**SOCI 2RR3: Case Studies in Social Inequality—The “Others”**

Term: Winter 2022 Instructor: **Sarah May Lindsay, PhDc**

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Class meets **asynchronously**; lectures are recorded and posted each Wednesday morning

**Important Note:** This lecture schedule is based upon current university and public health guidelines and may be subject to changes during the term. Any changes to the schedule or course delivery will be communicated on the course announcements section on Avenue to Learn. Please check the announcements prior to attending class.

Classroom: online; Avenue to Learn (Avenue)

Office Hours: Wednesdays at 11:00 am-12:00 pm EST via Zoom; email for additional appointment times

\*Note on meeting times: **Lectures are recorded and posted each Wednesday morning.** Friday class time is reserved for you to work on discussion posts and assignments and for test preparation.

\*Please utilize the detailed course outline included in this syllabus to **plan your work** throughout the term. Build key deadlines into your plan; and always leave yourself extra time (just in case)!

## **Course Description**

This course will introduce students to the empirical literature on social inequality. Specifically, we critically examine how certain individuals and groups are cast as “others”, the motivations for “othering”, and how an “us versus them” ideology furthers oppression in contemporary Western society. In this course, we utilize case studies to deeply engage and understand social inequalities involving class, gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, ability, environment, and species.

## **Learning Outcomes**

### By the end of this course, you will be able to:

### understand the major theoretical perspectives and key concepts in the study of social inequality,

### critically interpret and evaluate sociological information in light of empirical evidence,

### apply theoretical and methodological tools of sociology to conceptualize and explain contemporary social inequality,

### demonstrate improved analytic, writing, and discussion skills,

* understand how to gain access to additional scholarly work on this and other topics, and
* pose critical questions about social inequality and “othering”.

## **Required Texts**

* all readings are available online (Avenue to Learn)

**Additional Information on Assignments**

Assignments must be turned in electronically to Avenue to Learn by the deadline on the course schedule. This course will use the originality-checking feature in Avenue to Learn to screen all assignments for plagiarism (see below). All pages must be numbered and have 1" to 1.25" margins on all sides. All text should be double-spaced in an easy-to-read 12-point font. Utilize ASA or APA style for all assignments. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will be reflected in the mark for the assignment.

**McMaster Research Ethics**

In this class, you may engage in research on human subjects. We take research ethics very seriously, and we will discuss research ethics in class. One resource for you is the McMaster Research Ethics website: https://reo.mcmaster.ca/. I am also happy to answer any questions you have about research ethics.

## **Evaluation Method and Important Dates**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Element | Weight | (Due) Date | Notes |
| Discussion Entries | 10% | ongoing; due weekly on Fridays\*\* | complete on Avenue; first submission due: Week 2, Friday, by 11:55 pm |
| Test #1 | 25% | February 16th | All material up to this point; completed online |
| Critical Documentary Review | 15% | March 4th | submit via Avenue by 11:55 pm |
| Test #2 | 25% | April 6th | All material since Test #1; completed online |
| Case Study Research Assignment | 25% | April 8th | submit via Avenue by 11:55 pm |
| Total | **100%** |  |  |

\*\*refer to Avenue for exceptions

## **Details of Evaluation**

Discussion Entries—10%

Each week (see Avenue for exceptions), beginning Week 2, you are required to answer one of two discussion questions related to the course readings, which will be posted in the Discussion section of Avenue on Wednesdays. You will have until end-of-day on Friday each week to post your answer. Complete details are provided on Avenue.

Critical Documentary Review—15%

For this assignment, choose and view one of the documentaries from the course. Submit a critical review demonstrating your understanding/perspective of “othering”, how this concept/practice is at play in the chosen film, and your how social inequality more generally is addressed, challenged, and/or reinforced. Complete details are provided on Avenue.

Tests—25% (x2)

Two tests of your comprehension and learning will occur over the term. These examinations will occur during our regular lecture time, on Wednesdays, and be conducted on Avenue to Learn. Complete details are provided on Avenue.

Case Study Research Assignment—25%

This assignment asks you to choose and research a contemporary case study in social inequality. Utilizing course readings and peer-reviewed, academic sources, you will locate and research a case study involving “othering” and one or more of our course themes (gender, race/ethnicity, species, environment, class, and/or ability). Complete details are provided on Avenue.

**Review of Marks**

I will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Nonetheless, occasionally students disagree with the marks they receive. When this occurs, I will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.***

To request a review of a mark, write a brief (<1-page) memo describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. Submit this memo, with the original marked assignment to me via email. You may submit requests for review no later than two weeks after assignments/exams are handed back to the class.

## **Absences, Missed Work, and Illness**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. The McMaster Student Absence Form is a self-reporting tool for undergraduate students to report absences that last up to 3 days. This form allows students to request accommodation for any missed academic work. This tool cannot be used during any final examination period. You may submit a maximum of one Academic Work Missed request per term. It is your responsibility to follow up with your professor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation. If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a non-medical reason, you must visit the office of the Associate Dean of your Faculty. You may be required to provide supporting documentation. Any disruption this causes to turning in assignments on time, completing exams, and so forth, must be addressed directly with your Teaching Assistant as soon as possible.

For late assignments without approved excuses, you must make arrangements directly with your professor to submit the assignment. Assignments will be marked down 5 percentage points for each day it is late, including weekend days and holidays.

## **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

**Accommodations**

I am committed to making appropriate accommodations for students' observance of religious holidays. Please contact me as early in the term as possible to make individual arrangements.

I am also committed to working with students with disabilities to make individualized accommodations according to your specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through the Student Accessibility Services department. Please drop by my office hours at the beginning of the term to make individual arrangements and to complete the necessary paperwork. All such arrangements will be kept confidential.

**Email**

Please consider email equivalent to any other form of written communication. Students are expected to follow rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition, please include a proper greeting, such as "Dear Ms. Lindsay," and a closing that includes your full name, such as "Sincerely, Jane Lee." Email failing to meet these standards may be returned unanswered. Email containing questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus or to Avenue to Learn may not be answered. I do not check the separate Avenue to Learn email, so please do not try to contact me that way. All email communication must come from your mcmaster.ca email account. Please note that I will respond to email during the work week; evenings, weekends and holidays are not times for work-related email.

## **Detailed Course Outline**

This course utilizes academic and magazine articles, books, and documentary films to examine case studies in social inequality. When reading or watching each week, please pay special attention to emerging links between the material, and the theories and themes identified. Think critically, and consider aspects such as:

* What is the topic of the article/film?
* What theories (explanations for social phenomena) are identified/utilized?
* What are the authors’/filmmakers’ research questions, theses, or aims?
* What are the links to key social constructs (and sources of inequality) such as gender/sexuality, class, race/ethnicity, ability, or species?
* Are there interconnections of theory or practice, explicit or otherwise?

**Week 1: January 12th**

**Introduction**

Readings

Becker, Howard. 1963. “Outsiders—Defining Deviance.” Pp. 1–18 in *The Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: The Free Press.

Bogdan, Robert, and Steven Taylor. 1987. “Toward a Sociology of Acceptance: The Other Side of the Study of Deviance.” *Social Policy* 18(2):34–39.

Kleinman, A., and R. Hall-Clifford. 2009. “Stigma: A Social, Cultural and Moral Process.” *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 63(6):418–19. doi: 10.1136/jech.2008.084277.

**Week 2: January 19th**

**Class**

Readings

Proudfoot, Shannon. 2021. “The Working Class Has Had Enough: How a Once Undervalued, Ignored and Politically Silent Group Is Fighting Back.” *Maclean’s*, October, 38–45.

Scott, Rebecca. 2009. “The Sociology of Coal Hollow: Safety, Othering, and Representations of Inequality.” *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 15(1 and 2):7–25.

Documentary

* Deveaux, Bert. 2013. *Poor No More*. Deveaux Babin.

Supplemental

Lindell, Johan. 2020. “Battle of the Classes: News Consumption Inequalities and Symbolic Boundary Work.” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 37(5):480–96. doi: 10.1080/15295036.2020.1829670.

**Week 3: January 26th**

**Gender and Sexuality**

Readings

Colliver, Ben, Adrian Coyle, and Marisa Silvestri. 2019. “The ‘Online Othering’ of Transgender People in Relation to ‘Gender Neutral Toilets.’” Pp. 215–37 in *Online Othering*, edited by K. Lumsden and E. Harmer. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Perrin, Sarah, Karine Bertrand, and Emmanuel Langlois. 2021. “Avoiding the Stigma. A Qualitative Study of Socially Included Women’s Experiences of Drug Use and Dealing, Health Services and the Police in France.” *International Journal of Drug Policy* 87:102850. doi: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2020.102850.

Documentary

* Schwarz, J. (Director). (2011). Vito. First Run Features.
  + https://mcmaster.kanopy.com/video/vito

**Week 4: February 2nd**

**Race/Ethnicity**

Readings

Li, Yao, and Harvey L. Nicholson. 2021. “When ‘Model Minorities’ Become ‘Yellow Peril’—Othering and

the Racialization of Asian Americans in the COVID‐19 Pandemic.” *Sociology Compass* 15(2). doi: 10.1111/soc4.12849.

Udah, Hyacinth. 2019. “Searching for a Place to Belong in a Time of Othering.” *Social Sciences* 8(11):297.

doi: 10.3390/socsci8110297.

Documentary

Fendelman, Joel. 2018. *Man of Fire*.

**Week 5: February 9th**

**Indigenous Peoples**

Readings

Denis, Jeffrey S. 2015. “Contact Theory in a Small-Town Settler-Colonial Context: The Reproduction of

Laissez-Faire Racism in Indigenous-White Canadian Relations.” *American Sociological Review*

80(1): 218-242.

Corntassel, Jeff, and Cindy Holder. 2008. “Who’s Sorry Now? Government Apologies, Truth

Commissions, and Indigenous Self-Determination in Australia, Canada, Guatemala, and Peru.” *Human Rights Review* 9(4): 465-489.

Documentary

*Muffins for Granny*. 2008. Film directed by Nadia McLaren. Mongrel Media.

[\* Available for streaming through McMaster library system]

Suggested

Bombay, Amy, Kimberly Matheson, and Hymie Anisman. 2014. “The Intergenerational Effects of Indian

Residential Schools: Implications for the Concept of Historical Trauma.” *Transcultural Psychiatry* 51: 320-338.

Ramos, H. (2008). Opportunity for Whom?: Political Opportunity and Critical Events in Canadian

Aboriginal Mobilization, 1951-2000. *Social Forces*, *87*(2), 795–823. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.0.0145

**Week 6: February 16th**

* Test #1 (no lecture)

**\*\*FEBRUARY 21-27TH** MID-TERM RECESS: **NO CLASSES\*\***

**Week 7: March 2nd**

**Ability**

Readings

Mik-Meyer, Nanna. 2016. “Othering, Ableism and Disability: A Discursive Analysis of Co-Workers’ Construction of Colleagues with Visible Impairments.” *Human Relations* 69(6):1341–63. doi: 10.1177/0018726715618454.

Nachman, Brett Ranon, and Kirsten R. Brown. 2020. “Omission and Othering: Constructing Autism on Community College Websites.” *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* 44(3):211–23. doi: 10.1080/10668926.2019.1565845.

Supplemental

Kerzner, L., Temple Jones, C., Haller, B., & Blaser, A. (2020). Rights and Representation: Media Narratives

about Disabled People and Their Service Animals in Canadian Print News. *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, *9*(2), 38–76.

Tarvainen, Merja. 2019. “Ableism and the Life Stories of People with Disabilities.” *Scandinavian Journal of*

*Disability Research* 21(1):291–99. doi: 10.16993/sjdr.632.

**Week 8: March 9th**

**Environment**

Readings

Njoku, Anuli U. 2021. “COVID-19 and Environmental Racism: Challenges and Recommendations.” *European Journal of Environment and Public Health* 5(2):em0079. doi: 10.21601/ejeph/10999.

Documentary

Page, Elliot, and Ian Daniel. 2020. *There’s Something in the Water*.

**Week 9: March 16th**

**Species**

Readings

Gruen, Lori, and Kari Weil. 2012. “Animal Others-Editors’ Introduction.” *Hypatia* 27(3):477–87. doi: 10.1111/j.1527-2001.2012.01296.x.

Sutton, Zoei, and Nik Taylor. 2019. “Managing the Borders: Static/Dynamic Nature and the ‘Management’ of ‘Problem’ Species.” *Parallax* 25(4):379–94. doi: 10.1080/13534645.2020.1731006.

**Documentary**

Devries, Mark. 2013. *Speciesism: The Movie*. Mark Devries Productions, Inc.

**Week 10: March 23rd**

**Intersectionality (1)**

Readings

Falek, J., & Butler, C. (2020). Tricky Ticks and Vegan Quips: The Lone Star Tick and Logics of Debility.

*Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, *9*(2), 157–183.

Stahl, Garth. 2017. “The Practice of ‘Othering’ in Reaffirming White Working-Class Boys’ Conceptions of

Normative Identities.” *Journal of Youth Studies* 20(3):283–300. doi: 10.1080/13676261.2016.1212163.

**Week 12: March 30th**

**Intersectionality (2)**

Readings

* Best, S. (2006). Rethinking Revolution: Animal Liberation, Human Liberation, and the Future of the Left. *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, *2*(3). <http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol2/vol2_no3_Best_rethinking_revolution.htm>
* Pellow, D. N. (2016). Toward a Critical Environmental Justice Studies: Black Lives Matter as an Environmental Justice Challenge. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, *13*(2), 221–236. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X1600014X>

**Week 13: April 6th**

* Test #2 (no Lecture)

## **University Policies**

## Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academiccredentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academiccredit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)**.**

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

* Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](https://sas.mcmaster.ca/) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca%20) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [*Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf)policy.

## **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2019/02/Academic-Accommodation-for-Religious-Indigenous-and-Spiritual-Observances-Policy-on.pdf) accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Code-of-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g., use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

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## Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

## Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

## Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

| **MARK** | **GRADE** |
| --- | --- |
| 90-100 | A+ |
| 85-89 | A |
| 80-84 | A- |
| 77-79 | B+ |
| 73-76 | B |
| 70-72 | B- |
| 67-69 | C+ |
| 63-66 | C |
| 60-62 | C- |
| 57-59 | D+ |
| 53-56 | D |
| 50-52 | D- |
| 0-49 | F |