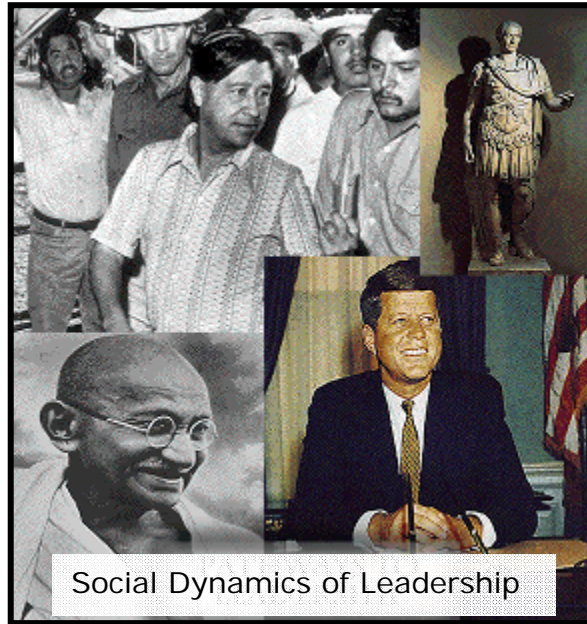


Social Dynamics of Leadership: Elites and Society

Sociology 375/Leadership 375



D. Michael Lindsay

Description of the course

This course explores the rise, reign, and fall of elite groups in human societies (the powerful, the influential, the celebrated, the stars) with major, though not exclusive, emphasis on the contemporary United States. The focus is comparative, using sociological analysis but also drawing from contributions in history, anthropology, and political and social theory. Specific contemporary elites, e.g., business leaders, political leaders, military commanders and media celebrities, will be studied with a view to answering questions about their social profiles, their responsibilities, their rewards, and their efficacy. Particular themes to be addressed include power, wealth, fame, and status and the paths to achievement in different sectors of society. The course will also attend to leadership failures, moral dilemmas, and issues of accountability. Throughout the course, we will consider the social dynamics influencing individual leaders—social networks, institutional settings, and organizational affiliations. This course will be of interest to students interested in sociology, but also to other students intrigued by issues surrounding societal leadership and elite circles.

Course requirements

Analytical Paper and Presentation. Each student will be given the chance to engage one additional text on the topic of elites and leadership. Students will choose one text from several options and then prepare an analytical paper of the book, incorporating one major theoretical idea from their course in their analysis. This paper (8-10 pages, or approximately 2500 words) will be due immediately following the midterm break during week 8. During week 8, each student will review another student's paper and return the draft with marked comments and a cover letter in the following class period. A final version (as well as the draft with reviewer comments) will be due at the end of week 9.

Guidelines for the paper and peer review will be distributed during the second week of class. Then, students who reviewed the same text will collaborate to deliver a 10-minute presentation on the book and its relation with other course readings; two presentations will be held each week starting week 10. The presentations will incorporate items raised in students' papers as well as areas of further investigation suggested in the instructor's feedback. Exemplary presentations will be not only informative but also engaging; hopefully, the presentations will be scheduled so that they coordinate with weekly topics. Presenters will meet with the instructor prior to their presentation, preferably over lunch on Monday of the week they present.

The paper will constitute 20% of the final grade, and the presentation will count an additional 15% toward the final grade. A portion of the group presentation grade will come from peer assessments in which each member of the group will assign a number grade (which I then average across the entire group) for each member of the group. You will rate the other group members and yourself.

Titles from which paper/presentation assignments can be drawn include the following

- ◆ G. William Domhoff, *The Bohemian Grove and Other Retreats*
- ◆ Diana Kendall, *Power of Good Deeds: Privileged Women and the Social Reproduction of the Upper Class*
- ◆ S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, Linda S. Lichter, *The Media Elite*
- ◆ Ferdinand Lundberg, *The Rich and the Super-Rich*
- ◆ Susan Ostrander, *Women of the Upper Class*
- ◆ Leonard Silk and Mark Silk, *The American Establishment*
- ◆ David Vogel, *Fluctuating Fortunes: The Political Power of Business in America*
- ◆ Maurice Zeitlin, *The Large Corporation and Contemporary Classes*
- ◆ Richard L. Zweigenhaft and G. William Domhoff, *Diversity in the Power Elite: Have Women and Minorities Reached the Top?*

Midterm Exam. There will be an in-class midterm exam that will be administered during week 7 (right before break). This will be based on the readings, lectures, and class discussions from weeks 1-7 and will constitute 25% of the final grade.

Attendance and Informed Participation. Mark Twain said "half of life is just showing up," and while I am not as generous as he, I believe attendance and active participation in class discussions (based on careful reading of all assigned texts) should be rewarded. Student attendance and

participation along with occasional, in-class writing assignments will constitute 10% of the final grade.

Final Exam. A final exam will be administered on the date set by the registrar. The final exam, which will be comprehensive in scope and closed-notes, will constitute 30% of the final grade.

To summarize, here are the course requirements and the percent of the final grade they constitute:

In-class midterm (based on weeks 1-7 material)	25%
Analytical paper due at the end of week 9	20%
In-class presentation during weeks 10-15	15%
Final exam (cumulative)	30%
Class attendance and participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

Course materials and logistics

Each student should obtain the following items for the course:

- ◆ One copy of the leadership text for the paper/presentation assignment
- ◆ Course readings (online via course website which is password protected for students enrolled in the course)
- ◆ One copy of Thomas R. Dye, *Who's Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition (available at the bookstore)
- ◆ One copy of William Domhoff, 1983. *Who Rules America Now*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ.



Course outline

Week 1: Introduction and Overview

- ◆ Course overview
- ◆ Power, authority, fame
- ◆ Defining elites and leaders

Assignments for next week:



Suzanne Keller, 1968, "Elites," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. New York: The Macmillan Company

C. Wright Mills, 1956. *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press. "The Higher Circles," pages 2-29

Daniel Bell, 1960. "Is There A Ruling Class in America? The Power Elite Reconsidered" in *The End of Ideology*. New York: Free Press, Chapter 3, pages 47-74

Robert D. Putnam, 1976. "Elites and the Social Structure" in *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Chapter 2, pages 20-44

Thomas R. Dye, *Who's Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition, Chapters 1 and 7, pages 1-12 and 135-169



Week 2: American Elites

- ◆ Mrs. Astor's Ballroom—the Forbes 400
- ◆ Social profile of American elite in 2005

Assignments for next week:

Gaetano Mosca, 1939. *The Ruling Class*. Trans. By Hannah D. Kahn. New York: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 2, pages 50-69

Martin N. Marger, 1987. "The Class Model" in *Elites and Masses: An Introduction to Political Sociology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Chapter 5, pages 88-116

G. William Domhoff, 1983. *Who Rules America Now*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ. "The Issue of Class and Power in America," pages 1-16



Week 3: Theories of Elites: Monolithic Model

- ◆ Ruling class (Marx, Marger, Domhoff)
- ◆ Ruling elite (Pareto, Mosca)
- ◆ American corporate elite in 2005

Assignments for next week:



Max Weber, [1946] 1991. "Class, Status, Party" in *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* edited by Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. London: Routledge, pages 180-195

Suzanne Keller, 1963. *Beyond the Ruling Class: Strategic Elites in Modern Society*. New York: Random House. Introduction, pages xi-25

Robert Lerner, Althea K. Nagai, and Stanley Rothman, 1996. *American Elites*. New Haven: Yale University Press, Chapters 1 and 2 and Conclusion, pages 1-31 and 136-140

Week 4: Theories of Elites: Pluralist Model

- ◆ Centralized vs. Dispersed elites
- ◆ Community studies of power—distributed in multiple centers
- ◆ Keller's segmented elites

Assignments for next week:

Thomas R. Dye, *Who's Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition, Chapters 4 and 8, pages 55-96 and 171-202

Steven Lukes, 2005. *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave. "Three- Dimensional Power," Chapter 3, pages 108-151



Week 5: Presidents, Statesmen, Public Servants

- ◆ Wielding political power—the social dynamics of presidential elections
- ◆ Elite networks
- ◆ Symbols and sentiments
- ◆ Political access and ascent



Assignments for next week:

Marvin E. Olsen and Martin N. Marger, 1993. *Power in Modern Societies*. Boulder, CO: Westview. “Forms and Levels of Power Exertion,” “National Power Structures,” pages 29-36 and 153-160

Judy B. Rosener, “Ways Women Lead” in *Harvard Business Review* (November-December, 1990), Volume 68, Number 6, pages 119-125

“Debate: Ways Women Lead” in *Harvard Business Review* (January-February, 1991), Volume 69, Number 1, pages 150-160



Abraham Zaleznik, “The Management of Power in Interpersonal Relations,” in *Human Dilemmas of Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), Chapter 8, pages 147-170

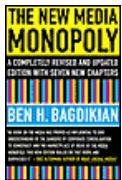
Howard Gardner, *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), Chapter 10, “Eleanor Roosevelt,” pages 184-202

Week 6: Power and Societal Leadership

- ◆ Role play: The Truth about Lies
- ◆ Tocqueville: fall of the *Ancienne Regime*
- ◆ Gender and Power

Assignments for next week:

James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), “Heroes and Ideologues,” pages 241-254



Ben H. Bagdikian, 2004. “Dear Mr. President...” in *The New Media Monopoly*. 7th Edition, pages 204-217

Thomas R. Dye, *Who’s Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition, Chapter 5, page 97-113

Pierre Bourdieu, 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. “The Aristocracy



of Culture.” Trans. by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pages 11-18

Joshua Gamson, 1994. *Claims to Fame: Celebrity in Contemporary America*. “Industrial-Strength Celebrity.” Berkeley: University of California Press, pages 57-78

E. Digby Baltzell, 1966. “‘Who’s Who in America’ and ‘The Social Register’: Elite and Upper Class Indexes in Metropolitan America.” In *Class, Status, and Power*. Reinhold Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds. New York: Free Press, 2nd edition, pages 266-275



S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda S. Lichter, 1986. *The Media Elite: America's New Powerbrokers*. New York: Hastings House. “The Rise of the National Media,” pages 1-19

Week 7: Status and Fame: Public Icons and Stars

- ◆ Media power
- ◆ Modes of distinction in elite circles
- ◆ Creation of images and media messages
- ◆ The social significance of celebrities
- ◆ In-class midterm

Assignments for next week:

Max Weber, “Charisma and its Transformation.” in *Economy and Society* edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), Chapter 14, pages 1111-1125 and 1148-1157



Peter M. Blau, “Critical Remarks on Weber’s Theory of Authority,” *American Political Science Review*, Volume 57, Number 2 (June 1963), pages 305-314

Rakesh Khurana, 2002. *Searching for a Corporate Savior: The Irrational Quest for Charismatic CEO's*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, Preface and pages 51-81

Malcolm Gladwell, “The Talent Myth” in *The New Yorker*, July 22, 2002, pages 28-33

Thomas R. Dye, *Who’s Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition, Chapters 2 and 3, pages 13-54

Week 8: Corporate Power Structure and Their Chieftains

- ◆ Analytical papers due; peer review conducted this week
- ◆ Weberian bureaucracy and executive leadership—constraining and enabling
- ◆ Executive selection—selection mechanisms in elite circles
- ◆ Entrepreneurs, CEOs, corporate executives
- ◆ Inner circle of leadership—interlocking directorates

Assignments for next week:



Thomas R. Dye, *Who's Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition, Chapters 1 and 9, pages 1-12 and 203-213

Harold R. Kerbo, 1993. "Upper Class Power," in *Power in Modern Societies*, ed. by Marvin E. Olsen and Martin N. Marger. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pages 223-237

Michael Useem, 1983. *The Inner Circle: Large Corporations and the Rise of Business Political Activity in the U.S. and the U.K.* New York: Oxford University Press, pages 116-149

Week 9: Wealth and Philanthropy in the Higher Circles

- ◆ Inherited wealth vs. "new money"
- ◆ The "dark side" of wealth
- ◆ Aristocracy or meritocracy
- ◆ Philanthropic behavior of societal leaders
- ◆ Analytical papers (final draft) due



Assignments for next week:

G. William Domhoff, 1983. *Who Rules America Now*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ. "The American Upper Class," pages 17-55



David Brooks, 2001. *Bobos In Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* New York: Simon & Schuster. "Rise of the Educated Class" and "Intellectual Life," pages 13-53 and 140-188

Peter W. Cookson and Caroline Hodges Persell, 1985. *Preparing for Power: America's Elite Boarding Schools*. New York: Basic Books. Chapters 1-3, pages 13-69



Thorstein Veblen, 1919. New York: B.W. Huebsch. "Conspicuous Consumption" in *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*. Chapter 4, pages 68-101

Week 10: Education and Institutional Settings for Societal Leadership

- ◆ Elite Education and Klitgaard's "selection at the right tail"
- ◆ Ascription vs. achievement
- ◆ Qualifications for success, preparing for power
- ◆ Loci of American Establishment: Case Studies on The Ford Foundation, Brookings Institution, and Council on Foreign Relations (*American Establishment*)

Assignments for next week:

C. Wright Mills, 1956. *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press. "The Higher Immorality," pages 343-361

Geoffrey Regan, *The Book of Military Blunders*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1991), "The Bay of Pigs," pages 177-181

Jerrold M. Post and Robert S. Robins, *When Illness Strikes the Leader*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), Selections from Chapters 1 and 2, pages 1-7 and 31-61



Warren Bennis, *Why Leaders Can't Lead* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), Chapter 2, pages 14-24 and Chapter 7, pages 59-66

Week 11: Institutional Challenges, Elite Dangers, and Leadership Failures

- ◆ The arrogance of power
- ◆ When the leader falls: ethically, politically, physically
- ◆ Role play: The Truth about Lies
- ◆ Tocqueville: fall of the *Ancienne Regime*

Assignments for next week:

James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), “The Power of Leadership” and “The Structure of Moral Leadership,” pages 9-46



Hara Marano, “The Depression Suite,” in *Psychology Today*, Volume 36, Number 3 (May/June 2003), pages 58-65



Stephen R. Covey, *Principle-Centered Leadership* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), “Introduction,” Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 8, pages 29-47, 57-66, and 94-100

Abraham Zaleznik, “The Human Dilemmas of Leadership,” in *Human Dilemmas of Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), Chapter 3, pages 30-43

Week 12: Leaders and Human Morality

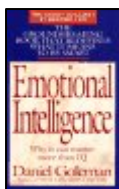
- ◆ Accountability
- ◆ The social contract between leaders and their constituents
- ◆ Interpersonal relations in leadership positions
- ◆ Personal struggles in positions of responsibility

Assignments for next week:

Michael Useem, *The Leadership Moment*, (New York: Random House, 1998), “Introduction,” Chapter 3, and “Conclusion: Vision Plus Action,” pages 3-9, 65-93, and 263-271



Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter, and James Noel, *The Leadership Pipeline: How to Build the Leadership-Powered Company* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), Introduction and Chapter 1, pages 1-31



Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), Chapter 6, “The Master Aptitude,” pages 78-95

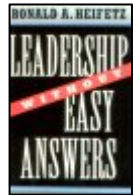
Warren Bennis, *Why Leaders Can't Lead* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), Chapter 19, pages 121-136

Abraham Zaleznik, "Equality and the Problem of Rivalry," in *Human Dilemmas of Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), Chapter 5, pages 72-99

Week 13: Leading People

- ◆ Emotional Intelligence
- ◆ Working with others
- ◆ Dealing with subordinates in leadership contexts
- ◆ The challenge of privilege

Assignments for next week:



Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), Chapters 10 and 11, pages 235-276

Ronald A. Heifetz and Donald L. Laurie, "The Work of Leadership" in *Harvard Business Review* (January-February, 1997), Volume 75, Number 1, pages 124-134

Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), Chapter 1, pages 1-16

Howard Gardner, *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), Introduction and Chapters 1 and 15, pages 3-40 and 285-306



Week 14: Work of Leadership

- ◆ Vision (The Hedgehog and the Fox)
- ◆ Decision-making
- ◆ Management vs. Leadership
- ◆ Class presentation on *Good to Great* by Jim Collins

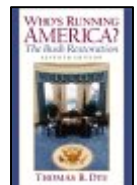
Assignments for next week:



James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), "Toward a General Theory," Chapter 16, pages 422-443

Plato, Selections from *The Republic*, in *The Great Political Theories*, Edited by Michael Curtis, (New York: Avon, 1961), pages 29-36 and 44-53

Thomas R. Dye, *Who's Running America: The Bush Restoration?* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7th edition, Chapter 9, pages 203-213



Pareto, Vilfredo, 1968. *The Rise and Fall of Elites*. New York: Bedminster Press. "The Decline of the Old Elite," pages 59-71

Week 15: Rise and Fall of Elites

- ◆ Lions and Foxes
- ◆ Vision for the Future
- ◆ Final exam (to be set by registrar)