

SOC5570: Race Relations in Urban Society (Section 001, CRN: 24678)
AFS5570: Race Relations in Urban Society (Section 001, CRN: 25167)
SOC8710: Advanced Seminar on Race and Ethnicity (Section 001, CRN: 27466)
SOC8802: Topics in Urban Sociology (Section 001, CRNL 26502)

WHEN: TUE 5:30-8:15
WHERE: 0106 MAIN
TERM: WINTER 2013

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Hours: Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30, and by appointment

“As long as the black man is among his own, he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflicts, to experience his being through others. There is of course the moment of “being for others,” of which Hegel speaks, but every ontology is made unattainable in a colonized and civilized society. It would seem that this fact has not been given sufficient attention by those who have discussed the question. In the *Weltanschauung* of a colonized people there is an impurity, a flaw that outlaws any ontological explanation. Someone may object that this is the case with every individual, but such an objection merely conceals a basic problem.”

Frantz Fanon (1952), “The Fact of Blackness”

INTRODUCTION

With the election of Barack Obama, first in 2008 and his re-election in 2012, several lines of commentary emerged reflecting our current socio-political-economy: 1) Does the initial election reflect the fact that we are now a “post-racial” society (or conversely, was the very strong and, by some accounts, very agitated opposition to Obama’s first term reflect a fundamental racism still defining our society)? 2) Can we anticipate a significant shift in society as this last election placed into sharp contrast the fact that we are rapidly if not already a “majority minority” society—by that we simply mean Whites are no longer the majority, if not now, then in the very near future; and 3) Is there a significant shift in the structure of the US society as through the growing concentration of non-Whites in our major conurbations consistent with a steady global process of spreading urbanization and ever larger city size—especially if we think of the city as more than its narrowly defined political boundaries?

This course, for upper level undergraduates and graduate students, will explore how we have come to understand the concept of race, how people create racial identities (for themselves, for others), and how the urban setting helps define and articulate the racial nature of our society. We will then be using the notion of covert racism as a foundation to examine the impact, importance and persistence of race in our social and political discourse.

COURSE READING

This course is divided into two parts. In part one (up to Spring Break) we will focus on developing an understanding of race in the context of urban society. Readings will come from the works of Manning Marable, William Julius Wilson, and additional articles uploaded into Blackboard. The second part of the course will explore our current experiences with race as we examine what racism looks like in a supposedly “post-racial” society. Readings will come from the volume edited by Rodney Coates plus, again, additional articles and other material I provide as the semester progresses. For the last two weeks of the semester you will be asked to read one or two articles identified by the paper presenters to guide the class discussion.

The following books will be available at the university bookstore, via online services like Amazon, and in the case of the Coates book, by special arrangement from Haymarket (see below).

Marable, Manning 1983 *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and Society* Boston, MA: South End Press [HCUBA]

Rodney Coates, 2011 *Covert Racism: Theories, Institutions and Experiences* Leiden: Brill (hardcover) and Chicago: Haymarket (paperback) [CR]

Wilson, William Julius, 2009 *More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City* New York, NY: W. W. Norton [MTJR]

Wilson, William Julius 1996 *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* New York, NY: Vintage Books [WWD]

The Rodney Coates paperback is available at a deeper discount, 30% off the \$36 cover price, if it is ordered directly from Haymarket (www.haymarketbooks.org), by using the discount code, see http://criticalsociology.org/classroom_tools/haymarket/Covert_Racism_flyer%20rs.pdf

All additional required readings listed below will be found either as a PDF available to be downloaded from Blackboard, or given to you as a citation to a journal article available for download through the WSU online library collection of journals (see <http://www.lib.wayne.edu/>).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

First and foremost, you will be expected to arrive in class having done the reading assigned for that class period. Being prepared for class is the expectation, coming unprepared has potential consequences.

Undergraduates (enrolled in either SOC or AFS 5570) will be graded in two phases: 1) an assessment of the readings for 8 of the weeks (due on the weeks indicated with an * on the course schedule below). This will take the form of a critical summary (not just a restatement of

what is in the article) of the main points presented, plus your reaction to what was read (3-5 pages); and 2) a take home final exam question requiring a well crafted essay (questions to be provided on Blackboard April 9th).

Graduate students (in 8710 or 8802) will be graded based two requirements: 1) giving a presentation of their class seminar paper in a conference format (undergraduates will serve as discussants for these paper presentations) for which they will be assigning 1 or 2 foundational articles everyone will have to read in preparation for class discussion; and 2) a final paper that incorporates written and verbal comments received. Paper proposals are due Feb 24th, first drafts of the paper will be due to me by March 31st, and your course paper will be due April 28th (as an email attachment). Draft seminar papers will be made available on Blackboard prior to the class presentation; everyone will be required to read them prior to the presentation and be prepared to make comments. Paper discussants are to provide written comments to the authors.

The paper proposal should fall into one of the 5 topic areas in the expanded bibliography below, and will contain: 1) a brief (maximum 1 page) description of the project topic and its central focus, 2) a preliminary scan of existing literature on that topic, and 3) a bibliography of possible or likely sources on which this paper will be based. This proposal must be submitted as an attachment by February 24th. Appended to this syllabus is an extensive bibliography of key works in each section. These can serve as a resource for developing your seminar paper. You are, of course, free to venture beyond these suggestions as you develop your paper topic.

Your final grade will be based on your performance on all the written assignments and exams turned in during the semester. We will discuss this more fully in class.

COURSE GRADING

“A” level work consists of cogent, well-articulated, and well-developed written and oral presentation, demonstrating insight, originality, and complexity in both form (e.g., language, expression, organization) and substance (e.g., logical argumentation, factual accuracy, and appropriate examples); critical thinking skills are amply demonstrated; sociological imagination is highly active; tasks are completed on time and according to the guidelines, often going “above and beyond”. “A” level work is considered excellent.

“A-/B+” level work may be thoughtful and developed, but may not be original, particularly insightful, or precise. While ideas might be clear, focused, and organized, they are less likely to be comprehensive or dialectical. Critical thinking skills are satisfactory; sociological imagination is active. “A-” level work is considered good and shows some originality. “B+” work is still good, but only goes a little beyond the most basic grasp of concepts and ideas though with satisfactory levels of communication. This is my most common grade range.

“B” level work is reasonably competent, yet may be unclear, inconsistent, and minimally inadequate in form and/or content. Critical thinking skills are minimal; sociological imagination is weak. “B” level work is considered mediocre and barely adequate. Keep in mind that you must get at least a “B” in any graduate course for a passing grade, and your overall average has

to be better than a “B” implying offsetting “A” grades. This grade will reflect my concern about your overall grasp of the material and/or your ability to convey what you know effectively.

“B-” level work is not competent, appropriate, relevant, complete, and/or adequate in form and/or content, thereby not fully meeting the minimum requirements. Critical thinking skills are largely absent; likewise with sociological imagination. “B-” level work is not passing at the graduate level, and will require you to retake this course. I do not give a grade lower than “B-” in most instances to graduate students.

“C/C-” level work shows the barest understanding of the subject or task assigned, is poorly written, and fails to make a coherent argument. Students who receive this grade tend to confuse description with analysis, an inventory of the work with a discussion of the concepts, and in most instances reflect knowledge of the issues based on summaries or book reviews rather than a reflection on the actual works mentioned. I generally do not give a grade below C- to undergraduates who make any effort.

“D” level work is given to any paper that is inadequate, and only reflects the fact that an assignment was turned in—otherwise the student would receive an **F**.

“WN/P/F” is given when you withdraw from the course. “N” is given when no work was done—and I encourage you to quickly withdraw to get a refund if you start to miss class. “P” is given when you have completed all work to date in a satisfactory manner but must withdraw from the course (and I will not require an explanation from you). “F” is given when you decide to withdraw and you have not maintained the work and assignments up to the date of the request. All requests for withdrawal are initiated by the student, per the university deadline. Any appeal must be directed to the Registrar (to rescind the request).

THERE WILL BE NO INCOMPLETES GIVEN FOR THIS COURSE

IMPORTANT DATES

- January 18: Last day to withdraw with full tuition refund
- February 24: Seminar paper proposal due
- March 12: Spring Break—no class
- March 23: Last day to withdraw from the course with a “W” grade
- March 26: Reading assignment selection deadline
- March 31: First draft of seminar papers due—basis of the class presentation
- April 28: Final seminar papers and take home exams due

COURSE OUTLINE

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Jan 8	INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE	
Jan 15	<i>Does Race Matter?</i>	Fanon, Black Skin White Mask (on Blackboard as a PDF) Warren, "Suburban Isolation and Race Tension: The Detroit Case" Williams, "The Hidden Meanings of 'Black English'"
Jan 22*	<i>Race in the City</i>	Wilson, MTJR all
Jan 29*	<i>Race and Poverty: Working Class</i>	Marable, HCUBA chapters 1-4
Feb 5*	<i>Race and Poverty: Inner City</i>	Wilson, WWD chapters 1-5
Feb 12*	<i>Race and Poverty: Elites</i>	Marable, HCUBA chapters 5-8
Feb 19*	<i>Race and Poverty: Policy</i>	Marable, HCUBA chapters 9-10 Wilson, WWD chapters 6-8
Feb 26	<i>Racial Boundaries and Barriers</i>	Lichter et al. "The Geography of Exclusion: Race, Segregation and Concentrated Poverty" Crowder et al. "Neighborhood Diversity, Metropolitan Constraints, and Household Migration" Pais et al. "Metropolitan Heterogeneity and Minority Neighborhood Attainment: Spatial Assimilation or Place Stratification?"
Mar 5	<i>Post-Racial Society</i>	Hill Collins, "The New Politics of Community" Farley "The Waning of American Apartheid?"
Mar 12	SPRING BREAK	
Mar 19*	<i>Perspectives on Covert Racism</i>	Coates, CR Part I (all articles)
Mar 26*	<i>Covert Racism and Institutions</i>	Coates, CR Part II (all articles)
Apr 2*	<i>Covert Racism and Individuals</i>	Coates, CR Part III (all articles)
Apr 9	<i>Student Presentations, Group A</i>	Student assigned readings
Apr 16	<i>Student Presentations, Group B</i>	Student assigned readings
Apr 28	FINALS AND PAPERS DUE APRIL 28, 5PM	

EXPANDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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2. Race and Social Movements

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