

McGill University
Department of Sociology
SOC 366: Neighborhoods and Inequality
W 2:35 – 5:25 PM
Location: Maass Chemistry Building 217

Winter 2018

Professor Zoua M. Vang
Email: zoua.vang@mcgill.ca
Office: Peterson 340
Phone: 398-6854
Office Hours: Thursdays 16:00 to 17:30

COURSE SUMMARY

This course provides a broad overview of racial/ethnic and class dimensions of place-based inequalities in urban neighborhoods. In order to understand how 'place' matters for individual life chances and group stratification, we will review the neighborhood effects literature and examine key theories of neighborhood and community social processes. Patterns and causes of neighborhood structural conditions such as racial residential segregation, racially-mixed neighborhoods, and concentrated poverty will be assessed. Finally, the empirical evidence on place-based social inequalities in health, crime and education will be examined. These issues will be evaluated primarily within the context of the United States, a pluralistic society where the coupling of race, class and place has endured. However, comparisons will be made with Canada and (to a lesser extent) Western Europe, where appropriate.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your overall course grade will be based on four components, as follows:

1. Participation – 30%

- Attendance. Since the class only meets once a week, attendance is mandatory. Requests for excused absences may be granted by permission of the instructor only (not the TA). Note that excused absences are typically granted only in cases of medical emergencies (where a student's own health is affected) or family emergency (i.e., death in the family). Contribution to participation grade = 10%.
- In-class methodological activities. Methodological activities will be scheduled for the term. These activities are meant to give students practical hands-on experience in some of the common methods used in neighborhoods research. Contribution to participation grade = 10%.
- In-class discussion activities. Students will be assigned into small discussion groups consisting of 8 students. Students will be randomly assigned to a group at the

beginning of the term and will remain in the same discussion group throughout the term for all discussion activities. Contribution to participation grade = 10%

Please note that it is not possible to “make up” missed in-class discussion activities. Students who are not in attendance during the in-class discussions will not receive points.

2. Neighborhood Project – 30%

Students will work in pairs for the neighborhood project. The project consists of comparing and contrasting the *social life* of two Montreal neighborhoods, one affluent and one working class. The neighborhood project will provide students first-hand experience in applying neighborhoods-based methods in research. Eligible neighborhoods will be announced in class and posted on MyCourses. The neighborhood project consists of three parts:

- 4 direct observations of social life (2 per neighborhood). Each direct observation must be a minimum of 2 hours in duration and completed on different dates. Sites must be chosen strategically and must help to illuminate the research question. Field notes from direct observations must be thick description (4 pages max, double space).
- 2 systematic social observations (SSO) (1 per neighborhood)
- Final report (6 pages max, double space)

Students can choose their own partners for the neighborhood project. Since this is a team effort, each team will submit only one neighborhood project.

4. Final exam – 40%

- The final exam will consist of multiple choice questions and one essay.
- Final exam will be scheduled during the regular exam week.

Evaluation: You will be evaluated on your knowledge of key terms, theories, and empirical research studies covered in the readings and lectures and your ability to critically analyze the concepts as they relate to issues of neighborhood inequality. Terms and concepts covered in the movies may also appear on the final exam.

REQUIRED READINGS

You are expected to read the assigned material before class.

Books

Four books are required for this class. They are available for purchase from the Bookstore. Copies (of non-electronic books) are also available on reserve in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library.

Florida, Richard L. 2012. *The Rise of the Creative Class, Revisited*. New York: Basic Books.
(Note: This book is available as an eBook from McGill library.)

Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
(Note: This book is available as an eBook from McGill library.)

Wilson, William Julius. 2012. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Journal Articles

In addition to the text books, we will draw on journal articles. All journal articles will be available for download as PDFs from *MyCourses*.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will incur a penalty of one full grade. Each additional 24-hour delay (including over the week-end) will incur another full grade penalty per 24-hour cycle. For example, if your reflection memo #1 is submitted 3 days late, and you earn a B on the assignment, your final grade—adjusted for lateness—will be C.

PLAGIARISM

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

COPYRIGHT MATERIAL

© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

Neighborhoods, communities, and neighborhood effects – part 1

January 10:

Kearns, Ade, and Michael Parkinson. 2001. "The Significance of Neighbourhood." *Urban Studies* 38(2):2103-10.

Menahem, Gila, and Shimon Spiro. 1989. "Urban neighborhoods and the quest for community: Implications for policy and practice." *Community Development Journal* 24: 30-32 only.

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2.

Sharkey, Patrick and Jacob Faber. 2014. "Where, when, why and for whom do residential contexts matter? Moving away from the dichotomous understanding of neighborhood effects." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 40: 559-579.

Neighborhoods, communities, and neighborhood effects – part 2

January 17:

Fischer, Claude S. 1975. "Toward a Subcultural Theory of Urbanism." *American Journal of Sociology* 80(6):1319-41.

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighbourhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 7.

Schwirian, Kent P. 1983. "Models of neighborhood change." *Annual Review of Sociology* 9:83-102.

Methodological Reading:

Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 1999. "Systematic Social Observation of Public Spaces: A New Look at Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods." *American Journal of Sociology* 105(3): 603-651.

Recommended:

Wirth, L. 1938. Urbanism as a Way of Life. *American Journal of Sociology*, 44, 1-24.

****In-class methodological activity: SSO of McGill ghetto**

Racial residential segregation: causes and trends

January 24:

Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapters 1, 2 & 4

Schelling, Thomas. 1971. "Dynamics of Segregation." *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 1:143-86.

Jan 31:

Farley, Reynolds (2011). "The Waning of American Apartheid?" *Contexts*, 10(3): 36-43.

Massey, Douglas S, and Jonathan Tannen. 2015. "A Research Note on Trends in Black Hypersegregation." *Demography* 52:1025-34.

Peach, Ceri. 2009. "Slippery Segregation: Discovering or Manufacturing Ghettos?" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35:1381-1395.

Phillips, Deborah. 2010. "Minority Ethnic Segregation, Integration and Citizenship: A European Perspective." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36(2):209-25.

January 31st class:

Small group in-class discussion activity #1

In-class video: Race, Power of an Illusion, episode 3 (25 mins)

Segregation and concentrated poverty

February 7:

Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapters 5 & 6.

Walks, R. Alan, and Larry S. Bourne. 2006. "Ghettos in Canada's cities? Racial segregation, ethnic enclaves and poverty concentration in Canadian urban areas." *Canadian Geographer* 50:273-297.

Methodological Reading:

Geertz, Clifford. 2001. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." Pp. 55-75 in Robert M. Emerson, *Contemporary Field Research: Perspectives and Formulations*, 2nd Ed. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.

Recommended:

Cutler, David M. and Edward L. Glaeser (1997). "Are Ghettos Good or Bad?" *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 112(3): 827-872.

****In-class methodological activity: direct observation of public incivility**

Urban underclass debate

February 14:

Wilson, William Julius. 2012. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* Chicago: University of Chicago press. Chapters 1, 2, 5 & 6.

Recommended:

Ihlandeldt, Keith R., and David L. Sjoquist. 1998. "The spatial mismatch hypothesis: A review of recent studies and their implications for welfare reform." *Housing Policy Debate* 9:849-892.

****DUE: Fieldnotes from in-class methods activity - direct observation of public incivility**

Gentrification

February 21:

Lees, Loretta (2008) "Gentrification and Social Mixing: Towards an Inclusive Urban Renaissance?" *Urban Studies*, 45: 2449-2470.

Lees, Loretta, Tom Slater, and Elvin K. Wyly. 2008. *Gentrification*. New York; London: Routledge. Chapters 1 & 6.

Walks, R. Alan, and Richard Maaranen. 2008. "Gentrification, Social Mix, and Social Polarization: Testing the Linkages in Large Canadian Cities." *Urban Geography* 29(4):293-326.

****DUE: Completed SSO inventories (1 per neighborhood; 2 total).**

Neighborhood racial/ethnic diversity: trends and causes

February 28:

Ellen, Ingrid, Katherine O'Regan, and Keren Horn. 2012. "Pathways to Integration: Examining Changes in the Prevalence of Racially Integrated Neighborhoods " *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* 14:33-53.

Logan, John R., and Charles Zhang. 2010. "Global Neighborhoods: New Pathways to Diversity and Separation." *American Journal of Sociology* 115:1069-1109.

Putnam, Robert D. 2007. "E pluribus unum: diversity and community in the twenty-first century-the 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30:137-174.

Recommended:

Friedman, Samantha. 2007. "Do Declines in Residential Segregation Mean Stable Neighborhood Racial Integration in Metropolitan America? A Research Note." *Social Science Research*.

The Creative Class: socially engineering neighborhood diversity

March 14:

Bereitschaft, Bradley, and Rex Cammack. 2015. "Neighborhood diversity and the creative class in Chicago." *Applied Geography* 63:166-183.

Florida, Richard L. 2012. *The Rise of the Creative Class, Revisited*. New York: Basic Books. Chapters 3, 11 & 14.

****DUE: First set of neighborhood observation fieldnotes (1 per neighborhood; 2 total).**

Examining neighborhood effects on health

March 21:

Bower, Kelly M., Roland J. Thorpe, Charles Rohde, and Darrel J. Gaskin. 2014. "The intersection of neighborhood racial segregation, poverty, and urbanicity and its impact on food store availability in the United States." *Preventive Medicine* 58:33-39.

Ross, Nancy A., Lisa N. Oliver, and Paul Y. Villeneuve. 2013. "The contribution of neighbourhood material and social deprivation to survival: A 22-year follow-up of more than 500,000 Canadians." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 10:1378-1391.

Vang, Zoua M., and Irma T. Elo. 2013. "Exploring the health consequences of majority-minority neighborhoods: Minority diversity and birthweight among native-born and foreign-born blacks." *Social Science & Medicine* 97:56-65.

Williams, David R. and Chiquita Collins. 2001. "Racial Residential Segregation: A Fundamental Cause of Racial Disparities in Health." *Public Health Reports* 116:404-416.

Recommended:

Ross, Nancy A., Stephane Tremblay, and Katie Graham. 2004. "Neighbourhood influences on health in Montreal, Canada." *Social Science & Medicine* 59(7):1485-94.

Walker, Renee E., Christopher R. Keane, and Jessica G. Burke (2010). "Disparities and Access to Healthy Food in the United States: A Review of Food Deserts Literature," *Health and Place*, 6: 876–884.

March 21st class:

Small group in-class discussion activity #2

In-class video: Unnatural Causes - Place Matters (29 mins)

Examining neighborhood effects on educational attainment

March 28:

Cockley, Kevin. 2013. "Deconstructing Ogbu's Acting White Thesis: An Africentric Critique." *Texas Education Review* 1:154-63.

Fordham, Signitha, and John U. Ogbu. 1986. "Black Students' School Success: Coping with the Burden of Acting White." *The Urban League Review* 18(3):176-206.

Sharkey, Patrick, and Felix Elwert. 2011. "The Legacy of Disadvantage: Multigenerational Neighborhood Effects on Cognitive Ability." *American Journal of Sociology* 116(6):1934-81.

Sharkey, Patrick, Amy Ellen Schwartz, Ingrid G. Ellen, and Johanna Laco. 2014. "High stakes in the classroom, high stakes on the street: the effects of community violence on students' standardized test performance." *Sociological Science* 1:199-220.

Recommended:

Ogbu, John U. 2004. "Collective Identity and the Burden of "Acting White" in Black History, Community, and Education." *The Urban Review* 36(1):1-35.

Examining neighborhood effects crime and violence

April 4:

Friedson, Michael and Patrick Sharkey. 2015. "Violence and Neighborhood Disadvantage after the Crime Decline." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 660: 341-358.

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighbourhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 6.

Sampson, Robert J., Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton J. Earls. 1999. "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy." Pp. 337-50 in *The Society and Population Health Reader*, edited by Ichiro Kawachi, Bruce P. Kennedy, and Richard G. Wilkinson. New York: New Press.

Thompson, Sara K., and Rosemary Gartner. 2014. "The Spatial and Social Context of Homicide in Toronto's Neighborhoods." *Journal of Research in Crime & Delinquency* 51(1):88-118.

Recommended:

Fitzgerald, Robin. 2008. "Fear of crime and the neighborhood context in Canadian cities." *Crime and Justice Research Paper Series*. Ottawa: ON: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Catalogue no. 85-561-M—No. 013.

****DUE: Second set of neighborhood observation fieldnotes (1 per neighborhood; 2 total).**

Social policies to address neighborhood-based inequalities

April 11:

Bolt, Gideon, Deborah Phillips, and Ronald Van Kempen. 2010. "Housing policy, (de)segregation and social mixing: An international perspective." *Housing Studies* 25:129-135.

Ludwig, Jens, Jeffrey R. Kling, Laurence Katz, Lisa Sanbonmatsu, Jeffrey B. Liebman, Greg J. Duncan, and Ronald C. Kessler. 2008. "What Can We Learn about Neighborhood Effects from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment?" *American Journal of Sociology* 114(1):144-88.

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 15.

Wilson, William Julius. 2012. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy* Chicago: University of Chicago press. Chapter 7.

Recommended:

Deluca, Stephanie. 2012. "What is the Role of Housing Policy? Considering Choice and Social Science Evidence." *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 34(1): 21–28.

Polity, "What is Social Policy?"

Sampson, Robert J. 2008. "Moving to Inequality: Neighborhood Effects and Experiments Meet Social Structure." *American Journal of Sociology* 114(1):189-231.

**April 11th class:
Small group in-class discussion activity #3**