

CRIMIN 6550: Race and Punishment

Professor: Dr. Marisa Omori
Email: marisa.omori@umsl.edu

Class sessions: 5:30-8:10pm Tuesdays, Clark Hall 213

Course description

We often think of race as a fixed, biological human characteristic. But when we study the concept of race as a social process, it becomes evident that race is neither biological nor fixed – but the consequences of race are very real. This class explores theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of race and racism and its application to punishment, the criminal legal system, and crime in the United States. We learn various ways that race and ethnicity are socially constructed, identify the multiple ways that racism manifests in modern society, and examine how the criminal legal system (including the police, courts, and corrections) operates as a racialized system of social control. This class will also consider the ways that theories of race and racism can inform current and future work in criminology and criminal justice. The class will cover both early and contemporary theories of race and racism, as well as some applications and research in punishment, the criminal legal system, and crime.

Learning Objectives

- 1) To understand the social significance of race in criminology and criminal justice
- 2) To give a broad overview of theories of race and racism from criminological, sociological, socio-legal literatures.
- 3) To understand the relationship between race, the criminal legal system, and crime

Texts and materials

All texts will be posted on Canvas

Course logistics

- I will post the syllabus and readings on Canvas, so make sure you check it regularly.
- Because of COVID-19, I am planning the course so that if we do need to go remote, we can make the switch relatively seamlessly.
 - If we go remote, you need to have access to a computer with a camera and microphone, an internet connection, and [Zoom](#). You can get a free Zoom account with your University of Missouri email.
 - If we go remote, I ask that you keep your video on and mic muted unless you are talking. You are welcome to use virtual backgrounds.
- If you need to miss class for whatever reason, please let me know. You do not need to detail/document the reason (this is grad school!). I do expect that you keep up with the class material. If there is an ongoing issue, please let me know, and I'm happy to make reasonable accommodations.
- Please let me know if you need any disability accommodations. I will happily make accommodations through the [office of disability services](#) (314.516.6554).

Assignments and Grading

1. **Weekly “blogging”/discussion board posts (10 x 2% each = 20% total).** You are required to do 10 weeks worth of “blogs” or discussion board posts on Canvas. In the posts, you will blog about at least one of the class readings (either required or optional further reading) for that week and a) capture what you think the main concept/argument(s) is in the reading and raise any questions you have (if you have any), and b) reflect on the material, which may include relating the readings to something in your own life—whether it’s something you see on social media, or in the news, or something you experience with your family or friends. Blog posts should be at least 200 words, and will be graded based on the depth and ability to capture the main concept/argument of the response, as well as the integration of the reading(s) to your opinions or experience. You can choose which 10 weeks you want to post, but you must blog over 10 separate weeks—so there is no double- or triple- posting in a single week. Blogs are due on Tuesdays before class (5:30pm).

If you find yourself getting bogged down in reading academic articles, check out these sources for tips: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/strategies-for-reading-academic-articles> and <http://www.raulpacheco.org/resources/reading-strategies/>

2. **Reading overview/leading discussion (30%):** We will divide the readings each week so that 1 person is responsible for preparing 2-3 slides a) introducing the main concepts or argument in the reading, and then b) posing 3 discussion questions to facilitate discussion about the reading. **MA students are expected to lead discussion questions for 2 readings over the course of the semester, and PhD students are expected to do the reading overview/lead discussion for 4 readings.**

As the reading overview/discussion leader, you should email me your slides by Monday evening (11:59pm) for the following day, and I will post them on Canvas. You should expect to use about 5 minutes to present the main concepts or argument for the reading, and then 15-20 minutes of in-class time for discussion questions. As you prepare your presentations, consider the following:

- What should the class know about the reading? Think about key points of the reading that your peers should take away from the discussion
 - Why is this reading important/relevant today? Even if this was written a zillion years ago, are there ideas that still matter for us today?
 - What are the implications for the reading?
3. **Participation (10%):** Participation in class discussions when you are not leading the reading. Even if you are not in charge of leading a particular reading, I still expect you to read and engage with the discussion questions.
 4. **Final writing project (40%):** you will choose a writing project for this course. These are slightly different guidelines for masters vs. PhD students. Masters students are also welcome to pick one of the PhD assignments if you prefer, but you need to get the project approved by me first.

For masters students, writing projects include two components: a) a literature review (including at least 3 class readings, plus the outside sources), and b) an application/analysis section, where you are applying the concepts by selecting one of the three options below. Writing projects should be between 2,500-5,000 words, including bibliography, and should include at least 5 peer-reviewed outside sources in addition to the 3 class readings used. I suggest you pick the 3 class readings from the same week, although this is not required, and use [citation tracing](#) from the class readings to locate the 5 peer-reviewed outside articles. The options for your application/analysis are:

- Race and racism in the news: connect the theories/concepts in the readings to a current event(s) (e.g. covid-19 response in different areas, including debates around masks/vaccinations, #BlackLivesMatter protests, affirmative action in college admissions, etc.). Make sure you cite your news sources.
- Race and racism in policies: connect the theories/concepts in the readings to a criminal legal system policy (e.g. stop-and-frisk, gun control, death penalty). Make sure you cite research on the policies.
- Race and racism in pop culture (adapted from [Dr. Jennifer Sims](#)): connect the theories/concepts in the readings to a fictional story or universe in literature, television, or movies (e.g. Marvel universe, Harry Potter, Walking Dead, Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones). Describe the story/universe in a paragraph at the beginning of the application/analysis section, and use concepts from the readings to discuss the racial dynamics of this story/universe. Make sure you cite the movies/books/comics etc. appropriately.

For PhD students, you must also draw from at least 3 class readings and apply the concepts in the readings in your writing projects. The topic and format need to be approved by me, and you can work on one of the following options below. Writing projects should be between 4,000-7,000 words, including bibliography, although I will allow some flexibility on word count depending on the project. You should be using at least 10-20+ peer-reviewed sources in addition to the class readings.

- Article manuscript: does not need to include methods/findings/discussion, but I would want to see a literature review and a current study section
- Grant or fellowship proposal: should include a literature review and project design. Does not need to include methods/budget/roles.
- Prospectus/literature review for a thesis or dissertation: hopefully pretty self-explanatory—this can focus in-depth on the literature review, summarized by topic, and identifying holes in the literature
- Comprehensive exam draft: either for the empirical or theoretical comp

Grading for final writing project

Section	Description	Points
Introduction	An introduction to your topic/question. Your introduction should include your research question	3

Literature review: synthesis and organization	Synthesis of prior research done on the question, organized into themes.	10
Literature review: Explanation of concepts/theories	Explanations of the concepts in the class readings	5
Literature review: Use of readings	You should include at least 3 class readings, plus 5 outside sources (masters students) or 3 class readings, plus 10 outside sources (PhD students).	5
Application/analysis: connection and argument	Either the application/analysis section (for masters students) or argument (for PhD students). For masters students, how well you connected the concepts to your news, policy, or pop culture example. For PhD students, how well you developed an argument for your project.	10
Application/analysis: support	How well you support points in the application/analysis sections (for masters students) or argument (for PhD students)	5
Mechanics and citation	Sentence construction (use active voice!) and grammar. Cite using a standard format (APA, ASA, etc).	2
Total		40

Grade categories

93.5 +	A	73.5-76.4	C
89.5-93.4	A-	69.5-73.4	C-
86.5-89.4	B+	66.5-69.4	D+
83.5-86.4	B	63.5-66.4	D
79.5-83.4	B-	59.5-63.4	D-
76.5-79.4	C+	Below 59.5	F

Schedule—we may make adjustments as we go along!

Week 1 Jan 18: Introduction to the class

Week 2 Jan 25: What is race? Origins of race, social construction of race, scientific racism

- Golash-Boza (2019). *The Origin of the Idea of Race*. Ch. 1 in *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*.
- Roberts (2011). *Fatal invention: How science, politics, and big business re-create race in the twenty-first century*. (excerpt).
- Du Bois. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Penguin (excerpt)
- Further reading: Du Bois (1897). *The Conservation of Races*.

Week 3 Feb 1: Overview of race, racism and racial ideology frameworks and theories

- Golash-Boza (2019). *Racial Ideologies and Sociological Theories of Racism*. Ch. 2 in *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*.
- Golash-Boza (2016). A critical and comprehensive sociological theory of race and racism. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 2(2), 129-141.
- Further reading: Hirschman (2020). [Levels of racism: individual, organizational, institutional, and systemic](#).

Week 4 Feb 8: Racial formation and racemaking

- Omi and Winant (2014). *Racial formation in the United States*. (excerpt).
- Winant (2000). Race and race theory. *Annual review of sociology*, 26(1), 169-185.
- Walker (2016). Race making in a penal institution. *American Journal of Sociology*, 121(4), 1051-1078.
- Further reading: Ignatiev (1995). *How the Irish became white*. Routledge.
- Further reading: Steinberg (2001). *The Ethnic Myth: Race, ethnicity, and class in America*.
- Further reading. Goodman (2008). “It's just Black, White, or Hispanic”: an observational study of racializing moves in California's segregated prison reception centers. *Law & Society Review*, 42(4), 735-770.
- Further reading: Gallagher (1997). White racial formation: Into the twenty-first century. In *Race and Ethnic Conflict* (pp. 24-29). Routledge.

Week 5 Feb 15: Racial “middle” and racialization beyond Black and White

- Feliciano, Lee, and Robnett (2011). Racial boundaries among Latinos: Evidence from internet daters' racial preferences. *Social Problems*, 58(2), 189-212.
- O'Brien (2008). *The racial middle: Latinos and Asian Americans Living Beyond the Racial Divide* (excerpt).
- Bonilla-Silva (2004). From bi-racial to tri-racial: Towards a new system of racial stratification in the USA. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 27(6), 931-950.
- Selod and Embrick (2013). Racialization and Muslims: Situating the Muslim experience in race scholarship. *Sociology Compass*, 7(8), 644-655.
- Further reading: Wimmer, A. (2008). The making and unmaking of ethnic boundaries: A multilevel process theory. *American journal of sociology*, 113(4), 970-1022.

- Further reading: Valdez, Z., and Golash-Boza, T. (2017). Towards an intersectionality of race and ethnicity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(13), 2256-2261.
- Further reading: Golash-Boza and Darity, Jr. (2008). Latino Racial Choices: The Effects of Skin Colour and Discrimination on Latinos' and Latinas' Racial Self-Identifications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31(5):899–934.

Week 6 Feb 22: Race relations, group and racial threat theory, racial invariance

- Steinberg (2007). *Race Relations: A Critique* (excerpt)
- Blumer (1958). Race prejudice as a sense of group position. *Pacific sociological review*, 1(1), 3-7.
- Feldmeyer and Cochran (2018). Racial threat and social control: A review and conceptual framework for advancing racial threat theory. In *Building a black criminology*, 283-316.
- Grattet (2009). The urban ecology of bias crime: A study of disorganized and defended neighborhoods. *Social Problems*, 56(1), 132-150.
- Sampson, Wilson, and Katz. (2018). Reassessing “Toward A Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality”: Enduring and New Challenges in 21 st Century America. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 15(1), 13-34.
- Further reading: Cox (1948). *Race relations: Its meaning, beginning, and progress*. In theories of race and racism: A reader.
- Further reading: Park (1939). The nature of race relations. *Theories of race and racism: A reader*, 105-112.
- Further reading: Blalock (1967). *Toward a theory of minority-group relations* (Vol. 325). New York: Wiley.
- Further reading: Sampson and Wilson. (1995). *Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality*. In John Hagan and Ruth D. Peterson (Eds.), *Crime and Inequality*, pp. 37-56. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Further reading: Unnever, Barnes, and Cullen (2016). The racial invariance thesis revisited: Testing an African American theory of offending. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 32(1), 7-26.

Week 7 Mar 1: Individual theories of racism and racial inequality

- Bobo, Kluegal and Smith (1999). *Laissez-Faire Racism: The Crystallization of a Kinder, Gentler, Antiblack Ideology*.
- Russell-Brown (2018). The academic swoon over implicit racial bias: costs, benefits, and other considerations. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 15(1), 185-193.
- Lynch (2019). Focally concerned about focal concerns: A conceptual and methodological critique of sentencing disparities research. *Justice Quarterly*, 36(7), 1148-1175.
- Bonilla-Silva (2006). *Racism Without Racists*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield (excerpt)
- Further reading: Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, and Jackson (2008). Not yet human: implicit knowledge, historical dehumanization, and contemporary consequences. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 94(2), 292.
- Further reading: Steffensmeier, Ulmer, and Kramer (1998). The interaction of race, gender, and age in criminal sentencing: The punishment cost of being young, black, and male. *Criminology*, 36(4), 763-798.

- Further reading: Mueller (2018). Advancing a sociology of ignorance in the study of racism and racial non-knowing. *Sociology Compass*, 12(8).
- Further reading: Tatum (2017). Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race. (excerpt).

Week 8 Mar 8: Institutional racism, racialized organizations, cumulative disadvantage

- Carmichael (Ture) and Hamilton (1967). *Black power: The politics of liberation in America*. Vintage. (excerpt).
- Ray (2019). A theory of racialized organizations. *American Sociological Review*, 84(1), 26-53.
- Haney Lopez (2000). Institutional racism: Judicial conduct and a new theory of racial discrimination. *Yale Law Journal*, 1717-1884.
- Kurlychek and Johnson (2019). Cumulative disadvantage in the American criminal justice system. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 2, 291-319.
- Further reading: Van Cleve (2016). *Crook County: Racism and injustice in America's largest criminal court*. Stanford University Press.
- Further reading Clair (2020). *Privilege and punishment: How race and class matter in criminal court*. Princeton University Press.
- Further reading: Lewis (2011). Race in the Schoolyard: Negotiating the color line in classrooms and communities.
- Further reading: Merton (1968). The Matthew effect in science: The reward and communication systems of science are considered. *Science*, 159(3810), 56-63.

Week 9 Mar 15: Systemic racism, racialized social systems, and systems perspectives

- Feagin (2013). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. Routledge. (excerpt).
- Bonilla-Silva (1997). Rethinking racism: Toward a structural interpretation. *American sociological review*, 465-480.
- Reskin (2012). The race discrimination system. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38, 17-35.
- Hughey, Embrick, and Doane, (2015). Paving the way for future race research: Exploring the racial mechanisms within a color-blind, racialized social system. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 59(11), 1347-1357.
- Further reading: Feagin (2020). *The white racial frame: Centuries of racial framing and counter-framing*. Routledge.
- Further reading: Bonilla-Silva (1999). [The essential social fact of race](#). *American Sociological Review*, 64(6), 899-906.

Week 10 Mar 22: Racial capitalism, black feminist theory, and critical race theory

- Robinson (2000). *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. (excerpt)
- Crenshaw (1990). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stan. L. Rev.*, 43, 1241.
- Delgado and Stefancic (2007). Critical race theory and criminal justice. *Humanity & Society*, 31(2-3), 133-145.
- Potter (2013). Intersectional criminology: Interrogating identity and power in criminological research and theory. *Critical Criminology*, 21(3), 305-318.

- Further reading: Bell (1980). *Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma*.
- Further reading: Williams (1991). *The alchemy of race and rights*. Harvard University Press.
- Further reading: Delgado and Stefancic (2001). *Critical race theory: An Introduction*. NYU Press.
- Further reading: Luna and Pirtle (2021). *Black Feminist Sociology: Perspectives and Praxis*. Routledge.

Week 11 April 5: Critical whiteness studies

- Lipsitz (2006). *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (excerpt).
- Hughey (2010). The (dis)similarities of white racial identities: The conceptual framework of 'hegemonic whiteness'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33(8), 1289-1309
- Roediger (2002). *All about Eve, critical white studies, and getting over whiteness*. In *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*.
- Further reading: Delgado and Stefancic (1997). *Critical White Studies: Looking behind the mirror*. Temple University Press (excerpt)
- Further reading: Grover (1997) Growing Up White in America? In Delgado and Stefancic (1997). *Critical White Studies: Looking behind the mirror*. Temple University Press.
- Further reading: Applebaum (2016). [Critical Whiteness Studies. Oxford Research Encyclopedia](#).
- Further reading: Croll (2007). Modeling determinants of white racial identity: Results from a new national survey. *Social Forces*, 86(2), 613-642.

Week 12 April 12: Race and criminology

- Muhammad (2019). *The condemnation of Blackness: Race, crime, and the making of modern urban America, with a new preface*. Harvard University Press.
- Russell-Brown (1998). *The Color of Crime: Racial Hoaxes, White Fear, Black Protectionism, Police Harassment, and Other Microaggressions*. (excerpt)
- Unnever and Gabbidon (2011). *A theory of African American offending: Race, racism, and crime*. Routledge.
- Leon (2021). Latino criminology: Unfucking colonial frameworks in "Latinos and crime" scholarship. *Critical Criminology*, 29(1), 11-35.
- Further reading: Gabbidon (2001). WEB Du Bois: Pioneering American Criminologist. *Journal of Black Studies*, 31(5), 581-599.
- Further reading: Hawkins (Ed.). (1995). *Ethnicity, race, and crime: Perspectives across time and place*. SUNY Press.

Week 13 April 19: Race, the state, and the criminal legal system

- Ward (2015). The slow violence of state organized race crime. *Theoretical Criminology*, 19(3), 299-314.
- Hughey (2015). The five I's of five-O: racial ideologies, institutions, interests, identities, and interactions of police violence. *Critical Sociology*, 41(6), 857-871.

- Murakawa and Beckett (2010). The penology of racial innocence: The erasure of racism in the study and practice of punishment. *Law & Society Review*, 44(3-4), 695-730.
- Van Cleve and Mayes (2015). Criminal justice through “colorblind” lenses: A call to examine the mutual constitution of race and criminal justice. *Law & Social Inquiry*, 40(2), 406-432.
- Further reading: Ward (2012). *The Black Child-Savers*. University of Chicago Press (excerpt)
- Further reading: Forman Jr, (2012). Racial critiques of mass incarceration: Beyond the new Jim Crow. *NYUL Rev.*, 87, 21.

Week 14 April 26: Immigration and crimmigration

- Armenta (2017). Racializing crimmigration: Structural racism, colorblindness, and the institutional production of immigrant criminality. *Sociology of race and ethnicity*, 3(1), 82-95.
- Portes and Zhou (1993). The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants. *The annals of the American academy of political and social science*, 530(1), 74-96.
- Ousey and Kubrin (2018). Immigration and crime: Assessing a contentious issue. *Annual Review of Criminology*, 1, 63-84
- Further reading: Golash-Boza (2019). *Racism and Nativism in Immigration Policy*. Ch. 3 in *Race and Racisms: A Critical Approach*.
- Further reading: Portes and Rumbaut (2014). *Immigrant America*. University of California Press. (excerpt)
- Further reading: Armenta (2017). *Protect, serve, and deport: The rise of policing as immigration enforcement* (p. 212). Oakland: University of California Press. (excerpt)
- Further reading: Lee and Martinez (2009). Immigration reduces crime: An emerging scholarly consensus. In *Immigration, crime and justice*. Emerald Group Publishing.

Week 15 May 3 Race and space

- Anderson (2015). The white space. *Sociology of race and ethnicity*, 1(1), 10-21.
- Wacquant (2003) *America’s new “peculiar institution”*: *On the prison as the surrogate ghetto*
- Peterson and Krivo (2010). *Divergent social worlds: Neighborhood crime and the racial-spatial divide*. Russell Sage Foundation. (excerpt)
- Warren, Tomaskovic-Devey, Smith, Zingraff and Mason, (2006). Driving while black: Bias processes and racial disparity in police stops. *Criminology*, 44(3), 709-738.
- Further reading: Pattillo (2010). *Black on the Block*. University of Chicago Press.
- Further reading: Massey, D., & Denton, N. A. (1993). *American apartheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Harvard university press.
- Further reading: Lamberth (2010). Driving while black. In *Race, Ethnicity, and Policing* (pp. 32-35). New York University Press.

Additional topics:

Colonialism

- Fanon (1952). The Fact of Blackness. In *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*

- Agozino (2004). Counter-colonial criminology: A critique of imperialist reason. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 21(10), 32.
- Kelley (1999). A poetics of anticolonialism. *Monthly Review*, 51(6), 1.
- Mills (1997). *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Race and gender

- Richie (2012). *Arrested justice*. New York University Press.
- McCorkel (2013). *Breaking women*. New York University Press
- Jones (2009). *Between good and ghetto*. Rutgers University Press
- Miller (2008). *Getting played: African American girls, urban inequality, and gendered violence* (Vol. 9). NYU Press.
- Butler (2018). *Chokehold: Policing black men*. The New Press.
- Davis (1981). *Women, race, & class*. New York, NY: Random House
- Williams (2019). Race as a carceral terrain: Black lives matter meets reentry. *The Prison Journal*, 99(4), 387-395.

Colorism

- Hunter (2007). The persistent problem of colorism: Skin tone, status, and inequality. *Sociology compass*, 1(1), 237-254.
- Monk (2019). The color of punishment: African Americans, skin tone, and the criminal justice system. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(10), 1593-1612.
- King and Johnson. (2016). A Punishing Look: Skin Tone and Afrocentric Features in the Halls of Justice. *American Journal of Sociology* 122 (1): 90–124.
- Lanuza, Petersen, and Omori (2021). Colorism in Punishment among Hispanics in the Criminal Justice System. *Social Problems*.
- Kizer. (2017). Arrested by Skin Color: Evidence from Siblings and a Nationally Representative Sample. *Socius* 3: 1–12.

Race, racism, and methods

- Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi (2008). Toward a Definition of White Logic and White Methods. In Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva (eds). *White Logic, White Methods*.
- Roberts (2011). *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-First Century*.
- Zuberi (2001). *Thicker than Blood: How Racial Statistics Lie*.
- Sewell (2016). [Quantifying Race: On Methods for Analyzing Social Inequality](#). In *Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Research Methods* (pp. 209-234). Routledge.
- Obasogie (2013). [Critical Race Theory and Empirical Methods](#). *UC Irvine Law Review*.

Finals week: writing project due May 10