Introduction to Sociology (SC001.01)
Spring 2013
McGuinn 415
Tuesday & Thursday, 10:30-11:45

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Office Hours: Tue. and Thur. 12-1pm and by appointment
Mailbox: #49 in McGuinn 410

Sociology could be defined as the scientific study of human society, ranging from the smallest of social interactions to the functioning of global society. This course is designed to introduce you to the study, theory, and methods of sociology. We will examine connections between the individual and society, structures of power, social institutions, and social change. As a Boston College core course, this class will also incorporate the following elements:

1. **An exploration of perennial questions of human existence.** What is society and what is the individual’s place within it? To what extent are we free agents and to what extent are our choices, behaviors, and preferences influenced by society? Why do some groups in society have more power than others and how can we resist what is unjust and bring about social change?

2. **Attention to cultural diversity.** In this course we will consider in depth how race, class, gender, sexuality and other dimensions of human diversity contribute both to the individual’s experience within society and to the organization and characteristics of society itself. As we will be considering perspectives that may not be familiar to you and will be discussing sensitive subjects, I ask that you always treat your fellow classmates with respect. Focus any critical comments you may have on a student’s arguments—not on the student themselves.

3. **A historical perspective.** While much of sociology consists of the study of contemporary issues, sociologists also seek to understand how we got to where we are today. Sociological thought and theories themselves, as in other disciplines, have evolved over time and will continue to do so. Thus, we will consider both how society has changed over time and where it might be headed in the future, as well as the history and development of the sociological discipline itself.

4. **An introduction to methodologies of the field.** We will learn about some of the most common methodologies used in sociology. Throughout the course, as we read various sociological publications, we will at times consider which methods the researchers have employed and why.

5. **A strong writing component.** College is a great opportunity to develop and improve your writing skills. Written assignments will be an essential component of this class and I will aim to provide feedback that will help you improve the clarity and impact of your arguments.
6. **A contribution to the development of a personal philosophy.** One of the central aims of this course is to help you develop a *sociological imagination*. In doing so, you may be challenged to question fundamental and “common sense” assumptions—about yourself, others, relationships, race, gender, family, social class, and many other things. The aim is to help you think in new ways about society, people who are different from you, and your own life and self, and to use this knowledge and perspective to enjoy a richer understanding of the social world we all inhabit.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**
4. Additional readings on Course Reserves (“Reserve”) AND on Blackboard.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

14% Participation and Attendance
16% Quizzes (8 of 10 unannounced quizzes worth 2 points each)
20% First Paper
25% Second Paper
25% Final Exam

**Participation and Attendance:**
A large element of this class is discussion. We all benefit from having as many viewpoints and opinions shared as possible so, for this reason, attendance and participation are mandatory and make up a significant portion of your grade. High quality class participation includes listening carefully and responding thoughtfully and respectfully to others’ ideas, as well as expressing your own ideas. Keep in mind that you are not required to agree with what I say or with the readings! I hope you enjoy thinking critically about the course material, and I welcome differing opinions on all of the topics.

**Quizzes:**
Throughout the semester I will give ten unannounced short quizzes at the start of class, worth two points each. The two lowest grades will be dropped, leaving just the eight highest to be counted. They quizzes will consist of one or two short answer questions on the day’s assigned readings. Try not to fret too much about these quizzes; if you’ve done the reading, you will most likely do well and, if not, it will help you recognize that you’re slipping behind.

**Papers:**
There will be two 5-7 page sociological analysis papers. **Paper #1 is due February 28 and Paper #2 is due April 16, both at the start of class.** Late papers will drop 5% for each day they are late, taking effect at the start of class. 5 minutes late is still late! Please note that I only grant
extensions in extreme situations, and in such a case I would require a supporting note from a Dean or medical professional.

**Final Exam:**
There will be a **cumulative** final exam on **Friday, May 10 from 12:30 – 2:30 PM, location TBA.**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**
Cheating, plagiarism and fabrication of information or citations are considered extremely serious offenses, both by me and by the university, and will result in automatic course failure. As it is your obligation to be fully aware of the Boston College policies on academic honesty, please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with them at www.bc.edu/integrity.
# COURSE SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>January 15</th>
<th>Welcome! Introduction and Course Overview</th>
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<td><strong>Introduction to Sociology</strong></td>
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| January 17 | Ferguson, Ch. 1: C. Wright Mills, “Personal Experiences and Public Issues” from *The Sociological Imagination*  
Ferguson, Ch. 54: Edin and Kefalas, “Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood before Marriage”  
Blackboard: Miner, “Body Ritual among the Nacirema” |
Ferguson, Ch. 4: Hunter and McClelland, “Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology” |
| **Sociological Research Methods** |  |
| January 24 | M&B, Ch. 6: Babbie, “The Importance of Social Research”  
Ferguson, Ch. 7: Schwalbe, “Finding Out How the Social World Works”  
Reserve: Altorki, “Arab Women in the Field” |
| **Microsociology: The Self and Social Interaction in Everyday Life** |  |
| January 29 | Reserve: Cooley, “The Looking Glass Self” from *Society and the Individual*  
M&B, Ch. 15: Mead, “The Self”  
Massey, Ch. 9: Read and Bartkowski, “To Veil or Not to Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation Among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas” |
| January 31 | M&B, Ch. 20: Goffman, “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”  
Massey, Ch. 11: Anderson, “The Code of the Street” |
| February 5 | Ferguson, Ch. 18: Adler and Adler, “Peer Power: Clique Dynamics among School Children”  
M&B, Ch. 17: Kilbourne, “Socialization and the Power of Advertising” |
| **Gender Socialization and Gender Inequality** |  |
| February 7 | M&B, Ch. 39: Lorber, “‘Night to His Day’: The Social Construction of Gender”  
Reserve: West and Zimmerman, “Doing Gender”  
Ferguson, Ch. 13: Kane, “‘No Way My Boys Are Going to Be Like That!’: Parents’ Responses to Children’s Gender Nonconformity” |
| February 12 | Reserve: Kimmel, “Masculinity as Homophobia”  
Ferguson, Ch. 29: Pascoe, “‘Dude, You’re a Fag’: Adolescent Male Homophobia” |
| February 14 | M&B, Ch. 40: Benokraitis, “How Subtle Sex Discrimination Works”  
Reserve: Slaughter, “Why Women Still Can’t Have it All”  
<p>| <strong>Stratification, Class, and Economic Inequality</strong> |  |
| February 19 | Massey, Ch. 23: Ehrenreich, “Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America” |</p>
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| February 21| - Ferguson, Ch. 25: Shapiro, “The Hidden Cost of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality”  
- Ferguson, Ch. 24: “Who Rules America? The Corporate Community and the Upper Class”  
- M&B, Ch. 37: Eglitis, “The Uses of Global Poverty: How Economic Inequality Benefits the West”  |
- Ferguson, Ch. 15: Granfield, “Making It by Faking It: Working-Class Students in an Elite Academic Environment”  |
| February 28| - PAPER #1 DUE                                                               |
| March 5    | - NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK                                                    |
| March 7    | - NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK                                                    |
| March 12   | - M&B, Ch. 44: Sacks, “How Did Jews Become White Folks?”  
- M&B, Ch. 45: Zhou, “Are Asian Americans Becoming ‘White’?”  
- Massey, Ch. 22: Waters, “Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?”  |
- M&B, Ch. 43: Hill Collins, “Controlling Images and Black Women’s Oppression”  |
| March 19   | - Reserve: McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege”  
| March 26   | - M&B, Ch. 58: Bowles and Gintis, “Education and Inequality”  
- M&B, Ch. 59: Kozol, “Savage Inequalities: Children in U.S. Schools”  
- Reserve: Morris, “‘Tuck in That Shirt!’ Race, Class, Gender, and Discipline in an Urban School”  |
| March 28   | - NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK                                                    |
| March 28   | - Reserve: Kahn, “Getting In: How Elite Schools Play the College Game”  
| April 2    | - Reserve: Armstrong, et al., “Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape”  
- Reserve: Bogle, “Men, Women, and the Sexual Double Standard”  
- Reserve: Rosin, “Boys on the Side”  |
<p>| April 4    | - M&amp;B, Ch. 26: Ritzer, “McJobs: McDonaldization and the Workplace”  |</p>
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| April 9  | Reserve: Hochschild, “Exploring the Managed Heart”  
Reserve: Striffler, “Inside a Poultry Plant”  
Massey, Ch. 25: Thompson, “Hanging Tongues: A Sociological Encounter with the Assembly Line” |
| April 11 | Massey, Ch. 15: Lareau, “Concerted Cultivation and the Accomplishment of Natural Growth” from *Unequal Childhoods*  
Massey, Ch. 38: Coontz, “The Radical Idea of Marrying for Love”  
Massey, Ch. 39: Stack, “Domestic Networks” from *All Our Kin: Strategies of Survival in a Black Community* |
| April 16 | **PAPER #2 DUE** |
| April 18 | Massey, Ch. 33: Rhodes, “Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison”  
M&B, Ch. 28: Durkheim, “The Functions of Crime” |
| April 23 | Massey, Ch. 29: Chambliss, “The Saints and the Roughnecks”  
| April 25 | Reserve: Benson, “Denying the Guilty Mind: Accounting for Involvement in a White-Collar Crime”  
Massey, Ch. 36: Hunt, “Police Accounts of Normal Force” |
| April 30 | Reserve: Meyer, “If Hitler Asked You to Electrocute a Stranger, Would You? Probably”  
Ferguson, Ch. 16: Dyer, “Anybody’s Son Will Do”  
Massey, Ch. 5: Kelman and Hamilton, “The My Lai Massacre: A Crime of Obedience?” |
| May 2    | Ferguson, Ch. 57: Johnson, “What Can We Do? Becoming a Part of the Solution”  
Ferguson, Ch. 57: Anderson, “The Cosmopolitan Canopy” |
| May 10   | **FINAL EXAM, 12:30 – 2:30 PM, LOCATION TBA** |

** You are responsible for completing all course readings by the date they are listed.  
** I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time, provided I give you fair and ample warning.