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Fall 2000	Office Hours: MWF 11-12; Tues 2-3

Introduction to Sociology

Soc 101

AIMS OF COURSE: This course introduces students to the methodologies and conceptual "tool kits" of sociology and the interpretive social sciences. We will give particular attention to problems of "rationalization", inequality and social class in modern, capitalist societies. How are relations of power and domination maintained, or altered, over time? What are the nature and function of gender relations in a modern, capitalist society? Like professional social scientists, students in this course will move back and forth between "theory" and "practice," carefully considering the assigned readings in light of empirical observations, and re-interpreting their observations in light of our analytic discussions and readings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: In addition to keeping up with the reading and fully participating in class discussion, four short (5 pages) papers, a web project, and a final take home examination are required.

Regular **LearnLink** postings are required (at least one per week, preferably more) in response to the readings, to other students' postings, class discussion and students' day to day observations. From time to time, short **quizzes** (usually unannounced) on the readings will be given. **Papers** will be partly based on original student research social and cultural life on the Oxford campus or on the surrounding Oxford-Covington community.

Grading is based on the following criteria:

Four short papers (50 points each)	200 points
Take home examination	50 points
Web Based Project	50 points
LearnLink, web reviews, and quizzes	50 points
Class discussion:	50 points

Grading is based on a scale of 400 points for the entire course, with the following letter-grade cut-offs:

A=376	B+=348	C+=306	D=266
A-=362	B=334	C=294	F=below 266
	B-=320	C-=280	

Plus/minus grading is used in this course, and the Honor Code is always in force.

Course materials are largely found in the "Blackboard" environment on line, at



<http://blackboard.wcw.emory.edu>. Go to "Oxford College" and click on this course. You will be provided with a user ID and password at the first class meeting.

READINGS: This course is organized around themes and problems drawn from the so-called "Holy Quaternity," the four foundational thinkers in modern social thought -- Max Weber, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud. We begin with Max Weber's classic work, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, which is, in many respects, our "core text" for this course. I urge you to return to The Protestant Ethic repeatedly throughout the semester, and to consider the subsequent readings in light of Weber's arguments: in what ways are Weber's insights reproduced in these other readings, and in what respects do they force us to reconsider or challenge Weber's interpretive framework? To what extent can the approaches of Marx, Durkheim and Freud be reconciled with Weber's approach?

- Max Weber. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
- Jay MacLeod., Ain't No Making It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood, 1995
- Mary Pattillo-McCoy. Black Picket Fences. Promise and Peril among the Black Middle Class.
- Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle. Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag. 1999.
- Thorne, Barrie. Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School

Reserve readings are on line in electronic form. Please bring hard copies of reserve reading to class for discussion on the assigned day.

Reading is an active process of questioning and reinterpretation. As you take written notes on the texts, try to put the author's concepts into your own words, rather than quoting verbatim. Indicate when a particular passage is puzzling or ambiguous, and be sure to bring up these points in class discussion or on LearnLink. Your written notes on the readings are a valuable resource that will serve as the basis for your essays and exam preparation. You are expected to bring these reading notes to class and to revise them in light of class discussion.

As you read any academic book or essay, please ask yourself the following questions:

- What major questions does the author formulate at the start?
- To what extent does the work as a whole answer these questions?
- What new questions does the work raise by its conclusion?

Pose yourself these questions, as well, about your draft essays.

From time to time, I will post my own reading notes on the web, providing helpful background and posing questions that you may wish to consider as you read through the texts on your own.

WEB-BASED PROJECT: During most weeks, a small group of students will take turns working on the class website, depicting different aspects of social and cultural life in Oxford, Covington and Newton County, with particular reference to the readings for that week. Each student will be responsible for developing her or his own web pages based on original research, and for developing hyperlinks to other pages in that group, and in our class website. The web projects (due each week at Friday 3:00 p.m.) will be staggered through the semester, according to a schedule developed during the second week of the term.

The following Monday, students in another group will be responsible for evaluating the new website,

through an on line form on LearnLink.

You should submit your entire website (html pages, image files, and other assets) in "zipped" (compressed) format on line, to the Digital Drop Box in the Blackboard site. If you are a PC user, please download "winzip". If you are a Mac user, please download "maczip." **Please be sure that all hyperlinks in the site work before you submit your work.**

The class BlackBoard website is administered by the Emory Center for Interactive Teaching, and can always be reached through <http://blackboard.wcw.emory.edu>. Please check it and the class LearnLink conference regularly.

Please read carefully through the posted Instructions for Student Web Projects in Dr. Auslander's classes. Please be familiar with Sociology Internet Resources.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS: Students are required to attend each class, on time. Missed quizzes will not be re-administered, regardless of circumstances (including illness or family emergencies). Students will not be directly penalized for the first three classes that they miss (although they will miss the chance to take a quiz that day, if one is administered). For each subsequent class missed (regardless of cause) a grade level will be deducted from the student's course total. (For example, an overall course grade of "A-" will be changed to a "B+.") A partial grade will be deducted for each lateness or for leaving class prematurely. Eight missed classes will be grounds for failing the course.

Students are responsible for signing in on the sign-up sheet at the start of each class session.

Only hard copies (not electronic versions) of the papers will be accepted. Late papers will be downgraded.

COURSE OUTLINE

Part I. The "Spirit" of Capitalism

Wednesday, August 30. **Introduction.** The Sociological Imagination. Observation exercise on the Meaning of Money. Approaching Max Weber.

First Observation Exercise: The Meaning of Money

Your first assignment is to post your empirical observations about the use and meanings of money on the Oxford campus, or in our immediate vicinity. I ask that you devote at least 30 minutes to this observation exercise, in addition to the time you spend writing up your observations.

Possible strategies:

1. Pick a location on campus where money is exchanged (the bookstore, Lil's, the Ox. etc) and observe precisely how money is handled by the various actors. You may wish simply to observe, or you might at times ask follow up questions about why people handle money as they do.
2. Do several interviews about money with a range of people on campus.

3. Keep a careful log all day of all the ways in which you come into contact with money (spending it, earning it, thinking about it)

Please post your first observations to the "Money Observations" subconference in the class LearnLink conference by Tuesday, September 5 at 10:00 a.m.

Before class on Wednesday, September 6, please be sure to have read all of the postings on learnlink and be prepared to discuss them in class. Please print out the three most interesting postings and bring hard copies to class.

Friday, September 1. Max Weber. "Introduction to the Sociology of Religion" (reprinted in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. pp.13-31).

Note on reading this essay: Read this essay carefully, taking notes and putting as much of Weber's into your own words as possible. Look up in a dictionary any words that you do not know, and indicate what terms or passages are unclear to you. We will go through the essay in class on Friday.

In this classic essay, Weber lays out his broad comparative program for understanding the relationship between many different institutions in diverse human societies, past and present. As you read this essay, consider the following questions. I encourage you to post your thoughts on this question on LearnLink, by Thursday afternoon or evening. If possible, try to respond to at least one other student's posting:

- In your own words, what precise questions does Weber seem to be asking in this piece?
 - What exactly does Weber find to be special or unique about Western Civilization? Does he only note a collection of diverse traits, or is there one common theme among all these traits?
 - Why does Weber begin an essay that is largely about capitalism with a discussion of science and art?
 - Weber asserts that capitalism is not simply the pursuit of gain or profit. What does he mean? And what does he think is special about Western (Occidental) capitalism
 - What does Weber seem to mean by the terms "rational", "rationality" and "rationalization"?
 - How does Weber appear to think proper scientific sociological research should be conducted?
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Monday, September 4. No class: Labor Day

Wednesday, September 6. Max Weber, "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism" (reprinted in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. pp.xlii-lxxiv).

Ask yourself the following questions as you read this essay, and post your thoughts on LearnLink (I also encourage you to post other questions, as they occur to you):

- Many effective essays begin by stating a puzzle. What puzzle does Weber raise, as an outsider confronting North American society?
- Why does Weber give several anecdotes from his visit to the United States? What does he learn or surmise from these experiences?
- How does Weber understand the relationship between social affiliation (in organizations such as churches and voluntary associations) and economic status?
- Weber distinguishes between money's capacity to purchase social prestige as opposed to "social honor." What does he mean, and why is the distinction important?
- What special or unusual characteristics does Weber apprehend in Protestantism?
- Why does he discuss at length theological distinctions between different Protestant denominations?

What point is building to?

- What distinction does he see between medieval guilds and modern religious sects? Why is this distinction so important to him?

Remember, to come prepared to class to discuss the student postings about money. Do the two Weber essays cast any light on these observations?

Friday, September 8. Weber. "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." pp. 35-78. (nb. read pp. 47-78 very closely and always be sure to read Weber's footnotes)

Web Group 1 project due. (Group 2 please review Group 1's website over the weekend) Suggested topic: observe the social uses of money in the Oxford community, in light of Weber's distinction between "social prestige" and "social honor." Does Weber appear to have been correct?

Monday, September 11. Weber. "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." pp. 79-94

Wednesday, September 13. Weber. "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." pp. 95-154

Friday, September 15. Weber. "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." pp. 155-183

Web Group 2 project due. (Group 3 please review Group 2's website by Tuesday Sept. 19) Suggested topic: Weber argues that self restraint, discipline and "worldly asceticism" are at the heart of the "spirit of capitalism." Many have argued, in contrast, that the imperative to spend and consume drives capitalist culture. What do your observations about savings and consumption in the Oxford community suggest about this question?

Monday, September 18. **Paper 1 due** at start of class.

The Meaning of Money

Assess at least two student postings on the meaning of money in light of Weber's model of the originating "spirit" of capitalism. Does Weber's characterization of capitalism adequately characterize the material you and your peers have gathered? Your essay should demonstrate a clear understanding of Weber's explanatory model and engage carefully and thoughtfully with the posted empirical observations. 5-7 pages. (Typed, double spaced, 10 or 12 point)

In class lecture: Social Class and Social Reproduction.

Wednesday, September 20. "**Ideology**"

- Karl Marx, Selections from "The German Ideology", including "Ruling Class and Ruling Ideas". "The Real Basis of Ideology" [pp.64-72]. On Electronic Reserve.
- Raymond Williams, "Ideology" (Keywords) On electronic reserve

Friday, September 22. Jay MacLeod. Ain't No Making It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood, (pp. 3-49)

Web Group 3 project due. (Group 4 please review Group 3's website over the weekend.) Suggested topic:

Low income neighborhoods in Newton County.

Monday, September 25, MacLeod.pp. 50-82.

Wednesday, September 27. MacLeod.pp.83-111

Friday, September 29. MacLeod.pp.112-151

Web Group 4 project due. (Group 5 please review Group 4's website over the weekend.) Suggested Topic: The Newton County Department of Children and Family Services.

Monday, October 2. Class Field Trip into Atlanta to observe Nat Turner ceremony. (Details to be announced)

Wednesday, October 4. MacLeod. pp. 155-195

Friday, October 6. MacLeod. pp. 196-269.

Web Group 5 project due. (Group 6 please review Group 5's website by Tuesday, October 10) Suggested topic: The Nat Turner Ceremony.

Monday, October 9. **Paper 2 due at start of class:**

In a 5-7 page essay, please write on ONE of the following questions:

1. Evaluate MacLeod's explanation of the social functions of education in American society in light of Marx's discussion of ideology and the "ruling ideas" of an epoch. Defend or critique MacLeod's understanding of the role played by high schools in inner city America
 2. To what extent are the Hallway Hangers and Brothers victims of a limited opportunity structure, and to what extent are they victims of their own flawed choices?
 3. To what extent to the Brothers and Hallway Hangers share the "capitalist ethos" characterized by Max Weber?
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Monday, October 9. Field Trip to Local Church Congregation.

Part III. Race and Middle Class Culture

Note: During this section of the course, student will work closely with members of local African-American congregations, collecting life histories and family histories.

Wednesday, October 11. Mary Pattillo-McCoy. Black Picket Fences. Promise and Peril among the Black Middle Class.pp. 1-30

Friday, October 13. Mary Pattillo-McCoy.pp.31-67

Web Group 6 project due. Suggested topic: African American Middle Class Families in Newton County (Group 7 please review Group 6's website by Wednesday October 18)

Monday, October 16. **No class: Fall Break.**

Wednesday, October 18. Workshop with local congregations. Research for the Biography Project

Friday, October 20.Mary Pattillo-McCoy. pp. 67-116

Web Group 7 project due. Suggested topic: African American Middle Class Families in Newton County (Group 8 please review Group 7's website over the weekend)

Monday, October 23. Mary Pattillo-McCoy.pp. 117-166

Wednesday, October 25.Mary Pattillo-McCoy. pp. 167-218.

Friday, October 27. **Paper 3 due at start of class.**

Please write on one of the following questions:

1. Compare MacLeod and Potillo-McCoy's approaches to race and class in urban neighborhoods. Does race matter more, or less, or about the same at middle class and lower-income levels?
 2. Discuss at least one of the biographies collected with the Grace U.M.C. or another congregation in light of Potillo-McCoy's discussion of race and class in America, and Marx's discussion of ideology.
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Lecture in class (10/27): Durkheim and Symbolic Process.

Part IV. Symbolism and Culture

Monday, October 30. Emile Durkheim. The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. Selections, reprinted in Lessa and Vogt, Reader in Comparative Religion.pp. 27-35. (on electronic reserve)

Wednesday, November 1. Emile Durkheim. Rules of Sociological Method. Selections (on electronic reserve)

Friday, November 3. Marvin and Ingle. Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag. pp. 1-40

Web Group 8 project due. Suggested Topic: Attitudes towards the U.S. Flag in Oxford (Group 9 please review Group 7's website over the weekend)

Monday, November 6. Marvin and Ingle. pp. 41-98

Wednesday, November 8. Marvin and Ingle. pp. 99-171

Friday, November 10. Marvin and Ingle. pp. 172-247

Web Group 9 project due. Suggested Topic: Attitudes towards the Confederate Battle Flag and the Georgia State Flag in Oxford. (Group 10 please review Group 9's website over the weekend)

Monday, November 13. View and discuss Gordon Jones' video, "The Symbol War."

Wednesday, November 15. Marvin and Ingle. pp. 248-315

Friday, November 17. **Paper 4 due.** (5-7 pages) Defend or critique Marvin and Ingle's application of a Durkheimian framework to American culture.

Part V. Psychoanalysis and Society

Friday, November 17 Lecture: Freud, Socialization and Gender

Monday, November 20. Sigmund Freud, (Selections from Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, including "Symbolism of Dreams" (pp. 149-169) and "The Development of the Libido and the Sexual Organizations") On electronic reserve.

Wednesday, November 22. Nancy Chodorow. "Family Structure and Feminine Personality" in Women, Culture and Society. (on electronic reserve)

Friday, November 24 **No class: Thanksgiving**

Monday, November 27. Thorne, Barrie. Gender play: Girls and boys in school. Ch. 1. Children and Gender

. Thorne, Gender Play. Ch. 2. Learning from Kids; Ch. 3. Boys and Girls Together...But Mostly Apart

Wednesday, November 28. Thorne, Gender Play. Ch. 4. Gender Separation: Why and How; Ch. 5. Creating a Sense of "Opposite Sides"

Friday, December 1. Thorne. Gender Play Ch. 6. Do Girls and Boys Have Different Cultures?

Web Group 10 project due. Suggested Topic: Childhood and Gender Relations in the Oxford/Covington area. (Group 1 please review Group 10's website over the weekend)

Monday, December 4. Thorne. Gender Play Ch. 7. Crossing the Gender Divide

Wednesday, December 6. Thorne. Gender Play Ch. 8. Lip Gloss and "Goin' With": Becoming Teens.

Friday, December 8. Thorne. Gender Play Ch. 9. Lessons for Adults.

Monday, December 11. Final Class. Take home examination distributed in class

Monday, December 18: Take home final examination due at 4:00 p.m. Dr. Auslander's office.