

Irene Browne
Soc585
Intersectionality
Fall 2019

SYLLABUS

SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO INTERSECTIONALITY

This course is an overview of the sociological approaches to the topic of “intersectionality.” We explore the differences and debates in the sociological literature, as scholars address key questions regarding intersectionality perspectives, including, “What is intersectionality?” “How should we define key dimensions of intersectionality -- race, gender, class and sexuality?” “How do institutions and interactions influence the construction of intersectional systems and identities?” “How do intersecting social systems and identities influence social institutions, social interactions, and individual experiences?” We will discuss the challenges that intersectionality theories pose for research methods, and interrogate the range of empirical approaches to meet those challenges. We will also look at how sociologists apply specific theories and methods to understand intersectionality within specific institutional arenas, including schools, families and relationships, work and organizations, migration and social movements. Throughout the semester, we will be comparing arguments within the readings, applying the following concepts: cultural and structural processes; implicit and explicit understandings of structure and agency; connections between macro, meso, and micro levels of analysis.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS*

This course is organized as a seminar. Regular attendance and participation of each student is key to developing a rich learning environment for everyone. You are expected to attend class every week, come prepared to discuss the readings, and constructively participate in class discussion.

A) Attendance

To maintain continuity and build upon class discussion, attendance every week is important. Please inform me ahead of time if you will be missing class. Unexcused absences or chronic tardiness will negatively affect your grade.

B) Class Participation and Discussion

You are expected to actively and constructively participate in class discussions. This requires that you arrive prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Of course, class discussion should be both informed and respectful; moreover, it should be a forum wherein all can raise questions, explore ideas, and express misgivings. Class participation (including your role as facilitator) comprises 25% of your grade.

C) Weekly Memos

You will prepare a 3-page memo for each week's readings (typed and double-spaced). You should approach these memos as an opportunity to explore ideas rather than as finished products. At a minimum, the memos should demonstrate that you read the material and present some critical engagement with what you read. Use them to digest each week's readings and to respond with questions, criticisms, and new ideas. You should also discuss whether/how the assigned reading(s) could be useful to your final project and present your reasoning for either option ("yes, useful" or "no, not useful.") Please submit your memo on Canvas 30 minutes before the class period and bring a copy memo to class. Late memos will not be accepted. *Memos on the day you facilitate the seminar should be 5 pages and incorporate comments on the "recommended" reading.* The weekly memos comprise 25% of your grade.

D) Seminar Facilitator

Each student will be responsible for leading discussion during one of the weeks of class. You should distribute discussion questions to the class via email two days before your assigned day to facilitate. *Note that everyone will be required to submit 2 discussion questions on Sept. 11, the day before we discuss Marisela's dissertation. She will be joining us via Skype!* Your performance as facilitator (including the 5 page memo) will be incorporated into your participation grade.

E) Final Paper

Final paper: You should write a theoretically-informed paper of at least 15 pages (typed and double-spaced) with an empirical component that engages with the concept of "intersectionality" in some way. You may expand upon one of the issues or theories covered in class, or you can choose a topic that was not the focus of the course materials. Your paper can take one of two forms: 1) a research proposal or 2) an empirical project. You can expand upon a paper that you are writing for another class or that you have previously written, but you must receive approval and articulate how the paper for our seminar is distinct from the other versions that are written or in progress. I ask that each student discuss her topic with me by 10/11 and submit an outline by 11/18. The final paper is due on Dec. 16 and comprises 50% of your final grade.

Required readings:

Cottom, Tressie McMillan. 2018. *Thick*. The New Press.

DuBois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*.

Abu-Lughod. Lila. 2013. *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Articles and dissertations on EUCLID electronic reserve.

****If you have any special needs, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and we will discuss the necessary arrangements (for additional information, visit the Emory Office of Disability Services website; see <http://www.ods.emory.edu/>).****

COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

Aug 29

- Cottom, Tressie McMillan. 2019. *Thick*. "Author's Note" and "Thick" (pp. ix-32)
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 2015. "Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1(1):54-74.

[Objectives: Begin the conversations about approaches to intersectionality, and ways to generate connections between "history" and "biography." Unpack theories of "settler colonialism" in relation to sociological approaches; gain tools to use this concept in analyzing readings throughout the semester]

WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?

Approaches

Sept. 5

- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 139-167.
- Nash, Jennifer C. "Re-thinking Intersectionality." 2008. *Feminist Review* 89(1):1-15.
- Anthias, Floya. 2013. "Hierarchies of Social Location, Class and Intersectionality: Towards a Translocational Frame." *International Sociology* 28(1): 121-138.
- Carbado, Devon. "Colorblind Intersectionality" *Signs* 38(4):811-845.
- Cohen, Cathy. 1997. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ* 3:437-465.

Lecture: Browne, Irene and Joya Misra. 2003. "The Intersection of Gender and Race in the Labor Market." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29:487-513.

[Objectives: Critically analyze different approaches to intersectionality used by sociologists. Identify and interrogate how intersectionality is related to experience at multiple levels (macro, meso, micro). Identify and interrogate how sexuality can be deployed as an analytic category and as a disruptive theoretical intervention in intersectional approaches. Explore how intersectional identities and experiences are linked to structural dimensions of intersectionality on the one hand and political activism on the other hand.]

Sept. 12

- Martinez-Cola, Marisela. 2017. *The Bricks before Brown v. Board of Education: A*

Comparative, Historical Study of Race, Class, Gender in Chinese American, Native American, and Mexican American School Desegregation Cases, 1885-1947.

Doctoral dissertation. Emory University (available in discover-E).

Everyone is required to submit 2 discussion questions by Sept. 11 at 11 am.

[Objectives: Cover the arguments of critical race theory; take an in-depth look at how an Emory PhD student uses intersectionality theory as the theoretical framework for her dissertation; take an in-depth look at a multi-method, historical analysis of intersectionality that combines structural, organizational, and individual processes; apply Glenn's "settler colonialism" framework to a study that does not explicitly use this framework.]

Sept. 19

- Lila Abu-Lughod. 2013. *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

[Objectives: Articulate "postcolonial" approach to intersectionality theory; use the critiques of Western-centered intersectionality theory to revisit readings from previous weeks.]

Definitions

Sept 26 What are sex, gender, sexuality?

- Watch: *One in Two Thousand*. (30 min. Link on e-reserves or through discover-E)
Read:
- Davis, Georgiann, and Sharon Preves. 2017. "Intersex and the Social Construction of Sex." *Contexts* 16(1): 80-80.
- Schippers, Mimi. 2007. "Recovering the Feminine Other: Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Hegemony." *Theory & Society* 36:85-102.
- Pfeffer, Carla A. 2014. "'I Don't Like Passing as a Straight Woman': Queer Negotiations of Identity and Social Group Membership." *American Journal of Sociology* 120(1): 1-44.
- Ridgeway, Cecilia, and Shelley J. Correll. 2004. "Unpacking the Gender System: A Theoretical Perspective on Gender Beliefs and Social Relations." *Gender & Society* 18(4): 510-531.
- Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender & Society* 4(2): 139-158. (also to be discussed on 10/3)

Recommended

Lorber, Judith. "Paradoxes of Gender Redux." *Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research* (2018): 297.

[Objectives: Recognize and understand differences between and among theories of gender at the structural, organizational, and individual level. Articulate Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity and Pascoe's critique. Articulate the difference between and the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality.]

Oct. 3 What is race?

- DuBois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folk*.
- Ray, Victor. 2019. "A Theory of Racialized Organizations." *American Sociological Review*, 84(1), 26–53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122418822335>
- Quisumbing King, Katrina. 2019. "Re-centering US Empire: A Structural Perspective on the Color Line." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 5(1): 11-25.
- Stewart, Quincy Thomas and Abigail A. Sewell. 2016. "Quantifying Race: On Methods for Analyzing Social Inequality." Pp. 209-234 in John H. Stanfield, II (ed). *Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Research Methods*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. [you can skip the equations in this paper]

Recommended: Bonilla-Silva E. 1997. "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation". *Am. Sociol. Rev.* 62:465–80.

Saperstein, Aliya, Andrew Penner and Ryan Light. 2013. "Racial Formation in Perspective: Connecting Individuals, Institutions, and Power Relations." *Annual Review of Sociology* 39:359-378.

[Objectives: Interrogate Du Bois' theory of the "color line," and his concepts of double consciousness and the veil. Recognize and understand differences between and among theories of race at 3 levels: structural, organizational, individual; build skills in analyzing current data describing some of the racial inequality in the U.S. described by Du Bois, compare theories of race with theories of gender]

Oct 10 What is class?

- Cottom, Tressie. 2019. *Thick*. "The Price of Fabulousness" and "Black is Over (or, Special Black)"
- Tatum, Katharine and Irene Browne. 2018. "The Best of Both Worlds: One-up Assimilation Strategies among Middle-class Latino Immigrants." *Poetics*.
- McDermott, Elizabeth. 2006. "Surviving in Dangerous Places: Lesbian Identity Performances in the Workplace, Social Class and Psychological Health." *Feminism & Psychology* 16(2): 193-211.
- Bridges, Khiara M. 2018. "Excavating Race-Based Disadvantage among Class-Privileged People of Color." *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, vol. 53, no. 1:65-130.
- Gopal, Meena. 2012. "Caste, Sexuality and Labour: The Troubled Connection." *Current Sociology* 60(2):222-238.

[Objectives: Identify and critically evaluate cultural and economic definitions of "class." Articulate the differences between and relations across "class" and "caste," and "class" and "status." Interrogate whether and how definitions of social class are applicable across different countries and locales. Critically analyze the links between "class" at the level of social structure and the level of individual experience.]

10/11: DUE DATE FOR FINAL PAPER TOPIC

Methods to Empirically Research Intersectionality

Oct 17

- McCall, Leslie. 2003. "Managing the Complexity of Intersectionality." *Signs*.
- Rios, Victor M., Nikita Carney, and Jasmine Kelekay. "Ethnographies of Race, Crime, and Justice: Toward a Sociological Double-consciousness." *Annual Review of Sociology* 43 (2017): 493-513.
- Best Amy. 2003. "Doing Race in the Context of Feminist Interviewing: Constructing Whiteness through Talk". *Qualitative Inquiry* 9:895–914.
- Choo, Hae Yeon and Myra Marx Ferree. 2010. "Practicing Intersectionality in Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis of Inclusions, Interactions, and Institutions in the Study of Inequalities." *Sociological Theory* 28 (2): 129–49.
- Narayan, Uma. 1997. "Cross-Cultural Connections, Border Crossing, and 'Death by Culture.' Thinking about Dowry Murders in India and Domestic Violence Murders in the United States." In *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminisms*

[Objectives: Identify the challenges inherent in designing a study to research processes and outcomes from an intersectional perspective. Compare and critically assess the assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches to researching intersectionality. Determine what approach and what types of data are best suited to answer your own research question]

HOW DO INTERSECTING SYSTEMS OF POWER AND DISADVANTAGE ORGANIZE INSTITUTIONS AND SHAPE IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE? HOW CAN IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE SHAPE INTERSECTING SYSTEMS OF POWER?

Bodies (and Health)

Oct. 24

- Cottom, Tressie McMillan. 2019. "Dying to be Competent."
- Ridgeway, Cecilia L. "Gender, Status, and Leadership." 2001. *Journal of Social issues* 57(4): 637-655.
- Frederick, Angela. 2017. "Risky Mothers and the Normalcy Project: Women with Disabilities Negotiate Scientific Motherhood." *Gender & Society* 31(1):74-95.
- Pande, Amrita. 2010. "Commercial Surrogacy in India: Manufacturing a Perfect Mother-Worker." *Signs*. 35(4): 969-992.
- Sewell, Abigail A. 2016. "The Racism-Race Reification Process: A Mesolevel Political Economic Framework for Understanding Racial Health Disparities." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 2(4):402-432.

[Objectives: Compare the Cottom and Ridgeway readings. In particular, evaluate whether Ridgeway's expectations states theory explains the experiences described by Cottom in "Dying to Be Competent." Understand perspectives that investigate the social construction of parenthood, and critically evaluate perspectives that focus on how social institutions "produce" particular types of "subjects." Identify the challenges and importance of studying health outcomes from an intersectional perspective]

Bodies (and "Beauty")

Oct. 31

- Cottom, Tressie McMillan. 2019. *Thick*. "In the Name of Beauty."
- Craig, Maxine Leeds. 2006. "Race, Beauty and the Tangled Knot of a Guilty Pleasure." *Feminist Theory* 7(2):159-177.
- Wilkins AC. 2004. "Puerto Rican Wannabes—Sexual Spectacle and the Marking of Race, Class, and Gender Boundaries". *Gender & Society* 18:103–21
- Williams et al. 2013. "Trans Men: Embodiments, Identities and Sexualities." *Sociological Forum* 2.
- Lindsay-Dennis, LaShawnda. 2015. "Black Feminist-womanist Research Paradigm: Toward a Culturally Relevant Research Model Focused on African American Girls." *Journal of Black Studies* 46(5): 506-520.

[Objectives: Critically analyze and compare Cottom's discussion of Black women and beauty standards with Craig's arguments. Articulate how sexuality, race, class and gender influence the social definitions and constructions of "desirable" bodies.]

Families and Schools

Nov 7

- Curl, Heather, Annette Lareau, and Tina Wu. 2018. "Cultural Conflict: The Implications of Changing Dispositions Among the Upwardly Mobile." *Sociological Forum*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 877-899.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. "Gender, Black Feminism, and Black Political Economy." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 568:41-53.
- Lopez, Nancy. 2002. Latinas and Latinos in High School: Re-writing Race and Gender Lessons in the Classroom. *Teachers College Record* 104(6):1187-1203.
- Lareau, Annette, and Wesley Shumar. 1996. "The Problem of Individualism in Family-School Policies." *Sociology of Education* 24.

[Objectives: Describe the theoretical tension between "structure" and "agency," and apply these concepts to readings about family and schools. Critically engage the concept of "Black feminist epistemology," in relation to studies of the family. Explain how family relations can reproduce and challenge intersecting binaries of: gender/sexuality/race/class. Apply concepts from previous weeks (culture vs. structure; levels of analysis) to current readings]

Work and Organizations

Nov 14

- Durr, Marlese, and Adia M. Harvey Wingfield. 2011. "Keep your 'N' in check: African American women and the interactive effects of etiquette and emotional labor." *Critical Sociology* 37(5): 557-571.
- Brumley, Krista. 2014. "The Gendered Ideal Worker Narrative: Professional Women's and Men's Work Experiences in the New Economy at a Mexican Company." *Gender & Society*. 28(6): 799-823.
- Pedulla, David. 2014. "The Positive Consequences of Negative Stereotypes: Race, Sexual Orientation, and the Job Application Process." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 77(1):75-94.
- Emmanuel David. 2015. "Purple-collar labor: Transgender Workers and Queer Value at Global Call Centers in the Philippines." *Gender & Society*. 29(2): 169-194.
- Aptekar S. 2009. Organizational Life and Political Incorporation of Two Asian Immigrant Groups: A Case Study." *Ethnic & Racial Studies* 32:1511-33.
- Tinkler, Justine, Jun Zhao, Yan Li and Cecilia Ridgeway. 2019. "Honorary Whites? Asian American Women and the Dominance Penalty." *Socius* 5:1-13.

[Objectives: Interrogate how intersections of gender and race influence experiences in the workplace, and the conditions that shape that experience; critically engage with arguments about conditions in which individuals in multiple marginalized social positions could experience "advantage" in the workplace]

Nov 18 OUTLINE DUE

Immigration

Nov. 21

- Choo, Hae Yeon. 2013. "The Cost of Rights: Migrant Women, Feminist Advocacy, and Gendered Morality in South Korea." *Gender & Society* 27(4): 445-68.
doi:10.1177/0891243213483896.
- Carrillo, Héctor, and Jorge Fontdevila. 2014. "Border Crossings and Shifting Sexualities among Mexican Gay Immigrant Men: Beyond Monolithic Conceptions." *Sexualities* 17, 8: 919-38.
- Collier, Megan, and Meghan Daniel. 2019. "The Production of Trans Illegality: Cisnormativity in the US Immigration System." *Sociology Compass*: e12666.
- Bashi V. 2004. "Globalized anti-blackness: transnationalizing Western immigration law, policy, and practice." *Ethn. Racial Stud.* 27:584-606

Nov. 28 ***** THANKSGIVING *****

Politics and Social Movements

Dec 5

- Watkins Liu, Callie. 2018. "The Anti-oppressive Value of Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality in Social Movement Study." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 4(3):306-321.
- Cottom, *Thick*, "Girl"
- Cohen, Cathy J., and Sarah J. Jackson. "Ask a feminist: A conversation with Cathy J. Cohen on Black Lives Matter, feminism, and contemporary activism." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 41, no. 4 (2016): 775-792.

[Objectives: Articulate the conditions that generate a social movement. Articulate the challenges, disadvantages and advantages that confront attempts to build a social movement around "intersecting oppressions." Apply the concepts and theories from the semester to questions about politics and social movements.]

DEC 16: PAPER DUE