

SC215.02 :: Social Theory
Spring 2008
M / W 4:30 – 5:45
Carney 102

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Course Overview

This course presents a survey of classical and contemporary social theory. Our readings are organized into the following five sections:

- (1) Welcome to the Social : An Introduction to Social Theory : January 14th – January 23rd,
- (2) Marx, Weber, & Durkheim : January 28th – February 13th,
- (3) Self and Society in Classical Social Theory : February 18th – March 25th,
- (4) From Classical Critical Theory [...to...] Classical Contemporary Theory : March 3rd – March 19th,
- (5) What Comes After the Classics : March 24th – April 31st.

Course Requirements

My hope for this class is that we will collectively discuss, analyze, and come to understand important primary and secondary social theory texts. Given this collective project, the requirements for this course emphasize both preparation and participation. Of course, participation and our collective project depend on rigorous preparation outside of class.

Grading

Class Preparation (55% of your final grade)

Participation (10% of your final grade)

Final Essay (35% of your final grade)

Please Note: There are no extra credit opportunities.

Requirements

Class Preparation (55%)

Your **class preparation** grade includes two components :

- (1) Primary-Text Worksheets (30%)
- (2) Questions, Comments, & Key Passages (25%)

(1) Primary-Text Worksheets (30%)

Assignment Overview: For each primary text that we read in sections (2), (3), and (4), you will fill out a worksheet (available online). This worksheet will ask you to fill-in important historical and biographical information about a given text and its author. Also, the sheet asks you to briefly discuss each text's major points.

Please Note: I have marked readings for which a worksheet is due with "~" in the syllabus.

Grading: Your worksheet grade will be based on both your "completion rate" of the worksheets and the quality of your responses. Your completion rate is worth 55% of your worksheet grade and your quality grade is worth 45% of your worksheet grade.

Completion Rate: Your completion rate will simply correspond to the percentage of the worksheets that you complete. For example, if you complete all areas of all the worksheets, your completion grade for that section is 100%.

Grade Conversion Scale

95%-100%	...	A
90%-94%	...	A-
87%-89%	...	B+
84%-86%	...	B
80%-83%	...	B-
77%-79%	...	C+
74%-76%	...	C
70%-73%	...	C-
<i>etc.</i>		

Quality: Over the course of the semester, I will randomly select a sample of the worksheets to grade for quality. Your grade for this section will be based on the adequacy of your responses. Worksheets graded for quality

will receive a letter grade of A (Exceptional Quality), B (High Quality), C (Adequate Quality), D (Incomplete), F (No Credit).

Due Dates: Worksheets are due at the beginning of each class for which they are required. No late worksheets will be considered.

(2) Questions, Comments, & Key Passages (25%)

Assignment Overview: For each class in all sections, you should bring two or three pre-written (typed or legibly hand-written) questions and/or comments about course readings. Also, with your questions and comments, you reproduce one short passage that you find important within the readings and be prepared to elaborate on why you find that passage important.

As the semester progresses, your questions and comments should become increasingly analytic. It will always be fine for you to bring in a very general question about a key passage or idea from a text, but you should also strive to confront some of the major issues of social theory, as well as work to make connections between readings.

Grading: I will randomly collect the pre-written questions during *at least* five classes, one-per-section. All collected questions will be graded with the following letter grade: A (Exceptional Quality), B (High Quality), C (Adequate Quality), D (Incomplete), F (No Credit).

Participation (10%)

Assignment Overview: All students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions. Participation, though, is linked to preparation. Worksheets and randomly collected questions will be one measure of attendance. Also, while I will not regularly take attendance, I will note frequent absences and this will affect your participation grade. Finally, I expect all students to contribute to class discussions. Since there are approximately thirty students in our class, I do not expect all students to participate in all classes; however, I do expect consistent contributions from all students. I understand that for some students class participation can induce all sorts of anxieties. I encourage all students to attend my offices to talk about strategies for participation, as well as our course material.

Grading: I will grade participation with the following letter grades: A (Exceptional Quality), B (High Quality), C (Adequate Quality), D (Incomplete), F (No Credit).

Final Essay (35%)

Assignment Overview: Our final essay will be a take home essay. The length of the assignment, as well as the requirements of it, will be announced when we begin the fifth section of the course. The final exam is due on Wednesday, May 7th, in McGuinn 410 by 5:45. Exams turned in after 5:45 will lose one letter grade per day late.

Please Note: Since you will receive the final exam more than a month before it is due, I will not grant extensions for the final without written permission from your Dean.

Course Readings

- (1) *Classical Sociological Theory, Second Edition*. Edited by Craig Calhoun, Joseph Gerteis, James Moody, Steven Pfaff, and Indermohan Virk. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.
 - a. *Classical Sociological Theory* is abbreviated as *CST* in the *Course Schedule*.
- (2) Elliott, Anthony. *Concepts of the Self*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2007.
 - a. *Concepts of the Self* is abbreviated as *CotS* in the *Course Schedule*.
- (3) Selected Readings
 - a. Course/Online Reserves at <http://www.bc.edu/libraries/>
 - i. Please note that online reserve readings are marked with an asterick (“*”) in the course schedule.
 - b. Web readings
 - i. Please note that readings available online are marked by @ in the course schedule.

Course Schedule

- Readings should be done *by* the class assigned in the *Course Schedule*.
- To facilitate class discussion, please try to bring books or copies of readings to class.
- **Remember:** a "~" in the course readings means that a worksheet is due for that article!

(1) Classes 1 – 4

Welcome to the Social : Introduction to Social Theory : January 14th – January 23rd

- (1) **Monday, January 14th**
 - a. Introduction to Course
- (2) **Wednesday, January 16th**
 - a. Introduction to Social Theory, Part 1
 - i. @ Bruno Latour, "A Plea for Earthly Sciences"
 1. (<http://www.bruno-latour.fr/articles/article/102-BSA-GB.pdf>)

- ii. @ Dictionary of Sociology, Oxford Reference.
 - 1. Structure
 - 2. Agency

Please see the final page of the syllabus for information about accessing the Dictionary of Sociology.

(3) Monday, January 21st

- a. Introduction to Social Theory, Part 2
 - i. Elliott, "Introduction," *Concepts of the Self*
 - ii. * Anthony Giddens, "Chapter 21, Sociological Theory," *sociology, third edition*.

(4) Wednesday, January 23rd

- a. Introduction to Social Theory, Part 3
 - i. * Collins & Makowsky, "Chapter One, The Prophets of Paris: Saint-Simon and Comte," *The Discovery of Society*
 - ii. "Introduction to Part I," *Classical Sociological Theory*
 - iii. (Optional) Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?," *Classical Sociological Theory*

(2) Classes 5 - 10

Marx, Weber, Durkheim : January 28th – February 13th

(5) Monday, January 28th

- a. Karl Marx, Part 1
 - i. Introduction to Part II, *Classical Sociological Theory*
 - ii. ~ Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," *Classical Sociological Theory*

(6) Wednesday, January 30

- a. Karl Marx, Part 2
 - i. ~ Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," *Classical Sociological Theory*
 - ii. ~ Karl Marx, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," *Classical Sociological Theory*, pages 96-104

(7) Monday, February 4th

- a. Max Weber, Part 1
 - i. "Introduction to Part IV," *CST*
 - ii. ~ Max Weber, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," *CST*

(8) Wednesday, February 6th

- a. Max Weber, Part 2
 - i. ~ Max Weber, "The Types of Legitimate Domination," *CST*
 - ii. ~ Max Weber, "Bureaucracy," *CST*

(9) Monday, February 11th

- a. Emile Durkheim, Part 1
 - i. "Introduction to Part III," *CST*

- ii. ~ Emile Durkheim, "The Division of Labor in Society," *CST*
- (10) **Wednesday, February 13th**
 - a. Emile Durkheim, Part 2
 - i. ~ Emile Durkheim, "The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life," *CST*
 - ii. ~ Emile Durkheim, "Suicide," *CST*

(3) Classes 11 – 15

Self and Society in Classical Social Theory : February 18th – Wednesday, March 5th

- (11) **Monday, February 18th**
 - a. Self and Society in Classical Social Theory, Part 1
 - i. "Introduction to Part V," *CST*
 - ii. ~ George Herbert Mead, "The Self," *CST*
- (12) **Wednesday, February 20th**
 - a. Self and Society in Classical Social Theory, Part 2
 - i. ~ Georg Simmel, "The Stranger," *CST*
 - ii. ~ W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Souls of Black Folk," *CST*
- (13) **Monday, February 25th**
 - a. Self and Society in Classical Social Theory, Part 3
 - i. * ~ Erving Goffman, "Introduction," *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*
 - ii. "Self, Society, and Everyday Life," *CotS*
- (14) **Wednesday, February 27th**
 - a. Self and Society in Classical Social Theory, Part 4
 - i. * ~ Simone De Beauvoir, "Introduction," *The Second Sex*
 - ii. "Sex, Sexuality, and Gender," *CotS, 103-121*

(4) Classes 15 – 20 : Wednesday, March 5th – Wednesday, March 19th

From Classical Critical Theory [... to ...] Postmodern Social Theory

- (15) **Wednesday, March 5th**
 - a. Critical Theory
 - i. "Introduction to Part VI," *CST*
 - ii. ~ Horkheimer and Adorno, "The Culture Industry," *CST*
 - iii. ~ Marcuse, "One-Dimensional Man," *CST*
- (16) **Monday, March 10th**
 - a. "Classical Contemporary Theory" : Foucault
 - i. "Technologies of the Self," *CotS*
- (17) **Wednesday, March 12th**
 - a. "Classical Contemporary Theory" : Bourdieu
 - i. * ~ Bourdieu, "Social Space and Symbolic Power"
- (18) **Monday, March 17th**
 - a. Postmodern Social Theory

- i. "The Postmodern Self" & "Conclusion," *CotS*
- (19) **Wednesday, March 19th**
 - a. Postmodern Social Theory
 - i. * Steven Seidman, "The End of Sociological Theory"

(5) Classes 20-30 : Monday, March 24th – Wednesday, April 30th
What Comes After the Classics

- (20) **Monday, March 24th**
 - a. After Modernity, Part 1: Risk Society
 - i. * Anthony Giddens, "Risk & Responsibility"
 - ii. * Ulrich Beck, "The Terrorist Threat: World Risk Society Revisited."
- (21) **Wednesday, March 26th**
 - a. After Modernity, Part 2: We Have Never Been Modern
 - i. * Bruno Latour, "Crisis," *We Have Never Been Modern*
- (22) **Monday, March 31st**
 - a. After Objectivity, Part 1
 - i. * Bruno Latour, "When Things Strike Back"
 - ii. * Pages 188 - 196 in Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges"
- (23) **Wednesday, April 3rd**
 - a. After Objectivity, Part 2
 - i. * John Law & John Urry, "Enacting the Social"
- (24) **Monday, April 7th**
 - a. After Objectivity, Part 3
 - i. * Dorothy Smith, "The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Methodology."
- (25) **Wednesday, April 9th**
 - a. The Missing Feminist Revolution, Part 1
 - i. * Stacey & Thorne, "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology."
 - ii. * Stacey, "Feminism and Sociology in 2005: What Are We Missing?"
- (26) **Monday, April 14th**
 - a. The Missing Feminist Revolution, Part 2
 - i. * Barrie Thorne, "How Can Feminist Sociology Sustain Its Critical Edge?"
 - ii. * bell hooks, "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory."
 - iii. * Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others"
- (27) **Wednesday, April 17th**
 - a. Race Theory
 - i. * Howard Winant, "Race and Race Theory."
- (28) **Wednesday, April 23rd**

- a. Challenging the Colonized Subject
 - i. * Edward Said, "Representing the Colonized"
 - ii. Viewing, *The Battle of Algiers*.

(29)Monday, April 28th

- a. Challenging the Colonized Subject
 - i. * Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Critical Fanonism."
 - ii. Viewing, *The Battle of Algiers*.

(30)Wednesday, April 30th

- i. * Michael Kaufman, "The World: Film Studies; What Does the Pentagon See in the 'Battle of Algiers'?"
- ii. * Susan Sontag, "Regarding the Torture of Others."
- iii. * Seymour M. Hersch, "Torture at Abu Ghraib."
- iv. Viewing, *The Battle of Algiers*.

Academic Integrity

In class, we will work together to comprehend social theory texts. In the spirit of this collective effort, please feel welcome to speak with classmates about primary text worksheets, course readings, and the final exam. However, your work must be original and, when using, paraphrasing, or referencing the work of another, you must include a citation of the source. I will treat plagiarism in accordance with Boston College's Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures.

“The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. Presentation of others' work as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the educational process.”

You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with these policies and procedures, which you can find at - <http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>

To Access the *Dictionary of Sociology*

- (1) Visit the BC Library's Research Guide Page for Sociology @
<http://libguides.bc.edu/content.php?pid=1155>
- (2) Click the "Dictionaries and Encyclopedias" tab at the top of the page
- (3) Scroll down to the following citation : Scott, John and Gordon Marshall. 2005.
[Dictionary of Sociology](#) Oxford Reference Online. (BC Community Only)
- (4) Click the *Dictionary of Sociology* link & log-in with your BC account information.
- (5) Search the terms assigned in the Course Schedule. **Be sure to choose "Search this book" when searching, not "Search whole database."**

Assigned Terms

1. Structure
2. Agency

(6) Enjoy!

PS: Please feel welcome to use the *Dictionary of Sociology* to search for information on the theorists who we read, as well as some of their terms.