

CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Sociology 920:516:01
Department of Sociology
Rutgers University
Spring 2022

Professor, Zakia Salime
Place, Davison Hall
Day and Time, Wednesday (5-8)
Email, zsalime@sociology.rutgers.edu
Office Hours. Wednesday 4pm , or by appointment

Books

Gurminder Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and Sociological Imagination* (Palgrave, 2007)
Moallem, Minoo, *Persian Carpet as a Transnational Commodity* (Routledge, 2018)
Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*
bell hooks and Stuart Hall. *Uncut Funk, A Contemplative Dialogue* (Routledge, 2017)

All articles are on Canvas

Links to other reading provided in the syllabus

Course Description

This course provides a broad overview of contemporary debates in social theory. It offers an extensive introduction to different schools of thought that have deeply impacted the debates in social theory. We will explore contemporary social debates through the influence of Semiotics, Symbolic Interaction, Structuralism, Functionalism, Structural-Functionalism, Critical Theory, Critical Race theory, Governmentality Studies, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism, Postcolonial and Subaltern Studies, as well as Feminist Theory and Public Sociology. We will explore texts that tackle questions of structure and agency, culture and politics, knowledge and power, systems, the psychological and emotional bases of domination, subjects and subjectivities, and gender, race and diasporic identities. This course is not designed to help you “apply” a particular framework or a theory, but rather to think critically about all theories and find your own.

Course objectives

- become familiar with the main conceptual and theoretical frameworks that have influenced social research broadly defined
- improve your critical thinking through cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary analyses of the social forces that work to produce structures of domination, subjects, policies and institutions
- locate your own work and interests within/and in relation to these perspectives

Class Format

The class is organized as a seminar with students taking an active role in the discussions. This entails reflecting on the readings, participating in the class discussions and bringing provocative thoughts and questions to the class on a weekly basis.

Course Requirements

1) A **weekly reaction paper**. Students must do **ALL** of the assigned readings and post a memo/reaction piece. I encourage you to include the questions that you would want to raise during the class discussion. Briefs must be posted to the course's website on Canvas by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday. Fifty percent of your final grade will be based on your class participation and the quality of these memos. Your **attendance is required** every week.

2) A **Final Paper**, due on the Mai 15. I suggest the following:

1) A **20-page research paper**, in which you explicitly utilize one or more of the theoretical frameworks discussed in this class to animate your analysis;

2) A **20-page literature review** in which you go beyond the syllabus to explore more richly debates in a particular vein of theorizing or applications of concepts in that theoretical vein;

3) A **20-page critical essay reviewing and explicitly** juxtaposing different theoretical frameworks we have explored during the semester and placing them in constructive dialogue with each other;

Class policy and Academic Integrity

We all have earned membership in this class thus we must be respectful of all the voices and different opinions and point of views. We must use this forum in a way that reflects our respect to the ethics of academic debate.

My policy about **plagiarism** is to award an **F** to the student.

Academic Integrity

I follow the Rutgers University's policy on academic integrity. Please explore the website indicated below to become more familiar with this policy:

http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

Diversity Statement

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have Instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

Class Schedule
(Subject to revision)

January 19 Introduction/Syllabus

Film, The Century of the Self

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnPmg0R1M04> (part 1)

January 26 Problematizing Modernity and the Enlightenment Project

Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (Excerpts) (Pantheon, 1978)

Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," pp. 1-34 in Timothy Mitchell, ed.,

Questions of Modernity (Minnesota, 2000)

Lila Abu-Lughod, Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World

Gurminder Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity*. Part 1 (two first chapters)

Chimamanda ngozi adichie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kWgJvHU0PY>

February 2 Function and Structure

Talcott Parsons, "Actions and Social Systems," pp. 321-324 in Lemert, ed., *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings* [Excerpt from *The System of Modern Societies*]

Richard M. Emerson, Power-Dependence Relations. *American Sociological Review* (27)1:31-41

Robert K. Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions," pp. 328-334 in Lemert, ed., *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings* [Excerpt from *Social Theory and Social Structure*]

Herbert Blumer. "Race Prejudice as Sense of Group Position." *Pacific Sociological Review* 1 (1958): 3-7.

Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," pp. 163-171 in James Farganis, ed., *Readings in Social Theory: The Classic Tradition to Post-Modernism*, 5th edition (McGraw-Hill, 2008)

Herbert J. Gans, "The Uses of Poverty: The Poor Pay All," pp. xx-xx in Eve Howard, ed., *Classic Readings in Sociology* (Thomson, 200x)

Ferdinand de Saussure, "Signs and Language," pp. 55-63 in Jeffrey Alexander and Steven Seidman, eds., *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates* (Cambridge, 1990)

Judith Stacey and Barrie Thorne, "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology," *Social Problems* 32, 4 (April 1985): 301-316

Film, The Century of the Self (Part 2)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEsPOt8MG7E>

February 9 Phenomenology, Ethnomethodology, Symbolic Interaction

Alfred Schutz, "Common-Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action," pp. 283-300 in James Farganis, ed., *Readings in Social Theory*

Herbert Blumer, "Society as Symbolic Interaction," pp. 334-341 in James Farganis, *Readings in Social Theory*

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, "Society as a Human Product," pp. 418-423 in Charles Lemert, ed., *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings* [from *The Social Construction of Reality*]

Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, pp. 1-4, 35-49, 79-94

Erving Goffman, "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life," [selections], pp. 341-50 in James Farganis, *Readings in Social Theory* (McGraw-Hill, 2008)

Erving Goffman, "On Face-Work," pp. 330-34 in Charles Lemert, ed., *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings* [From *Interaction Ritual*]

Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, pp. 1-47

Erving Goffman, "Out-of-frame activity," pp. 105-113 in Jeffrey Alexander and Steven Seidman, eds., *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates* (Cambridge, 1990) [from *Frame Analysis*]

Erving Goffman, "Presidential Address: The Interaction Order," *American Sociological Review* 48,1 (February 1983): 1-17

Gurminder, k. Bhambra, Rethinking Modernity (Part 2)

Film, The Century of the Self (part 3)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VouaAz5mQAs>

February 16 Feminist Critique

Saba Mahmood, "The Subject of Freedom," **Chapter 1** in *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton 2005)

Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* (14:3. 1988): 575-599

Judith Butler, *Frames of War When is Life Grievable* (2009, Verso) (excerpts)

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Excerpts. In Charles Lemert (ed) 1999. *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings*. (Boulder, 1988) 548-552.

Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (Routledge, 1996) (Excerpts)

Lecture, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Trajectory of the Subaltern in My Work"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZHH4ALRFHw>

Lecture: Judith Butler, "Why Bodies Matter"?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rD6vifFTDLY>

February 23 Critical Theory

Max Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," pp. 432-436 in Peter Kivisto, ed., *Social Theory: Roots and Branches* (Oxford, 2011)

Jurgen Habermas, "Further Reflections in the Public Sphere," pp 421-440 in Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (MIT, 1992)
<https://fdocuments.in/document/further-reflections-on-the-public-sphere.html>

Marcuse Herbert, *One Dimensional Man* (excerpts)

Zakia Salime, "Embedded Counterpublics: Women and Islamic Revival in Morocco".
Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies (37)3: 47-73, 2016.

Students Presentations (Idea of final paper)

Film, The Century of the Self (part 4)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ub2LB2MaGoM>

March 2 Postmodernism and Poststructuralism

Jacques Derrida, "Difference," pp. 61-79 in Peggy Kamuf, ed., *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds* (Columbia, 1991)

Jacques Derrida, The Decentering Events in Social Thought. In Lemert, Charles (editor) *Social Theory: The Multicultural, Global and Classic Readings* (Westview Press, 2016)

Jean Baudrillard, "Simulacra and Simulations" pp. 166-184 in Mark Poster, ed., *Selected Writings* (Stanford, 2001)

Jean-François Lyotard, "The Postmodern Condition" (excerpts), pp. 330-341 in Jeffrey Alexander and Steven Seidman, *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates* (Cambridge, 1990)

Film, *The Piano*. 1992. Directed by Jane Campion

March 9 Structure /Agency

Pierre Bourdieu and Loic J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, pp. 7-19, 36-41

Pierre Bourdieu, "The Logic of Fields," pp. 94-115 in his *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago, 1992)

Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," pp. 241-258 in J. G. Richardson, ed., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenwood, 1986)

Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*, pp. 1-7, 372-396 (Harvard, 1984)

John Levi Martin, "What is Field Theory?" *American Journal of Sociology* 109, 1 (July 2003): 1-49

William H. Sewell, Jr., "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation," *American Journal of Sociology* 98,1 (1992): 1-29

Anthony King. The Odd Couple: Margaret Archer, Anthony Giddens and British Social Theory. *The British Journal of Sociology* (2010): 253-260

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS MARCH 12-20

March 23 **Michel Foucault / Poststructuralism**

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 3-7, 195-230 (“The body of the condemned,” and “Panopticism”) (Vintage, 1979)

Conversation, Justice vs. Power - Noam Chomsky vs. Michel Foucault

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mj2VJ7oexKc&feature=related>

Lecture, Sociology is a martial art, Bourdieu

<https://vimeo.com/92709274>

March 30 **Foucault/Poststructuralism**

Michel Foucault, “Docile Bodies,” pp. 179-204 in *The Foucault Reader*

Michel Foucault, “Lecture Two: 14 January 1976,” in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, pp. 92-108

Colin Gordon, “Governmental Rationality” pp. 87-104 in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago 1991)

Thomas Lemke, ‘The birth of bio-politics’: Michel Foucault’s lecture at the Collège de France on neo- liberal governmentality. *Economy and Society* 30 (2): 190-207, 2001

Achille Mbembe, Necropolitics, *Public Culture* 15(1):11-40

Lecture, The Culture of the Self

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaXb8c6jw0k>

Film, Deleuze and Guattari, *The Rhizome, A Thousand Plateaus*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQ2rJWwXilw>

April 6 **Postcolonial Encounters**

Moallem Minoo, *Persian Carpet as a Transnational Commodity* (Routledge, 2018)

April 13 **Hegemony**

Antonio Gramsci, “Culture and Ideological Hegemony,” pp. 47-54 in Jeffrey Alexander and Steven Seidman, eds., *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates*

Antonio Gramsci. 1971 (1929-1936). “Intellectuals and Hegemony.” Excerpts. Charles Lemert (ed) 1999. *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 259-261

Antonio Gramsci, “State and Civil Society,” from *Prison Notebooks* (Sakai)

bell hooks and Stuart Hall. *Uncut Funk, A Contemplative Dialogue* (Routledge, 2017)

Outline of paper due

April 20 **Students presentations**/reaction to the content of the course

Film, *The color of fear*

April 27 **Race, Critical Race Theory**

Kimberly Crenshaw, *Critical Race Theory: Introduction + Chapter 1*

https://books.google.co.ma/books?id=ILXTyrIM59MC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial formations in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (Routledge & Kegan Paul Inc) (excerpts, 53-76)

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "The Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race," pp. 364-373 in Peter Kivisto, ed., *Social Theory: Roots and Branches* (Oxford, 2011)

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skins White Masks*, p10-62 (Grove Press)

Eduardo Bonilla Silva, "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation," *American Sociological Review* Vol. 62, No. 3 (Jun., 1997), p. 465-480.

Lecture, *Race the Floating Signifier*, Stuart Hall

Film, *My Beautiful Laundrette*

drette (1985), directed by Stephen Frears, (94 min) OR: *Sammie and Rosie Get Laid* (1992), directed by Stephen Frears (97 min)

Film, *Wings of Desire* (1987), directed by Wim Wenders (128 min)