

Human, Social and Political Sciences Tripos 2024-5

PART IIA SOC3: Modern Societies II - Global Social Problems and Dynamics of Resistance

Key Information

Lectures day, time, and place

Michaelmas	Lent	Easter
Dr Matthew Sparkes and all lecturers Introduction Wed. 1pm, week 1, 16 Oct McCrum Lecture Theatre Dr Jeff Miley Global Social Problems W. 4-6, weeks 1-3, beginning 16 Oct Lecture Theatre A Dr Scarlet Harris Policing the Planet: Colonialism, Crisis, and Resistance W. 4-6, weeks, 4-6, beginning 6 Nov Lecture Theatre A	Dr Matt Mahmoudi Control and Resistance in Digital Societies W. 4-6, weeks 1-3, beginning 29 Jan Dr Matthew Sparkes Credit and Debt in Unequal Societies W. 4-6, weeks 4-6, beginning 19 Feb	All lecturers Revision Session W. 4-5, week 2, 14 May

Key people

Paper Convenor: Dr Matthew Sparkes (ms2268@cam.ac.uk)

Supervisions Coordinator: Dr Sebastian Raza-Mejia (slr75@cam.ac.uk)

Lecturers (Order of Teaching)

Dr Jeff Miley (tjm52@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Scarlet Harris (sh2232@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Matt Mahmoudi (mm2134@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Matthew Sparkes (ms2268@cam.ac.uk)

Paper Description

Aims and Objectives

- To introduce and explore a selection of global social problems and dynamics of resistance from a sociological perspective.
- To develop a critical understanding of key sociological concepts, approaches and analyses to social problems such as inequality, neoliberalism, development, nationalism, globalisation, social movements, protest, transnationalism, democracy, discourse, political economy, control and pluralism.
- To introduce the sociological notion and methodological tool of intersectionality – bringing gender, race, and class to the fore – to understand social problems and dynamics of resistance in a critically imbricated way and not as one-dimensional struggles upheld by one-dimensional subjects (simply men, simply women, etc.).
- To think and raise questions about the current climate crisis across a range of social problems and dynamics of resistance.

General Resources and Readings

- Crenshaw, K. (2015). *Kimberlé Crenshaw Discusses 'Intersectional Feminism'*. Interview. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROwquxC_Gxc
- Bhambra, G. (2014). *Connected Sociologies*. London: Bloomsbury Academic [Online].
- Bhambra, G. (2014). *Conference on Connected Sociologies*. Keynote Lecture (Intro in Spanish, talk in English). Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sX-JsrhOIA>
- Latour, B. (2018). *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*. Cambridge: Polity Press [Online].
- Pedwell, C. (2014). *Affective Relations: The Transnational Politics of Empathy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan [Online].
- Skeggs, B. (2019). [The forces that shape us: The entangled vine of gender, race and class](#). *The Sociological Review*, 67(1) 28–35.

Mode of Teaching

The teaching mode for this paper will be in-person. The paper starts with a one-hour Introduction (week 1), delivered by the course convenor and the lecturers. Following this, SOC3 has two sections: *Section One* in Michaelmas and *Section Two* in Lent. Each section has two modules, and each module consists of three two-hour sessions. The paper ends with a revision session in Easter term. The substantive topics are as follows:

Section One (Michaelmas):

1. Global Social Problems (Dr Jeff Miley)

- Lecture 1: Global Inequalities
- Lecture 2: Borders
- Lecture 3: Climate Catastrophe

2. Policing the Planet: Colonialism, Crisis and Resistance (Dr Scarlet Harris)

- Lecture 4: Policing, racism and colonial continuities
- Lecture 5: Policing, racism and crisis
- Lecture 6: The abolitionist imperative: Global resistance to prisons and policing

Section Two (Lent):

3. Control and Resistance in Digital Societies (Dr Matt Mahmoudi)

- Lecture 7: Critical Approaches to the Information Society
- Lecture 8: Social Media and Social Movements

Lecture 9: Representation and Resistance: The Problematics of Big Data and the Politics of the Selfie

4. Credit and Debt in Unequal Societies (Dr Matthew Sparkes)

Lecture 10: Critical approaches to the stratifying effects of debt

Lecture 11: Consuming credit – Housing, consumption, and culture

Lecture 12: The ideology of debt and its affects

Supervisions

Supervision will be organised centrally by the Teaching Associate for SOC3, Dr Sebastian Raza-Mejia (slr75@cam.ac.uk), in relation to student's interests.

The course is taught by means of 12 two-hour sessions and eight supervisions. Students should plan to have three substantive supervisions in Michaelmas and three in Lent, and then two revision supervisions in Easter term.

Lectures are central to this paper, and students are strongly advised to attend all lectures throughout Michaelmas, Lent, and Easter. Nonetheless, for supervision purposes students should choose one of the two modules of that term's teaching and have all three supervisions on the three topics of that module. As a result, they will cover two of the four modules over the year in their supervision. One of the revision supervisions should be on their Michaelmas topics, and the other should be on their Lent topics.

Students will receive instructions about how to sign up for supervisions at the start of the academic year, with the expectation to have this settled by the first week of Michaelmas.

Lecturers will give some supervisions on their modules, but due to the size of the student cohort, cannot give all of them. The teaching team therefore also consists of a selected group of supervisors whose expertise matches the supervision topics. Students will have one supervisor per part (topics and revision supervision), so two supervisors for the duration of the paper. This supervisor allocation policy aims to balance supervisor expertise and consistency of supervision for students.

To provide a stimulating and varied learning experience, students will receive *one* larger supervision (6-7 students per group) and *two* smaller essay-based supervisions (3 or 4 students per group) for each of their chosen modules. (This means that students will produce a minimum of four essays over the six substantive supervisions, as per Department of Sociology policy.)

Individual supervisors will decide on the teaching format of the larger supervision (e.g., they may be based on critical readings of core text(s) or group presentations). Your designated supervisor will communicate the format and order of the supervisions in the first week of each term.

The reading lists below are meant to provide guidance for students and supervisors. In the two smaller essay-based supervisions, students should answer one of the specified supervision questions provided for those topics.

Mode of Assessment

This paper will be examined by one three-hour examination paper, divided into two sections according to the two sections of the paper. You will be required to answer three questions, including at least one from each section.

Section One: Module Synopsis

Module One: Global Social Problems

Lecturer

Dr Jeff Miley

Module Overview

In this module, we will explore three major social issues and structures: 1) inequality, 2) borders, and 3) the sociology of climate change. Our examination of these social problems will be complemented by an analysis of the underlying structures and forces that not only exacerbate these issues but also offer pathways for addressing them. A key focus throughout the module will be on the intersectionality and complexities of inequality, emphasising how these problems are interlinked and affect diverse groups in multifaceted ways.

Lecture 1: Global Inequalities

Essential Readings

- Boatca, M. (2015). [*Global Inequalities beyond Occidentalism*](#) (Ashgate), Introduction and Conclusion.
- Boatcă, M. (2021). "The centrality of race to inequality across the world-system 1: Old figurations and new reconfigurations." *Spatial Transformations*. Routledge. 97-108.
- Chancel, Lucas, and Thomas Piketty. (2021). "Global income inequality, 1820–2020: the persistence and mutation of extreme inequality." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 19.6: 3025-3062.
- Federici, S. (2004). "Introduction," and "The Accumulation of Labor and the Degradation of Women. Constructing 'Difference' in the Transition to Capitalism," [*Caliban and the Witch. Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation*](#) (Autonomedia).
- Harvey, D. (2003). "Accumulation by Dispossession," [*The New Imperialism*](#) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.137-182.
- Melamed, J. (2015). "[Racial Capitalism](#)," *Critical Ethnic Studies*, vol. 1, No. 1, pp.76-85.
- Riley, D. and R. Brenner. "Seven Theses on American Politics," *NLR*, no. 138, Nov./Dec. 2022.

Additional Readings

- Aung, G. (2018). "[Postcolonial Capitalism and the Politics of Dispossession. Political Trajectories in Southern Myanmar](#)," *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 17, pp.193-227.
- De Angelis, M. (2007). "Marx and the Enclosures We Face," "Enclosures with No Limits," [*The Beginning of History. Value Struggles and Global Capital*](#) (Pluto).
- Bhattacharya, R. and I. Sedra-Irizarry. (2017). "[Primitive Accumulation](#)," in D. Brennan, et. al., *Routledge Handbook of Marxian Economics* (Routledge).
- Bhattacharya, G. (2018). *Rethinking Racial Capitalism. Questions of Reproduction and Survival* (Rowman and Littlefield).
- Chancel, Lucas. (2022). *World inequality report 2022*. Harvard University Press.
- Chancel, Lucas, et al. (2023). "Income inequality in Africa, 1990–2019: Measurement, patterns, determinants." *World Development* 163: 106162.
- Coronil, F. (1996). "[Beyond Occidentalism: Toward NonImperial Geohistorical Categories](#)," *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp.51-87.

- Coulthard, G. (2014). "Karl Marx, Settler Colonialism, and Indigenous Dispossession in Post White-Paper Canada," [*Red Skins, White Masks. Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*](#) (University of Minnesota Press), pp.6-15.
- Elsässer, Lea, and Armin Schäfer. (2023). "Political inequality in rich democracies." *Annual Review of Political Science* 26.1: 469-487.
- Gonçalves, G. L. and S. Costa. (2020). [*"From Primitive Accumulation to Entangled Accumulation: Decentering Marxist Theory of Capitalist Expansion," European Journal of Social Theory*](#), Vol. 23, No. 2, pp.146–164.
- Holton, R. J. (2014). *Global Inequalities* (Palgrave MacMillan).
- Korzeniewicz, R.P. and T.P. Moran. (2009). *Unveiling Inequality: A World-Historical Perspective* (Russell Sage Foundation).
- Kabeer, N. (2015). [*"Gender, Poverty, and Inequality: a Brief History of Feminist Contributions in the Field of International Development," Gender & Development*](#), Vol. 23, No. 2, pp.189-205.
- Mies, M. and V. Bennholdt-Thomsen. (2000). [*The Subsistence Perspective. Beyond the Globalized Economy*](#) (Zed Books).
- Milanovic, B. (2016). *Global Inequality. A New Approach for the Age of Globalization* (Harvard University Press)
- Moore, J. (2018). [*"The Capitalocene, Part II: Accumulation by Appropriation and the Centrality of Unpaid Work/Energy," The Journal of Peasant Studies*](#), Vol. 45, No. 2, pp.237-279.
- Patel, R. and J. Moore. (2017). [*"Introduction," The History of the World in Seven Cheap Things. A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet*](#) (University of California Press), pp.1-43.
- Pfeffer, Fabian T., and Nora Waitkus. (2021). "The wealth inequality of nations." *American sociological review* 86.4: 567-602.
- Perelman, M. (2000). [*The Invention of Capitalism. Classical Political Economy and the Secret History of Primitive Accumulation*](#) (Duke University Press).
- Roberts, W. C. (2017). [*"What Was Primitive Accumulation? Reconstructing the Origin of a Critical Concept," European Journal of Political Theory*](#), pp.1-21.
- Roth, J. (2017). [*"Occidentalism," InterAmerican Wiki. Terms-Concepts-Critical Perspectives.*](#)
- Sanyal, K. (2007). [*Rethinking Capitalist Development. Primitive Accumulation, Governmentality, and Post-Colonial Capitalism*](#) (Routledge).
- Sassen, S. (2010). [*"A Savage Sorting of Winners and Losers: Contemporary Versions of Primitive Accumulation," Globalizations*](#), Vol. 7, Nos.1-2, pp.23-50.
- Savage, Mike. (2021). *The return of inequality: Social change and the weight of the past*. Harvard University Press.
- Seaton, L. (2023). "Reflections on Political Capitalism," *NLR*, No. 142, July/Aug 2023.
- Singh, N. (2016). [*"On Race, Violence, and So-Called Primitive Accumulation," Social Text*](#) 128, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp.27-50.
- Therborn, G. (2013). *The Killing Fields of Inequality* (Cambridge: Polity).

Supplementary Videos

- Federici, S. (2019). [*"Women, the Body, and 'Primitive Accumulation'."*](#)
- Gilmore, R.W. (2020). [*"Geographies of Racial Capitalism."*](#)
- Goldstein, A., et. al. (2020). [*"Racial Capitalism and the U.S. Colonial Present."*](#)
- Harvey, D. (2019). [*"Anti-Capitalist Chronicles: Primitive or Original Accumulation."*](#)
- Harvey, D. (2019). [*"Anti-Capitalist Chronicles: Accumulation by Dispossession."*](#)
- Kelley, R. (2017). [*"What is Racial Capitalism and Why Does it Matter?"*](#)
- Melamed, J. (2019). [*"Operationalizing Racial Capitalism: Administrative Power and Ordinary Violence."*](#)
- Milanovic, B. (2016). [*"The Evolution of Global Inequalities."*](#)
- Patel, R. (2019). [*"On Cheapness in the Age of Capitalism."*](#)
- Singh, N. (2018). [*"Primitive Accumulation."*](#)

Supervision Questions

- Provide an intersectional account of global inequalities.
- What does “primitive accumulation” have to do with the production of global inequalities?

Lecture 2: Borders

Essential Readings

- Achieme, E. Tendayi. (2021). "Racial borders." *Geo. LJ* 110 (2021): 445.
- Balibar, E. (2009). [“Europe as Borderland,”](#) *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 27, pp. 190-215.
- Bhambra, G.K. (2017). “The current crisis of Europe: Refugees, colonialism, and the limits of cosmopolitanism”, *European Law Journal*, 23(5), pp.395-405.
- Bambra, G. (2021). “Open Borders: A Postcolonial Critique,” in 1: Old figurations and new reconfigurations." *Spatial Transformations*. Routledge, 2021. 87-96.
- Brown, W. (2017). “Waning Sovereignty, Walled Democracy,” *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (MIT Press), pp.7-42.
- Jones, R. (2017). “The Global Border Regime,” *Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move* (Verso), pp.48-69.
- Mbembe, A. (2018). [“The Idea of a Borderless World,”](#) *Africa Is a Country* (November).
- Walia, H. (2013). “What Is Border Imperialism?”, [“Undoing Border Imperialism](#) (AK Press), pp.35-80.

Additional Readings

- Anderson, B. (2013). *Us and Them? The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Controls* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Andersson, R. (2014). *Illegality Inc.: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe* (University of California Press).
- Andreas, Peter. (2022). *Border games: the politics of policing the US-Mexico divide*. Cornell University Press, 2022
- Bauder, H. (2017). *Migration, Borders, Freedom* (London: Routledge).
- Brambilla, Chiara, and Reece Jones. (2020). "Rethinking borders, violence, and conflict: From sovereign power to borderscapes as sites of struggles." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 38.2 (2020): 287-305.
- Casas-Cortes, M. et. al. (2015). [“New Key Words: Migration and Borders,”](#) *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp.55-87.
- Chattopadhyay, S. (2018). [“Borders Re/make Bodies, and Bodies Are Made to Make Borders: Storying Migrant Trajectories,”](#) *ACME: An International Journal of Critical Geographies*, pp.1-24.
- Davis, Julie Hirschfeld, and Shear, M. (2020). *Border wars: Inside Trump's assault on immigration*. Simon & Schuster, 2020.
- De Genova, N. ed. (2017). *The Borders of “Europe”: Autonomy of Migration, Tactics of Bordering* (Duke University Press).
- Diener, Alexander C., and Joshua Hagen (2024). *Borders: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2024.
- Donnan, Hastings, and Thomas M. Wilson. (2021). *Borders: Frontiers of identity, nation and state*. Routledge, 2021.
- Espejo, Paulina Ochoa. (2020). *On borders: Territories, legitimacy, and the rights of place*. Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Gahman, L., and E. Hjalmarson. (2019). [“Border Imperialism, Racial Capitalism, and Geographies of Deracination,”](#) *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, Vol. 18, No.1, pp.107-129.

- Grosfoguel, R. (2008). [“Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality,”](#) *Eurozine*.
- Jones, R., et. al. (2017). [“Interventions on the State of Sovereignty at the Border,”](#) *Political Geography* 59, pp.1-10.
- Laine, Jussi P. (2021). "Beyond borders: Towards the ethics of unbounded inclusiveness." *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 36.5 (2021): 745-763.
- Loyd, J.M., et. al., eds. (2012). *Beyond Walls and Cages. Prisons, Borders, and Global Crisis* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press).
- Manning, Patrick, and Tiffany Trimmer. (2020). *Migration in world history*. Routledge, 2020.
- Mbembe, A. (2019). [“Bodies as Borders,”](#) *From the European South*, Vol. 4, pp.5-18.
- Mezzadra, Sandro. (2021). "Abolitionist vistas of the human. Border struggles, migration and freedom of movement." *Inclusive Solidarity and Citizenship along Migratory Routes in Europe and the Americas*. Routledge, 2021. 20-36.
- Mezzadra, S. and B. Neilson. (2013). [Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor](#) (Duke University Press).
- Mignolo, W. and M. Tlostanova. (2006). [“Theorizing from the Borders. Shifting to Geo- and Body Politics of Knowledge,”](#) *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.205-221.
- Miller, T. (2019). *Empire of Borders. The Expansion of the U.S. Border around the World* (Verso).
- Mohanty, C. (2003). [Feminism without Borders. Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity](#) (Duke University Press).
- Newman, D. (2006). [“Borders and Bordering: Towards an Interdisciplinary Dialogue,”](#) *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.171-186.
- Oltmer, Jochen. (2022). *The Borders of the EU*. Springer, 2022.
- Osuna, José Javier Olivas. (2024). "Populism and borders: tools for constructing “the people” and legitimizing exclusion." *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 39.2 (2024): 203-226.
- Paasi, A. (2014). [“The Shifting Landscapes of Border Studies and the Challenge of Relational Thinking,”](#) in Bufon, M., J. Minghi, and A. Paasi, eds. *The New European Frontiers: Social and Spatial (Re)integration Issues in Multicultural and Border Regions* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars).
- Pack, A.N. (2020). *Bans, Walls, Raids, Sanctuaries. Understanding U.S. Immigration for the Twenty-First Century* (University of California Press).
- Panebianco, Stefania. (2023). "The EU and migration in the Mediterranean: EU borders' control by proxy." *The Spiralling of the Securitisation of Migration in the European Union*. Routledge, 2023. 72-90.
- Rheindorf, Markus, and Ruth Wodak. (2020). "Building ‘Fortress Europe’: Legitimizing exclusion from basic human rights." *Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Migration Control* (2020): 116-141.
- Rohrer, Judy. (2022). "Imperial Dis-ease: Trump's Border Wall, Obama's Sea Wall, and Settler Colonial Failure." *American Quarterly* 74.3 (2022): 737-763.
- Sadiq, Kamal, and Gerasimos Tsourapas. (2021). "The postcolonial migration state." *European Journal of International Relations* 27.3 (2021): 884-912.
- Vaughan-Williams, N. (2015). [Europe’s Border Crisis. Biopolitical Security and Beyond](#) (Oxford Scholarship Online).
- Vickers, T. (2019). *Borders, Migration, and Class in an Age of Crisis. Producing Workers and Immigrants* (Bristol University Press).
- Walia, Harsha. (2021). *Border and rule: Global migration, capitalism, and the rise of racist nationalism*. Haymarket books, 2021.

Supplementary Videos

- Achiume, T. (2021). [“Race, Tech, and Borders”](#)
- Balibar, E. (2020). [“Migration and Contemporary Capitalism.”](#)
- Bhambra, G. (2019). [“Neoliberal Modernity and the Refashioning of ‘Open Borders’”](#)
- Brown, W. (2010). [“Walled States, Waning Sovereignty. Keynote Lecture.”](#)
- Jones, R. (2019). [“Border Walls and Violent Borders.”](#)
- Mezzadra, S. (2012). [“Keywords Lecture: Borders.”](#)

Mbembe, A. (2018). ["The Idea of a World without Borders."](#)
Mbembe, A. (2019). ["Bodies and Borders."](#)
Walia, H. (2017). ["Undoing Border Imperialism."](#)

Supervision Questions

- Are border walls and fences but a last vestige of a dying system of territorially bounded sovereignty?
- Critically assess the concept of "border imperialism."

Lecture 3: Climate Catastrophe

Essential Readings

Bhambra, Gurinder K., and Peter Newell. (2022). "More than a metaphor: 'climate colonialism' in perspective." *Global Social Challenges Journal* 1.aop (2022): 1-9.
Fraser, N. (2021). "Climates of Capital," *New Left Review*, Vol. 127, 2021
Gonzalez, Carmen G. (2020). "Racial capitalism and the Anthropocene." *The Cambridge handbook of environmental justice and sustainable development* 72 (2020): 72-85.
Magdoff, F. and J.B. Foster. (2010). ["What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know About Capitalism,"](#) *Monthly Review*.
Mellor, M. (2019). ["En Ecofeminist Proposal,"](#) *New Left Review*, Vol. 116.
Stuart, Diana, Ryan Gunderson, and Brian Petersen. (2020). "The climate crisis as a catalyst for emancipatory transformation: An examination of the possible." *International Sociology* 35.4 (2020): 433-456.

Additional Readings

Angus, Ian. (2016). *Facing the Anthropocene. Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System* (Monthly Review Press).
Chomsky, Noam, and Robert Pollin. *Climate crisis and the global green new deal: The political economy of saving the planet*. Verso Books, 2020.
Davidson, Joe PL, and Luke Kemp. (2024). "Climate catastrophe: The value of envisioning the worst-case scenarios of climate change." *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* 15.2: e871.
Eisenmenger, Nina. (2020). "The Sustainable Development Goals prioritize economic growth over sustainable resource use: a critical reflection on the SDGs from a socio-ecological perspective." *Sustainability Science* 15.4 (2020): 1101-1110.
Ekberg, Kristoffer. (2022). *Climate obstruction: How denial, delay and inaction are heating the planet*. Routledge, 2022.
Felli, Romain. (2021). *The great adaptation: climate, capitalism and catastrophe*. Verso Books, 2021.
Foster, John Bellamy. (1999). "Marx's Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundations for Environmental Sociology." *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 105, no. 2, 1999, pp. 366–405.
Foster, John Bellamy, Brett Clark, and Richard York. (2010). *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth* (Monthly Review Press).
Gills, Barry, and Jamie Morgan. (2022). "Global climate emergency: After COP24, climate science, urgency, and the threat to humanity." *Economics and climate emergency*. Routledge. 253-270.
Gonzalez, Carmen G. (2023). "Climate change, race, and migration." *Gonzalez, C.(2020). Climate Change, Race, and Migration. Journal of Law and Political Economy* 1.1 (2023).
Gratani, Monica. (2016). "Indigenous Environmental Values as Human Values," *Cogent Social Sciences*
Houghton, J. 2009. *Global Warming: A Complete Briefing*. 4th Edition (Cambridge University Press).
Kemp, Luke. (2022). "Climate Endgame: Exploring catastrophic climate change scenarios." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 119.34 (2022): e2108146119.
Malm, A. (2016). *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming* (Verso).

- Malm, A. (2016). [“Who Lit this Fire? Approaching the History of the Fossil Economy,”](#) *Critical Historical Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp.215-248.
- Mies, Maria and Vandana Shiva. (1993). *Ecofeminism* (Fernwood Publications).
- Mittiga, Ross. "Political legitimacy, authoritarianism, and climate change." *American Political Science Review* 116.3 (2022): 998-1011.
- Moore, Sam, and Alex Roberts. (2022). *The rise of ecofascism: Climate change and the far right*. John Wiley & Sons, 2022.
- Obi, C. (2010). [“Oil Extraction, Dispossession, Resistance, and Conflict in Nigeria's Oil-Rich Niger Delta,”](#) *Canadian Journal of Development Studies / Revue canadienne d'études du développement*, Vol. 30, No. 1-2, pp.219-236.
- Park, J. (2015). [“Climate Change and Capitalism,”](#) *Consilience. The Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp.189-206.
- Pope Francis. (2015). *Laudato Si*. <https://earthministry.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Laudato-Si.pdf>
- Saito, K. (2017). *Karl Marx's Ecosocialism: Capital, Nature, and the Unfinished Critique of Political Economy* (Monthly Review Press).
- Schild, V. (2019). [“Feminisms, the Environment, and Capitalism: On the Necessary Ecological Dimension of a Critical Latin American Feminism,”](#) *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 6, pp.23-43.
- Sealey-Huggins, L. (2018). [“The Climate Crisis Is a Racist Crisis: Structural Racism, Inequality and Climate Change,”](#) in A. Johnson, et. al., eds. *The Fire Now: Anti-Racist Scholarship in Times of Explicit Racial Violence* (London: Zed Books), pp. 99-113.
- Steel, Daniel, C. Tyler DesRoches, and Kian Mintz-Woo. (2022). "Climate change and the threat to civilization." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 119.42 (2022): e2210525119.

Supplementary Videos

- [Climate Change, Decolonization, and Ways of Seeing](#). (2018).
- [Climate and Colonialism: Reflections on COP26](#) (2022).
- Nancy Fraser: [“Climates of Capital: Anatomy of Ecological Crisis”](#) (2021)
- Foster, J.B. and J. Jonna. (2018). [“What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know about Capitalism.”](#)
- Carmen Gonzalez (2024): [“Climate Justice, Racial Capitalism, and International Law.”](#)
- M. Mellor. (2017). [Ecofeminism as Politics](#).
- Walter Mignolo (2023). [Coloniality, Global Racism, and Climate Changes: The Pope, the Environmental Crisis, and Frontline Leaders](#) (2023).
- Vergès, F. (2019). [“Capitalocene, Race, Waste, and Gender.”](#)

Supervision Questions

- Provide an intersectional analysis of the dynamics of and/or resistance to climate catastrophe.
- What are the main sociological factors associated with climate catastrophe?

Module Two: Policing the Planet: Colonialism, Crisis, and Resistance

Lecturer

Dr Scarlet Harris

Module Overview

In this module, we will take a critical sociological approach to examining the role of the police and policing in different global contexts. Key to our analysis will be an understanding of the development of policing in the context of colonialism, and the subsequent 'boomerang' effect on the policing of the most marginalised in Britain. We will explore how an intersectional approach can enrich our understanding of how policing reproduces and relies on the construction of 'dangerous' others, as well as illuminate the dynamics of resistance to policing as it plays out in different (but interconnected) geographical and historical contexts.

Lecture 4: Policing, racism and colonial continuities

Lecture Overview

In the first lecture we will critically assess the relationship between policing, colonialism and imperialism. We explore how, far from being a purely domestic phenomenon, the development of policing in Britain (often considered the birthplace of the modern police force) was intimately tied to the policing of its colonies. We will address the intersections of colonial policing and the management of populations within the 'imperial core', asking: what do these histories mean for how we understand the policing of racially minoritised populations today?

Essential Readings

- Chowdhury, T. (2021) 'From the colony to the metropole: race, policing and the colonial boomerang' in Duff, K. (ed.) *Abolishing the Police*. London: Dog Section Press, pp. 85-93. Available at: <https://issuu.com/dogsectionpress/docs/abolishingthepolice>
- Elliott-Cooper, A. (2021) *Black Resistance to British Policing*. Manchester: Manchester University Press [Chapter 5: 'All out war: surveillance, collective punishment and the cutting edge of police power'].
- Go, J. (2024) *Policing Empires: Militarization, Race, and the Imperial Boomerang in Britain and the US* [especially Introduction; Chapter 1; Chapter 6]
- Nijjar, J (2018) Echoes of Empire: Excavating the Colonial Roots of Britain's "War on Gangs", *Social Justice*, 45(2/3): 147-161.

Additional Readings

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- Neocleous, M. (2000) *A Critical Theory of Police Power: the Fabrication of Social Order*. London: Verso
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- Williams, P. and Clarke, B. (2016) "Dangerous associations: Joint enterprise, gangs and racism" *Centre for Crime and Justice Studies*. Available at: <https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/Dangerous%20associations%20Joint%20Enterprise%20gangs%20and%20racism.pdf>

Supervision Question

- What does an analysis of the colonial history of policing reveal about police racism in the present?
- What role does racialisation play in the construction of collective criminality? Answer with reference to at least one colonial and one contemporary context.

Lecture 5: Policing, racism and crisis

Lecture Overview

In this lecture, we will consider the role of policing in the context of multiple contemporary and overlapping crises. We will focus on the seminal work of Stuart Hall and colleagues to examine the relationship between policing and political crisis, before exploring how the policing of particular populations both depends on and contributes to the construction of racialised and gendered threats to the nation. We will adopt an expansive understanding of policing to consider how discourses of 'foreign criminals', 'terrorists' and 'gangs' animate multiple forms of criminalisation, securitisation and state violence at the current conjuncture.

Essential Readings

- Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T. Clarke, J. and Roberts, B. 2013 [1978]. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*. London: Red Globe Press [Chapter 8 and Chapter 10].
- Bhattacharyya, G., Elliott-Cooper, A., Balani, S., Nisancioglu, K., Koram, K., Gebrial, D., El-Enany, N., de Noronha, L. 2021. *Empire's Endgame: Racism and the British State*, London: Pluto Press [Part 1: Racializing the Crisis].

Additional Readings

- Abbas, M-S. (2019) "Producing 'internal suspect bodies': divisive effects of UK counterterrorism measures on Muslim communities in Leeds and Bradford" *The British Journal of Sociology*, 70(1): 261-282.
- Alexander, C. (2008) *(Re)Thinking 'Gangs'*. London: Runnymede Trust. Available at: <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/RethinkingGangs-2008.pdf>
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- Hall, S. and Massey, D. (2010) 'Interpreting the Crisis' *Soundings*, 44(1): 57-71
- Harris, S., Joseph-Salisbury, R., Williams, P. and White, L. (2021) "A threat to public safety: policing, racism and the Covid-19 pandemic" *Institute of Race Relations*. Available at: <https://irr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/A-threat-to-public-safety-v3.pdf>
- Holmwood, J. and Aitlhadj, L. (2022) *The People's Review of Prevent*. Available at: <https://peoplesreviewofprevent.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/mainreportlatest.pdf>
- Kundnani, A. (2014) *The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*. London: Verso.
- LeBrón, M. (2020) "They Don't Care if We Die: The Violence of Urban Policing in Puerto Rico" *Journal of Urban History*, 46(5): 1066-1084.
- Puar, J. (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. London: Duke University Press
- Sayyid, S. and Vakil, A. (2010) (eds.) *Thinking through Islamophobia: global perspectives*. London: Hurst & Co.
- Tufail, W. (2015) "Rotherham, Rochdale, and the Racialised Threat of the 'Muslim Grooming Gang'" *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 4(3): 30-43
- Williams, P. and Clarke, B. (2016) "Dangerous associations: Joint enterprise, gangs and racism" *Centre for Crime and Justice Studies*. Available at: <https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/Dangerous%20associations%20Joint%20Enterprise%20gangs%20and%20racism.pdf>
- Williams, P. and Kind, E. (2019) "Data-driven policing: the hardwiring of discriminatory policing practices across Europe" *Open Society Foundation*. Available at: <https://www.statewatch.org/media/documents/news/2019/nov/data-driven-profiling-web-final.pdf>
- Valluvan, S. (2019) *The Clamour of Nationalism: race and nation in twenty-first-century Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press (Chapter 3: Valuing the nation: liberalism, Muslims and nation-state values)

Supervision Question

- Explain the relationship between 'moral panics' and policing at the current conjuncture.
- In what ways are race and gender imbricated in the construction of 'dangerous others'?

Lecture 6: The abolitionist imperative: global resistance to prisons and policing

Lecture Overview

In our final lecture, we will turn to the question of resistance and alternatives to policing. We begin by exploring the development of the North American prison abolition movement, before examining how the concept of abolition has been applied to questions of policing and criminal justice in various global contexts. In particular, we will focus on intersectional approaches to police and prison abolition, and the ways in which abolition calls not only for the dismantling of carceral systems, but the creation of new institutions and ways of relating to ourselves and each other.

Essential Readings

- Davis, A. (2003) *Are Prisons Obsolete?* [Introduction and Chapter 4].
- Davis, A. (2011) *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture*. Seven Stories Press. [Introduction]

- Elliott-Cooper, A. (2021) *Black Resistance to British Policing*. Manchester: Manchester University Press [Chapter 6]
- Gilmore, R.W. (2007) *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley, CA: Univ of California Press [especially Introduction and Chapter 5].

Additional Readings

- Abdo, N. (2014) *Captive Revolution: Palestinian Women's Anti-Colonial Struggle within the Israeli Prison System*. London: Pluto [Especially Chapter 1: Forgotten History, Lost Voices and Silent Souls: Women Political Detainees].
- Bailey, K. D. (2015) Black-Palestinian Solidarity in the Ferguson-Gaza Era. *American Quarterly*, 67(4), 1017-1026
- Berger, D., Kaba, M. and Stein D. (2017) What Abolitionists Do. *Jacobin*. Available at: <https://jacobin.com/2017/08/prison-abolition-reform-mass-incarceration>
- Bradley, G. M. and de Noronha, L. (2022) *Against Borders: The Case for Abolition*. London: Verso
- Coyle, M. J. (2018) "Who Is Mired in Utopia? The Logics of Criminal Justice and Penal Abolition" *Social Justice*, 45(4): 79-116.
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- Davis, A. (2016) *Freedom is a constant struggle: Ferguson, Palestine and the foundations of a movement*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Davis, A., Dent, G., Meiners, E. R., and Richie, B. E. (2022) *Abolition. Feminism. Now*. London: Penguin.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1998) *Black Reconstruction in America: 1860-1880*. New York, NY: The Free Press. [Especially 'XVI: Back Toward Slavery']
- Ghabin, T. (2022) "The Future-Making of Prisoner Resistance" *Jadaliyya*. Available at: <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/43979>
- Gilmore R.W. and Lambert L. (2018) "Making Abolition Geography in California's Central Valley". *The Funambulist*. Available at: <https://thefunambulist.net/magazine/21-space-activism/interview-making-abolition-geography-california-central-valley-ruth-wilson-gilmore>
- Goldberg, D. T. (2015) *Are We All Postracial Yet?* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Kaba, M. (2021) *We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Kelley, R. D. G. (2019) "From the River to the Sea to Every Mountain Top: Solidarity as Worldmaking" *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 48(4): 69-91.
- Kurd, Z. (2021) "Police Power in the Aftermath of Black Lives Matter" *Social Justice*, 47(3-4): 137-150
- Lamble, S. 'Queer Necropolitics and the Expanding Carceral State: Interrogating Sexual Investments in Punishment' *Law and Critique*, 24(3): 229-253.
- Perry, K. H. (2022) Black Futures Not Yet Lost: Imagining Black British Abolitionism. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 121(3), 541–560.
- Purnell, D. (2021) *Becoming Abolitionists*. London: Verso [Especially 'Introduction: how I became a police abolitionist'].
- RAIA and Jewish Voice for Peace (2018) *Deadly Exchange: The Dangerous Consequences of American Law Enforcement Trainings in Israel*. Available at: <https://deadlyexchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Deadly-Exchange-Report.pdf>
- Scott, D. (2013) Visualising an abolitionist real utopia: principles, policy and praxis. In Malloch, M. and Munro, B. (eds.) *Crime, Critique and Utopia: Themes for a Critical Criminology* (pp. 90-113). London: Palgrave.
- Smith., R. J. (2011) "Graduated Incarceration: The Israeli Occupation in Subaltern Geopolitical Perspective" *Geoforum*, 42(3): 316-328.
- Stanley, E. A., Spade, D. and Queer (In)Justice (2012) "Queering Prison Abolition, Now?" *American Quarterly*, 64(1): 115-127.
- Sudbury, J. (2004) "A World Without Prisons: Resisting Militarism, Globalized Punishment and Empire" *Social Justice*, 31(1): 9-30.

- Taylor, K. Y. (2016) *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago: Haymarket Books (Especially 'Chapter 6: Black Lives Matter: A Movement, Not a Moment')
- Thompson, V. E. (2021) "Policing in Europe: disability justice and abolitionist intersectional care" *Race & Class*, 62(3), pp.61-76.
- Vitale, A. (2017) *The End of Policing*. London: Verso
- Winder, A. (2020) "Anticolonial Uprising and Communal Justice in Twentieth-Century Palestine" *Radical History Review*, 137(1): 75–95.

Supervision Question

- Critically discuss the claim that police and prison abolition is as much about 'presence' as it is 'absence'.
 - How might an intersectional approach to abolition enrich our understandings of policing and prisons?
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Section Two: Module Synopsis

Module Three: Control and Resistance in Digital Societies

Lecturer

Dr Matt Mahmoudi

Module Overview

This module examines how global social problems and related modes of resistance play out *in*, or are increasingly born out *of*, digital societies. We underpin this examination by first looking at talk about technology, namely how technologies are often discursively equated with progress, and how and why these discourses travel and have impact across the globe. In particular, we will draw on critical race and digital studies (CRDS) to look beneath these discourses, to the dynamics of coloniality and inequality reproduced and augmented by technology production, use, and disposal. This will help us develop three lenses to combine and aid us in our analysis: an intersectional lens, critical political economy lens, and decolonial lens.

Next, we look at the role of social media in recent social movements, thinking in particular about the power and counter-power of networks. Finally, we will examine resistance through representation, focusing on the contested practice of selfies, reels, and other content focused on the self, and on the problematics that big data and artificial intelligence tools pose for representation. Throughout, we will be attuned to continuity versus change in digital societies, as well as implications for equality, pluralism, accountability and the environment. We will also keep a critical eye on the methods used to research phenomena in digital societies, and specifically the relationship between these methods and the claims made.

Lecture 7: Critical Approaches to the Information Society

Lecture Overview

This lecture introduces students to the discourse of the information society, in which technology is understood as driving progress. We will critically assess this claim, using examples like the mining of minerals for mobile phones, the content moderation of social media posts, the gender imbalance on

Wikipedia and the disposal of e-waste. We will investigate three approaches for studying technology critically: the political economy approach, the intersectional approach, and the decolonial approach.

Essential Readings

- Benjamin, R. (2019) [*Race after Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*](#). Cambridge, UK: Polity. ['Introduction']
- Glendinning, C. (1990) 'Notes toward a Neo-Luddite Manifesto', The Anarchist Library.
- Hall, S. (2001) 'Foucault: Power, Knowledge and Discourse', in Wetherell, M., Taylor, S., and Yates, S.J. (eds) *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader*. London, UK: SAGE Publications, pp. 72–81.
- Mansell, R. (2010) '[The Life and Times of the Information Society](#)', *Prometheus*, 28(2), pp.165–86.
- McMillan Cottom, T. (2020). Where Platform Capitalism and Racial Capitalism Meet: The Sociology of Race and Racism in the Digital Society. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 6(4), 441–449. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649220949473>
- Noble SU and Tynes BM (2016) [*The intersectional Internet : race, sex, class and culture online*](#), New York, NY : Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Additional Readings

- Agarwal, R. and Wankhade, K. (2006) 'Hi-Tech Heaps, Forsaken Lives: E-Waste in Delhi', in Pellow, D., Sonnenfeld, D. and Smith, T. (eds.) [*Challenging the Chip*](#). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, pp. 236–46.
- Boyd, d. (2010) '[Transparency is not Enough](#)' In *Gov2.0 Expo*. Washington, DC.
- Brock, A. (2011) '[Beyond the Pale: The Blackbird Web Browser's Critical Reception](#)', *New Media & Society*, 13 (7): pp. 1085–1103.
- Broussard, M. (2018) '*Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World*', Cambridge, Massachusetts. The MIT Press
- Chan, J., Pun, N. and Selden, M. (2013) '[The Politics of Global Production: Apple, Foxconn and China's New Working Class](#)', *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 28(2), pp.100–15.
- Eubanks, V. (2012) [*Digital Dead End: Fighting for Social Justice in the Information Age*](#). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. [Chapter 2: 'The Real World of Information Technology']
- Fairclough, N. (2014) [*Language and Power*](#). 3rd edition. London: Routledge. [Chapter 4: 'Discourse, Common Sense and Ideology']
- Ford, H. and Wajcman, J. (2017) '[“Anyone Can Edit”, Not Everyone Does: Wikipedia's Infrastructure and the Gender Gap](#)', *Social Studies of Science* 47 (4), pp. 511–27.
- Fuchs, C. 2014. [*Digital Labour and Karl Marx*](#). Abingdon, UK: Routledge. ['Introduction']
- Gabrys, J. 2011. [*Digital Rubbish: A Natural History of Electronics*](#). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press. [Introduction: 'A Natural History of Electronics,' Chapter 3: 'Shipping and Receiving – Circuits of Disposal and the “Social Death” of Electronics,' Chapter 5: 'Media in the Dump: Salvage Stories and Spaces of Remainder']
- Gunkel, D. J. (2003) '[Second Thoughts: Toward a Critique of the Digital Divide](#)', *New Media & Society* 5(4), pp.499–522.
- Held, V. (2006) [*The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global*](#). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. ['Introduction']
- Leye, V. (2009) '[Information and Communication Technologies for Development: A Critical Perspective](#)', *Global Governance* 15, pp.29–35.
- Mansell, R. (2004) '[Political Economy, Power and New Media](#)', *New Media & Society*, 6(1), pp.74–83.
- Mansell, R. (2012) [*Imagining the Internet: Communication, Innovation, and Governance*](#). Oxford, UK: OUP Oxford. [Chapter 3: 'Social Imaginaries of the Information Society']
- Mosco, V. (2004) [*The Digital Sublime: Myth, Power, and Cyberspace*](#). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. [Chapter 2: 'Myth and Cyberspace']

- Roberts, S. T. (2016) 'Commercial Content Moderation: Digital Laborers' Dirty Work', in Noble, S. U. and Tynes, B. M. (eds) [*The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Class, and Culture Online*](#). New York: Peter Lang, pp. 147–60.
- Webster, F. (2005) '[Making Sense of the Information Age](#)', *Information, Communication & Society*, 8(4), pp.439–58.

Supervision Question

- How can we critically understand the concept of the information society?
- Is the concept still relevant to the dynamics at play today?

Thinking and Talking Question

- What is the connection between information society discourses and racial inequality and dispossession?

Lecture 8: Social Media and Social Movements

Lecture Overview

This lecture both builds on the previous lecture's concept of discourse and introduces the metaphor of the network to interrogate the use of social media by social movements. We will first examine how this relatively recent adoption of social media follows a long tradition of social movements' use of media for symbolic counter-power, including the anti-globalisation Zapatista movement, a very early adopter of online mobilization tactics. We will go on to look at several more contemporary examples, including the 'Twitter Revolution' in Iran, the #BlackLivesMatter movement in the United States, #YaMeCansé in Mexico, and Extinction Rebellion in the UK. In each case, we will focus on how technology intersects with the power relations within and around these movements, including those related to race, gender and sexuality as well as to corporate and state power.

Essential Readings

- Castells, M. (2013) [*Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*](#). Cambridge, UK: Polity. ['Opening: Networking Minds, Creating Meaning, Contesting Power']
- Shapiro, R. (2015) '[Rhetorics of Hope: Complicating Western Narratives of a "Social Media Revolution"](#)', *Literacy in Composition Studies* 3(1), pp.156–74.
- Tufekci, Z. (2017) [*Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*](#). New Haven: Yale University Press. [chapter 5: 'Technology and People']
- Tynes, B. M., Schuschke, J. and Noble, S. U. (2016) 'Digital Intersectionality Theory and the #Blacklivesmatter Movement', in Noble, S. U. and Tynes, B. M. (eds) [*The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Class, and Culture Online*](#). New York: Peter Lang, pp. 21–40.

Additional Readings

- Aouragh, M. and Alexander, A. (2011) '[The Egyptian Experience: Sense and Nonsense of the Internet Revolution](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 5, pp. 1344–58.
- Bennett, W.L. and Segerberg, A. (2012) '[The Logic of Connective Action](#)', *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), pp.739–768.
- Bonilla, Y. and Rosa, J. (2015) '[#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States](#)', *American Ethnologist* 42(1), pp. 4–17.
- Castells, M. (2011) '[Network Theory: A Network Theory of Power](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 5, pp.773–787.
- Christensen, C. (2011) '[Discourses of Technology and Liberation: State Aid to Net Activists in an Era of "Twitter Revolutions"](#)', *The Communication Review*, 14(3), pp.233–253.

- Clark, M. D. (2019) [‘White Folks’ Work: Digital Allyship Praxis in the #BlackLivesMatter Movement’](#), *Social Movement Studies* 18(5), pp. 519-34.
- Easterling, K., (2014). *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. Verso.
- Fenton, N. and Barassi, V. (2011) [‘Alternative Media and Social Networking Sites: The Politics of Individuation and Political Participation’](#), *The Communication Review* 14(3): 179–96.
- Freelon, D., McIlwain, C. and Clark, M. (2016) [‘Quantifying the Power and Consequences of Social Media Protest’](#), *New Media & Society*, 20(3), pp. 990-1011.
- Fuchs, C. (2012) [‘Behind the News: Social Media, Riots, and Revolutions’](#), *Capital & Class*, 36(3), pp.383–391.
- Gerbaudo, P. (2012) *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism*. London: Pluto Press [\[Introduction\]](#).
- Jakubowicz, A. H. (2017) [‘Alt Right White Lite: Trolling, Hate Speech and Cyber Racism on Social Media’](#), *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies*, 9(3), pp. 41-60.
- Maxfield, M. (2015) [‘History Retweeting Itself: Imperial Feminist Appropriations of “Bring Back our Girls”’](#), *Feminist Media Studies*, 16(5), pp. 886-900.
- McPherson, E. (2017) [‘Social Media and Human Rights Advocacy’](#), in Tumber, H. and Waisbord, S. (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Media and Human Rights*. London: Routledge, pp. 279–288.
- Mejias, U.A. (2012) [‘Liberation Technology and the Arab Spring: From Utopia to Atopia and Beyond’](#), *The Fibreculture Journal*, 20, pp. 204–17.
- Natale, S. and Ballatore, A. (2014) [‘The Web Will Kill Them All: New Media, Digital Utopia, and Political Struggle in the Italian 5-Star Movement’](#), *Media, Culture & Society*, 36(1), pp. 105-121.
- Nummi, J., Jennings, C. and Feagin, J. (2019) [‘#BlackLivesMatter: Innovative Black Resistance’](#), *Sociological Forum*, 34(S1), pp. 1042-64.
- Ott, K. (2018) [‘Social Media and Feminist Values: Aligned or Maligned?’](#), *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 39(1), pp. 93-111.
- Pearce, K.E. and Kendzior, S. (2012) [‘Networked Authoritarianism and Social Media in Azerbaijan’](#), *Journal of Communication*, 62(2), pp.283–98.
- Russell, A. 2005. [‘Myth and the Zapatista Movement: Exploring a Network Identity’](#), *New Media & Society* 7(4), pp. 559–77.
- Sengupta, A., Bouterse, S., Allmann, K. (2018) [‘Build an internet for, and from, us all’](#), *Nature*.
- Vie, S. (2014) [‘In Defense of ‘Slacktivism’: The Human Rights Campaign Facebook Logo as Digital Activism’](#), *First Monday* 19(4).
- Youmans, W.L. and York, J.C. (2012) [‘Social Media and the Activist Toolkit: User Agreements, Corporate Interests, and the Information Infrastructure of Modern Social Movements’](#), *Journal of Communication*, 62(2), pp.315–329.

Supervision Question

- Do social media revolutions exist?
- Do social media platforms enable or foreclose the possibility for resistance and social movements?

Thinking and Talking Question

- What are the tensions arising from environmental and/or racial justice movements’ uses of social media?

Lecture 9: Representation and Resistance: The Problematics of Big Data and the Politics of the Selfie

Lecture Overview

This lecture will introduce the concept of representation and examine how the power relations around representation have (or have not) changed in the digital age. We will use the examples of selfies and of big data as case studies, examining the differences in the claims to representation made by these types of information, as well as in the ways these types of information are represented. In particular, we'll also consider the implications of platform and infrastructure power, especially when these govern the main channels through which social movements engage in resistance – how is state and corporate power entangled or challenged through e.g. community standards, content moderation, and censorship? Or through enabling tools of policing and surveillance, e.g. predictive policing and facial recognition? We will then circle back to the political economy approach to reflect on the environmental consequences of the 'cloud,' in which such digital representations tend to be stored, before returning to the decolonial approach and considering the emancipatory potential and challenges of 'refusal'.

Essential Readings

- Boyd, d. and Crawford, K. (2012) '[Critical Questions for Big Data: Provocations for a Cultural, Technological, and Scholarly Phenomenon](#)', *Information, Communication & Society* 15(5), pp.662–79.
- Cervi, L., & Divon, T. (2023). Playful Activism: Memetic Performances of Palestinian Resistance in TikTok #Challenges. *Social Media + Society*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051231157607>
- Milner, Y., Traub, A. (2021), '[Data Capitalism + Algorithmic Racism](#)', Data For Black Lives report.
- D'Ignazio, C. and Klein, L. (2019) *Data Feminism*. MIT Press Open. [Chapter One: '[Bring Back the Bodies](#)']
- Hall, S. (2013) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Second Edition. Milton Keynes: SAGE Publications Ltd. [Chapter 1: 'The Work of Representation' and Chapter 4: 'The Spectacle of 'The Other']
- Senft, T.M. and Baym, N.K. (2015) '[What Does the Selfie Say? Investigating a Global Phenomenon](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 9, pp. 1588-1606.
- Sobande, F. (2021). Spectacularized and Branded Digital (Re)presentations of Black People and Blackness. *Television & New Media*, 22(2), 131–146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476420983745>

Additional Readings

- Amnesty International (2020), '[We Sense Trouble: Automated Discrimination and Mass Surveillance in Predictive Policing in the Netherlands](#)'
- Amnesty International (2019), '[Surveillance Giants: How the Business Model of Google and Facebook Threatens Human Rights](#)'
- Andrejevic, M. (2014) '[The Big Data Divide](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 8, pp. 1673-89.
- Brager, J. (2015) '[The Selfie and the Other: Consuming Viral Tragedy and Social Media \(After\)lives](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 9, pp. 1660-71.
- Burns, A. (2015) '[Self\(ie\)-Discipline: Social Regulation as Enacted Through the Discussion of Photographic Practice](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 9, pp. 1716–33.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2017) '[Symbolic Bordering: The Self-Representation of Migrants and Refugees in Digital News](#)', *Popular Communication*, 15(2): pp. 78–94.
- Crawford, K., Gray, M. L. and Miltner, K. (2014) '[Critiquing Big Data: Politics, Ethics, Epistemology](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 8: pp. 1663-72.
- Duguay, S. (2016) '[Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer Visibility Through Selfies: Comparing Platform Mediators Across Ruby Rose's Instagram and Vine Presence](#)', *Social Media + Society* (April-June), pp. 1-12.

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Supervision Question

- How is representation mediated and weaponised in an age of surveillance giants, AI, and Big Data?
- How are digital spaces reclaimed or instrumentalized towards resistance-oriented goals?

Thinking and Talking Question

- What shapes the representation of the climate crisis in the digital age?

Module Four: Credit and Debt in Unequal Societies

Lecturer

Dr Matthew Sparkes

Module Overview

This module introduces one of the most significant social, economic, and cultural developments of the neoliberal era: the unprecedented rise in personal debt. We will explore the underlying dynamics behind these changes, as well as the far-reaching implications social (in)equalities, identity, culture, and politics.

The module offers a sociologically informed and critical exploration of personal debt, diverging from the traditional perspectives of economists and bankers. We will begin by analysing how personal debt both contributes to and is shaped by *structural* inequalities. Next, we will explore the *cultural* dimensions of debt, examining how societal inequalities impact individuals' use of credit and their reasons for seeking it. Finally, we will investigate the *ideational* struggles associated with debt, including how experiences of indebtedness are influenced by debt stigma and societal attitudes.

Lecture 10: Critical approaches to the stratifying effects of debt

Lecture Overview

The first session deals with the structural impact of personal debt. We start with a brief historical analysis of personal debt, before examining the core factors driving its rise and significance in the neoliberal era. We will then shift our focus to three key approaches grappling with the stratifying consequences of personal debt (the stratification approach, the critical Marxist approach, and the classification situations approach), with a particular focus on the interplay between credit and housing markets. We will consider how these processes intersect with questions of class, race, and gender.

Essential readings

- Dwyer, R. (2018). [Credit, debt, and inequality](#). *Annual Review of Sociology*, 44, 237-261.
- Adkins, L., Cooper, M. and Konings, M. (2019). [Class in the 21st century: Asset inflation and the new logic of inequality](#). *Economy and Space*, 0(0), 1-25.
- Burton, D. (2008). [Credit and Consumer Society](#). London: Routledge.
- Fourcade, M. and Healy, K. (2013). [Classification situations: Life-chances in the neoliberal era](#). *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 38 (8), 559–72.
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Additional Readings

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- Castellanos, M. Bianet (2020). [Indigenous Dispossession Housing and Maya Indebtedness in Mexico](#). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Charron-Chenier, R. and Seamster, L. (2020). [Racialized Debts: Racial Exclusion From Credit Tools and Information Networks](#). *Critical Sociology*.
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- Krippner, G. (2017). [Democracy of Credit: Ownership and the Politics of Credit Access in Late Twentieth-Century America](#). *American Journal of Sociology*, 123(1), 1-47.
- Langley, P. (2008). [Financialization and the consumer credit boom](#). *Competition & change*, 12, 133–147.
- Lazzarato, M. (2009). [Neoliberalism in action: Inequality, insecurity, and the reconstitution of the social](#). *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26 (6), 109–33.
- LeBaron, G. (2014). [Reconceptualizing Debt Bondage: Debt as a Class-Based Form of Labor Discipline](#). *Critical Sociology*, 40(5), 763–780.
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- Montgomerie, J. and Büdenbender, M. (2015). [Round the Houses: Homeownership and Failures of Asset-Based Welfare in the United Kingdom](#). *New Political Economy*, 20(3), 386-405.
- Payne, C. (2013). [The Consumer, Credit and Neoliberalism](#). London: Routledge.
- Roberts, A. (2013). Financing social reproduction: The gendered relations of debt and mortgage finance in Twenty-first-century America. *New Political Economy*, 18, 21–42.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2012.662951>
- Rona-Tas, A. (2017). [The off-label use of consumer credit ratings](#). *Historical Social Research*, 42 (1), 52–76.
- Seamster, L. (2019). Black Debt, White Debt. *Contexts*, 18(1).
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- Sparkes, M. and Wood, J. (2020). [The Political Economy of Household Debt and the Keynesian Policy Paradigm](#). *New Political Economy*.

Supervision Question

- How can we critically understand the stratifying effects of the rise in personal debt?

Lecture 11: Consuming credit – Housing, Consumption, and Culture

Lecture Overview

The second session deals with the cultural impact of credit. Drawing on case studies from Anglo-America, Latin-America, and Europe, we will explore why people turn to credit and explore how this alters places, spaces, and identities. The first part of the session examines cultural practices and tastes and the stigmatising narratives that reinforce them. In the second part, we will explore how credit is used in consumption choices to both delineate and resist cultural and symbolic boundaries. We will be guided by the question of whether consumer credit is integral to the construction of social identity in increasingly unequal societies.

Essential Reading

- Bourdieu, P. (1984). [Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste](#). Routledge.
- Burton, D. (2008). [Credit and Consumer Society](#). London: Routledge.
- Kus, B. (2015). [Sociology of Debt: States, Credit Markets, and Indebted Citizens](#). *Sociology Compass*, 9(3), 212–223.
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Additional Reading

- Ariztia, T. (2014). [Housing markets performing class: middle-class cultures and market professionals in Chile](#). *The Sociological Review*, 62, 400–420.
- Bernthal, M. J., Crockett, D., and Rose, R. L. (2005). [Credit Cards as Lifestyle Facilitators](#). *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(1), 130–145.
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- Marambio-Tapia, A. (2017). [Narratives of Social Mobility in the Post-Industrial Working Class and the Use of Credit in Chilean Households](#). *OpenEdition Journals*.
- McClanahan, A. (2017). [Dead Pledges: Debt, Crisis, and Twenty-First Century Culture](#). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Montgomerie, J. (2007). [The Logic of Neoliberalism and the Political Economy of Consumer Debt-led Growth](#). In S. Lee and S. McBride, (Eds). *Neo-Liberalism, State Power and Global Governance* (pp. 157–72). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Montgomerie, J. (2009). [The pursuit of \(past\) happiness? Middle-class indebtedness and American financialisation](#). *New Political Economy*, 14, 1–24.
- Pitcher, B. (2016). [Race, debt and the welfare state](#). *New formations*, 1(87), 47–63.
- Sullivan, T. (2008). [Debt and the simulation of social class](#). In R. Brubaker, R. Lawless, & C. Tabb (Eds.), *A Debtor World: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Debt* (pp. 36–59). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Poster, W. R. (2013). [Hidden Sides of the Credit Economy: Emotions, Outsourcing, and Indian Call Centres](#). *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 54(3), 205–227.

Supervision Questions

- To what extent is credit use cultural?

Lecture 12: Debt stigma and its affects

Lecture Overview

The final session moves on to examine the problem of debt and the related experience of indebtedness, including the ideations and materialities that sustain it. We will look specifically at how recent sociological approaches spotlight the role of politicians, the media, creditors, and credit reference agencies in propagating and upholding a stigmatising discourse of moral obligation to repay, often unpayable, debts. We will also consider the paradoxical duality between individualising compliance to this debt logic as well as instances of collective resistance.

Essential Reading

- Dawney, L., Kirwan, S., & Walker, R. (2018). [The intimate spaces of debt: Love, freedom and entanglement in indebted lives](#). *Geoforum*, 110, 191-199.
- Deville, J. (2012). [Regenerating market attachments](#). *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 5 (4), 423-39.
- LeBaron, G. and Roberts, A. (2012). [Confining Social Insecurity: Neoliberalism and the Rise of the 21st Century Debtors' Prison](#). *Gender and Politics*, 8(1), 25-49.
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Additional Reading

- Deville, J. (2014). [Consumer credit default and collections: The shifting ontologies of market attachment](#). *Consumption, Markets & Culture*, 17 (5), 468-90.
- Kirwan, S., Dawney, L., and Walker, R. (2020). ['Choose your moments': Discipline and speculation in the indebted everyday](#). In M. Featherstone (Ed.), *The Sociology of Debt* (pp. 119-144). Bristol: Policy Press.
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- Scambler, G. (2018). Heaping blame upon shame: 'Weaponising stigma' for neoliberal times. *The Sociological Review*, 6 (4), 766-82.
- Simms, A. (2009). [Ecological Debt: Global Warming and the Wealth of Nations](#). London: Pluto Press.
- Sparkes, M., Wang, S., and Wels, J. (2023). Debt, Credit Payment Holidays, and their Relationship with Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United Kingdom. *Society and Mental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21568693231169783>
- Sparkes, M. (forthcoming). Who Is Publicly Declared Vulnerable and Worthy of Relief: The Cultural Politics of Neoliberalism. In F. Wherry, M. Gray, and J. Gardner, (Eds). *Viral Debt*. Routledge.
- Sweet, E. (2018). 'Like you failed at life': Debt, health and neoliberal subjectivity. *Social Science & Medicine*, 212(212), 86-93.
- Tyler, I. and Slater, T. (2018). [Introduction: Rethinking the sociology of stigma](#). *The Sociological Review*, 6 (4), 721-43.
- Walker, C., Hanna, P., Cunningham, L., and Ambrose, P. (2014). ['A Kind of Mental Warfare': An Economy of Affect in the UK Debt Collection Industry](#). *Australian Community Psychologist*, 26(2), 54- 67.
- Walker, C. (2011). ["Responsibilizing" a healthy Britain: Personal debt, employment, and welfare](#). *International Journal of Health Services*, 41 (3), 525-38.

Supervision Questions

- Is debt stigma solely rooted in the creditor-debtor relationship, or does it involve more complex factors?
- To what extent does debt stigma affect repayment behaviours and the perceived legitimacy of debt collection practices?