Sociology 406 - 1: Classical Theory in Sociological Analysis       Autumn quarter, 2012

Professor: Wendy Griswold; 1810 Chicago Ave, 2nd floor; w-griswold@northwestern.edu
Office hours: Thursdays 11 – 12:30 by appointment (e-mail me first and let me know what you would like to discuss; we can set up a different time if necessary)

Class meeting: Tuesdays 2:00 to 4:30 in Parkes 222

This seminar, which is required for and restricted to first-year Sociology students, introduces some of the essential sociological writings of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and Georg Simmel. These four men wrote what are generally considered to be the foundational texts of sociological theory, and their thinking continues to guide contemporary research. We will be focusing on how these social theorists conceptualized modernity and whether the analytic tools they developed at the beginning of the twentieth century are useful for addressing the issues and social configurations of the twenty-first.

Course requirements:
- two short papers;
- one longer paper written by a team;
- being part of a team leading the day’s discussion at least twice;
- active, knowledgeable, prepared participation in seminar discussions.

Short papers: Students will identify a problem or question that interests them. For two of the four theorists covered, students will write a short paper (4-5 pages) on what hypothesis that person's theory would generate regarding their problem and how they could go about testing this hypothesis. These papers will be due by 5:00 on the Thursday after the second class on that theorist (dates indicated below). Plan accordingly; there should be no late papers. You should put a hard copy in my mailbox and also e-mail me the pdf.

Longer, team paper: For a final paper, which everyone will write, students will be viewing a documentary film. Working in teams of two or three people, students will write a paper applying the sociological theories studied previously to the materials covered in this film. This paper will be a bit longer than the previous ones, but should not go much over 8 pages.

Discussion leadership: Working in teams of two or three, students will identify a set of discussion questions on the readings for each week. They will distribute these questions to seminar members in advance via Blackboard. Each day, after a short introductory lecture, the student team will lead the discussion of these questions.

Participation: Every seminar member will actively engage in every discussion. Preparation is a must; you will need to be on top of the readings, and to have some informed responses to the questions that the student discussion leaders have circulated.

Books (available at Norris and on reserve at library; you probably want to own these as you build your sociological library)
Emile Durkheim  1858 - 1917

Karl Marx  1818 - 1883

Georg Simmel  1858 - 1918

Max Weber  1864 - 1920

Note: Students are to complete all readings and prepare the discussion questions before the class for that week.

**Week 1 (September 25) Durkheim I**
Durkheim, *Suicide*
Introduction (41 – 53).
Book One (skim this)
Book Two, chapters 1 - 5 (143 – 276).
Book Three, chapters 1 – 2 (295 – 360).

**Week 2 (October 2) Durkheim II**
Durkheim *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*
Introduction
Book One, chapter 1 (section III).
Book Two, chapters 1 - 3; 6 - 7; 8 (sections IV - VI).
Book Three, chapters 1 - 2; 5 (section IV).
Conclusion (all)

Papers on Durkheim due Thursday October 4

**Week 3 (October 9) Marx I**
Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*
Week 4 (October 16) Marx II
The Marx-Engels Reader
“Alienation and Social Classes,” 133-35.
“Wage, Labor and Capital,” 203-217
“The Coming Upheaval,” 218-19
“Capitalism, Alienation, and Communism,” 292-293.
“Commodities and Money,” 302-61.

Papers on Marx due Thursday October 18

Week 5 (October 23) Weber I
Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
All, including Author’s Introduction

Week 6 (October 30) Weber II
Weber, Economy and Society
“Basic Terms,” 3-62
“Class, Status and Power,” 926-940
“Types of Legitimate Domination,” 212-271

Papers on Weber due Thursday, November 1

Week 7 (November 6) Simmel I
Simmel, Individuality and Social Forms
“How Is Society Possible?” 6-22
“The Problem of Sociology,” 23-35
“The Stranger,” 143-149
Photocopy: "Types of Social Relationships by Degrees of Reciprocal Knowledge of Their Participants"

Week 8 (November 13) Simmel II
Simmel, Individuality and Social Forms
“Sociability,” 127-140
“The Metropolis and Mental Life,” 324-339.
"The Conflict in Modern Culture," 375-393.

Papers on Simmel due Thursday November 15

Week 9 (November 20) Case study: Belfast, Maine, a documentary film (streaming starts Nov. 30)

Week 10 (November 27) Group presentations

Papers on Belfast, Maine due Thursday November 29