Lakehead University
Department of Sociology

Sociology 4411/4113 2025
Advanced Perspectives in Social Theory: Settler Colonialism

Dr. Chris Southcott **Fall 2025**
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Office Hours
By appointment

Course Objective:
This course is designed to familiarize students with advanced perspectives in social theory that will help them understand the emergence of new theoretical models. Topics are chosen based on emerging relevant issues. For this course, participants will be looking at settler colonialism. It will be examined as an attempt to understand the relationships that exist between Indigenous peoples and colonial powers. The course will first look at the place of Indigenous peoples and colonialism in social theory. It will analyze the emergence of the theory of settler colonialism and examine its usefulness as theoretical model to help understand the current relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Describe the place of Indigenous peoples and colonialism in both classical and contemporary sociological and social theory.
2. Describe and explain the relationship between Indigenous peoples and colonialism in Canadian social and sociological theory.
3. Define settler colonialism and explain how it emerged as a theoretical concept
4. Describe the relationship between the settler colonialism and other contemporary social and sociological theories.
5. Evaluate the usefulness of settler colonialism for understand the current relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.
6. Collect and evaluate both secondary sources and primary sources in order to address issues and questions related to the theory of settler colonialism.

Texts:
There will be no required texts. Students will be required to read articles to be downloaded off the internet. There should be no costs associated with any material required for this course outside of normal general university costs.

Basis of Evaluation:

       Mid-term Assignment.................................25%
       Research Proposal…………………………..10%
       Participation..15%
       Presentation…………………………………10%
       Research Paper..40%

Mid-term Assignment: Participants will be given a take home assignment on Oct. 10th to be completed and handed in by Oct. 24th. The assignment will be comprised of a list of short essay questions relating to material dealt with in the first part of the course.

Research Proposal: One of the main requirements of this course is to prepare a research paper on a key question relating to the theory of settler colonialism. The paper itself is described below but to ensure that you are prepared to write this paper you will be required to hand in a 4 page, 1000 word proposal on Oct. 24th. This proposal should contain a section with a background section explaining why the topic you chose is important (why you chose it), a section containing a clear hypothesis/research question, a section describing how you will examine your hypothesis/research question (ie a road map of the paper), and a suggested bibliography with at least 6 key sources.

Participation: This course will be run as a seminar. For this reason, it is important that all participants are actively involved in the discussions. This means that readings should be completed before each session and that participants arrive with questions and points of interest to discuss. Participation marks will be based on attendance, level and quality of participation in discussions, and level of preparedness for each session. The more a participant contributes to creating an interesting, informative, and supportive leaning environment during the seminar the higher the participation mark.

Presentation: During the last two weeks of the course you will be required to present the finding of your research paper. Presentations should be 20 minutes long followed by 15 minutes of questions.

Research Paper: Participants will be required to write a 15-20 page (4000 to 5000 word) research paper on a key question relating to the theory of settler colonialism and the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. Topics should be chosen in consultation with the professor. The completed paper is due on Dec. 12th, 2025. Research papers should use the manuscript format suggested by the American Sociological Association (or APA format for those who are not sociology majors).

Please note that plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. Please see the university regulations section on academic dishonesty in the Calendar. For advice to avoid plagiarism please see http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html

Soc 4113 FA Course Structure and Readings

Part One: Concepts and basic structures

Session 1 Introduction to the course: What is settler colonialism and why it is important for contemporary social theory?

Veracini, Lorenzo. 2011. "Introducing: Settler Colonial Studies." *Settler Colonial Studies* 1(1):1-12.

Wolfe, P. 2006. "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4): 387-409.

Session 2 Colonialism, Indigenous people and Classical Sociological Theory

*Bourne, H. R. Fox. 1900. *The Claims of Uncivilised Races a Paper Submitted to the International Congress on Colonial Sociology, Held in Paris in August, 1900*. London: Aborigines Protection Society. (*Warning – this article contains language that is today considered offensive. Please read it critically. It is meant to be an example of social thought of the pre-World War 1 period.)

Seidman, Steven. 2013. "The Colonial Unconscious of Classical Sociology." in *Postcolonial Sociology*, edited by J. Go. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Session 3 Colonialism and Social Theory in the 20th Century: Modernization Theory and Dependency Theory

Tipps, Dean C. 1973. "Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of National Societies: A Critical Perspective." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15(2):199-226.

Frank, Andre Gunder. 1975. "Development and Underdevelopment in the New World: Smith and Marx Vs. The Weberians." *Theory and Society* 2(1):431-66.

Session 4 Indigenous peoples and Settler colonialism

Wolfe, Patrick. 1997. "History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism." *The American Historical Review* 102(2):388-420.

Veracini, Lorenzo. 2013. "'Settler Colonialism': Career of a Concept." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41(2):313-33.

Session 6 Settler colonialism and social theory

Carey, Jane and Ben Silverstein. 2020. "Thinking with and Beyond Settler Colonial Studies: New Histories after the Postcolonial." *Postcolonial studies* 23(1):1-20. doi: 10.1080/13688790.2020.1719569.

Steinman, E. W. 2022. "Settler colonialism and sociological knowledge: insights and directions forward." *Theory and Society* 51(1): 145-176.

Behrendt, M. C. (2022) "Settler colonial origins of intimate partner violence in Indigenous communities." *Sociology Compass* e13019 1-38.

Part Two: Settler Colonialism and Canada

Session 7 Social Theory and Indigenous People

Denis, Jeffrey S. 2015. "Contact Theory in a Small-Town Settler-Colonial Context: The Reproduction of Laissez-Faire Racism in Indigenous-White Canadian Relations." *American Sociological Review* 80(1):218-42.

McGuire Patricia, D. 2012. "Indigenous Spaces in Sociology." in *Reading Sociology: Canadian Perspecitives*, edited by L. Tepperman and A. Kalyta. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Barker, A. J., et al. (2017). Settler Colonialism and the Consolidation of Canada in the Twentieth Century. *The Routledge handbook of the history of settler colonialism*. E. Cavanagh and L. Veracini. London, Routledge: 153-168.

Session 8 Settler colonialism in Canada Part 1

Watkins, M. 1977. "From Underdevelopment to Development." Pp. 84-99 in *Dene Nation - the Colony Within*, edited by M. Watkins. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Coulthard, Glen S. 2007. "Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada." *Contemporary political theory* 6(4):437-60. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300307.

Simpson, Audra. 2016. "Whither Settler Colonialism?". *Settler Colonial Studies* 6(4):438-45.

Session 9 Settler colonialism in Canada Part 2

Kulchyski, Peter. 2016. "Hunting Theories: Totalisation and Indigenous Resistances in Canada." *Historical Materialism* 24(3):30-44.

Martino, N. (2021). ""It should be equal across the board": how treaty opposition among hunters and anglers upholds settler colonialism in Canada." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44(15): 2752-2771.

Rodgers, K., & Scobie, W. (2024). "Unsettling Sociology Curriculum: Indigenous Content in Introductory Sociology Textbooks." *Teaching Sociology*, 52(4), 352-366. https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055x241248185

Session 10 Criticisms of settler colonialism in Canada

Fung, A. 2021. "Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?". *Canadian Ethnic Studies-Etudes Ethniques Au Canada* 53(2):115-31.

Petray, Theresa. 2012. "Can Theory Disempower? Making Space for Agency in Theories of Indigenous Issues." in *Theorising Indigenous Sociology: Australian Perspectives.* , edited by D. Howard-Wagner, D. Habibis and T. Petray. Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney e-Press.

Bernauer, W. (2024). "Canadian settler colonialism: Structure, event, relationship, or process?" *Canadian Geographies-Geographies Canadiennes*, 68(4), 451-455. https://doi.org/10.1111/cag.12943

Session 11 and 12 Presentations

Students with Special Needs
Students with special needs may request accommodations in accordance with the Senate Policy on Students with Disabilities. Such students should at the earliest opportunity advise the Student Accessibility Services (formerly the Learning Assistance Centre) and the instructor of such needs so that appropriate arrangements can be made to accommodate their needs. Those who encounter extenuating circumstances which may interfere with the successful completion of the course should, as soon as possible, discuss these circumstances with the instructor and the Student Accessibility Services.

Lakehead Policy on Academic Dishonesty
As academic integrity is crucial to the pursuit of university education, students are expected to uphold the academic honour code at all times and are advised to familiarise themselves with the university's policy on academic dishonesty, especially in relation, but not limited, to plagiarism, cheating, impersonation etc. In order to make sure that a degree awarded by Lakehead University is a reflection of the honest efforts and individual academic achievement of each student, Lakehead University treats cases of academic dishonesty very seriously and severely penalises those caught in violation of the university's policy on academic honesty.

LAKEHEAD RESOURCES

If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other difficulties in your student life, don't hesitate to ask for help! If it is about an issue beyond this class, please contact your academic advisors, or get help from any number of other support services on campus, including:

The Student Success Centre has many programs and support services in place to help you achieve your academic and personal goals while studying at Lakehead University. They provide academic support through tutoring services, career exploration, co-operative opportunities and leadership development. More information is available here https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre.

The Lakehead Library provides access to resources, study rooms, and research support both online via chat and in person with more details available here https://library.lakeheadu.ca/.

Public Computer Labs are available on campus where you may write and/or print out your work. For more details go to https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/helpdesk/computer-labs.

Student Life and Services offers health and wellness resources both on and off campus, as well as opportunities for involvement in health and wellness activities. More information is available here https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/or.

Office of Human Rights and Equity. You have the right to an education that is free from any form of discrimination. A wide variety of resources are available here https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/human-rights-and-equity/resources.

Use of AI. Generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI or GenAI) is a category of AI systems capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts. These systems include ChatGPT and its variant Bing (built by OpenAI) and Bard (built by Google) among several others. Other generative AI models include artificial intelligence art systems such as Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, and DALL-E.

GenAI tools can provide valuable assistance and support in academic work. However, it is essential to use them responsibly and ethically. The following information and guidelines apply to the use of AI-based tools in this course:

a. **Student Responsibility** – It is the responsibility of the student to understand the limitations of AI-based tools. While these tools can provide suggestions and insights, final decisions and critical thinking should come from the student's own understanding and effort. Before submitting, review your work with this in mind. If you don't understand what type of GenAI usage is appropriate, ask the course instructor for clarification.

b. **Formative Usage** – In this class, you may use GenAI for formative, but not summative, work. That means it can be used as a "possibility engine" (brainstorm tool), a "study buddy," a "collaboration coach," a "guide on the side," a "personal tutor," a "co-designer," etc. to help you learn course content, but it cannot be used as the primary vehicle for any work that is submitted for marks or evaluation. (See UNESCO's "ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education Quick Start Guide," page 9, for explanations and examples of these and other roles GenAI can productively serve in a formative capacity.)

c. **Error & Bias** – AI content is created by computer algorithms that have been trained using large amounts of data. The AI learns from patterns and examples in the data to generate new content that resembles what it has been trained on. If the training data used to train the AI model is biased or limited in scope, the AI may reproduce content that is inaccurate, incomplete, offensive, and/or biased. Students should weigh this as they consider material produced by AI.

d.   **Trustworthiness** – Generative AI can be vulnerable to manipulation and misuse. It can be used to generate fake news, misinformation, or deepfake content, which can have harmful consequences. Students should check AI generated content against reputable sources.

e.   **Plagiarism** – Since [writing and critical thinking ability] are learning outcomes of this course, all work submitted for evaluation must be the student's original work. Using the work of others (including content curated/generated by AI) without proper citation is considered plagiarism. See "Citing Artificial Intelligence" for assistance with correct documentation.

f.   **Citation of Sources** – If you use material generated by an AI program for an assignment in this course, it must be cited like any other source (with due consideration for the quality of the source, which may be judged as poor). Failure to do so will be considered a violation of academic integrity. See Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity.