

Minority Group Relations
Sociology 208-04
Rhode Island College, Fall 2008

Mondays 4-7 PM, Craig-Lee Hall room 053

Instructor Information

Mikaila Mariel Lemonik Arthur

marthur@ric.edu

401. 456. 8681

Office: Craig Lee Hall room 451

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30-5:30 PM, Wednesdays 2:30-3:30 PM, or by appointment

Course website: <http://www.ric.edu/faculty/marthur/classes.html>

Required Materials

Ghallagher, Charles A. **2007**. *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity*. Boston: McGraw Hill. Available at the RIC bookstore as well as online. Costs \$68 new. You must get the 2007 edition, but used texts should be available.

Supplemental readings will be distributed through electronic reserves, WebCT, or in class as is appropriate.

Course Description

Why should we study race? Race does not “exist” in any physical or biological sense. The genes that dictate our skin color, our hair color, the shape of our eyes or our nose—these genes do not come in some neat little bundle that tells us who belongs to which group. Indeed, over history and still today there has not been a consensus on how to classify people into races or even how many races exist. However, race is extremely real in its effects on our lives as individuals and as members of society. By studying race, along with ethnicity (an idea which is often confused or conflated with race), we can unravel where race comes from, why it still matters, how it impacts us, and how it intersects with other sorts of inequality in society.

By the end of this course, you will have:

- Been introduced to sociology as a discipline and to sociological ways of understanding the world;
- Developed an understanding of the historical dynamics of race and ethnicity and the ways in which they have shaped the contemporary United States;
- Explored the complex interactions between race and other forms of inequality (class, gender, sexuality, disability) as well as between race and significant social institutions (education, employment, family, media, the criminal justice system) that shape our daily lives;
- Learned to analyze how the realities of race and ethnicity have shaped their own personal histories, their communities, and the policy debates that currently face our world; and
- Advanced your skills in writing about and discussing quantitative and geographical data as well as complex and controversial issues.

Grading

1. **PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE.** While regular participation is important in all college courses, it is even more important in a course that meets only once a week, as this one does. Missing one class session of our course is like missing a whole week of another course. You are expected to come on time for every class meeting and let me know as soon as possible (preferably in advance) if you must miss class for a legitimate reason. Part of your attendance is the expectation that you will participate in class sessions by contributing something to our discussions. If you have significant problems speaking in class, I strongly urge you to come speak to me privately as soon as possible to develop alternative participation mechanisms (such as private meetings or e-mail discussions) so that you can meet this requirement. Remember that there are few stupid questions, but that all questions and comments should be made in a spirit of respect for other students and their contributions to the class. **(10% of final course grade)**
2. **WEEKLY IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS.** Each week in class we will do some sort of in-class assignment. Sometimes, these assignments will take the form of short essay quizzes; other times, they will take the form of interactive small-group exercises. These assignments serve three purposes: first, they help you to gather your thoughts for whole-class discussion. Second, they help you stay on track with the reading load. And third, they enable me to take attendance quickly and easily. Because they are also used for attendance, you should submit your assignment even when you do not know the answer to the question. As part of this segment of your course grade, you may occasionally be asked to complete a short out-of-class exercise, such as using an interactive website and submitting the results to me via email. **(20% of final course grade)**
3. **PAPERS.** During the course of the semester, you will complete two papers. Each paper will be approximately 4-6 pages in length. One paper will require you to use Census and other geographical data found on the Internet to address questions about race, residence, and inequality. The other will ask you to consider theories and concepts discussed in the course in light of your own family history (or that of another individual you interview). More details about these assignments will be handed out as they are due. (Each paper is worth **25%** of the final course grade)
4. **FINAL EXAM.** During the regularly scheduled exam period, there will be an in-class, open-book/open-note, essay-style final exam. **(20% of final course grade)**
5. **READING.** You are expected to complete all assigned course readings prior to the date for which they are assigned. Remember that normal expectations for a college course are that you should do two to three hours of work outside class for every one hour in class—since you are spending three hours a week in this class, that means you should expect to work on reading, writing assignments, and studying for this class for six to nine hours a week outside of class. Reading assignments are generally kept under 75 pages a week, but are heavier in the first few weeks of the semester as we get off the ground. While you are not required to use them, practice tests on the readings in *Rethinking the Color Line* can be found online at http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073135747/student_view0/ to help you study.

Schedule

(Reading assignments followed by a **T** can be found in *Rethinking the Color Line*; those followed by an **E** are available electronically).

- September 8 **First Class Meeting**
- September 15 **History and Definitions of Race**
Zinn, "Drawing the Color Line" (9-20) **T**
Rodriguez and Cordero-Guzman, "Placing Race in Context" (85-91) **T**
Wilkins, "A Tour of Indian People and Indian Lands" (92-112) **T**
Lee and Bean, "Beyond Black and White" (122-129) **T**
Gilman, "Are Jews White?" *Theories of Race and Racism* (229-236) **O**
McKee Evens, "From the Land of Canaan" *AHR* (15-43) **O**
Be sure to read the entire syllabus prior to this class meeting
- September 22 **Migration & Ethnicity**
Zhou, "The Changing Face of America" (477-498) **T**
Espiritu, "Asian American Panethnicity" (113-122) **T**
Suleiman, "The Arab Immigrant Experience" (498-517) **T**
Waters, "Ethnic and Racial Identities" (518-534) **T**
Ong, "The Ambivalence of Salvation" *Buddha is Hiding* (195-228) **O**
Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge," *Foreign Policy* (1-12) **O**
- September 29 **No Class Meeting**
In lieu of this week's class, you will be expected to attend at least two events during Diversity Week and write about one page about the events you attended and the role that Diversity Week plays, ought to play, or should not play on the RIC campus. If time commitments preclude you from doing this, please see me for an alternate assignment.
- October 6 **Theoretical Understandings of Race and Racism**
Feagin and Feagin, "Theoretical Perspectives" (29-45) **T**
Omi and Winant, "Racial Formations" (21-29) **T**
Bonilla-Silva, "Racialized Social System Approach" (46-56) **T**
Gallagher, "Color Blind Privilege" (130-142) **T**
Guinier and Torres, "The Ideology of Colorblindness" (143-149) **T**
Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness" (201-214) **T**
Web Assignment: Complete one or more Implicit Association Tests (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/>), including the one titled "Race IAT" found under "Demonstration."
- October 13 **Race and Social Inequality**
Shapiro, "Transformative Assets" (80-85) **T**
Blank, "An Overview of Trends" (56-68) **T**
McIntosh, "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" **O**
Collins, "Pornography and Black Women's Bodies," *Race, Class, Gender, and the Media* (279-286) **O**
Samuels, "My Body, My Closet," *GLQ* (233-255) **O**

- October 20 **Race and Family Life**
 Dalmage, “Discovering Racial Borders” (542-554) **T**
 Wu, “The Changing Face of America” (554-572) **T**
 Moynihan, *The Negro Family*, entire. (Can be read online at <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm>.)
 Rothman, “Family” (3-8) and “Hair” (206-224), from *Weaving a Family* **O**
- October 27 **Race, Residence, and Health**
 Feagin, “The Continuing Significance of Race” (214-223) **T**
 Massey, “Residential Segregation” (224-250) **T**
 Bullard, “Environmental Justice” (262-279) **T**
 Zeek, “Why Are There No Supermarkets” (290-299) **T**
 Williams and Collins, “The Color of Health” (69-79) **T**
Web Assignment: Map segregation in your hometown on <http://www.socialexplorer.com>.
***First Paper Due: Family History**
- November 3 **Race and Employment**
 Newman and Ellis, “There’s No Shame in My Game” (363-378) **T**
 Pager, “The Mark of a Criminal Record” (344-349) **T**
 Braverman, “Kristen v. Aisha” (349-350) **T**
 Duster, “Individual Fairness, Group Preferences, and the California Strategy,” *Race and Representation* (111-134) **O**
- November 10 **Race and Education**
 Kozol, “Savage Inequalities” (280-290) **T**
 Steele, “Thin Ice: ‘Stereotype Threat’ and Black College Students,” *Atlantic Monthly* (44-47) **O**
 Suzuki, “Asian Americans as the ‘Model Minority,’” *Change* (13-19) **O**
 Shapiro, “Getting a Decent American Middle-Class Education” (155-182) **O**
- November 17 **Race, Law, and Crime**
 Cole, “No Equal Justice” (304-314) **T**
 Davis, “Race and Criminalization” (314-323) **T**
 Reiman, “...And the Poor Get Prison” (324-344) **T**
 ASA, “Race, Ethnicity, and the Criminal Justice System” (1-31) **O**
- November 24 **Race and the Media**
 Klein and Naccarato, “Broadcast News” (415-420) **T**
 Lewis and Jhally, “Television and the Politics of Representation” (420-432) **T**
 Lichter and Amundson, “Distorted Reality” (432-445) **T**
 Merskin, “Winnebagos, Cherokees, Apaches, and Dakotas” (446-455) **T**
 Lapchick, “Sport in America” (456-465) **T**
Web Assignment: Prior to November 20, email me ads, YouTube clips, news articles, or other media sources that you feel represent race in a way worth discussing
***Second Paper Due: Demographic Analysis**

December 1	<p>Race, Politics, and Social Change Akram and Johnson, "Race and Civil Rights" (185-200) T Branch, "The Sit-In Movement" (27-31) and Cozzens, "Mississippi and Freedom Summer" (67-72), <i>Solutions to Social Problems</i> O Lipsitz, "Whiteness and War," <i>The Possessive Investment in Whiteness</i> (70-105) O <i>Web Assignment:</i> Play the Redistricting Game, Mission 4, at http://www.redistrictinggame.org/.</p>
December 8	<p>Final Class Meeting: Future Trends Please come to class prepared with questions for exam review. Gans, "The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy" (149-165) T Ghallagher, "Ten Simple Things You Can Do" (582-585) T</p>
Date TBA	Final Exam

Course Policies

Academic Honesty

All students enrolling in this course are expected to abide by the Rhode Island College guidelines on academic honesty, which can be located in the Student Handbook and other official documents. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarizing written work, including copying some or all of your work from a book, a website, or another student's paper. Think about how you would feel if someone passed off your hard work as their own.
- Using sources without proper attribution. Remember that all claims in a paper that did not spring fully formed from your own head need attribution, regardless of whether or not they are paraphrased, and all direct quotes should appear in quotation marks. If you are unsure how to document sources, please see me or reference my webpage on the American Sociological Association citation format, available online at: <http://www.ric.edu/faculty/marthur/race05/styleguide/index.html>
- Turning in work completed for other classes without prior permission.
- Working together with another student on an assignment, or seeking assistance with the content of your work from professionals, parents, or peers, without prior permission. (The exception to this policy is proofreading.)
- Copying off of another student or off of materials you have brought without permission during an exam. This includes text messaging and use of the internet during exams.
- Destroying course materials or otherwise preventing other students from achieving fully in this course.

You should be aware that I have caught many students who have engaged in academic dishonesty. Cheating successfully is often harder than you think, and you might as well just put your effort into doing the assignment legitimately. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and include receiving a 0 on the assignment for the first minor offense, receiving an F for the class for a repeated offense, and report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs at RIC. If you feel the urge to engage in academic dishonesty, stop and think about what you are doing, and then come see me so we can work out a plan together to ensure your success in the course.

Extensions, Absences, and Attendance

You are expected to attend class regularly, but I am aware that emergencies do come up and that this class is not the only priority in your life. If you know in advance that you will be absent for a legitimate reason, please let me know via email so that you can be excused. If something unavoidable comes up, it is your responsibility to let me know as soon as possible afterwards. Regardless, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate (I do not provide notes to students) and to meet with me to clarify what you have missed. If you must be late to a class or if you must leave early, you should try to let me know in advance, and you should always be sure not to disturb other students with your comings and goings. Be aware that repeated absences, even if excused, may imperil your ability to do well in the course, and that you can not earn participation points if you are not present.

All assignments are due in class at the start of class. While I understand that you may occasionally experience printer problems, these are not an excuse for late work. It is my preference that all work be turned in on paper, but in unavoidable situations you may email me your work. If you must email me your work, it must be sent at least 15 minute prior to the start of class (you may not skip class to finish your work) in *.rtf, *.doc, *.docx, *.pdf, or *.html format (try “Save As” to select one of these formats). I will write back to you letting you know that I received and could open your work. If I do not receive it or can not open it, it does not count as having been submitted, so I encourage you to try your best to get me a paper copy. If unavoidable circumstances require you to seek an extension on your work, I am generally open to providing one. However, you will need to request the extension via email at least 24 hours prior to the due date unless the extension is due to a major emergency (health crisis, death in the family, etc.) – so plan ahead.

Course Technology

Students are expected to check their RIC email addresses frequently, at a minimum twice a week before each class meeting. If you primarily use another email account, I would suggest you arrange for your RIC email to be forwarded, as I do use email to disseminate important information about the course. Students are also responsible for being able to access the WebCT site for this course (through which you can access the course website), as course documents and information will be made available there. If you are not able to access email, WebCT, or the course website, you should seek assistance from User Support Services (<http://www.ric.edu/uss/> or x8886) right away so that you do not fall behind in the course.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that might interfere with your ability to perform at your best in this course, it is your responsibility to come and speak with me as early as possible in the semester so that we can develop a plan together. All reasonable accommodations will be made. Students with disabilities should be sure that they are registered with Disability Services in order to ensure access to the full range of services available at Rhode Island College. Information about these services and about registration is available at <http://www.ric.edu/disabilityservices/>.

Supplemental Services

Writing center: <http://www.ric.edu/writingcenter/>

Academic and Study Skills: <http://www.ric.edu/oasis/>

Counseling Center: <http://www.ric.edu/counselingctr/>