Faculty of Human, Social and Political Sciences
HSPS PART II B Tripos
Part II 2020-21

Paper SOC11: Racism, ‘Race’ and Ethnicity

Course Organiser
Dr Mónica Moreno Figueroa, mm2051@cam.ac.uk

Lecturers
Dr Mónica Moreno Figueroa (MMF), mm2051@cam.ac.uk
Dr Rachell Sanchez Rivera (RSR), rs871@cam.ac.uk
Dr Hande Güzel (HG), hg401@cam.ac.uk
Dr Jeff Milley, tjm52@cam.ac.uk
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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 will also be able to 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 Dr Rachell Sanchez Rivera (rs871@cam.ac.uk) who is supporting with supervisor’s allocation or the course organiser, Dr Moreno Figueroa (mm2051@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.

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 |

SOC 11
(This term lectures will be on Tuesdays from 4-6 pm)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Oct 2020</td>
<td>1. The Emergence of ‘Race’ and Racism, Enlightenment, Capitalism and the Colonial Enterprise (MMF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Oct 2020</td>
<td>2. The Science Fiction of ‘Race’ (RSR)</td>
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**Histories**

1. The Emergence of ‘Race’ and Racism, Enlightenment, Capitalism and the Colonial Enterprise (MMF)
2. The Science Fiction of ‘Race’ (RSR)
3. Legacies of Scientific Racism: Racial Projects, Assimilation & Segregation (RSR)

**Key Perspectives on Racism**

4. Problematising Whiteness (MMF)
5. Orientalism (HG)
6. Nationalism and Racism (JM)
7. Critical Race Theory: Post-Racialism and the United States of Trumpamerica (AM)
8. Racialised Capitalism: Decoding the Race-Class Nexus (AM)

**Lent (8 Lectures: Weeks 1-8)**

(This term lectures will be on Tuesdays 2-4 p.)

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>26 Jan 2021</td>
<td>9. Globalised White Hegemony and the Black middle Classes (AM)</td>
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<td>2 Feb 2021</td>
<td>10. Seeing ‘Race’, Visualising Otherness (MMF)</td>
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**Topics on Racism**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>23 Feb 2021</td>
<td>13. Environmental Racism and Anti-racist Practice (JM)</td>
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<td>2 March 2021</td>
<td>14. Antiracism and colonialism in the academy (AM)</td>
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<td>9 March 2021</td>
<td>15. The Aesthetics of Anti-racism (AM)</td>
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**Anti-racism**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 May 2021</td>
<td>16. Revision Session MMF, RSR, HG, AM, JM</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 May 2021</td>
<td>17. Revision Session MMF, AM, JM</td>
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**Easter – revision sessions (4-5 pm)**

Online version of this paper for this academic year 2020-21

This year all lectures of this paper will be online, according to the paper’s timetable, as follows:

1. Students will first meet for an hour with the paper organiser, Dr Monica Moreno Figueroa, to go over the paper’s organisation.
2. All lectures will include an approximately 50-60 min pre-recorded lecture that will be available ahead of time (usually Friday before the lecture) and that you can watch in the first hour of the timetabled slot.
3. The second hour of the lectures slot will be synchronous and interactive, that is, an online live session using the Zoom platform, which might include Q&A and other online activities. Students can write their questions in the chat, and the lecturers will answer them live. These sessions will be recorded and available on the SOC3 Moodle sites.
Outline of Topics and Reading Lists

Michaelmas

1. The Emergence of ‘Race’ and Racism, Enlightenment, Capitalism and the Colonial Enterprise (MMF)

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.

Essential readings


Additional Readings


Supervision questions

- What, if any, is the relationship between Enlightenment philosophy and the emergence of notions of race?
- What, if any, is the historical relationship between the development of capitalism and racism?

2. The Science Fiction of ‘Race’ (RSR)
This lecture will explore the nineteenth and early-twentieth 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 and contemporary legacies of having the ‘respectability’ of science behind racist beliefs.

**Essential readings**


**Additional Readings**


Supervision questions

- To what extent do debates around eugenics reinvigorate scientific racism?
- What are the gendered consequences of scientific racism?
- What, if any, is the correlation between disability, eugenics, and racism?

3. Legacies of Scientific Racism: Racial Projects, Assimilation/Segregation

This lecture will explore the legacies of, what we know now as scientific racism, during the second-half of the twentieth and twenty-first century. It will examine how these seemingly or assumed scientific truths slip in contemporary academic, cultural, social, and nationalistic understandings of science, medicine, and politics.

Essential readings


Additional readings


Supervision questions

- What are the legacies of scientific racism? Mention two examples.
- What is the link between segregation and contemporary forms of “race” science? (Mention 2 examples)
- Should the prison system be abolished?

4. Problematising Whiteness (MMF)

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.

Essential readings


**Additional readings**


**Supervision questions**

- To what extent is whiteness an organising principle of late modernity?
- How is white privilege exercised? Discuss in relation to at least two different national contexts.

**5. 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 gendered and racialised construction of knowledge about the East contributed to the development of Western imperial ideologies and colonial expansion. We will then link this to the notion and phenomena of Islamophobia as a contemporary form of racism in relation to the notion of ‘the Orient’ and ‘West-East’ power relations.

**Essential readings**


**Additional readings**


Supervision question

- What is the Orient? How it is actively produced? Answer with reference to at least two specific examples.

6. Nationalism and Racism (JM)

In this lecture, we will focus on the relationship between nationalism and racism. We will begin by considering Benedict Anderson’s influential attempt to downplay the affinities between the two phenomena, and especially his claim that “nationalism thinks in historical destinies, while racism dreams of eternal contaminations.” To this end, we will examine Homi Bhabha’s postcolonial rejoinder to Anderson’s narrative. We will then turn to analyse Frantz Fanon’s subtle account of the intertwining of racial and national consciousness in the African context, and in relation to the dynamics of anti-colonial struggle. This will lead us to take a close look at Anne McClintock’s analysis of how “gender runs like a multiple fissure” through Fanon’s treatment of race and of the nation form. Finally, we will conclude with an overview of Patricia Hill Collins’ argument about “how gendered family rhetoric fosters racialized constructions of national identity” in the context of the United States.
Essential Readings


Additional Readings


**Supervision questions**

- Critically assess the proposition that the affinity between nationalism and racism has been much exaggerated.
- How are the categories of race and nation related to one another? Discuss in relation to concrete examples.

**Supplementary Videos**

7. Critical Race Theory: Trumpamerica and Brexit Britain (AM)

In this lecture we will examine critical race theory, and assess its usefulness in analysing contemporary US society. We will question what is theoretical about critical race theory, and whether its focus on post-racialism means that it is outdated—or in need of revision—in Trumpamerica. We will also question the US-centricity of critical race theory, and whether—as a theoretical paradigm—it can be deployed elsewhere.

Essential readings


Additional Readings

Supervision questions

- To what extent was Trump’s electoral success a result of White identity politics?
- Analyse the claim that Trump’s electoral success was the result of a White working class backlash.
- Does critical race theory offer a convincing apparatus for the study of racism?

8. Racialised Capitalism: Decoding the Race-Class Nexus (AM)

This lecture will focus on racialised capitalism. We will examine the relationship between capitalism and racism both historically and in the present. Beyond a focus on simply the economic component of capitalism, we will also consider processes of stigmatisation and devaluation. Our case studies will range from European modernity, through to protests against immigrant labour in the Windrush generation, stigmatisation of ‘welfare queens’, and the current politics of austerity and Grenfell.

Essential readings


Additional readings


**Supervision questions**

- Does ‘racialised capitalism’ theory provide a convincing account of contemporary inequalities?
- What is the relationship between racism and capitalism?

**Lent**

**9. Globalised White Hegemony and the Black middle Classes (AM)**

This lecture will analyse race and class by focusing on the Black middle classes in a comparative perspective. We will discuss how dominant middle class identity, cultural practices, and cultural membership, are all expressions of hegemonic whiteness (even in countries where Whites are not a majority demographic group). We will then consider Black middle class strategies used to respond to this ongoing structural racism.

**Essential Readings**


**Additional readings**


**Supervision questions**

- What is the relationship between whiteness and Black middle class identities?
- To what extent can we understand middle class spaces as ‘white spaces’?
  - Does strategic assimilation offer a convincing account of Black middle class identity?


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.

**Essential readings**


Quarterly, 55 (3); 457-478.

Additional readings


Supervision topics

- “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 1993, 17). Discuss with reference to TWO case studies.
- What is the relationship between the visibility of race and racism?
- How is the process of othering impacted by seeing and visibility?
11. The Racialised Body II: ‘Race’ and the Lure of Beauty (MMF)

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.

Essential readings


Additional readings


Supervision topics

- ‘Beauty is a gendered, racialised and contested symbolic resource’ (Craig 2007:160) Discuss with reference to specific case studies.
- What is the relationship between race and beauty?
- How do concerns with femininity and masculinity relate to racism?

12. Anti-racism and intersectionality in Latin America (MMF)

In this lecture we will discuss the growing awareness that any anti-racist struggle requires an intersectional perspective and a simultaneous redefinition of intersectionality. We will focus on examples from Latin America.

Essential readings

Moreno Figueroa, Monica and Viveros Vigoya, Mara, (2021) “Antiracism, intersectionality and the struggle for dignity” Forthcoming chapter in book ‘Against Racism” edited by Moreno Figueroa, Monica and Wade, Peter. (PDF attached – not for distribution nor citing)
Additional readings


Supervision question

- What can anti-racist practices learn from intersectionality? Discuss in relation to at least 2 countries of the region.

13. Environmental Racism and Anti-racist Practice (JM)

In this lecture, we interrogate the relationship between environmentalism and anti-racist practice. We begin by considering theoretical and historical accounts that would establish causal and constitutive
relations among the Anthropocene, racism, colonialism, and capitalism. We then turn to examine the relations among concrete struggles for environmental justice, struggles against racism, and struggles for decolonization. We focus in particular on two examples with environmental as well as anti-racist and decolonizing significance: namely, the struggle for food sovereignty in Africa, and the struggle of Standing Rock against the Dakota Pipeline.

**Essential Readings**


**Additional Readings**


Supervision Questions

How are racism and the Anthropocene related?
Or
What is the relationship between struggles for environmental justice and the struggle for decolonization?

Supplementary Videos


14. Decoloniality in sociology

This topic will explore the ‘decolonial imperative’, and its applicability in sociology. We will look at the importance of epistemic, temporal, and spatial links in decolonial thought, as well as the larger struggle for cognitive justice against the colonial matrix of power.

Essential readings


Additional Readings


**Supervision questions**

- What does it mean to ‘decolonize’ sociology?
- To what extent does the decolonial option transform the sociological imagination?

### 15. The aesthetics of anti-racism (AM)

**The aesthetics of anti-racism**

This topic will encourage students to conduct original research into anti-racist aesthetics, and the role of the cultural realm for anti-racist activity. The lecture will examine how artists, writers, and musicians outside of the academy have formed their own critiques of White supremacy and racism through cultural production. There is no required reading for this topic, but the two suggested books may be a useful frame for students new to thinking about this topic.


**Supervision questions**

- Critically analyse the use of music and/or art in anti-racist practice.
- Is cultural production social theory?
- Can academic texts alone teach us enough about the sociology of race and racism?