
This course is a continuation of our required graduate theory course. We will focus on the problem of the social construction of the self and its relationship to broader patterns of social organization. We will also place a special emphasis on the connection between social theories and their privileged methods. Important topics include, among others, patterns of social interaction and socialization, the strengths and weaknesses of the taken-for-granted, the concept of social space and social trajectories within it, commonalities and differences between various forms of domination, and the constitutive power of expert knowledge.

Requirements

(1) 4 reaction memos (no more than 2 pages each). These papers are due about once a month. You should use clear and concise language to summarize, probe or challenge the readings. Two of these memos are directed by me, two are self-directed. You are encouraged to use the open memos as an opportunity to use the theorists to help you think through the topic of your final essay. Each reaction paper will be marked as √-, √, or √+.
   a. Reaction paper #1: Compare and contrast Simmel and Mead’s conceptualization of social interaction. Due February 6 in class.
   b. Reaction paper #2: Free reflections on weeks 4, 5, 6. Due March 6 in class.
   c. Reaction paper #3: Compare and contrast Norbert Elias’s and Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of the habitus. Due April 3 in class.
   d. Reaction paper #4: Free reflections on weeks 10, 11, 12. Due April 24 in class.

(2) One final essay (no more than 15 double-spaced pages) This essay will address an interesting empirical question of your choice. The paper should include a substantial description of your empirical case, and contrast at least two possible theoretical explanations for it, using the authors presented in this class. You should work on this paper throughout the semester and are required to come discuss the topic with me in office hours at least once. I will not read drafts before the paper is due, however you are welcome to submit a one-to-two pages progress report at any point before Spring break if you want some additional feedback. Due May 8 by email or in my mailbox.

(3) Participation in class discussions is essential, but so is courtesy vis-à-vis other students and a helpful attitude toward facilitating the collective conversation. Please be mindful that everyone should get an opportunity to participate.
Course website
A course website has been set up in bCourse (Modern Sociological Theory).

Readings
The following books are required and have been ordered from the Cal student store.


Additional readings are available from electronic reserves on the course website, under “files”.
1. **INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE. TAKING STOCK OF THE CLASSICS, LOOKING FORWARD.** (JAN 23)

**PART I. SELF AND SOCIETY.**

2. **SIMMEL (1858-1918) (JAN 30)**

**Recommended:**


**Recommended:**

**Reaction paper # 1 due in class**

4. **PHENOMENOLOGY TO ETHNOMETHODOLOGY AND NEO-INSTITUTIONALISM (FEB 13)**

**Recommended:**
FEB 20 – NO CLASS (HOLIDAY)

PART II. SOCIAL STRUCTURES

5. GOFFMAN (1922-1982): THE ORDER OF INTERACTION (FEB 27)
   - From Charles Lemert and Ann Branaman, eds. The Goffman Reader. Chapter 2
     (“Self Presentation”), Chapter 9 (“Social Life as Drama”), Chapter 10 (“Social Life
     as Ritual” until p111), Chapter 14 (“Frame analysis of Gender”).
     Riggins (Ed.), Beyond Goffman: Studies on Communication, Institution, and Social

Recommended:

6. GOFFMAN AND FANON (1925-1961): MORTIFICATION, STIGMA (MAR 6)
   - From Charles Lemert and Ann Branaman, eds. The Goffman Reader. Chapters 6-7
     (“The Mortified Self”, “The Stigmatized Self”)
   - Franz Fanon, 1994, Black Skin, White Masks. Pp17-23, 179-180. New York:
     Grove Press.
   - Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Leigh Starr, 2000, “The Case of Race Classification
     and Its Consequences. MIT Press.

Recommended:
Fred Davis, 1961, “Deviance Disavowal: The Management of Strained Interaction by the Visibly

Reaction paper #2 due in class

7. BOURDIEU (1930-2002): HABITUS (MAR 13)
     128-205.
   - Loïc Wacquant, 2011, “Habitus as Topic and Tool: Reflections on Becoming a

Recommended
Blackwell.

8. BOURDIEU: SOCIAL SPACE AND THE THEORY OF CLASSES (MAR 20)
• Pierre Bourdieu, 1984, Distinction. Harvard University Press. Preface, Pp1-97; then pick one of chapters 5, 6, or 7; Pp466-502. Expect to have to explain your chapter (working class, middle class, or upper class) to your classmates.

Recommended

MARCH 27 – NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

PART III. BRINGING HISTORY BACK IN

9. ELIAS (1897-1990). THE RISE OF SELF-CONSTRAINT. (APR 3)

Recommended

Reaction paper #3 due in class

10. FOUCAULT (1926-1984). DISCIPLINARY POWER. (APR 10)
• Tania Bucher, 2012, “Want to be on the top? Algorithmic power and the threat of invisibility on Facebook,” New Media and Society 14(7) 1164–1180.

Recommended

11. FOUCAULT. BIOPOWER. (APR 17)

Recommended

12. Liberation (Apr 24)


Recommended
Homi Bhaba, "Framing Fanon", Foreword to The Wretched of the Earth.

Reaction paper #4 due in class

13. Conclusion & Brief Presentation of Your Final Paper Topic (May 1)