

Sociology of Race and Ethnicity
SOC 262 A, Winter 2009
Bellevue Community College

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 T Th 9:30-10:20

Office Location: D110- I
Class Meets: Daily 12:30-1:20
Class Location: A-130

Course Introduction:

Immigration policies and border control. Affirmative Action. Racial Profiling. The War on Terrorism. Barack Obama. Welfare policies. Model minorities. These are just a few of the topics that can stir intense emotional reactions in many of us. Not surprisingly, these are also topics that are closely related to race and ethnicity. Indeed, race and ethnicity remain “hot topics” today. We continue to live in a society that has many questions about race, but many people are afraid to ask them.



What is the difference between race and ethnicity?
Are we living in a colorblind society?
Is racial inequality a thing of the past?
How is race embedded in our society?
Does race affect all of us?

Over the course of the quarter, we will explore these questions as well as many other fascinating topics pertaining to race and ethnicity. Obviously, this class is about race. But it's also about much more. It is about culture, power, dominance, and inequality. It is about identity, immigration, education, and social change. Sociology teaches us that race and ethnicity do not exist in a vacuum. To the contrary, race and ethnicity are tied to history, culture, politics, economics, and power. We will explore these connections over the next several weeks. Our major goal for this quarter is to understand how the larger social environment fundamentally and differentially shapes the experiences of groups and individuals according to race.

As we all come to the course with strong ideas and beliefs about race and ethnicity, the subject matter can be personally as well as intellectually challenging. Some of what you will learn in this course might be shocking, surprising, or even make you angry. Nevertheless, I hope that you will realize that these reactions are a somewhat normal part of the learning process. As a result, I hope that you learn from each class experience and take these lessons with you on your future endeavors. I have a passion for the subject matter, and I hope you will have a passion too.

Welcome to our class!

Required Texts:

1. Maurice Berger, White Lies: Race and the Myths of Whiteness (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1999).
2. Kashif Malik Hassan-El, Willie Lynch Letter and the Making of a Slave (Bensenville, IL: Lushena Books, 2007).
3. Additional articles and/or handouts are posted on the course website (My BCC) or distributed in class.

Learning Atmosphere:

I believe that students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this is an active and interactive course where you will often learn by doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our class as a collaborative learning community where we all teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning – I think you'll enjoy it and learn a lot in the process.

A note about course content: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we will sometimes talk about provocative material in class. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will be framed in an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning. You may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. You are free to leave the room at any time, but please know you will be responsible for any course material you may have missed while you were gone. Also, profanity exists in our social world and thus will be used throughout this course - so please be advised. If you have any questions or concerns about course content or climate, don't hesitate to let me know.

Learning and Course Outcomes:

After completing the course, a successful student will be able to:

1. List basic approaches to the study of race and ethnicity
2. Explain the difference between race and ethnicity
3. Describe race and ethnic relations from a sociological perspective
4. Articulate how race and ethnicity are social constructs
5. Evaluate claims regarding the concept of race
6. Recall key historical and sociological facts regarding race and ethnic relations in the U.S.
7. Discuss how social institutions differently affect the lives of racial and ethnic groups
8. Contrast the experiences of selected racial and ethnic groups in the U.S.
9. Compare race and ethnic relations in the United States with selected non-U.S. countries
10. Apply findings of race and ethnic research to one's own life

General Education Outcomes:

This course's General Education ratings are: 3 in Critical Thinking; 2 in Reading; 2 in Listening and Speaking; 2 in Historical and Intellectual Perspectives, and 3 in Cultural Diversity.

General Course Rules and Expectations:

- **Attendance:** Attend all class meetings and come to class on time. Your presence in class contributes significantly toward your final grade in the course as I cover a lot of material in class that cannot be found in the readings. More than three unexcused absences or late attendances will lower your grade, and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with

me prior to the absence or tardy, unless it is an emergency. Excused absences include doctor's visits, family emergencies, and sometimes work-related issues. If you miss class, please connect with your colleagues to find out what you missed. I highly recommend that you get the names and contact information of one or two of your classmates so you can contact them for any assignments or notes you may have missed while absent.

- **Preparation:** You should come to class having done all the assigned reading and homework and you should always bring the proper supplies with you daily, including your textbook. Note that the BCC guideline for homework is two hours outside of class for each hour spent in class.
- **Assignments:** All assignments are due at the start of the class period. Assignments, papers, homework, or exams must be typed, printed out, stapled, and handed in at the beginning of class. Emailed assignments are not accepted. If you know you are going to be absent on the day an assignment is due, then turn it in early. All major due dates are indicated on the attached Course Calendar. Please see the writing guidelines for the format of submitting all written assignments.
- **Late Work:** I believe that one of the major lessons students take away from college is the importance of meeting deadlines. As a result, **no late work will be accepted** unless you have had it approved by me BEFORE the due date. Late work will receive a zero grade.
- **Contribution:** Learning about each other's experiences and perspectives is an integral part of the learning process in this course. I believe that you will learn a lot about yourself and your fellow classmates. Therefore, you are expected to be an active participant in our learning environment. An active participant can include contributing to discussions, but can also mean getting to class on time, taking notes, listening to your peers, and coming to class prepared. You should do your best to contribute to class discussions and activities.
- **Classroom Etiquette:** All electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom at all times. This includes cell phones, blackberries, laptops, i-pods/mp3 players, etc. If you need a laptop to take notes, I will need verification. All texting devices should be placed in your bag for the duration of the class. Please note that that texting, excessive talking, or other disruptive behavior is not only disrespectful to me, it is also disrespectful to the people around you. Your participation grade will be affected and lowered by these types of behaviors.
- **Respect:** I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Learning about diverse experiences is central to this course, so it is of the utmost importance that you respect your classmates' experiences, differences, and opinions. In order for us to learn from each other, we have to allow each other to make mistakes and to offer unpopular positions for debate. This is a college classroom and as such, I expect students to behave as adults. I do not tolerate excessive talking or whispering, consistent late arrivals, or early departures. *Students who are disrespectful to their classmates or the instructor will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent until arrangements are made with the instructor to return to class and will result in your participation credit lowering.*
- **Honesty:** Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in a failing grade for the course and a report to Student Affairs. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge in your papers if you borrowed any ideas, terms, or phrases, even if you have borrowed from a classmate. See the BCC handbook on academic dishonesty for further details and if you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me.

Students with Disabilities:

All students are responsible for all requirements of the class, but the way they meet these requirements may vary. If you need specific academic accommodations due to a disability, please speak with me and with Disability Support Services (425)564-2498. You will need to obtain the appropriate documentation from DSS in room B233. The disability accommodation documentation must be given to me before it is needed rather than afterward, so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Grading:

Grades are based on six factors. (1) Participation and Discussion, (2) Daily Notecards on the Readings, (3) Current Event Seminars (4) In-Class Journal Writing and Homework, (5) a Research Paper or Project, and (6) Exams. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

Participation/Discussion	50 points
Daily Notecards on Readings (10 at 10 points/each)	100 points
Current Events Seminars (5 at 20 points/each)	100 points
In-Class Journal Writing/Homework	100 points
Research Project or Paper	150 points
Exams (2 at 100 points/each)	200 points
<hr/> TOTAL	<hr/> 700 points

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	648-700	100-93%
A-	647-627	92-90%
B+	626-606	89-87%
B	605-578	86-83%
B-	577-557	82-80%
C+	556-536	79-77%
C	535-508	76-73%
C-	507-487	72-70%
D+	486-466	69-67%
D	465-417	66-60%
F	416-below	59% & below

Description of Components: the 6 Grading

1. Participation/Discussion: (50/700 points)

Participation is essential to the format of this class and will therefore contribute significantly toward your grade. In short, your success in this class depends on your active participation. Participation includes attendance, getting to class on time, class discussions, and group work. Disruptive behavior, excessive talking, texting while in class, or other interruptions will lower this portion of your grade. See the *General Course Rules and Expectations* for details about what is considered disruptive behavior. Do not take this portion of your grade lightly!

2. Daily Notecards on the Readings: (100/700 points)

For each day that a reading is assigned, you will need to submit a notecard about the readings for that day. If there are multiple readings, you must write on all readings assigned on a given day. At the beginning of each class period, I will collect your 3x5 notecard. Notecards must be turned in at the start of class at 12:30 – late notecards will not be accepted. The purpose of these cards is to help you keep up with the readings as well as help facilitate a more informed discussion for that day’s class period. I will collect the cards every day in order to keep track of your attendance, although they won’t always be graded. Ten times during the quarter, however, I will announce at the beginning of class that “your notecards will be graded today.” For those graded notecards, you will receive a score of between 0 and 10. Notecards must follow a particular format, as described below, and must include your name, date, title of the article and author, 2-3 sentences providing the thesis of the article, and any definitions or key terms that is discussed in the reading. You can use your notecards to help you on your exams - so spending some time now defining key terms and naming the thesis of the articles will help you when the exam comes. The guidelines for submitting your notecards are as follows:

NAME		DATE
	TITLE OF ARTICLE & AUTHOR	
	<p>THESIS OF ARTICLE – 2-3 Sentences describing what the main argument of the article is</p> <p>List/Define any Key terms discussed in the article</p>	

3. Current Event Seminars: (100/700 points)

As noted on the syllabus and course calendar, there will be five times throughout the quarter where we will engage in a seminar on current events during a given class period. For these “seminar days,” you will need to do sociological research and find a current event that pertains to what we have been discussing in class that week. In order to receive the full 20 points per seminar, you need to find a news story from a reliable source that pertains to the readings and/or discussion from that week’s given topics. A reliable source could be from a local newspaper, such as *The Seattle Times*, from a national newspaper like *The New York Times*, from an online news agency like ABC, CNN, NBC, etc. You will need to write up a 1-page paper briefly summarizing what the article is about and, most importantly you must discuss how and why the news item you chose is connected to and informing the course topics of the week. Students will present their current event to the class and must be present to receive full credit for these

assignments (so, you cannot just submit your current event and expect to receive 20 points). The goal of this assignment is for us to connect what is going on in the social world around us today in 2009 to what we are reading about.

4. In-Class Journal Writing and Homework: (100/700 points)

Over the course of the quarter, you will be asked to do several in-class activities either individually or in a group. These in-class assignments will be randomly delivered and *cannot be made up*. One activity that we will do is keep a journal where we will take a few moments on various days and reflect on either the readings for that day, a quote, a film clip, or apply some of the terms/ideas that we have gone over the previous class period. Other times, we will perform an in-class activity and you will submit work that you have completed during the class session for points. I may also give you a brief homework assignment that you will turn in the following day. If I notice that folks are not reading, quizzes can take the place of the in-class assignments. The purpose of these in-class assignments are to reflect on what we are reading and discussing and apply key terms or ideas to our own personal lives.

5. Research Project or Paper: (150/700 points)

Instead of a final exam in this class, you will have the choice of either writing a 7-8 page research paper on a topic of your choice or doing a creative research project and presenting your project to the class during our scheduled exam time on Thursday March 19th. Both research papers and projects will be due at this time. Creative projects can include original art, song/poetry, creating a website/multi-media platform, etc. Just keep in mind that this project/paper is a larger portion of your grade. You are strongly encouraged to submit proposals or seek out feedback on this assignment. More details and structure for this assignment will follow.

6. Exams: (200/700 points)

Over the course of the quarter, you will take two exams that integrate the course's in-class activities (lectures, films, etc.) and readings. Exams are designed to make sure you understand important course concepts and themes. Exams might include multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Please note that you cannot make up missed exams. The first exam is on Friday, February 6th and the second exam will be on Friday, March 6th.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, COSIDERATIONS, OR COMPLAINTS ABOUT A GRADE YOU RECEIVED, I ASK YOU TO TAKE 24 HOURS TO REEXAMINE THE ANSWERS OR THE WRITING THAT YOU SUBMITTED AND THEN COME AND TALK WITH ME.

**** General Guidelines for All Written Work ****

All papers or written work should be typed, in Times New Roman, 12 point font, double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides, and stapled. Assignments are due at the beginning of class – promptly at 12:30 a.m. – no late work will be accepted. Late papers or assignments will receive a zero. No emailed assignments will be accepted. Your work must be cited in MLA style and you must always give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Title pages and bibliographies are not counted toward the minimum page requirements. Student information (name, assignment title, class) is single-spaced, at the top left-hand side of the page. Do not put extra spaces between paragraphs and paragraphs contain no less than four sentences. Magazines, newspapers, journals, and books are *italicized*. Movie titles, article titles, song titles, etc. are "in quotation marks." Quotes inside of a quotation use 'single quotation marks.' Papers should be written from an academic perspective – so no colloquial language please!

General Grading Guidelines for Written Work:

A Paper - An A paper shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that demonstrated your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. Your arguments are solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You've demonstrated a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class materials and how they intersect with one another.

B Paper – The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well versed in the readings or materials as you could be. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others, but I would like to see you challenge yourself a bit more with the course issues and themes.

C Paper – The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

D Paper – A D paper is not proofread and it does not deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material or questions raised in class. The course materials are not presented clearly, or at all. I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows. Please note: a D paper or below may be resubmitted once during the quarter for a better grade.

Instructor Notes:

If at any point throughout the quarter you are confused or unclear about the expectations of the course, course material, a grade you received, or any other matters, I strongly encourage you to come talk with me early. It is my goal that all students succeed in this course; but, I can only help you if you meet me half way. Furthermore, if you are having personal problems or other issues going on outside of school, please let me know. I recognize that we all have lives outside of school, and am very willing to work with students, but I can only do so if I know there is a problem.

Syllabus:

You are expected to have read the readings assigned for the current day by the time you arrive in class!

****Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance in class. ****

Week 1

Monday, January 5th: Introduction to the Course

Go over syllabus; class introductions; beginning definitions

Tuesday, January 6th: Reflections on Race:

In class exercise on race and where we're at



Wednesday, January 7th: Race: Why Race Matters

Readings: "Race: Why it Matters," by Elizabeth Higginbotham on course website

"A Nation of Minorities," by Farai Chideya on course website

Thursday, January 8th: Racial Designations and Why They Matter

Readings: "Changing Race" by Clara Rodríguez on course website

"How Does it Feel to be a Problem," by Moustafa Bayoumi on course website



Friday, January 9th: Researching Race

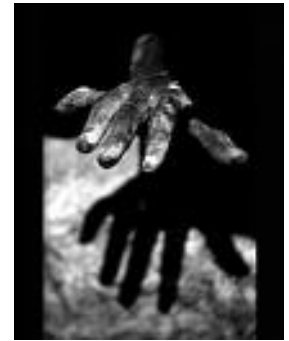
Readings: "The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race," by the ASA on course website

Week 2

Monday, January 12th: The Social Construction of Race

Readings: "The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity," by Elizabeth Higginbotham on course website

"Defining Race," on course website



Tuesday, January 13th: The Invention of Race

Readings: "Planting the Seed," by Abby Ferber, on course website

"How Did Jews Become White Folks," by Karen Brodtkin, on course website



Wednesday, January 14th: Racial Formation

Readings: "Racial Formation," by Omi and Winant, on course website

"Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin,"

by

Elizabeth Grieco, on course

website

Thursday, January 15th: Optional Ethnicities

Readings: "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only,"

Mary Waters

on course website

Friday, January 16th: Current Event #1 Seminar

Week 3

Monday, January 19th: No Class



Tuesday, January 20th: Racialized Identities

Readings: "A Hyphenated Identity," by Harry Kitano on course website
"Notes of a White Black Woman," by Judy Scales-Trent on course website

Wednesday, January 21st: Living on the Color Line

Readings: "Tripping on the Color Line," by Heather Dalmage on course website
"Salsa and Ketchup," by Peggy Levitt on course website



Thursday, January 22nd:

Readings: "Are Asian Americans Becoming White," by Min Zhou on course website

Friday, January 23rd: Current Event Seminar #2

Week 4

Monday, January 26th: Whiteness Privilege

Readings: "White Privilege: An Invisible Knapsack," by Peggy McIntosh on course website



Tuesday, January 27th: Whiteness...Realized

Readings: "Blinded by Whiteness," by Mark Chesler on course website



Wednesday, January 28th: White Lies

Readings: White Lies, pp. 1-77

Thursday, January 29th: Myths of Whiteness

Readings: White Lies, pp. 78-152

Friday, January 30th: What Whiteness is Worth

Readings: White Lies, pp. 153-219



Week 5

Monday, February 2nd: Racial Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism

Readings: "Representations of Race and Group Beliefs," by Elizabeth Higginbotham on course website
"Talking Past One Another," by Robert Blauner on course website



Tuesday, February 3rd: Race Relations Today

Readings: "The Color Line, the Dilemma, and the Dream," by Lawrence Bobo on course website



Wednesday, February 4th: The Myths of Colorblindness

Readings: "Color-Blind Privilege," by Charles Gallagher
"Systemic Racism," by Joe Faegin

Thursday, February 5th: Racism: Overt, Covert, and Everywhere In-Between

Readings: "Something about the Subject Makes it Hard to Name," by Gloria Yamato on course website



Friday, February 6th: Exam #1

Week 6

Monday, February 9th: Historical Reflections

Readings: The Willie Lynch Letter and the Making of a Slave (all)



Tuesday, February 10th: Manipulating Social Institutions by Race

Readings: "The Political Economy of Race," by Elizabeth Higginbotham on course website
"The Silent Voices," by Revathi Hines, on course website

Wednesday, February 11th: Citizenship Regulated

Readings: "Citizenship and Inequality," by Evelyn Glenn on course website
"Racism, Citizenship, and National Identity," by Joanne Mariner on course website



12th: Tribal Detention

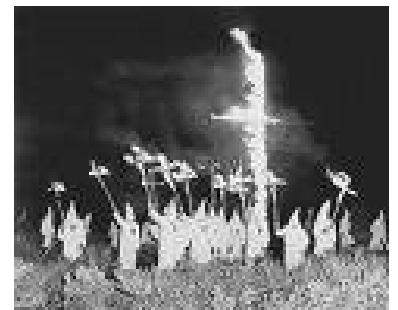
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Now," by



Thursday, February Sovereignty and

Readings: "American Indians in United States," by Russell Thornton on course website
"Detaining Minority Citizens, Then and Now," by Roger Daniels on course website



Friday, February 13th: Current Event Seminar #3



Week 7

Monday, February 16th: No Class

Tuesday, February 17th: Institutional Segregation

Readings: "Institutional Segregation and Inequality," by Elizabeth Higginbotham on course website
"Wealth and Racial Stratification," by Melvin Oliver on course website



Wednesday, February 18th: Racialized Classism

Readings: "A Tale of Two Classes," by Celeste Watkins on course website
"Is Job Discrimination Dead," by Cedric Herring on course website

Thursday, February 19th: Racialized Job Opportunities

Readings: "Race and the Invisible Hand," by Deirdre Royster
"Getting a Job in the Inner City," by Katherine Newman on course website



Friday, February 20th: Current Event Seminar #4

Week 8

Monday, February 23rd: Segregation Post-Integration

Readings: "Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Conditions in US Metropolitan Areas," by Douglas Massey
"Still Separate, Still Unequal," by J. Kozol, on course website



of Schools

Tuesday, February 24th: Racialization

Readings: "Race in American Public Schools," by Erica Frankenberg on



course website
“Experiencing Success,” by Vilna
Bashi Bobb on course
website

Wednesday, February 25th: The Impacts of Racism in Education

Readings: “Race-Gender Experiences and Schooling,” by
Nancy Lopez on course website
“The Significance of Race and Gender in School
Success among Latinas and Latinos in
College” by Heidi Barajas on course website



Thursday, February 26th:

Readings: “SAT as Racist,” on course website
“Racial and Class Differences in Education,” on course website

Friday, February 27th: Current Events Seminar #5



Week 9

Monday, March 2nd: Racism Today

Readings: “Racial Profiling: Walking While Black,” on course website
“Jena 6,” on course website

Tuesday, March 3rd: Racial Profiling and Institutional Racism

Readings: “Sean Bell’s Murder,” on course website
“Baggy Pants Laws Go National” on course website
“Black Lesbian Convicted by All-White Jury,” on course
website



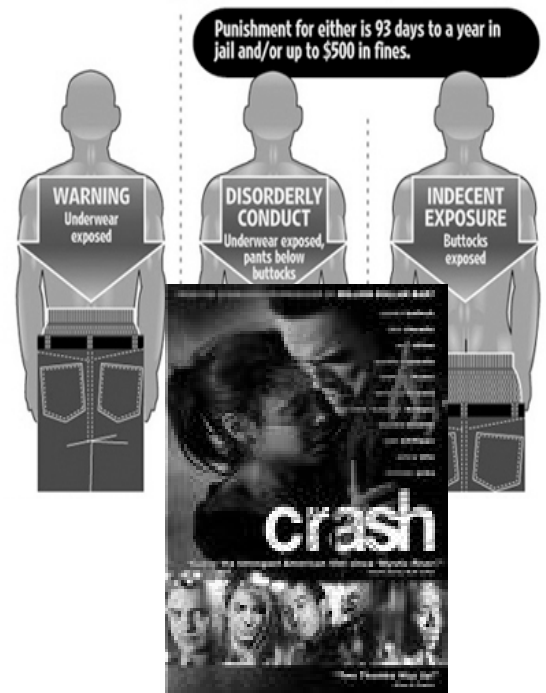
Wednesday, March 4th: Racist Representations

Readings: “Learning to be White through the
Movies,” by Hernan Vera
on course website
“Hidden Politics,” by Tricia
Rose on course website

Thursday, March 5th: Racist Representations

Readings: “Playing Indian,” by Charles
Fruehling on course website

Friday, March 6th: Exam #2



Week 10

Monday, March 9th: *Crash: A Film About Race?*

Watch *Crash* (2005)

Tuesday, March 10th: *Crash* Continued



Wednesday, March 11th: Reflections on *Crash*

Readings: Movie Reviews

Thursday, March 12th:

Readings: Director Commentary

Friday, March 13th:

Readings: Media Critiques



Week 11

Monday, March 16th: Constructing Social Change

Readings: “Mobilizing for Change,” by Elizabeth Higginbotham on course website

“The Genius of the Civil Rights Movement,” by Aldon Morris on course website



Tuesday, March 17th: Future Social Movements

Readings: “Identity and the Politics of American Indian and Hispanic Women Leaders,” by Diane-Michele Prindeville

“Signs, Signs, Turn Visible Again,” by Vincent Harding on course website

Wednesday, March 18th: Re-envisioning America

Readings: “We are all Americans,” by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva on course website

“Reducing Inequalities,” by Jacqueline Johnson on course website



Thursday, March 19th: Research Projects/Papers Due

12:30 – 2:20 a.m.

