

SOCIOLOGY 221: CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Spring Semester 2017

M/W 1:00-2:15

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****PLEASE READ THE SYLLABUS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU ASK TA OR PROFESSOR ANY QUESTIONS****

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this course, we survey major themes and questions in the sociology of culture. We do so in four sections:

1. **Introduction:** We use a documentary *Maya Lin: Strong and Clear Vision* to illustrate the culture diamond framework, through which we use for analysis of various cases in this course.
2. **Cultural Meanings and Theories:** In this section, we introduce major theoretical approaches to the sociology of culture.
3. **Cultural Production:** This section focuses on theories and case studies about how cultural objects are produced. We discuss the cultural production perspective and the Frankfurt School's mass culture theory.
4. **Culture and Politics:** In this section, we discuss various topics related to the intersection between culture and politics, including nation-state, ritual and politics, and civic culture.
5. **Culture and Stratification:** This section includes a few important theories of how culture is stratified and how culture helps stratification. We discuss Pierre Bourdieu's works, education and class, and symbolic boundaries.

There is a Blackboard site devoted to this course. This site will include all materials that we hand out in class (the syllabus, reading materials, etc.), as well as outlines of the lectures. Any important announcements will also be posted on this site and received via email.

TEXTBOOKS

1. Wendy Griswold. 2012. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (abbreviated CSCW in syllabus below). (Emory Bookstore)
2. Matt Gray. 2013. *Cultural Sociology: An Introductory Reader* (Abbreviated *Reader* below). (Emory Bookstore)

The books can be purchased at Emory campus bookstore or from amazon.com.

Journal articles can be downloaded from the library's website.

Other readings (scanned book chapters) will be distributed via Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Attendance is required and **10 points**. The instructor/TA will take attendance in the beginning/end of each class. Students who participate in University-sanctioned events, or have illness, or have emergency must inform the instructor in advance with appropriate verification documents. They also must make up any work they missed. Students who miss one (1) class without reasons will only get 5 for attendance credit. Students who miss two (2) classes will only get 2.5; those who miss more than two will not get any attendance credit.

Reading Summaries

Every student is expected to write summaries of readings for ten of the meetings. Most of the readings for summary are empirical studies. A template of summary will be distributed in class. Each summary is worth **2 points**.

Discussion Leading

Each student will be leading an in-class discussion for about 45 minutes, and the instructor will conclude the discussion by addressing important issues about the reading. The schedule and topic arrangement will be made after the enrolment is finalized. Instructions about discussion-leading will be given.

Exams

There will be four exams. Each exam covers a part of the course (not including introduction). None of the exams is cumulative. Each exam is worth **10%** of the final grades. Each exam consists of multiple-choice questions, short answers, and essay questions.

Final Exam

We will have a take-home, final exam, in which students need to address some broader issues common to different parts of the course. A few potential questions will be given to students before the exam, and the final questions will be announced two days before the due date. The final exam is worth **20%** of the final grade.

Grades

Requirements	Grades
Attendance	10
Discussion leading	10
Exams	40
Reading Summaries	20
Final Exam	20
Total	100

RULES AND POLICIES

Communication

- **Read this syllabus carefully before asking questions.**
- I will also send periodic BlackBoard announcements and/or emails about any further course information. **Please read all the written course communications thoroughly!**
- If you have questions after you have read everything in a particular course document (syllabus, paper instructions, study guide), then feel free to ask me.
- **Do NOT ask/email me questions that I have already answered** in a course document or via posted announcement/emails. I will not respond to these questions.

Email Communication:

I generally try to respond to emails within 24 hours, but I do not guarantee a response within 24 hrs.

Conduct

Please be mindful of the general code of conduct that you would use in any classroom setting. I expect us all to be respectful of one another.

- Please do not arrive late to class.
- Once in class, please refrain from carrying on private conversations with your neighbor(s). This is distracting for everyone else in the room.
- Please refrain from texting, checking Facebook, or any other non-class activities during all class meetings. If you are found to be engaging in these activities, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class.
- The use of cell phones is NOT permitted in this class. Please turn OFF your phones before entering the classroom.

Missed Classes

You are responsible for missed material. Please get notes from one of your classmates. After you have read all of the missed material, if you still have questions, please come to my office hours.

Video/Audio

You may not video or audiotape lectures without my express consent.

Extra Credit

There are no extra credit assignments available in this course.

Make-Up Policy

Makeup exams will *only* be allowed in a situation of an excused absence (e.g., illness, family emergency, university activities allowed by the administrations).

Academic Integrity

Students who are admitted to Emory College of Arts and Sciences agree to abide by the provisions of the Honor Code: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

Access and Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and have anticipated barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, or presume having a disability (e.g. mental health, attention, learning, vision, hearing, physical or systemic), and are in need of accommodations for this semester, we encourage you to contact the Office of Access, Disability Services, and Resources (ADSR) to learn more about the registration process and steps for requesting accommodations. If you are a student that is currently registered with ADSR and have not received a copy of your accommodation notification letter within the first week of class, please notify ADSR **immediately**.

Students who have accommodations in place are encouraged to coordinate sometime with your professor, during **the first two weeks** of the semester, to communicate your specific needs for the course as it relates to your approved accommodations. All discussions with ADSR and faculty concerning the nature of your disability remain confidential. For additional information regarding ADSR, please visit the website: equity.emory.edu/access.

Reading and Class Schedule

Introduction: the Cultural Diamond

January 11 Introduction to the course

A brief introduction to the course; discussion of definitions of culture and the cultural diamond perspective

January 18

Film screening: *Maya Lin: Strong and Clear Vision*

Reading

NYBooks pieces online:

Maya Lin. Making the Memorial.

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2000/11/02/making-the-memorial/>

Martin Filler. The Quiet Power of Maya Lin

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2016/09/29/the-quiet-power-of-maya-lin/>

January 23 Discussion: VVM and the Cultural Diamond

Reading:

CSCW: Chapter 1.

Logistics: Sign-up for discussion leading

Part I Cultural Meaning and Theories

January 25 Cultural Meaning I: Reflection Theory and Marxian Theory

Reading:

1. CSCW. Chapter 2 Cultural Meaning (pages)
2. *The Reader*. Chapter 1. German Ideology

January 30 Cultural Meaning II: Weberian, and toolkit theories

Reading:

1. CSCW. Chapter 2 Cultural Meaning (pages)
2. *The Reader*. Chapter 4 Basic Sociological Concepts

February 1 Cultural Meaning III: Durkheimian and Symbolic Interactionism

Reading:

1. CSCW. Chapter 2 (the part about functionalism); Chapter 3
2. *The Reader*. Chapter 2 Classifying Things from Primitive Classification Émile Durkheim Marcel Mauss

February 6

In-class Exam 1

Part II Cultural Production

February 8 The production of culture approach

CSCW Chapter 4 The Production, Distribution and Reception of Culture

February 13 Case of Cultural Production: Museums

Reading Summary 1. Reading: Peggy Levitt. Artifacts and Allegiances. Chapter 1.

February 15 Case of Cultural Production: Museums

Reading Summary 2. Reading: Peggy Levitt. *Artifacts and Allegiances*. Chapter 2.

February 20 Case of Cultural Reception: Literature

Reading Summary 3. Reading: George Lamming: *In the Castle of My Skin* (excerpts)

February 22 Case of Cultural Reception: Literature

Griswold, W. (1987). "The Fabrication of Meaning: Literary Interpretation in the United States, Great Britain, and the West Indies." *American Journal of Sociology* **92**(5): 1077-1117.

February 27 The Frankfurt school and culture industry

Reading: *Reader* Chapter 6

Also, *Enlightenment as mass deception*.

(http://www.icce.rug.nl/~soundscapes/DATABASES/SWA/Some_writings_of_Adorno.shtml)

March 1 Resistance through mass culture

In-class music listening: Cui Jian and the Chinese rock

Reading Summary 4. Reading: *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Rock Music*. (Excerpts)

March 13 In-class Exam 2

Part III Culture and Politics

March 15 Power and Culture

Reading: CSCW. Chapter 8

March 20 Nation-state and Culture

Reading Summary 5. Reading: Ernst Renan. *What is a nation?*

(http://web.archive.org/web/20110827065548/http://www.cooper.edu/humanities/core/hss3/e_renan.html)

March 22 Nation-state and Culture

Reading Summary 6. Reading: *Invention of Tradition* (chapters 1 and 7)

March 27 Ritual and Politics I

Readings:

1. **Reading Summary** 7. Durkheim. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (excerpts)
2. Schwartz, B. (1991). "Mourning and the Making of a Sacred Symbol: Durkheim and the Lincoln Assassination." *Social Forces* **70**(2): 343-366.

March 29 Ritual and Politics II

Readings:

1. Lukes, S. (1975). "Political Ritual and Social Integration." *Sociology* **9**(2): 289-308.
2. Kertzer, D. I. (1988). *Ritual, Politics, and Power*. New Haven, CT, Yale University Press. (Excerpts)

April 3 Cultural Sociology of Civil Society

Reading Summary 8. Reading: Eliasoph, N. (1998). *Avoiding politics: how Americans produce apathy in everyday life*. (Excerpts)

April 5 In-class Exam 3

Part IV Culture and Class

April 10 Bourdieu on Culture and Class

Reading: *Reader*. Chapter 31 (Naming as power) or *Distinction*

April 12 Education and Class: Working Class

Reading: *Reader* 30. *Paul Willis. Learning to Labor.*

April 17 Education and Class: Middle-Class

Reading: Laureau: *Unequal Childhood* (Reader 33)

April 19 Education and Class: Elite Youths

Reading Summary 9. Reading: Khan. *Privilege*. (excerpts)

April 24 Symbolic Boundaries

Reading Summary 10. Reading: Lamont. *Money, Morals, and Manners*. (Excerpts)

April 26 In-class Exam IV