Studying the American city : Urban Ethnography, Race and Marginality

ECTS : 6

Enseignant responsable : Elodie EDWARDS-GROSSI (http://www.elodieedwardsgrossi.com)

Langue du cours : Français

Description du contenu de l'enseignement :

The course aims to introduce qualitative field studies and sociological works pertaining to the concepts of race, ethnicity, gender and social inequalities to students. More specifically, the course shows the way urban ethnographers conceived urban neighborhoods as of utmost value as a laboratory for exploring social interactions. The course will also focus on the emergence of sociology in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century and explore its legacies. The first weeks of the course will be devoted to a survey of the contributions of urban sociologists from the 1920s and 1930s such as Robert Ezra Park and Louis Wirth who proposed novel theories on the notions of ethnicity, race, assimilation and segregation. The course will also aim to introduce to students current debates in the social sciences regarding the use of these terms in other national contexts, in France for example, notably the term 'ghetto' to depict stigmatized territories in the post-keynesian State. The last part of the course will allow students to immerse themselves in contemporary ethnographies to explore the issues of urban marginality, race, gender and public space in the US. Case studies from various cities such as New York, San Francisco, Chicago and Paris will be studied. Overall, the course aims to present the methodologies and qualitative field study techniques that were pioneered by urban ethnographers in the early 20th century, while providing students with a better historical and sociological understanding of key notions (race, class, gender, marginality) that are still in use today. The last course will also deal with the limits of ethnography. **SessionTopic 1**AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY IN THE US**2**CHICAGO AS A SOCIAL LABORATORY IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY **3**THEORIZING ASSIMILATION, RACE RELATIONS AND THE 'MARGINAL MAN' **4**CITY LIFE AND IMMIGRANTS' NEIGHBORHOODS **5**THE GHETTO AND ITS LEGACIES: RACE, CLASS AND MARGINALITY **6**MICRO-SOCIOLOGY: HOW TO STUDY INTERACTIONS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES**7**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANCE: SEX, GENDER AND SOCIAL NORMS IN NEIGHBORHOODS **8**THE AMERICAN CITY TODAY: MAKING A PLACE FOR ONESELF **9**GENTRIFICATION AND SOCIAL CLASS IN THE CITY: SOME CASE STUDIES **10**SOCIOLOGY OF POLICE WORK: GOVERNING RACE AND PUBLIC SPACE **11**METHODOLOGICAL COUNTERPOINTS: THE LIMITS OF ETHNOGRAPHY **12Final Exam**

Compétences à acquérir :

The course is structured as an advanced reading seminar in English: students will be able to improve their oral and writing skills in English and acquire specialised vocabulary in English pertaining to the social sciences. Students will also learn about the methods of qualitative field study.

Pré-requis obligatoires

No prerequisites

Mode de contrôle des connaissances :

- Posting comments (20%). Students will post a short position paper about the assigned readings each week on the online forum dedicated to the course. Each week, students will be responsible for reading and taking notes on the assigned readings before coming to class. Students are asked to post their comments on the readings (3-4 lines) no later than 24 hours before the start of the course session. The comments are designed to provide students with the opportunity to raise any questions they might have on the readings before class. Students may criticize the texts, answer their fellow students (and thus bounce back on previous comments) or draw parallels with personal readings in the social sciences. The comments may also provide a short, detailed analysis of any section of the assigned readings.
- Curating the seminar (30%). A group of students will be required to present the assigned readings and to introduce the discussion. Students will be required to: 1. Present the document to the whole class 2. Analyze it carefully and provide some historical context and/or discuss the arguments 3. Wrap up their thoughts and ideas in a conclusion 4. Lead the discussion. The presentation should last around 20 minutes. It is recommended that presenters consult the online forum postings and engage with them as a way to start the discussion.
- Final exam (during week 12). Students will sit a written exam based on the readings and notions acquired during the class. (50%)

The numerical grade distribution will dictate the final grade. The passing grade for a course is 10/20. **Class participation:**

Active class participation – this is what makes classes lively and instructive. Come on time and prepared. Class participation is based on quality of comments, not quantity. **Exam policy:** In the exam, students will not be allowed to bring any document (except if allowed by the lecturer). Unexcused absences from exams or failure to submit cases will result in zero grades in the calculation of numerical averages. Exams are collected at the end of examination periods.

Bibliographie, lectures recommandées :

- Achilles, Nancy, “The Development of the Homosexual Bar as an Institution,” in Gagnon John H. and Simon William (dir.), Sexual Deviance, Harper & Row, 1967, p. 228-244.
- Anderson, Elijah. A Place on the Corner, University of Chicago Press, Second Edition, 2003.
- Becker, Howard. “Becoming a Marihuana User and Marihuana Use and Social Control, Chapters 3 and 4,” in Outsiders, The Sociology of Deviance, The Free Press, 1963, p.41-79.
- Bonilla, Yarimar and Jonathan Rosa. “#Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States,” American Ethnologist, vol. 42, n° 1, 2017, p. 4-17.
- Bourgois, Philippe. In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Burgess, Ernest. “Th Growth of the City: an Introduction to a Research Project,” in Robert Ezra Park, Ernest Burgess and Roderick McKenzie, the City, University of Chicago Press, 1925.
- Cressey, Paul. The Taxi-Dance Hall, A Sociological Study in Commercialized Recreation and City Life, University of Chicago Press, Second Edition, 2008.
- Deener, Andrew. “Neighborhood Symbiosis,” in Mitchell Duneier, Philip Kasinitz and Alexandra K. Murphy (dir.), The Urban Ethnography Reader, Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 135-149.
- Duneier, Mitchell. “Introduction,” in Sidewalk, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.
- Duneier, Mitchell. Slim's Table: Race, Respectability and Masculinity, University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Duneier, Mitchell. “How Not to Lie with Ethnography,” Methodological Sociology, vol. 41, n°1, 2011, p. 1-11.
- Garfinkel, Harold. Studies of the routine grounds of everyday activities, Prentice Hall, 1967.
- Foote Whyte, William. Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum, University of Chicago Press, 1943.
- Goffman, Alice, On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City, University of Chicago Press, 2014.
- Goffman Erving, Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, Prentice-Hall, 1963.
- Grazian, David. On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife. The University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Hooker Evelyn, “The Homosexual Community,” in Gagnon John H. and Simon, William (dir.), Sexual Deviance, Harper & Row, 1967, p. 167-184.
- Joseph, Isaac. « Drames et Rituels », in Erving Goffman et la microsociologie, PUF, p. 51-69.
- Lewis-Kraus, Gideon. “The Trials of Alice Goffman,” The New York Times, Jan. 12, 2016, p. 23-31.
- Liebow, Elliot, Tally's Corner, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1967.
- Manalansan, Martin. “The Empire of Food: Place, Memory, and Asian ‘Ethnic' Cuisines,” in Gastropolis: Food and New York City, Columbia University Press, 2008, p. 93-107.
- Park, Robert Ezra. “The City as a Social Laboratory,” in Smith and White, An Experiment in Social Science Research, University of Chicago Press, 1929.
- Pattillo, Mary. Black on the Block: The Politics of Race and Class in the City, The University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Simmel, Georg. “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” in Richard Sennett (dir.), Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities, Prentice-Hall, pp. 47-60.
- Small, Mario. Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston Barrio and Unanticipated Gains: Origins of Network Inequality in Everyday Life, University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Stuart, Forrest. Ballad of the Bullet: Gangs, Drill Music, and the Power of Online Infamy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020.
- Venkatesh, Sudhir. “Doin’ the Hustle’: Constructing the Ethnographer in the American Ghetto,” Ethnography, vol. 3, 2002, p. 91-111.
- Wacquant, Loïc. “From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the ‘race question’ in the US,” New Left Review, vol. 13, January-February 2002, p. 41-60.
- Wirth, Louis. “The Ghetto,” The American Journal of Sociology, vol. 33, n°1, Jul. 1927, p. 57-71.
- Znaniecki, Florian and Thomas, William Isaac. The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, University of Chicago Press, 1919.
- Zukin, Sharon and Ervin Kosta. 2004. “Bourdieu Off-Broadway: Managing Distinction on a Shopping Block in the East Village.” City and Community, vol. 3, 2004, p. 101-114.