

QCST 440 / CANS 413

Living in Montréal: Ethnicity and ‘Race’ from the Past to the Present

Debates, at times acrimonious, about reasonable accommodation, the proposed Charter of Values, Bill 62, the *niqab*, the Syrian refugee crisis, national security, and the recent CAQ government’s Bill 21 which bans wearing of religious symbols for persons of authority in the civil service have dominated public discourse in Québec for more than a decade. To place these deliberations in perspective, this seminar takes a close look at ethnicity and ‘race’ in Montréal from the nineteenth century to contemporary society. QCST 440/CANS 413 considers the city’s multiethnic character, the racialization of particular communities, and the methodologies that scholars have developed to study ethnicity and ‘race.’ An interdisciplinary approach offers students an opportunity to explore and to understand past and present challenges to and opportunities for *rapprochement* between all residents of Montréal. Therefore, we will examine how various ethno-cultural groups formed complex communities (differentiated by class, gender, religious practices, and geographic origin for example), interacted with one another, earned their living, and responded to diverse political regimes. By unpacking the changing discourses around nationalism, we will also explore who was considered Québécois(e) and who was categorized as the “Other”.

Designed to provide a variety of learning opportunities, students will read key publications by academics of diverse disciplines, tour a mosque, go on a walking tour, and watch and discuss documentary and feature-length films. Scholars engaged in cutting-edge research on aspects of ethnicity and ‘race’ will present their findings individually or as round-table panelists; community activists will address issues around intercultural relations in Montréal. The seminar also offers interested students the opportunity to participate remotely in a community service learning experience placement [Experiential Community Engaged Research and Learning or ExCERL] working closely with members of a Montreal grassroots organization.

Students are expected to participate in weekly seminar discussions of assigned readings organized thematically, choose one of the weekly topics in the winter term and present a short analysis of the readings as well as lead the discussion and produce a reading report based on the discussion, and research and write a paper using both primary and secondary peer-reviewed sources.