Faculty of Human, Social and Political Sciences
HSPS PART II B Tripos
Part II 2017-18

Paper SOC11: Racism, ‘Race’ and Ethnicity

Course Organiser
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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 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. 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: Mónica Moreno Figueroa (MMF), Rachell Sanchez Rivera, Tiffany Page (TP)
(This term all lectures will be on Thursdays from 11-1)

5-Oct-17
1. Histories of Race 1: The Emergence of 'Race' and Racism, Enlightenment and the Colonial Enterprise (MMF)

12-Oct-17
2. Histories of Race 2: The Science Fiction of ‘Race’ (MMF + RSR)

19-Oct-17
3. Histories of Race 3: Rethinking 'Race' and the move to Ethnicity (MMF)

26-Oct-17
4. Problematising Whiteness (MMF)
2-Nov-17
5. Locating vulnerability for the understanding of the workings of racism (TP)

9-Nov-17
6. Vulnerable knowledge and methods for the study of racism (TP)

16-Nov-17
7. The Racialised Body I: Seeing 'Race', Visibilising Otherness (MMF)

23-Nov-17
8. The Racialised Body II: 'Race' And The Lure Of Beauty (MMF)

Lent (7 Lectures: Weeks 1-7) Lecturer: Ali Meghji (AM), Mónica Moreno Figueroa (MMF), Philip Luther-Davies (PLD) and Mahvish Ahmad (MA)
(This term all lectures will be on Tuesdays 2–4)

23-Jan-18
9. Putting race theory into practice: Post-racialism and Trumpism, and anti-anti-racism in Britain (AM)

30-Jan-18
10. Orientalism (MMF)

6-Feb-18
11. Race and Religion (PLD)

13-Feb-18
12. Anti-Semitism: its history, politics and the genocide of European Jews (PLD)

20-Feb-18
13. The Ethnicity Debates (MA)

27-Feb-18

6-March-18
15. Race and Empire I: Rethinking International Relations–and War (MA)

Easter – revision sessions

Tuesday 1st of May, 2018, 12-1 pm
16. Revision Session MMF, RSR, TP

Tuesday 8th of May, 2018, 12-1 pm
17. Revision Session MMF, AM, PLD, MA,
Outline of Topics and Reading Lists

Michaelmas

1. Histories of Race 1: The Emergence of ‘Race’, Enlightenment 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.


Supervision topic: What, if any, is the relationship between Enlightenment philosophy and the emergence of notions of race?

2. Histories of Race 2: The Science Fiction of ‘Race’ (MMF+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: Rethinking ‘Race’ and the Move to Ethnicity (MMF)

Alongside the strengthening of the scientific validation of race, unease with the concept also developed. This lecture will consider some of the scientific, moral and political bases of
objections to the concept of race. It examines the challenges that arose when race was replaced with 'ethnicity', and their overlapping affective and symbolic foundations.


Supervision topic: What would we gain by keeping both race and ethnicity as analytical categories for understanding the workings of racism? What would we loose?

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.


Supervision topic: To what extent is whiteness an organising principle of late modernity?

5. Locating vulnerability 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 unevenly 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://thenewinquiry.com/hands-up-dont-shoot/

Supervision topic: Consider some of the implications for social policies if vulnerability is both a universal condition and unevenly distributed.

6. Vulnerable knowledge and methods for the study of racism (TP)

We will continue the exploration of vulnerability, shifting to the kinds of epistemological and methodological strategies we might need in order to centre the lived experiences of ourselves and/or those differentially exposed to particular forms of vulnerability, in order to make visible the particularities of these inequalities. This includes discussions of agency in relation to vulnerability, challenging the limits of intelligibility and reflexivity, and the discomfort and uncertainty in being researchers.

Supervision topic: What does a notion of being a vulnerable researcher mean in the context of your own experiences and/or forms of inquiry?


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.


Princeton University Press). (Introduction)

*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.

8. 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.


*Supervision topic:* ‘Beauty is a gendered, racialised and contested symbolic resource’ (Craig 2007:160) Discuss with reference to specific case studies.
LENT

9. Putting race theory into practice: Post-racialism and Trumpism, and anti-anti-racism in Britain

This lecture will be composed of two parts. Firstly, we will explore the debates surrounding race theory, paying particular attention to critical race theory as a theoretical framework for analysing racism. This will involve discussing the benefits of both micro and macro approaches to racism, and how various critical race scholars have sought to bring these different levels together in a single theory of racism. We then assess critical race theory in the context of TrumpAmerica. We will then travel across the pond to examine how critical race theory can be used to understand race, racialisation and racism in contemporary Britain. The focus on the contemporary British racial climate will require us to engage with the emergence of post-racial ideology, and the idea of ‘reverse racism’ (racism towards white people).

Race theory and post-racialism:


Applying critical race theory to Britain:


Supervision Topic 1: What is critical race theory, and is it useful in studying contemporary racism in Britain?

Supervision Topic 2: Critically assess whether the rise of Trumpism is compatible with the claims of critical race theory.

10. Orientalism (MMF)

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.


Supervision topic: What is the Orient? How it is actively produced? Answer with reference to specific cases.

11. Race and Religion (PLD)

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 from early modernity in Europe to present day conflicts in the Middle East, including the singling out of Muslims in the USA, Europe, Israel, India, China, Myanmar and elsewhere. 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.


Surveys


Supervision Topic: Religious faith and identification has been a core element in how societies have demarcated in and out group status to individuals. However, interpretation of religious texts and practice have changed through time and are thus socially contingent on place and time. Discuss the ways that the social context of religion has been generative of race and racism.

12. Anti-Semitism: its history, politics and the genocide of European Jews (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.

Anti-Semitism & The Holocaust
*Marcus, K. 2015. The Definition of Anti-Semitism [CH 1 – 2, 5] [http://search.lib.cam.ac.uk/?itemid=|eresources|555737]

Responses to Anti-Semitism
Klaar, H. 'The “Never Again” State of Israel: The Emergence of the Holocaust as a Core Feature of Israeli Identity and Its Four Incongruent Voices', in Journal of Social Sciences, 69:1, pp. 125 – 143

*Supervision topic:* Compare and contrast how anti-Semitism, Zionism and anti-Zionism are similar, dissimilar or both?

13. The Ethnicity Debates

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 begin by reviewing theories of ethnicity, and follow this by revisiting one of the initial cases that prompted one of the first theorisations of ethnicity-as-constructed: The Pashtuns traversing the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

*Brubaker, Rogers (2004), Ethnicity Without Groups. Chp 3 (‘Ethnicity as Cognition’), also available in Theory and Society, Vol. 33(1), 2004 (co-authors Loveman, Mara and Peter Stamatov).*
*Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (1996), Ethnicity. Esp. Read excerpt from Geertz, Clifford ‘Primordial Ties’
Supervision Topic 1: Is ethnicity cognition? Discuss.

Supervision Topic 2: Why does ethnic identity persist in the 21st century?


The post-Cold War world has been characterised by a steady growth of violence between communities. Some of the most spectacular examples of this violence have been witnessed in the post-colonial world. From the Rwandan Genocide to Hindu-Muslim riots in India, we will interrogate why violence between communities takes place in the post-colonial world. To what extent is the emergence of this violence linked to its historical moment: After the demise of the Soviet Union and left-wing ideology in the aftermath of the Cold War? To what extent can globalisation—e.g. through the spread of open markets—account for this violence? To what extent is this violence particular to each society? What, in turn, is the place of the state—both historically, in the colonial era, and today?


Supervision Topic: The collapse of left-wing ideology, with the end of the Cold War, has paved the way for ethnic violence. Discuss, using one or two cases.
Western military intervention after 9/11 has resurrected old debates on the importance of race and empire to international relations—especially as pertains to war. We will ask: What does the lens of race and empire reveal about global relations and war—and what, if anything, does it obscure? To answer this question, we explore the relationship between racism ‘at home’ in the West and empire ‘abroad’ in the non-Western world—especially in the shadow of the Global War on Terror.


Barkawi, Tarek & Mark Laffey (2002). *Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations*. Millenium: Journal of International Relations.

  — (1925) *Worlds of Color*, Foreign Affairs, April. [Link]


Mamdani, Mehmood. (2004). *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism*. American Anthropologist. [LINK]


Supervision Topic 1: What does the lens of race and empire reveals about global relations and war—and what, if anything, does it obscure?

Supervision Topic 2: "Racism at home goes hand in hand with empire abroad." Discuss.