The Sociology of Globalization: Race and the Built Environment

Spring 2022

Class time: 10A (Tu/Th 10:10-12:00, F 3:30-4:20)
Location: TBA
Instructor: Sujin Eom (sujin.eom@dartmouth.edu)
Office Hours: Fridays 1 to 3 PM or by appointment

Course Description

This interdisciplinary course provides a critical approach to global urban studies, with a particular focus on race, migration, and the built environment. By scrutinizing sites of “globalization”—ships, railroads, ports, islands, plantations, canneries, slums, camps, museums, ghettos, cemeteries, infrastructures, archives—students will explore themes such as segregation, slave trade, anti-blackness, urban violence, settler colonialism, urban renewal, necropolitics, and environmental racism. The course will engage in a historical and postcolonial dialogue to offer students critical methods to “spatialize” intertwined histories of racial closure across continents.

Learning Objectives

- identify key concepts and debates in global urban studies
- understand how race and racisms become normalized in and through spatial configuration
- addresses questions of how history can help us understand contemporary problems
- think across time and space to imagine critical historiographies and different social relationships

Course Requirements and Evaluations

1. Student Led Seminars (20%): Each student will assume the role of a discussion leader who facilitates at least two seminars over the course of the term. The discussion leaders should read the assigned texts thoroughly and prepare three or more discussion questions for the entire class. You are also encouraged to create student activities, use whatever outside materials, including visual aids and distribute handouts. This practice not only gives you a deeper understanding of the material by teaching and talking through it, but also helps you become comfortable with speaking, facilitating discussion, and presenting material in front of groups of people. Discussion leaders will be graded on a pass/fail basis—if you lead the two seminars successfully, you will receive 20 points (“pass”).
2. **In-Class Writing Prompts (10%)**: At the beginning of each class, students will write short responses to a writing prompt on the readings for the day. The prompt can be either a quote from a reading or a topic. In your response, you are asked to provide a brief summary of the readings’ main ideas (arguments, findings, evidence, conclusions, etc) and add your own thoughts on the topic. You will share the responses with your classmates and receive feedback during class or in office hour meetings with me.

3. **Midterm (30%)**: The midterm examination consists of three essay questions. You will be expected to write a 500-word answer for each question. The questions will deal with sites and topics covered in the first half of the course. Here are a few examples:

- What is the role of ships in global imperialism?
- What are the key differences between “ghettos” and “gated communities”?
- What is segregation and how has it been practiced in urban space?

4. **Research Project (40%)** For the final writing assignment, you will write a research paper on the topic or question of your choice

   1) Research proposal (10%)
   2) Oral Presentation of Project (10%)
   3) Project Research Essay (20%)

**Schedule of Lectures and Readings**
Note: additional readings may be assigned for some topics

**Introduction**

Mar. 29 (T) Introduction to and Overview of the Course

Mar. 31 (Th) The Spatiality of Race

transcontinental inquiry on race, migration, space / the politics of location in knowledge production / how (and why) do we study race, migration, and space? / where is the place of urban theory?

**Readings**

**Recommended**

**Theme #1 Infrastructures of Empire**

**Apr. 5 (T) Ship**

transatlantic slave trade ships / transpacific coolie trade / history from below / the Komagata Maru / the ship of revolution / triangular trade

**Readings**

**Apr. 7 (Th) Railroad**

transcontinental railroad / Indigenous peoples / sovereignty / nation / Chinese Americans / the legacy of the train as a critical site of race in the United States / railroad colonialism / underground railroad and Jim Crow segregation / the link between race and railroad / the intimate connection between the railroad as infrastructure and the railroad as colonizing tool in the nation’s interior and west

**Readings**

**Clips**
- *The Underground Railroad* (2021)

**Apr. 12 (T) Port**

containment and control of unruly migration / the migrant, the vagabond, the Chinese, the Mestizo / the problem of circulation

**Readings**


**Theme #2 Spatial Governance**

**Apr. 14 (Th) Ghetto**

fear of touching / segregation / confinement / racial anxiety and intimacy / spatial proximity

**Readings**


**Apr. 19 (T) Cannery**

salmon canneries / British Columbia / Alaska / Asian settler colonialism / global capitalism / interracial intimacy

**Readings**


**Apr. 21 (Th) Island**

oceans and island / “the sea of islands” / archipelagic studies / nuclear colonialism / military imperialism / Hawai’i / Guam / Okinawa / Turtle Island

**Readings**


Apr. 26 (T) Camp

the camp as a political technology / the architecture of racialized incarceration / refugee camps / concentration camps / urban migrant camps / internment camps / carceral geography / Georgio Agamben / homo sacer

Readings


Recommended


Midterm

Apr. 28 (Th) Midterm

Theme #3 The Tactical Mobility of Race and Racisms

May. 3 (T) Blight

anti-blackness / blight / cold war urban development / urban renewal / militarization of cities / capitalist urbanization / Robert Moses / culture of clearance / the Bronx / Gordon Matta-Clark / anarchitecture

Readings

May. 5 (Th) Housing

public housing / race and citizenship / urban violence / white flight and suburbanization

**Readings**


**Clips**

- *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* (2011, dr. Chad Freidrichs)

May. 10 (T) Care

geopolitics of domestic work / gendered migration, labor, and care work / international division of reproductive labor

**Readings**

Theme #4 Violence

May. 12 (Th) Infrastructure

splintering urbanism / networked infrastructures / politics of infrastructure / elevated highways

Readings

May. 17 (T) Riot

urban conflict and riots / uprising / insurgent citizenship / urban rage / banlieue

Readings

Clips
- The Battle of Algiers (1967, dr. Gillo Pontecorvo)

May. 19 (Th) Necropolis

cemetery / death and urban space / national identity / bare life

Readings
May 24 (T) Ruin

ruin as a virulent verb / imperial tangibilities and place / colonial remnants

Readings

Theme #5 Unlearning

May 26 (Th) Archive

what is an archive? / the archive as an imperial regime of classification vs. the archive as critical spatial practice / unlearning, undoing / decolonial futures / anti-colonial and anti-racist place-making

Readings

May 31 (T) Student Presentation