Faculty of Human, Social and Political Sciences
HSPS PART II B Tripos
Part II 2018-19

Paper SOC11: Racism, ‘Race’ and Ethnicity

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Lecturers
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Supervisors
The paper has a large group of supervisors available to supervise all topics of this paper. You will receive by email a document with a list of supervisors with an indication of the topics they are willing to supervise. You can also find this document in Moodle. Please contact them directly to check availability and arrange your own supervision. If you find yourself with no options or availability or any other problem do get in touch with the course organiser, Dr Manali Desai (md644@cam.ac.uk). You should aim to do this in the first two weeks of the paper if not earlier.

Outline of the Paper

Aims and Objectives
• To introduce the key theoretical debates and analytical approaches to the study of racism, ‘race’ and ethnicity.
• To develop a critical understanding of the historical development and transformations of forms of racism and processes of racialization alongside ideas of ‘race’ and ethnicity.
• To provide knowledge and understanding of the racial and ethnic divisions that are prevalent in Britain and beyond.
• To develop an understanding of the interplay between key cultural, social and political forces and the rise of racism, racialization, ethnic division and violence.
• To develop key intellectual and analytical skills in exploring issues of racism, ‘race’, and ethnicity in different areas of the world and with reference to their intersection with gender and class.

Brief description of the paper
This paper explores the emergence of contemporary forms of racism, modern notions of ‘race’ and ethnicity and the social and political forces that have shaped them. A critical approach to the understanding of ‘race’ will be developed and you will be encouraged to assess the social implications of contemporary practices of racism and persistent racial and racist ideas. As well as examining theoretical approaches to notions of ‘race’, the module will explore empirical analyses of the impact of racism in contemporary society. Key questions will include: How are racial ideas
conceptualized and justified through a variety of biological, social and cultural discourses? How did ‘race’ and ethnicity come to be defined and embedded in the context of colonial and post-colonial rule? What are the, often complex, relations between ideas of ‘race’, the production of difference and identity, and the pervasiveness of social exclusion? Why does ‘race’ remain such a powerful determinant of individual and collective identities? What is the specificity of ethnicity in contemporary society? Why and how does ‘race’ and ethnicity matter?

**Mode of teaching**

The course is taught by means of 15 two-hour lectures, 6 supervisions and two revision sessions. Lectures are central to this paper and students are strongly advised to attend all of them. Students are advised to write at least four short essays over the year addressing the supervision questions listed in this paper guide. Students will be expected to produce a minimum of 4 essays instead of being required to write 6 essays. While still holding the stipulated 6 supervisions, individual supervisors can decide to use some supervision sessions to read and discuss an article, ask students to present on a topic, or find other ways to address the topic in ways that are stimulating and provide a learning experience for students.

The reading lists and supervision topics below are meant to provide guidance for students and supervisors. Students are not expected to cover all of the topics, but to make a balanced selection in consultation with their supervisors. In general, lecturers will give supervisions on their course.

**Mode of assessment**

The paper will be examined by a three-hour paper at the end of the year. Students taking the examination must answer three questions from an undivided paper.

**Outline of Lectures - Lectures Schedule**

The paper is taught in 2-hour lecture blocks throughout 15 weeks.

**Michaelmas (8 Lectures: Weeks 1-8) Lecturer: Ali Meghji (AM), Rachell Sanchez Rivera (RSR), Tiffany Page (TP)**

(This term all lectures will be on Tuesdays from 11-1)

**9-Oct-18**
1. Histories of Race 1: The Emergence of 'Race' and Racism, Enlightenment and the Colonial Enterprise (AM)

**16-Oct-18**
2. Histories of Race 2: The Science Fiction of ‘Race,’ Eugenics and their Inheritance (RSR)

**23-Oct-18**
3. Histories of Race 3: Race in Latin America (RSR)

**30-Oct-18**
4. Ethnicity (AM)
5. Problematising Whiteness (AM)

6. Locating vulnerability and vulnerable knowledge for the understanding of the workings of racism (TP)

7. Critical Race Theory, Trump, and Brexit (AM)

8. Race and Class: the Racial Underbelly of Britain’s Class System (AM)

Lent (6 Lectures: Weeks 1-6) Lecturers: Tanisha Spratt (TS), Hande Guzel (HG) and Philip Luther-Davies (PLD),
(This term all lectures will be on Tuesdays 2-4)


10. The Racialised Body II: ‘Race’ and the Lure of Beauty (TS)

11. Orientalism (HG)

12. Race and Religion (KG)

13. Islamophobia (PLD)

14. Anti-Semitism (PLD)

Easter – revision sessions

Tuesday 30th April, 2019, 11 – 12 noon
16. Revision Session AM, RSR, TP

Tuesday 7th of May, 2019, 11-12 noon
17. Revision Session TS, HG, PLD, KG
Outline of Topics and Reading Lists

Michaelmas

1. Histories of Race 1: The Emergence of ‘Race’, Enlightenment and the Colonial Enterprise (AM)

After an introduction to the course, this lecture considers the emergence and development of modern ideas of race within a period of developing capitalism, slavery, and scientific and social fascination with classification, explanation and description of human difference. Such ideas created opportunities for Europeans to appear superior to others, opportunities which were particularly poignant in colonial enterprises.


1. What, if any, is the relationship between Enlightenment philosophy and the emergence of notions of race?
2. Why did Europe sign the ‘racial contract’, and what did this contract do?

2. Histories of Race 2: The Science Fiction of ‘Race,’ Eugenics and Its Inheritance (RSR)

This lecture will explore the nineteenth century project of racial understanding that developed into what has been called scientific racism, involving forms of racial measurement and taxonomy. It will examine how historically specific ideas of race became ‘scientific truths’, and the implications of having the ‘respectability’ of science behind racist beliefs.

Supervision topic: To what extent do debates around eugenics reinvigorate scientific racism and how does this correlate to genomics today?

3. Histories of Race 3: Race in Latin America (RSR)


Imperialism, Chapter 3: Debating Reproduction, Chapter 4: Demon Mothers in the Social Laboratory


4. The Ethnicity Debates (AM)

Within sociology, theories of ethnicity have been applied widely on all forms of group identity and difference, including racial, tribal, and religious identity. Common in this application has been a rejection of primordial explanations for group identity. In this lecture, we ask: How do theories of ethnicity explain the persistence of group identities after rejecting the notion that differences are intrinsic? Moreover, how do they explain the persistence of group identity at a time when modernisation is presumed to prompt greater individualisation? We also consider whether ‘ethnicity’ provides a ‘post-racial’ way to continue discourses of racial difference.


1. What would we gain by keeping both race and ethnicity as analytical categories for understanding the workings of racism? What would we lose?

5. Problematising Whiteness (AM)

To what extent is whiteness the social location of privilege? Whiteness has often been treated as a norm against which ‘abnormal’ races/ethnicities are measured. This lecture will consider ideas and depictions of whiteness as invisible, ‘normal’, ‘human’ and ‘universal’. It will assess critiques of attaching whiteness to the white body, and the implications this has for understanding privilege and racism.


1. To what extent is whiteness an organising principle of late modernity?
2. Is whiteness a racial identity?
6. Locating vulnerability and vulnerable knowledge for the understanding of the workings of racism (TP)

This lecture will consider the concept of vulnerability and how it might be understood as a sociological phenomenon. It will unpack definitions of vulnerability as both a universal condition and as being socially distributed. We will discuss how a study of vulnerability, through lived experience, as well as the role of policy, access to and withdrawal of infrastructure and resources, can help to begin to address connections between the political, cultural and social forces of vulnerability and racial inequalities.

* Puar, Jasbir, Hands Up, Don’t Shoot! https://theminorityreport.com/hands-up-dont-shoot/

Supervision topic: Develop an analysis of one social issue through the lens of vulnerability. In doing so consider how might understanding vulnerability change how society addresses forms of racial and social inequality?

7. Critical race theory, Trump, and Brexit (AM)

This lecture will being with a discussion of critical race theory. We will consider the approaches of adopting a structural, material approach to racism. We will then particularly focus on the recent emergence of post-racial ideology, and how post-racialism led to the emergence of Trump
and Brexit. The second part of this lecture thus assesses critical rae theory in the context of ‘Trumpamerica’ and ‘Brexit Britain’.


1. Critically assess whether the rise of Trumpism is compatible with the claims of critical race theory.
2. ‘The same racialised logics underlie the rise of Trump and Brexit’. Discuss.

8. Race and class: the racial underbelly of Britain’s class system (AM)

This lecture will consider how Britain’s class system is deeply racialised. We will examine this from two perspectives. Firstly, ‘from the bottom’, we will look at how ethnoracial minorities are overrepresented in the lower-ends of Britain’s economic order. Secondly, ‘from the top’, we will examine how racism affects Britain’s black middle-class, while considering how the overrepresentation of whites in Britain’s wealth elite constitutes a Jim Crow economic order.


1. ‘Race is the modality in which class is lived’ (Stuart Hall). Discuss in relation to Britain’s class system.
2. Is racial inequality simply a form of class inequality?

LENT


Is race marked on the body in the form of physical and visible characteristics? This lecture will interrogate relationships between visibility and racial identification. It will explore the relationship of the emergence of photography and visual culture to racist thinking, and reflect on how constructions of ‘otherness’ affect how bodies are inhabited as well as represented. Since ‘race’ and ethnicity are open to visual exploration we will draw on the history and social theories of photography to consider its development alongside racist thinking.


112-129.

*Supervision topic:* ‘The visual field is not neutral to the question of race: it is itself a racial formation, a system of understanding, hegemonic and forceful’ (Butler 2005, 141-142). Discuss with reference to TWO case studies.


In this lecture we will continue with the exploration of how ‘race’ is often considered to be ‘marked’ on the body in the form of physical characteristics. Now we will focus on the relation between parameters of beauty, appearance, physical features and racialised perceptions of skin colour. We will reflect on beauty and its impact and materialisation in female and male racialised bodies, bodies where the skin is both witness and bearer of history.


Supervision topic: ‘When it comes to personal and professional success, more attractive people have a clear advantage over their less attractive peers’ (O’Connor, K. M and Gladstone E. 2018, 42-47). Discuss with reference to specific case studies.

11. Orientalism (HG)
In this session, we examine Edward Said’s influential notion of Orientalism and explore the invention and fixity of ‘the Orient’ and the consequences this has had for ‘West-East’ relations in terms of culture and power. We will consider the ways in which the construction of knowledge about the East contributed to the development of Western imperial ideologies and colonial expansion. The lecture will assess ways in which the construction of knowledge about the East contributed to the development of Western imperial ideologies and colonial expansion with a particular emphasis on gender in the latter half of the lecture.

Chapter 3: The Orient and Other Others

Supervision topic: What is the Orient? How is it actively produced? Answer with reference to specific cases.
12. Race and Religion (KG)

This lecture will focus on the nexus between religiosity and ethnic and/or racial identification of the Other, including in self-identification. It will help in the understanding of how religious difference has been generative of race and racism with a focus on Islam. By providing a broad picture of the history and present terrain we can examine, and re-examine, many of the axioms about Islamophobia and anti-Semitism in the academic literature, media and political and social spaces.


Supervision Topic: How has the social context of religion been generative of race and racism?

13. Islamophobia (PLD)

In this lecture, we will examine and explore Islamophobia both as a racist phenomenon and its development as a concept. We will pay attention to how Islamophobia has been deployed by Muslim’s in the UK, including by so-called ‘official’ bodies that claim to speak on behalf of British Muslims or Muslims globally, so that we can develop a critical understanding of this phenomena in academia and politics. We will also discuss the lived experiences of how British Muslim people have experienced Islamophobia and some of the problems encountered by researchers in defining what Islamophobia is or isn’t.


*Allen, C., Isakjee, A. and Ögtem Young, Ö. (2013) "Maybe We Are Hated" The Exprience and


Supervision topics:
1. How can religion become a source for racism? Answer with reference to two examples relating to Islam.
2. What is the Orient? How it is actively produced? Answer with reference to specific cases.

14. Antisemitism (PLD)

This topic will outline the history of European anti-Semitism from the modern period into the 20th Century and how the racialisation of Jewish people in Europe was tied into European modernity. We will examine both non-Jewish and Jewish responses to anti-Semitism from the 19th Century onwards with an emphasis on Jewish and non-Jewish streams of Zionism and anti-Zionism. This topic will try to merge the history with some of the pressing theoretical questions at hand in the academy and wider world by exploring the contemporaneous case of alleged antisemitism in the UK since the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the UK Labour Party. Drawing from our discussions on Islamophobia we will explore some of the important questions about freedom of speech and silencing that can occur within both the Muslim and Jewish communities when members try to speak out against injustices at home or abroad.

Antisemitism & The Genocide of Europe’s Jewish People

Responses to Antisemitism

*Herzl, T. (1896) The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution to the Jewish Question. Multiple editions and copies available in print; ebook online: http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/25282#download [Intro., CH 2 “The Jewish Question” & CH 6 “Conclusion”]

*Contemporary Controversies around Antisemitism: The Case of Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party

IHRA Working Definition of Anti-Semitism: https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism


JVP, “Global Jewish organisations affirm BDS movement” [& reject IHRA definition]:  

Jewish Labour Movement Press Release on NEC Code of Conduct:  
http://www.jlm.org.uk/press_release

Labour Friends of Israel “News”:
http://www.lfi.org.uk/labour-rejects-ihra-definition-of-antisemitism/

British Board of Jewish Deputies, “On its current trajectory, Labour is failing British Jews and it is failing as an anti-racist party”:
https://www.bod.org.uk/jewish-community-leaders-condemn-labour-nec-decision-on-antisemitism-definition/

Formby, J. (2018) “IHRA doesn’t go far enough – Labour’s new anti-Semitism guidelines are MORE comprehensive”, in Jewish News:  

[Satire from Jewdas]:  

Kenneth Stern [author of IHRA definition] written testimony to US Congress criticising implementation of IHRA definition:  

https://www.opendemocracy.net/uk/brian-klug/code-of-conduct-for-antisemitism-tale-of-two-texts

Lawson, S. (2018) “Enough of these disgraceful slurs against Jeremy Corbyn”, in Open Democracy UK:  
https://www.opendemocracy.net/uk/shaun-lawson/enough-of-these-disgraceful-slurs-against-jeremy-corbyn

Hodge, M. (2018) “I was right to confront Jeremy Corbyn over Labour’s antisemitism”, in The Guardian:  


Supervision topics:
1. Compare and contrast how anti-Semitism, Zionism and anti-Zionism are similar, dissimilar or both?
2. Wade into the so-called ‘Labour antisemitism controversy’: in what ways does it become problematic for Jewish people to be the sole arbiters of what constitutes antisemitism? And, how can this be resolved when there is so much profound disagreement between Jews themselves?