

Social Theory

Sociology 250



*D. Michael Lindsay
mlindsay@rice.edu
552 Sewall Hall*

*Office hours by appointment (email preferred or campus ext. 5511)
Department of Sociology, Rice University
Spring 2007*

Description of the course

This course engages and analyzes the foundational texts of social theory from its classical roots to its contemporary branches. The theoretical perspectives explored in this course represent major traditions within sociology. Although most social theory has been articulated by white men historically, we will draw upon notable women and people of color whose contributions have not always been appreciated in the social theory canon. The course aims to introduce students to the major approaches, themes, thinkers, and debates in social theory; it is an overview and, as such, moves quickly from one important topic to another.

Social theory seeks to explain change in society—how it develops, what factors facilitate and inhibit it, and what results from it. Looking at foundational texts within the discipline, we will consider the principal ideas offered by leading theorists of the last two centuries and how those ideas relate to the social and intellectual contexts in which they were produced. More important, we will consider their relevance for ongoing issues we face today.

Social theory means nothing unless it can translate into some news you can use. While some approach social theory as a historical narrative of ideas to be studied, in this class we will regard theory as a set of tools to be used in constructing our own explanations of what is happening in society around us. In order to draw on these ideas, we must carefully consider what each theorist has written and bring critical analysis to our interpretation.

The questions we will ask in social theory are important and weighty. What are the distinctive features of modern society? How does the individual relate to larger groups of people—his community, his workplace, his culture? What does it mean to be human, and how, therefore, should humans respond? What are the points of connection between individual behavior and wider social structures (such as school, church, and the media)? By the end of the course, you will know the major social theorists that have shaped Western society—their ideas and their major works. You will also be able to apply their categories of analysis to contemporary issues.

Course Requirements

Each student will be given the chance to engage two different social phenomena of particular interest from the perspective of two major theorists, one from the “classical roots” part of our class (Tocqueville, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, Freud, Mead, DuBois) and one from the “contemporary branches” part of the course (Merton, Parsons, Conflict Theory [Coser/Mills], Goffman, Social Construction Theory [Shutz/Berger & Luckmann], Garfinkel, Rational Choice [Coleman/Hechter], Feminist Theory [Butler/Smith], Habermas, Foucault, and Bourdieu). Students will choose one contemporary social issue that interests them (for example, the rise of radical Islam in France) and examine that topic by incorporating a particular theoretical perspective from the classical era of social theory (for example, Marx). That short paper, which will constitute 15% of the final course grade, should be 4-6 pages (excluding a reference page and a title page) will be handed in at the beginning of class on Friday, February 16.

Students will choose a second topic (for example, executive compensation for American CEOs today) and examine that issue by incorporating a particular theoretical perspective from the contemporary era (for example, social constructionism). That short paper, which will constitute an additional 15% of the final course grade, should be 4-6 pages (excluding a reference page and a title page) will be handed in at the beginning of class on Wednesday, April 25.

For both paper assignments, essays must be typed, double-spaced, stapled, and paginated using 12-point font and one-inch margins all around. Papers should include a title page and a references page beyond the 4-6 pages of substantive material. They must be handed in personally (no email submissions). Guidelines for the paper assignments will be given in class during the week of February 5, but naturally, all direct and indirect quotations from sources consulted should be properly acknowledged (for insights drawn from course lectures and discussions, this is not necessary). Because these assignments allow you to choose pressing social issues of particular interest to you, they must be independent pieces of work, not simply summaries or a literature review; constructive social analysis is required of both assignments. For both paper assignments, no extensions are allowed, but students may submit them early.

For the midterm assignment, students may choose between 1) an in-class presentation on an outside book they read and analyze by a particular theorist or 2) a quasi-open book conversational/oral midterm exam to be held in my office either before or after spring break. Students opting for the latter may choose to meet with me for the 20-30 minute conversation before spring break (February 28-March 2) or after spring break (March 12-14). Regardless of the time of the appointment, the midterm conversational exam will only cover material up through readings and class discussion on Friday, February 23. Students may bring to the exam

three 5 x 8" index cards to help them recall course materials during the conversation (these will be turned into the professor at the end of the conversation). For those who are interested, we will have a practice round outside of class, at a time to be determined. The benefits of the conversational oral are that it gives the student a chance 1) to see what the conversational final exam will be like; 2) to synthesize seven weeks' material before moving to the second half of the course; and 3) requires no additional reading beyond the assigned texts.

Students opting for the in-class presentation will select a work from the list below and present to the class a 20-30 minute presentation on the work's main ideas, how it reflects the given theorist's main ideas, and how it relates to other course materials (assigned for that day and for previous theorists). The following works are available for this option (you may not choose a work you have already read).

| Major Work | Social Theorist | Date of Presentation |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>The German Ideology, Part I</i> | Karl Marx | Friday, January 19 |
| <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> and <i>The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte</i> (parts 1 and 7) | Karl Marx | Monday, January 22 |
| <i>Suicide</i> | Emile Durkheim | Friday, January 26 |
| <i>Elementary Forms of the Religious Life</i> | Emile Durkheim | Monday, January 29 |
| <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i> | Max Weber | Wednesday, January 31 |
| Selections from <i>On Individuality and Social Forms</i> | Georg Simmel | Wednesday, February 7 |
| Selections from <i>The Interpretation of Cultures</i> | Erving Goffman | Friday, February 23 |
| <i>The Social Construction of Reality</i> | Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann | Monday, February 28 |
| <i>The Sacred Canopy</i> | Peter Berger | Friday, March 2 |
| Selections from <i>Discipline and Punish</i> | Michele Foucault | Monday, March 19 |
| Selections from <i>Distinction</i> | Pierre Bourdieu | Monday, March 26 |
| <i>Purity and Danger</i> | Mary Douglas | Friday, March 30 |
| Selections from <i>The Sociology of Philosophies</i> | Randall Collins | Wednesday, April 11 |

The benefits of the in-class presentation are that it gives the student the chance 1) to delve more deeply into one theorist's writings, which likely could be helpful for one of the short papers as well; 2) can happen throughout the semester, so it is less likely to occur at a time when multiple assignments are due; and 3) requires no exam preparation time during midterms. However, these works are dense and, at times, difficult to understand. I expect both assignments will require about the same amount of time, and I leave it up to you to decide which is more in line with your personal preferences and scheduling demands this semester. This will constitute 20% of the final course grade.

During finals week (April 30-May 4), each student will meet with me for 20-30 minutes for a quasi-open book conversational/oral final exam to be held in my office. Students may bring

three 5 x 8" index cards to the exam to help them recall course materials during the conversation (these will be turned into the professor at the end of the conversation). This final will be comprehensive in scope, covering readings, class discussions, and course material from all 15 weeks of the semester. Approximately one-third of the questions will be drawn from lecture material, one third from topics raised in class discussions, and one-third from material assigned in the readings but not covered in class. We will have an in-class practice round during the last week of classes. This conversational exam will constitute 30% of the final course grade.

Mark Twain once 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 (which will be taken every day) will constitute 20% of the final grade (in essence, each class session is worth .5% of the final course grade). If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get copies of any materials handed out and lecture/discussion notes as well as to be apprised of any announcements (about assignments or changes to the syllabus) made during class. I do not provide those to students who are absent. By the same token, I use email to make certain announcements throughout the semester. I expect that you will read any email I send within 24 hours, and I will do the same.

All students, including those taking the course on a pass/fail basis, must complete all course requirements in order to receive a passing grade. The two papers as well as the midterm assignment and the final exam are covered by the Rice Honor System. Violations include, but are not limited to, cheating on exams, having unauthorized knowledge of exam questions, and plagiarizing the work of another person as your own. Students are not to discuss any aspect of the conversational exam meetings (questions, format) with other students.

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

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Integration Short Paper 1 | 15% |
| Midterm Assignment (conversational exam or in-class presentation) | 20% |
| Integration Short Paper 2 | 15% |
| Conversational Final Exam | 30% |
| Class attendance and participation | 20% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

The grading scale for this course is as follows

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------|---|-------|----|-------|
| A+ | 99-100 | A | 94-98 | A- | 90-93 |
| B+ | 87-89 | B | 84-86 | B- | 80-83 |
| C+ | 77-79 | C | 74-76 | C- | 70-73 |
| D+ | 67-69 | D | 64-66 | D- | 60-63 |
| F | 59 and below | | | | |

Course philosophy and structure

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact Disability Support Services in the Ley Student Center.

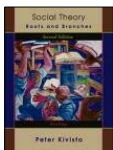
The course structure seeks to address these topics with pedagogical variety, active classroom engagement, careful attention to classic and contemporary texts (with eyes toward both appreciation and critique), and theory construction by students themselves on pressing issues.

The quality of our time together depends upon all of us. Social theory is dense material; a single page of Marx can take several minutes to read and digest. Theory deals with abstract ideas, much like philosophy. It cannot be memorized and often takes several pages to make a single, important point. I often read theory assignments twice; you might do the same. We will also spend some class time carefully examining particular passages, engaging in textual analysis much like a literature course. Everyone will be expected to participate in class discussions; you may be called upon to refresh our memory of the main ideas of a particular reading or to relate one theorist's ideas with another. That means you have to read consistently and thoroughly. You should bring readings to class everyday and be prepared to answer one another's questions.

Social theory can be boring and tedious, but I find it exciting and extremely rewarding. Think of this course as a gift—never before have you had the chance to think deeply about some of the most important matters facing our society. If you are like most people, the frenetic pace of college and career will keep you from thinking this deeply ever again. This is a time for you to come to your own conclusions, but you can only do that after considering what some of the greatest minds have had to say before you. Emile Durkheim wrote, “If you wish to mature your thought, apply yourself scrupulously to the study of a great master; dismantle a system down to its most secret workings.” That is our aim, and if we're successful, none of us will be the same.

Course materials and logistics

Each student should purchase the following items for the course:



- ◆ One copy of *Social Theory: Roots and Branches* Second Edition by Peter Kivisto (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2003)—available in the campus bookstore
- ◆ One copy of the theoretical text of your choosing (for those opting for the class presentation midterm assignment)
- ◆ Electronic course readings: available free via email or my website

Course outline

Dates to Remember

- ◆ No Class: Monday, January 15 (Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday)
- ◆ Integration Short Paper 1 Due: Friday, February 16 at the start of class

- ◆ Conversational Midterms: February 28-March 2 (Wednesday-Friday) and March 12-14 (Monday-Wednesday); student chooses meeting time (before or after spring break)
- ◆ Spring Break: March 3-11
- ◆ Spring Recess: April 5-6
- ◆ No Class: Wednesday, April 18
- ◆ Integration Short Paper 2 Due/Last Day of Class: Wednesday, April 25
- ◆ Conversational Finals: April 30-May 4; student chooses meeting time

Week 1: Introduction & Foundations of Social Theory: January 8-12

- ◆ Course overview; syllabus; introductions
- ◆ Philosophical and social foundations of the rise of social theory (Saint-Simon)
- ◆ Adam Smith and the modern world
- ◆ Tocqueville and social analysis

for Friday, January 12:

Read selections from Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (handout)

Volume I: Author's Introduction (9-20); Chapter 3 (50-57), Chapter 5 (61-98)

Volume II, Part 1: Chapter 2 (433-436)



for Wednesday, January 17:

Read selections from Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (handout)

Volume II, Book 1: Chapter 5 (442-449; 572-580), Chapters 9-12 (590-603)

Volume II, Part 2: Chapter 6 (690-695)

Read Karl Marx in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Alienated Labor” and “Theses on Feuerbach” (6-15)

Week 2: Tocqueville & Marx: January 15-19

- ◆ No Class: Monday, January 15 (Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday)
- ◆ Tocqueville as social observer: religion, politics, gender, community, civic life

for Friday, January 19:

Read Karl Marx in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Manifesto of the Community Party,” and “Commodities” (16-31)

Read “The Future of American Labor: Reinventing Unions” by Kim Voss and Rick Fantasia, *Contexts* Volume 3: 35-41 (pdf file)

- ◆ Marx: labor; means of production; theory of social life (economics at center); alienation; dynamism
- ◆ Historical materialism: theory and praxis; commodity
- ◆ Capital; class structure (bourgeoisie and proletariat); surplus value
- ◆ Social theory today—labor unions and Marx



for Monday, January 22:

Read “The American Class Structure” by Erik Olin Wright, *American Sociological Review* Volume 47: 709-726 (pdf file)

Read Karl Marx in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
 “The General Formula for Capital” (32-37)

Week 3: Marx and Social Class; Durkheim: January 22-26

- ◆ *Roger and Me*: social class in America
- ◆ Cross-national comparisons on social class (Erik Olin Wright)

for Wednesday, January 24:

Read Emile Durkheim in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
 “On Mechanical and Organic Solidarity,” “What Is a Social Fact,” and “Primitive Classification” (38-48, 56-59)

- ◆ Changing societies: organic and mechanical solidarity
- ◆ Development of new academic disciplines: Comte and Spencer
- ◆ Structure v. Agency
- ◆ Schemas and classification

for Friday, January 26:

Read Emile Durkheim in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
 “Anomic Suicide” (49-55)



- ◆ Anomie and society
- ◆ 2 x 2 tables and the sociological method

for Monday, January 29:

Read Emile Durkheim in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
 “The Human Meaning of Religion” (60-67)

Read “Civil Religion in America” by Robert Bellah, *The Robert Bellah Reader*, 225-245
 (pdf file)

Read “Yoga and Rebirth in America: Asian Religions Are Here to Stay” by Wendy Cadge and Courtney Bender, *Contexts* Volume 3: 45-51 (pdf file)

Week 4: Durkheim and Religion; Weber and Religion: January 29-February 2

- ◆ Sociology of Religion: classical and contemporary approaches

for Wednesday, January 31:

Read Max Weber in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
 “The Spirit of Capitalism” (74-81)

- ◆ Capitalism and religion: Weber’s *Spirit*
- ◆ Weber and Marx in conversation on the economy



for Friday, February 2:

Read Max Weber in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
 “Bureaucracy” and “The Nature of Charismatic Domination” (82-94)

Read “When Public Institutions Fail: Coping with Dysfunctional Government in Post-Soviet Russia” by Theodore P. Gerger, *Contexts* Volume 3:20-28 (pdf file)

Read “Violent Fatalities in Child Care” by Julia Wrigley and Joanna Dreby, *Contexts* Volume 5: 35-40 (pdf file)

- ◆ Bureaucracy
- ◆ Forms of Authority
- ◆ Modern society and social structures—institutions as organizing frames

for Monday, February 5:

Read Max Weber in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Objectivity’ in Social Science” and “Class, Status, Party” (68-73, 95-100)

Week 5: Weber, Simmel, Freud, and Mead: February 5-9

- ◆ Empirical sociology; *verstehen*
- ◆ Forms of social power: economic, political, social
- ◆ Marx and Weber on power/domination
- ◆ Class and social institutions: social clubs
- ◆ *People Like Us*

for Wednesday, February 7:

Read Georg Simmel in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Fashion,” “The Stranger,” and “Flirtation” (101-106, 119-128)



- ◆ Simmel: leisure and consumption
- ◆ Forms of social differentiation: gender and ethnic relations
- ◆ Toennies: community and association

for Friday, February 9:

Read Sigmund Freud in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Civilizations and Its Discontents” (138-145)

Read George Herbert Mead in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Fusion of the ‘I’ and the ‘Me’ in Social Activities” (146-150)



- ◆ Relations between sociology and psychology (culture and cognition; culture as analog to personality)
- ◆ Social understandings from different perspectives (Freud v. Marx)
- ◆ Objective and subjective social perspectives (I/Me)

for Monday, February 12:

Read W.E.B. Du Bois in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Conservation of Races” (157-161)

Read “Introduction: Religion and the Racialized Society” and “Chapter 1: Confronting the Black-White Racial Divide” by Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 (1-19) (pdf file)

Read “Black Public Intellectuals: From Du Bois to the Present” by Patricia Hill Collins, *Contexts* Volume 4: 22-27 (pdf file)

Read “Race as Class” by Herbert J. Gans, *Contexts* Volume 4:17-21 (pdf file)

Week 6: Du Bois, Addams, and Theory in Conversation with Research: February 12-16

- ◆ Lincoln’s Birthday: let’s talk about race in America—a conversation with Professor Michael O. Emerson, Center on Race, Religion, and Urban Life
- ◆ Assimilation and cultural pluralism
- ◆ Urban sociology: the Chicago (Houston) School of Sociology
- ◆ Du Bois and social theory



for Wednesday, February 14:

Read Jane Addams in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Utilization of Women in City Government” (166-172)

Read “Marriage: The Good, the Bad, and the Greedy” by Naomi Gerstel and Natalia Sarkisian, *Contexts* Volume 5:16-21 (pdf file)

- ◆ Early treatments of gender relations
- ◆ Marriage as a social institution

for Friday, February 16:

Integrative Short Paper 1 due at start of class

for Monday, February 19:

Read Robert K. Merton in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Unanticipated Consequences of Social Action” (180-187)

Read Talcott Parsons in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Functional Prerequisites of Social Systems” (188-193)

Read Jeffrey Alexander in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“After Neofunctionalism” (200-207)

Week 7: Functionalism and Conflict Theory: February 19-23



- ◆ Parsons: personality, social system, culture; AGIL
- ◆ Merton
- ◆ Micro v. macro theories of social action
- ◆ Structural functionalism

for Wednesday, February 21:

Read Lewis Coser in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Function of Social Conflict” (208-211)

Read C. Wright Mills in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Culture and Politics” (212-217)

Read Randall Collins in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Basics of Conflict Theory” (227-234)

- ◆ Social Conflict (Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel, Parsons, Coser)
- ◆ History as ongoing story of conflict
- ◆ Mills and radical sociology



for Friday, February 23:

Read Herbert Blumer in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Society as Symbolic Interaction” (241-247)

Read Erving Goffman in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Performances” (248-253)

Read “Out-of-Frame Activity” by Erving Goffman in *Frame Analysis*, London: Penguin Books, 1975 (105-112) (pdf file)

Read “The Balinese Cockfight as Play” by Erving Goffman in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books, 1973 (113-121) (pdf file)



- ◆ Symbolic Interactionism
- ◆ Dramaturgic Approach to Social Life; impression management; front stage vs. back stage
- ◆ Goffman: everyday life as drama (winks point to symbol systems)

for Monday, February 26:

Read Alfred Schutz in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Indirect Social Relationships” (262-267)

Read Alfred Schutz, “The Phenomenology of the Social World,” pages 32-41 (pdf file)

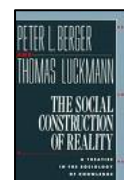
Read “Why Are There So Many ‘Minorities?’” by Mitch Berbrier, *Contexts* Volume 3: 38-44 (pdf file)

Week 8: Phenomenology and Social Constructionism: February 26-March 2

- ◆ Schutz as philosophical forerunner for social constructionism
- ◆ “Minority” status as a socially-constructed category
- ◆ Review of first seven weeks of course
 - ❖ Philosophical and social forerunners to the rise of social theory
 - ❖ Tocqueville
 - ❖ Marx
 - ❖ Durkheim
 - ❖ Weber
 - ❖ Simmel
 - ❖ Du Bois, Addams
 - ❖ Freud, Mead
 - ❖ Functionalism
 - ❖ Conflict Theory
 - ❖ Symbolic Interactionism

Conversational Midterm Exams (by appointment) Wednesday, February 28-Friday, March 2

for Wednesday, February 28:



Read Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann “The Social Construction of Reality,” 42-50
(pdf file)

Read “Surrenders and Quagmires” by Robin Wagner-Pacifici, *Contexts* Volume 5: 30-33
(pdf file)

- ◆ Social Constructionism
- ◆ Sociology of Culture
- ◆ Neoinstitutionalism and in-class analysis of social institutions influencing the lives of Rice undergraduate students

Spring Break: March 3-11

for Monday, March 12:

Read Harold Garfinkel in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Rational Properties of Scientific and Common Sense Activities” (275-283)

Read “The Politics of Small Things, Left and Right” by Jeffrey C. Goldfarb, *Contexts*
Volume 5: 26-32 (pdf file)

Week 9: Ethnomethodology and Rational Choice Theory: March 12-16

Conversational Midterm Exams (by appointment) Monday, March 12-Wednesday, March 14



- ◆ Garfinkel and ethnomethodology: how social order is created and shared
- ◆ Conversation analysis
- ◆ Microsociological analysis

for Wednesday, March 14:

Read George Homans in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Social Behavior as Exchange” (294-304)

Read Peter Blau in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Formulation of Exchange Theory” (334-341)

Read “Who Do Taxi Drivers Trust?” by Heather Hamill and Diego Gambetta, *Contexts*
Volume 5: 29-33 (pdf file)

- ◆ Behaviorism
- ◆ Individualism
- ◆ Exchange theory (Blau) and the rise of rational choice in social science

for Friday, March 16:

Read James Coleman in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Human Capital and Social Capital” (317-324)

Read Michael Hechter in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“The Emergence of Cooperative Social Institutions” (294-304)

- ◆ Rational choice and forms of capital: social, cultural, human, political, economic
- ◆ Quantitative analyses in social sciences—a conversation with Professor Bridget Gorman, Department of Sociology

for Monday, March 19:

Read Michel Foucault in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Panopticism” (410-416)

Read Michel Foucault, “Truth and Power,” 203-210 (reprinted from *Power/Knowledge*)
(pdf file)

Read “Can the Police Be Reformed” by Ronald Weitzer, *Contexts* Volume 4: 21-26
(pdf file)

Week 10: Foucault and Feminist Theory: March 19-23

- ◆ Postmodernism
- ◆ Post-structuralism and social theory
- ◆ Foucault: Power, discipline, subjectivity
- ◆ Sociology of knowledge (case of Jacques Derrida)



for Wednesday, March 21:

Read Judith Butler in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Subversive Bodily Acts” (342-349)

Read “Feminist Critiques of the Separative Model of Self: Implications for Rational Choice Theory” by Paula England and Barbara Stanek Kilbourne, *Rationality and Society* Volume 2: 156-171 (pdf file)

- ◆ Foucault and sociology of gender and sexuality
- ◆ Feminist social thought
- ◆ Relating gender issues to other social theories

for Friday, March 23:

Read Dorothy E. Smith in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“Sociology from Women’s Experience: A Reaffirmation” (360-370)

Read “The Sanctity of Sunday Football: Why Men Love Sports” by Douglas Hartmann, *Contexts* Volume 2: 13-19 (pdf file)

Read “I Can’t Even Think Straight: Queer Theory and the Missing Sexual Revolution in Sociology” by Arlene Stein and Ken Plummer, *Sociological Theory* Volume 12: 178-187 (pdf file)

- ◆ Guest presentation: Kristen Schilt and Elizabeth Long, Department of Sociology: Theories of Gender/Queer Theory

for Monday, March 26:

Read Pierre Bourdieu in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*



“Structures and the Habitus” (440-447)

Read “Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu” by Rogers Brubaker, *Theory and Society* Volume 14: 745-775.

Week 11: Cultural Analysis: Douglas and Bourdieu: March 26-30

- ◆ Bourdieu: fields, structure, capital, classifications
- ◆ Reflexive sociology and the sociology of cultural tastes
- ◆ Connecting contemporary theoretical branches with classical roots (Tocqueville, Weber, Durkheim, Marx, Simmel)

for Wednesday, March 28:

Read “Chess, Cheerleading, Choping: What Gets You Into College” by Jay Gabler and Jason Kaufman, *Contexts* Volume 5: 45-49 (pdf file)

Read Pierre Bourdieu, “Social Space and Symbolic Space,” 267-275 (reprinted from *Poetics Today*) (pdf file)

Read “As American as Apple Pie: Poverty and Welfare” by Mark R. Rank, *Contexts* Volume 2: 41-49 (pdf file)

- ◆ Social systems and classification: the case of higher education
- ◆ Modes of distinction: the upper class from bourgeois tastes; the middle class from the poor

for Friday, March 30:

Read “Symbolic Pollution” by Mary Douglas, 155-159 (reprinted from *Purity and Danger*) (pdf file)

Read “Food as a System of Communication” in *In the Active Voice*, Boston: Routledge, 1982 [1978], 82-124 (pdf file)

- ◆ Douglas: dirt and pollution
- ◆ Symbol systems and cultural analysis



for Monday, April 2:

Read Jurgen Habermas in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*

“On Systematically Distorted Communication” (390-396)

Read, “Civil Society and the Political Public Sphere,” by Jurgen Habermas, 358-376 (reprinted from *Between Facts and Norms*) (pdf file)

Week 12: Habermas and Critical Theory: April 2-6

- ◆ Communication and social analysis
- ◆ A theory of the public sphere
- ◆ Civil society
- ◆ Lifeworld



for Wednesday, April 4:

Read “The Tasks of a Critical Theory of Society” by Jurgen Habermas, 377-400
(reprinted from *The Theory of Communicative Action*) (pdf file)

- ◆ Critical Theory
- ◆ Gramsci, Adorno, and dominant ideology—connections with conflict theory

Spring Recess: April 5-6

for Monday, April 9:

Read *The McDonaldization of Society* by George Ritzer, 12-19 and other selection TBA,
Newbury Park, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1993
Read “Arnold Schwarzenegger, Ally McBeal and Arranged Marriages: Globalization on
the Ground in India” by Steve Derne, *Contexts* Volume 2: 12-18.

Week 13: Globalization, Network Theory, and Evolutionary Theory: April 9-13

- ◆ Interconnectedness of social systems
- ◆ The sociology of global trends: demography, health,
media, commerce, and political systems
- ◆ Macrosociological analysis



for Wednesday, April 11:

Read Manuel Castells in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*
“Materials for an Exploratory Theory of the Network Society” (477-488)
Read “The Strength of Weak Ties” by Mark S. Granovetter, *American Journal of
Sociology* Volume 78: 1360-1380.



- ◆ Network theory: rise of three world philosophies
- ◆ Theory meets praxis: Getting a job and network theory

for Friday, April 13:

Read “The Demographic Perspective” by Glenn R. Carroll and Michael T. Hannan in *The
Demography of Corporations and Industries*. Princeton: Princeton University
Press, 2000, 17-34 (pdf file)

- ◆ Evolutionary perspectives to social phenomena
- ◆ Population ecology (organizations)

for Monday, April 16:

Read “The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in
Organizational Fields,” by Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell. *American
Sociological Review* Volume 48: 147-160.
Read “The Nation as Babbitt: How Countries Conform” by John W. Meyer, *Contexts*
Volume 3: 42-47.

Week 14: Neoinstitutionalism and Systems Theory: April 16-20

- ◆ Organizations and social networks
- ◆ Institutions—Weberian antecedents and contemporary applications
- ◆ Nation-states: institutionalization and social conformity

No Class: Wednesday, April 18

for Friday, April 20:

Read “The Tipping Point” by Malcolm Gladwell, *The New Yorker*, June 3, 1996: 32-38 (pdf file)



- ◆ Society as a Complex System
- ◆ Complexity and postmodernism
- ◆ Simmel (dyad-triad): early articulation of “tipping point”

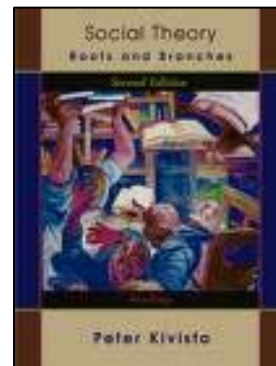
Week 15: Conclusion and Semester Wrap-Up: April 23 & 25

- ◆ Practice Rounds of Conversational Final Exam

for Wednesday, April 25:

Integrative Short Paper 2 due at start of class

- ◆ Review of entire course
 - ❖ Philosophical and social forerunners: Comte, Saint-Simon, Tocqueville
 - ❖ Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel
 - ❖ Simmel
 - ❖ Du Bois, Addams
 - ❖ Freud, Mead
 - ❖ Functionalism
 - ❖ Conflict Theory
 - ❖ Symbolic Interactionism
 - ❖ Ethnomethodology
 - ❖ Rational Choice Theory
 - ❖ Foucault, Feminist Theory
 - ❖ Douglas, Bourdieu
 - ❖ Habermas and Critical Theory
 - ❖ Globalization, Network Theory, Evolutionary Theory
 - ❖ Neoinstitutionalism. Systems Theory



Last Day of Class: Wednesday, April 25

Conversational Final Exams (by appointment): April 30-May 4