

SOCIETY & THE INDIVIDUAL

(SOAN 105)

Fall 2014

T/TH: 3-3:50

F: 10:10-11; 11:15-12:05

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 4-5; Friday, 12:30-2:30

Course website: <http://blogs.middlebury.edu/soan105tiger> or **go/soan105tiger**

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The nature of power and social control, the institutionalized and bureaucratized character of modern life, the interplay between individual agency and social structure, the relationship between economy and society – these are some of the issues we'll be discussing in this introductory sociology class. We will pursue the question "what does it mean to think sociologically?" while engaging with the theoretical "forefathers" of sociology (while asking, where are the mothers? And why do we use the language of parenting?). Through engaged, in-depth readings of some of the classic texts of sociology, we'll think and talk about the historical context out of which these theories emerged, the core questions the first sociologists grappled with, the methods they used to explore these questions, and the enduring significance of their theories. Throughout this course, we will look at how the people we read link notions of "the individual" to the social transformations that characterized modernity and beyond and how our contemporary ideas of what it means to be "free" and "autonomous" are constructed through the institutions that structure modern life.

READINGS:

You don't have to buy any books for this class. I will make all the readings available to you in PDF format. We'll discuss in class the logistics of how you'll access the readings.

Class Participation

You are expected to attend every class (lecture and discussion). Missing more than two classes without a dean's excuse may significantly lower your grade. Come to class prepared to discuss readings but also to join group discussions. Class participation means you regularly attend class and take part in meaningful

ways. We learn the course material through critical dialogue so coming to class is in our mutual interest.

Please do not bring your computers to class. They are not permitted in lecture or discussion. The internet is source of wonder but also distraction; the success of this course depends on our ability to be present and collectively engage with the material.

WHAT YOU’LL BE DOING (THAT I’LL BE GRADING):

Analytic Projects

You will have four analytic projects due in this class, one each on Durkheim, Weber and Marx and a fourth one of your choosing. These projects are an opportunity for you to raise ideas and issues you found interesting in the readings and to give your reaction to these ideas.

Final Exam – Take Home

Exam is a terrible word; don’t get nervous about this. I’ve devised a creative way for you to get in the last word about what we’ve learned this semester.

To Recap

4 analytic projects (3 pages each)	75%
In-class work /Participation	10%
Final exam	15%

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

September 9	Introduction	
September 11	What is sociology?	C. Wright Mills, <i>The Sociological Imagination</i> (introduction)
September 12	Discussion	Hacking, <i>Taming of Chance</i>
September 16	Durkheim	<i>The Rules of Sociological Methods</i> (chapter 1)
September 18	Durkheim	<i>Elementary forms of Religious Life</i> (conclusion)
September 19	Discussion	Grann, “Trial by Fire”
September 23	Durkheim	<i>The Division of Labor in Society</i>

September 25	Durkheim	Bearman, "The Social Structure of Suicide"
September 26	Discussion	Read sample paper
September 30	Marx PROJECT 1 DUE - DURKHEIM	<i>The German Ideology</i>
October 2	Marx & Engels	"The Manifesto of the Community Party"
October 3	Discussion	Abadie, <i>The Professional Guinea Pig</i>
October 7	Marx	<i>Estranged Labor</i>
October 9	Marx	<i>The Fetishism of Commodities</i>
October 10	Discussion	Garber, <i>Kapitalism, with Kim Kardashian</i>
October 14	FALL BREAK	
October 16	Weber PROJECT 2 DUE - MARX	<i>Protestant Ethic</i>
October 17	Discussion	Talbot, <i>Brain Gain</i>
October 21	Weber	<i>Class, Status & Party and Discipline</i>
October 23	Weber	<i>Science as a Vocation</i>
October 24	Discussion	Klein, <i>The Case Against Health</i>
October 28	Foucault	<i>Discipline & Punish</i>
October 30	Bordo	"Reading the Slender Body"

October 31	Discussion	Read sample paper
November 4	PROJECT 3 DUE - WEBER Watch in class: Project Runway	Simmel, "Fashion"
November 6	Simmell	"The Stranger"
November 7	Discussion	Marwick, <i>The Public Domain</i>
November 11	Freud	<i>Introductory Lectures</i>
November 13	Freud	<i>Civilization and its Discontents</i>
November 14	Discussion	Morris, <i>Tales from Millennials' Sexual Revolution</i>
November 18	W.E.B. Dubois	<i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>
November 20	W.E.B. Dubois PROJECT 4 DUE	<i>The Philadelphia Negro</i>
November 21	Discussion	Coates, "The Case for Reparations"
November 25/27	Thanksgiving Break	
December 2	Combahee River Collective	"A black feminist statement"
December 4	Buroway	"For public sociology"
December 5	Discussion	Black, "The abolition of work"
December 12	Exam Due	