

Marxism, Imperialism, Racism

Tuesdays 1:45 – 4:25 PM
CENT 191

Jeffrey Montez de Oca

Office: ACAD 431

Teaching Assistants

Lillian House lilhouse7@gmail.com

Ryan Hamby ryanhamby7@gmail.com

Office hours: Thursday 1:30-3:30 or by appt.
jmontezd@uccs.edu - (719) 255-4138

The sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant argue that the modern concept of race emerged out of Western imperialism and became grounded in the “racial state”. In this advanced seminar picks up on Omi & Winant’s insight to develop a materialist (aka Marxist) theory of intersectionality. What that means is we will study race and racism as necessary developments of Western imperialism. We will try to understand how organizing bodies within racial categories and the experience of race as an identity is linked to the development of capitalism since the 19th century. We will further consider intersections of political economy with other identity categories, such as gender, religion, and sexuality. We will read revolutionary thinkers and thinkers engaged in revolutions, such as Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Aime Cesair, WEB Dubois, Mao Zedong, Franz Fanon, Ho Chi Minh, and Che Guevara. Students will also apply their sophisticated theoretical knowledge to the histories of specific countries in order to develop an incisive analysis of contemporary imperialism.



SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES (SLO)

- 1. To demonstrate critical thinking.**
- 2. To be able to write in a clear, logical manner.**
3. To will be able to clearly express sociological knowledge in verbal communication.
- 4. To be able to use the core theoretical perspectives in sociology to understand, analyze and assess social experience.**
5. To collect, analyze and interpret sociological data effectively.
6. To understand key social phenomena of deviance, globalization, social change, multiculturalism, structural inequality, and the intersections of race, class, gender, and other forms of stratification.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to keep up with the reading, attend lecture, participate in the discussions, and successfully complete the assignments. Class readings are available on Canvas under “Syllabus”.

Specifications and Policies for Written Assignments

Spacing – double-spaced

Ink – black

Paper – white

Margins – 1 to 1.25 inches

Citation style – See guide below

Late Policy – 3-point deduction for every day past the deadline

Font – Times or Times New Roman 12 point

Plagiarism – I will vigorously uphold UCCS’ policy on plagiarism

Email – not accepted for submitting assignments

Guide to Citations (Based on Chicago 15 A)

Please use this as a guide for the citations in your papers.

In-text citations

One author

(Montez de Oca, 2012, p. 140)

(Marx, 2012, p. 148)

Two authors

(Montez de Oca & Prado, 2014, p. 160)

More than two authors

(Markusen et al., 1991, p. 223)

Bibliography Formatting

Articles

Montez de Oca, Jeffrey. 2012. White Domestic Goddess on a Postmodern Plantation: Charity and Commodity Racism in *The Blind Side*. *Sociology of Sport Journal* 29 (2):131-150.

Montez de Oca, J., & Prado, J. (2014). Visualizing Humanitarian Colonialism: Photographs From the Thomas Indian School. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 58(1), 145-170.

Books

Montez de Oca, Jeffrey. *Discipline & Indulgence: College Football, Media, and the American Way of Life During the Cold War*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013.

Markusen, Ann, Peter Hall, Scott Campbell, and Sabina Deitrick. 1991. *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chapter in an Edited Book

Marx, Karl. “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1848.” In *Classical Sociological Theory*, Third Edition edited by Craig Calhoun, Joseph Gerteis, James Moody, Steven

Pfaff, Kathryn Schmidt, and Indermohan Virk, 146-155. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2012.

Book Chapters

Montez de Oca, Jeffrey. "Sport as Social Institution: Football Films and the American Dream." In *Cinematic Sociology: Social Life in Film* edited by Jean-Anne Sutherland and Kathryn Feltey, 320-33. Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press, 2013.

The reading and writing assignments are listed on the syllabus. Unless you have documented evidence, such as a note from a physician, a Dean, or some other school authority, please don't ask for an exception to the late policy. If you have a scheduled conflict (a trip, an athletic event, a performance, or a deadline in another course), plan to submit work early. The following **do not** count as legitimate excuses for late assignments: printer problems, out-of-town guests, personal problems, travel, family holidays, academic or non-academic activities, other assignments, "I emailed it," hangovers, or "I forgot to ask for a note".

ASSIGNMENTS

Lead a Class Session

During the second class, students will sign up to lead a class session. Students need to decide how they will cover the material, if they will want to supplement the material, and how they will conduct the class. They should be prepared to explain the main issues, concepts, and methods in the reading. As well as answering questions, students need to generate questions and discussion. Perhaps students will show and lead discussion of video clips or images. **You should meet with me**, the professor, **two days in advance to discuss your plans**. All in-class presentations are graded on the following points: organization, clarity, style & creativity, how informative, and effort. The presentations are worth 20% of your final grade.

News Analysis

Most nations throughout the Global South (what used to get called the Third World or Decolonizing World) have experienced western colonialism. This assignment requires you to select a currently or formerly colonized nation that you will study throughout the course. Part of your research will be reading about conditions and events in your nation of choice. Each student over the course of the semester should read ten news articles about their country of choice and write up a one to three page news analysis paper on each article. Your analysis should be guided by ideas taken from the week's reading. You might apply a specific concept from the reading or you might argue what the author(s) would say about that content of the article. You may also wish to critique the perspective of the news article if it is clearly biased towards imperialist nations. The assignment has two goals: 1) develop knowledge about a specific country, its history, and its ongoing dynamics and 2) to develop skills for analysis imperialism. These news analysis papers will be graded credit/no credit. Each news analysis paper is worth 2% of your final grade (20% collectively).

Nation Analysis & Presentation

The Paper

You will need to write an in-depth study of your nation of choice. You will need to research the history, culture, major institutions, social structure, etc. of your nation of choice. This is essentially a bigger, longer, more in-depth version of your shorter news analysis papers. Beyond news articles, you should gather empirical and academic sources on your nation in order to contextualize its history and experience of colonization, decolonization, and neo-colonization. The paper should use your nation as an empirical example for a materialist critique of imperialism. There are different strategies you can take when writing these papers. You could provide a more general focus on history, culture, political economy, relations of dependence, and resistance to exploitation. You may also want to focus more narrowly on political economy or the arts and culture, etc. The paper is worth 30% of your final grade.

The Presentation

Everyone will provide a short, formal presentation of their research findings during the last class. You can expect to do a ten or fifteen minute presentation. You should also be prepared to answer questions from the class. You should prepare visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint or Prezi) to support your presentation. The presentation should provide a basic outline and overview of your research. Given our time is likely to be limited, it is very important that you practice your presentation in advance so that it is done professionally and you stay within the specified time limits. The paper is worth 10% of your final grade.

Class Participation

As a seminar, the success of this class and your learning experience is dependent upon student engagement and participation. This is especially true when students lead discussion. You all need to help each other out or the class presentations will be miserable for everyone. You should come to class prepared to constructively engage in class discussions. This means not only doing the readings but also taking some time to reflect on them and form a position. I have one rule for class discussions: we criticize ideas, not people. Shyness is no excuse for not participating; it simply means you must make extra effort. Class participation is 20% of your final grade.

Accommodations for Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact and register with the Disability Services Office, and provide them with documentation of your disability, so they can determine what accommodations are appropriate for your situation. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, you should contact the Disability Services Office as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that disability accommodations cannot be provided until an accommodation letter has been given to me. Please contact Disability Services for more information about receiving accommodations at Main Hall room 105, 719-255-3354 or dservice@uccs.edu.

What the Grades Mean:

A = Work that goes beyond the requirements of the assignment by adding new insight, creativity and/or particularly thoughtful analysis. Demonstrates a comprehensive command of the course material, an exceptional ability to apply concepts to the real world, and a superior ability to organize and express ideas.

B = Work that adequately meets the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates a solid command of the course material, an ability to apply concepts to the real world with only minor problems, and good organization and expression of ideas.

C = Work that partially meets the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates acceptable command of the course material, a basic ability to apply concepts to the real world with some gaps and problems, and moderate skill in the organization and expression of ideas.

D = Work that marginally meets the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates little command of the course material, minimal attempt to apply concepts to the real world, and limited ability to organize and express ideas.

F = Work that does not meet the requirements of the assignment. Demonstrates no command of the course material, unable to appropriately or consistently apply concepts to the real world, and insufficiently organizes and expresses ideas.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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| 1) August 21 | Welcome and Introduction to the Course |
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| Welcome to class | |
| 2) August 28 | Foundations – Karl Marx; Part I |
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| From <i>Capital</i> Volume 1 – read up to page 376 | |
| 3) September 11 | Foundations – Karl Marx; Part II |
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| From <i>Capital</i> Volume 1 – begin on page 376 (Part IV. Production of Relative Surplus)
“Crisis Theory” | |
| 4) September 18 | Defining Imperialism – Vladimir Lenin |
| <hr/> | |
| <i>Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism</i> | |
| 5) September 25 | A <i>Post-Colonial</i> Response |
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| Aime Cesair, <i>Discourse on Colonialism</i>
WEB Dubois, “Souls of White Folks” | |
| 6) October 2 | Fighting Different Imperialisms – Mao Zedong |
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| “The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party”
“On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism”
“The Role of the Communist Party in the National War”
“US Imperialism is a Paper Tiger”
“Statement Supporting the American Negroes In Their Just Struggle Against Racial
Discrimination by U.S. Imperialism” | |
| 7) October 9 | Psychology of Revolution |
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Franz Fanon, "Preface" by Sartre and first three chapters ("On violence," "Grandeur and Weakness of Spontaneity," "Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness") from *Wretched of the Earth*

8) October 16 Anti-Colonial Statements On Atmospheric Violence

Che Guevara, "The Message to the TriContinental"

Kim Il Sung, "Great Anti-Imperialist Revolutionary Cause of Asian, African and Latin American Peoples Is Invincible"

Ho Chi Minh, "The Imperialist Aggressors Can Never Enslave The Heroic Vietnamese People"

9) October 23 Interrogating Whiteness, US History & Radical Activism

Sakai, *Settlers: Myth of the White Proletariat*

10) October 30 Intersectionality

"Combahee River Collective Statement"

"White Blind Sports" – whole thing

Haider, "White Purity"

Sears, "A Marxist Critiques Identity Politics"

Jeter, "Speaker Fees, Selfies, Sucking Up"

11) November 6 Materialist Theories of Race and Empire

Anne McClintock, "Soft Soaping Empire" and "No Longer in a Future Heaven" from *Imperial Leather*

Walter Rodney, Chapter 1 (pp 3-29) from *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*

12) November 13 Black Capitalism

Cedric Robinson, "Racial Capitalism", "The Formation of an Intelligentsia", "Historiography and the Black Radical Tradition" in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*

13) November 20 World System Theory

Wallerstein, Fanon and the Revolutionary Class

Samir Amin, Parts 2 & 3 from *Eurocentrism*

14) November 27

Ellen Meiskins Wood, *Empire of Capital*

15) December 4

Presentations