Topics in Sociology: Contemporary Research
Fall 2017

This course explores the state of contemporary sociological research through a close reading of books published in the past 2-3 years that have garnered some acclaim within the discipline. The books we will read are all concerned with issues of inequality in the United States today. The objectives of the course are to introduce you to this research area, to give you a chance to understand the tradeoffs faced by current scholars, in combining theory and research methods in their work, and give you an opportunity to write critical essays regarding their arguments.

Expectations

All in the class are expected to be prepared to discuss the central arguments, evidence, analysis, and conclusions of the assigned reading for that day. Class participation is important, and will comprise 25% of the grade. The course will include 3 short assignments (each 15% of the final grade) and a final exam end of the semester (30%).

Texts: seven books have been ordered for this course:


I have requested that these be put on reserve as well.

I will be holding official office hours on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and am available by appointment. The best way to contact me is by email, mmckeever@haverford.edu.
Course Outline

Week 1
(Sep 6)
Introduction to course

Week 2
(Sep 13)
*On the Run*, chapters 1-5

Week 3
(Sep 20)
*On the Run*, chapters 6-8, methodological note, and critique

Week 4
(Sep 27)
*No Way Out*
Paper 1 assigned

Week 5
(Oct 4)
*Evicted*, chapters 1-11

Week 6
(Oct 11)
*Evicted*, chapters 12-24, Epilogue

Week 7
(Oct 25)
*Unequal City*
Paper 2 assigned

Week 8
(Nov 1)
*Skills of the Unskilled*, chapters 1-3

Week 9
(Nov 8)
*Skills of the Unskilled*, chapters 4-6

Week 10
(Nov 15)
*Coming Up Short*
Paper 3 assigned

Week 11
(Nov 29)
*Pedigree*, chapters 1-5

Week 13
(Dec 6)
*Pedigree*, chapters 6-11

Week 14
(Dec 13)
Reading TBA