

SOCI 335 ¹

Racialization and Ethnicity

Instructor: Seb Bonet

Course Description:

On September 2nd, 2015, the image of a Kurdish child, Alan Kurdi, raced around the Western world and prompted massive mobilizations to open up the borders and welcome refugees. Much less reported, Alan Kurdi's father asked that if people wanted to honour the memory of his son, they should support Rojava and the struggle for self-determination of Kurds living in territories claimed by Syria.

This course takes this tragic image as its point of departure, and seeks to honour the spirit of Alan's father's request. We will ask, and attempt to respond to, questions like: why is the global crisis of displacement and migration happening? What systems of racialized domination, like imperialism and white supremacy, are expressed by it? What relationships are being besieged through this crisis, from land reclamation in Central America, to Rojavan self-determination, Palestinian struggle for liberation, and indigenous resurgence?

And how have nation-states in Global North responded to the demand to welcome refugees and open colonial borders? How does racialization inform the way people are treated within these borders, from the many Indigenous nations of Turtle Island, to Black struggle for liberation, and migrant justice movements seeking to win status and protections for racialized people?

Course Outcomes/Objectives:

This course aims to provide students with a wide and deep enough theoretical framework to make sense of contemporary forms of racialization, from imperialism to capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy and settler colonialism, and the movements that attempt to create mutualistic alternatives to domination. The course also aims to connect theory to practice. The course will invite students to think of themselves in relation to the questions we grapple with, and will have guest speakers who model what it can look like to contend with these systems in embodied, grounded ways.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

This course has no mandatory requirements, although the Uvic Calendar recommends Soci 215. As this course will frame racialization within an intersectional analysis of power relationships, some acquaintance with thinking about domination, oppression and attempts to create alternatives to them would be helpful. In the absence of that, an open, respectful and critical mind will do.

¹ This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.