closely review them to ensure you include all information expected on assignments. I use a 5-level grading scale: exemplary, very good, acceptable, needs improvement, and unacceptable. Grades translate as follows: exemplary is the equivalent of “A” work (94-100%), very good is “A-/B+” work (88-93%), acceptable is B work (84-87%), needs improvement is “B-” work (80-83%), and unacceptable is “C” or lower (79 and below). Late assignments are always penalized in accordance with how late, and may be returned ungraded.
5. **Plagiarism:** I expect students to abide by the academic honor code. If you use your own words, but the ideas are from someone else, you must give credit to the author(s). If you use someone’s exact words, you must use quotation marks and provide the author’s last name, year, and page number. I take plagiarism seriously and follow WSU procedures if a student violates the integrity of academics. At a minimum, the student receives a zero for the assignment (most likely failing the course); at a maximum I enforce WSU policies on academic dishonesty. See the end of the syllabus for citation format; also on blackboard.
6. **Student Disability Services:** If you have a documented disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Student Disability Services (SDS), located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department; telephone is [313-577-1851](tel:313-577-1851) or [313-577-3365](tel:313-577-3365) (TTY phone is for hearing impaired students only). Once accommodations are in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at WSU.
7. **WSU Registration/Withdrawal policies:** Students must complete registration by January 10th, with no additional fees. After this date, students cannot add this course unless the professor and department approve it. The last day to drop the course is September 13th (with tuition cancellation). If dropped by this date, the course does not appear on the academic record. If dropped between September 14th and 27th, the course does not appear on the academic record, but students are liable for tuition. Students can drop the course between September 28th and November 12th, but this requires professor approval (WP or WF will appear on the academic record). **ALL registration and withdrawals are initiated by students through pipeline.** After **November 12th** students cannot withdrawal from the course and will receive a grade. See link for policies: <http://reg.wayne.edu/students/calendar15-16.php>

Sociology of Social Inequality Course Schedule

Date	Readings, Assignments, and Events
Social Stratification: foundational theories	
September 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grusky & Szelenyi, Part I and II ▪ Grusky & Szelenyi, Part III (readings 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 50, 58, 59) ▪ Kinsley, Davis & Moore, William E. 1944. "Some principles of stratification." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 10, 242-249. ▪ Acker, Joan. 2006. "Inequality Regimes." <i>Gender & Society</i> 20: 441-464. ▪ Discussion Questions DUE
Linking the Macro-Micro: Race, Class, Gender in an Urban Context	
September 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bourgois, Phillippe. <i>In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio</i>. (2 lead discussants)
Class, Capitalism, and Everyday Struggles	
September 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desmond, Matthew. <i>Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City</i>. (2 lead discussants)
Theorizing Racial and Ethnic Inequality	
September 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grusky & Szelenyi (24-35, 64, 68) ▪ Omi & Winant (BB article) ▪ Discussion Questions DUE
Race and Masculinity	
October 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duneier, Mitchell. <i>Slim's Table: Race, Respectability, and Masculinity</i>. (2 lead discussants)
Constructing Identities and Bodies: race, class, and gender	
October 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Julie Bettie. <i>Women without Class: Girls, Race, and Identity</i>. (2 lead discussants)
Theorizing Gender Inequality	
October 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acker, Joan. 1992. "From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions" <i>Contemporary Sociology</i> 21:565:569. ▪ Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, and Bodies." <i>Gender & Society</i> 4:139-158. ▪ West, Candace, and Zimmerman, Don H. 1987. "Doing Gender." <i>Gender & Society</i> 2:125-151. ▪ Lucal, Betsy. 1999. "What It Means To Be Gendered Me: Life on the Boundaries of a Dichotomous Gender System." <i>Gender & Society</i> 13:781-797. ▪ Grusky & Szelenyi (36-43, 45, 48) ▪ Discussion Questions DUE
Gender, Work, and Family:	
October 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hochschild, Arlie. <i>The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home</i>. ▪ Blair-Loy, Mary, Hochschild, Arlie, Pugh, Allison, Williams, Joan, and Hartmann, Heidi. 2015. "Insights from the <i>second shift</i> for the next quarter century." <i>Community, Work & Family</i> 18:435-454. (2 lead discussants)
October 31	Flex week – outline for final paper/manuscript for 8700 students
Gender, Race, and Work:	
November 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harvey Wingfield, Adia. <i>No More Invisible Man: Race and Gender in Men's Work</i>. (2 lead discussants)

Families, Sexuality, and Relationships:	
November 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moore, Mignon. <i>Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships, and Motherhood among Black Women</i>. (2 lead discussants)
Gender and Race in a Global Transnational Context, part I	
November 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pande, Amrita. <i>Wombs in Labor: Transnational Commercial Surrogacy in India</i>. (2 lead discussants)
Gender and Race in a Global Transnational Context, part II	
November 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plankey-Videla, Nancy. <i>We are in this Dance Together: Gender, Power, and Globalization at a Mexican Garment Firm</i>. (2 lead discussants)
December 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grusky & Szelenyi, Part IX (selected readings, to be confirmed) Discussion Questions DUE; TBD – see 12/12/17
December 12	Final Examination Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final paper for Graduate Students DUE (possibly due on 12/5/17)

Changes to the syllabus: I reserve the right to make adjustments to the syllabus during the semester, usually only done to accommodate University closings or some other unique situation.

Guidelines for bibliography/reference list (American Sociological Review style):

For a Book:

Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

For a Chapter in an edited Book:

Pye, Lucian W. 1998. "Democracy and Its Enemies." Pp. 21-36 in *Pathways to Democracy: The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*, edited by James F. Hollifield and Calvin Jillson. New York: Routledge.

For a Journal Article:

Jafar, Afshan. 2007. "Engaging Fundamentalism: The Case of Women's NGOs in Pakistan." *Social Problems* 54:256-273.

Fitzgerald, Kathleen J. and Diane M. Rodgers. 2005. "Radical Social Movement Organizations: A Theoretical Model." *The Sociological Quarterly* 41(4):573-592.

For an Internet cite:

The World Bank. 2000. "Income Inequality." Retrieved March 15, 2006. (www.worldbank.org).

ASR Style Guidelines for citations in the text:

Paraphrasing an author(s):

Scholars of social sciences have begun to recognize the importance of non-governmental organizations, particularly as advocates for citizenship rights (Alvarez 1998; Lind 2000).

Direct quote using author's name in the sentence:

As Segarra (1997:489) argues the "apparent failure of the state-centered model of development" has created space for civil society associations to play a role in politics.

Direct quote NOT using the author's name in the sentence:

Former President Salinas (1988-1994) actively sought to diminish the power of NGOs by changing fiscal laws to allow the government "to treat NGOs as private profit-making corporations" (Piester 1997:486).

Guidelines for Facilitating Group Discussion:

On one designated day during the semester, each student will help discuss reading assignments. Students will direct our conversations about the books or articles we have read during the current week. Students' tasks include the following: (1) *briefly explain some of the key themes of the readings*; (2) *identify questions the articles raise so that we can carry out our group discussion*; and (3) *highlight confusing/problematic sections of the readings so that we can clarify their meaning*. Student facilitators are also encouraged to think of innovative ways to create discussion through large or small group activities. This assignment will give students experience in identifying critical issues and themes in scholarly works, and also presentation/teaching experience. Below are some questions to think about when preparing to facilitate discussion. These questions are simply guides; students may discover that there are more important questions to address than the ones I suggest.

Finding Themes in the Articles You Read:

1. What is/are the major research question(s) or theme(s) of the work(s) you have read? Define the theme(s) and come up with an example of each theme you define.
2. What is/are the key findings or conclusions of the book chapters/articles in recent weeks? Can you summarize these findings in one or two sentences? Are these findings controversial and debatable at all?
3. What is/are the connection(s) between readings and lecture topics?

When Thinking of Questions to Discuss with the Class, Perhaps Try to Answer the Following:

1. Can you identify ways in which the researcher(s) could have gone farther in exploring this particular topic?
2. What implications do the authors' findings have for our use of certain research methods?
3. Why did I pick this reading for a "methods" course? Do you think the subject of the readings is appropriate to discuss, or are there more important subjects that we should be discussing?
4. What is most interesting to you about this reading? What is most controversial? Does it make you think differently about methods/certain types of methods?
5. How does your reading fit with or contradict all the other readings assigned for this week/prior weeks?? How are the readings similar to each other and how are they different? Are there any common themes? Do authors of these readings contradict each other?
6. Given the argument that the author(s) present(s), could you play "devil's advocate?" In other words, could we argue the opposite viewpoint?
7. Is the author presenting a biased viewpoint? If so, how do you know? Would you discuss the author's topic differently?
8. Who is the audience for this reading? How does this impact the author's arguments or presentation of the topic?
9. In what ways does this reading make you think deeper about the subjects covered in this class?
10. What might be the most interesting aspect of this reading for individuals in the class – i.e., grad students at Wayne State? How is this reading relevant for us?
11. What argument/theme in the readings did you dislike and why?
12. Based on the readings you have done, do we need to do more research in order to understand sociological methods? In other words, does the research push our knowledge far enough?
13. How can we take authors' conclusions and learn from them? What should we take away from this reading?
14. Based on this reading, what kind of question(s) could appear on the sociology methods exam?

Ideas for Small/Large Group Activities:

1. Have students draft research questions or statements of purpose for their research.
2. Have students actually participate in some sort of data analysis activity.
3. Have students participate in a focus group activity during class.
4. Have students critique a set of existing survey questions or an article's findings.
5. Bring in current event articles that relate to course material for that week, and discuss connections.
6. Brainstorm about how to study a particular topic using certain methods.
7. Pair up students and have them interview each other on a common question and then compare answers/experiences.
8. Bring in examples of research topics that need study, and discuss the pros and cons of research these topics, and using certain methods to study the topics.
9. Make students talk about how they would deal with certain research situations/problems.
10. Come up with your own idea!
~ See me if you have problems or questions about facilitating discussion on your designated day. ~