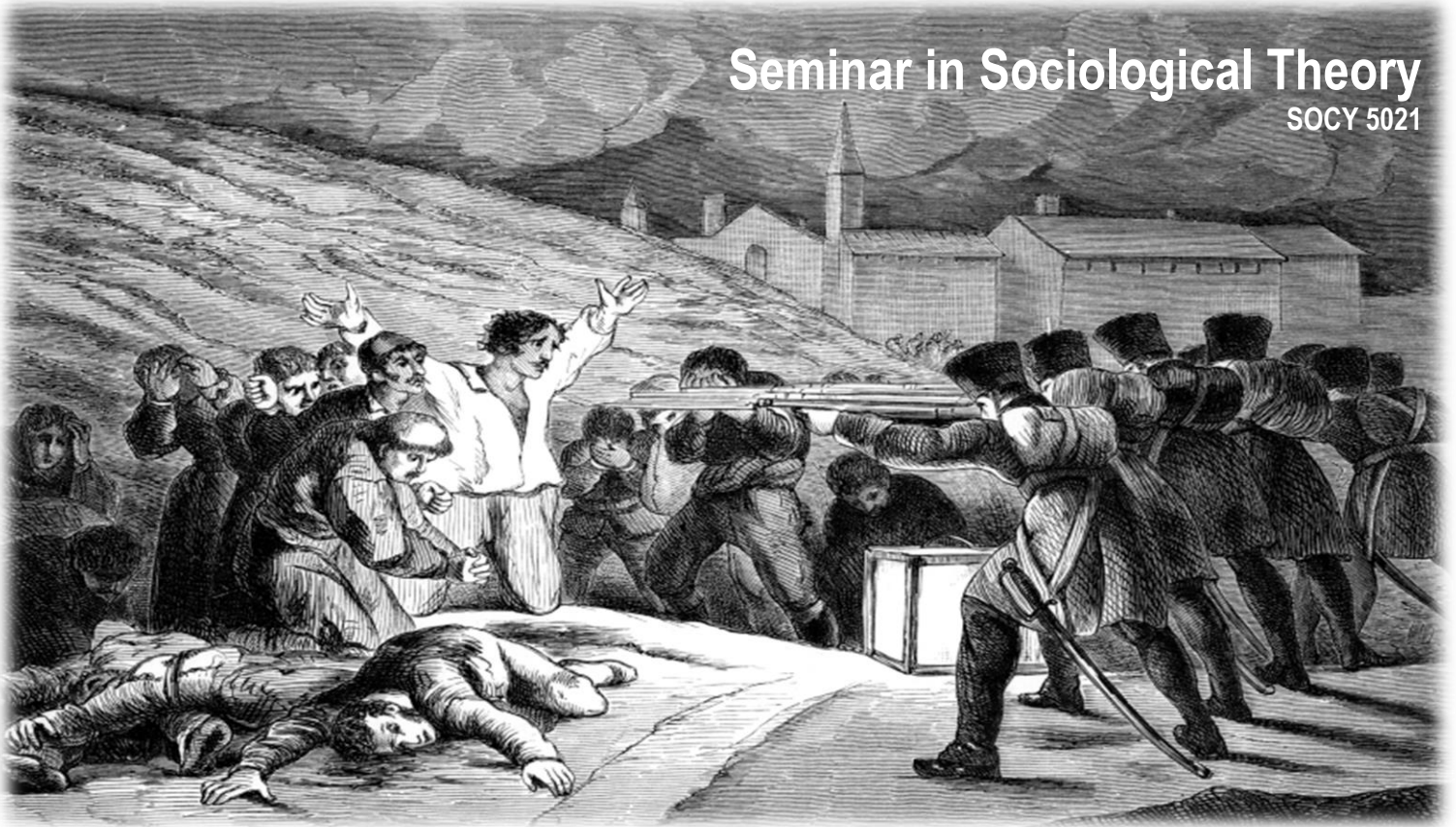


Seminar in Sociological Theory

SOCY 5021



Professor Leslie Irvine
Spring 2015

Welcome to the Theory Seminar! Together, we will examine theoretical approaches to core issues and problems in sociology, including the nature of society, the relationship between society and the individual, the role of culture and social structure, the sources of social power, and the conceptual structure of sociological knowledge itself. When you finish the course, you should be able to use the major concepts and frameworks of social theory in your research and writing, and pursue further theoretical reading on your own, as your work requires. In addition, by examining how contemporary scholars use theory, you will have acquired an intellectually pluralistic perspective that allows you to engage with various theories rather than just a “favorite” one. We will accomplish these goals through close reading and extended discussion of classic and contemporary texts, and by sharing our own sociological knowledge, perspectives on the reading, and extant research interests and projects with one another; theory is of necessity a collective project.

Obviously, we cannot read everything sociological theory has to offer. My apologies in advance to those of you who will be disappointed that we have omitted particular works you consider important. I will gladly recommend readings to anyone wishing to follow theoretical roads not taken in this seminar.

The image above depicts the tragic scene of the Third of May 1808, when Napoleon's army massacred Spanish citizens who resisted French occupation of Madrid. It is an engraving of the painting by artist Francisco Goya (1746-1828). It appeared in in an 1867 collection of Goya's work, and is now in the public domain. The painting paved the way for modern art. In depicting political tyranny, institutional and local power, and resistance, it symbolizes many of the themes we will explore in this seminar.

Contact info

I will respond to email promptly, but do not expect to hear from me after 5 p.m. or over the weekends. I will hold office hours by appointment on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. You can schedule a meeting with me using the posted link on D2L. I can meet you either in Fleming 410 or at a mutually convenient place on campus.

Course requirements

1 Attend class. You can miss one class without penalty. Missing two will lower your grade by one letter. I will make exceptions if extenuating circumstances such as serious illness or a death in the immediate family cause you to miss class. If you find yourself in such a situation, please inform me as early as possible. Please note that we will not have class on March 12.

2 Keep current with the reading. I have tried not to overload you; with only a few exceptions, I have kept the average weekly page numbers assigned at around 150. I have posted brief guides and questions on D2L to direct your attention to essential themes in each week's material. Please bring each week's texts to class and reference them during discussion, as needed.

Because we will read the following books in their entirety (or nearly so), I have ordered them at the CU Bookstore. If obtaining any of them poses a financial hardship on you, please contact me to arrange for loaner copies.

Blumer, Herbert. 1969. *Symbolic Interactionism*.
Du Bois, W.E.B. 2007. *The Souls of Black Folk*.
Garfinkel, Harold. 1984. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*.
Pampel, Fred C. 2006. *Sociological Lives and Ideas*.
Tucker, Robert C. (ed.). 1978. *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

Because we will read only sections of the following, I have posted the relevant excerpts on D2L (marked on schedule with *). If your budget allows, you may want to purchase copies for your own library.

Durkheim, Émile. 1997. *The Division of Labor in Society*.
_____. 1982. *Rules of the Sociological Method*.
_____. 1951. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*.
Foucault, Michel. 1975. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.
_____. 1976. *A History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*.
Mills, C. Wright. 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*.
Weber, Max. 2003. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

Optional: Foucault action figure <http://www.theory.org.uk/action.htm>

I have posted other required readings (i.e., journal articles) on D2L (also indicated on schedule with *).

3 Make informed contributions to the discussion in the seminar. I expect you to ask questions about the material. I also expect us to contribute collectively to the exploration of any questions raised. As a group, I want us to construct and maintain the seminar as a safe place to make mistakes and learn without fearing the consequences of looking foolish.

4 Write four short papers (3-5 pp.) responding to questions posted on D2L. I offer five dates for submitting these papers; you choose the four that work best for you. I will grade these on a Pass/No Pass basis. You will have the opportunity to redo one paper that receives a No Pass. If you receive more than one mark of No Pass, you must arrange to meet

with me to discuss your status in the course. You will turn hard copies in during class on the designated due dates AND upload them to the D2L dropbox using the originality checker.

I will assign your final grade for the course based on #3 and #4 above, using the Department of Sociology's rubric for graduate seminars:

A: Consistently performed well above expectations for the course (e.g., 4 Passing papers and regular participation indicating consistent preparation)

A-: Performed above expectations for the course (4 Passing papers and competent participation)

B+: Met expectations for the course (4 Passing papers and occasional participation)

B: Occasionally performed below expectations for the course (3 Passing papers, contributes little to discussion)

B-: Consistently performed below expectations for the course (3 Passing papers; does not participate)

C: Unsatisfactory work for a PhD student (Incomplete or late work; misses class)

Course Schedule

Subject to change. I will announce changes in class and over email and on D2L.

Reminder: asterisk (*) indicates readings posted on D2L.

Week 1 (Jan 15)

Course Orientation

- **Topics:** course requirements; mutual expectations; why bother with theory?

Week 2 (Jan 22)

Setting the Stage

- **Topics:** Historical context and scope of classical sociological theory; the creation of a canon

- **Reading:**

*Connell, R. W. 1997. "Why Is Classical Theory Classical?" *American Journal of Sociology* 102:1511-1557.

*Davis, Murray S. 1971. "That's Interesting! Towards a Phenomenology of Sociology and a Sociology of Phenomenology." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 1: 309-344.

*Hadden, Richard W. 1997. "The Enlightenment, Conservative Reaction, Comte, and Spencer" (Chapter 1). Pp. 15-38 in *Sociological Theory: An Introduction to the Classical Tradition*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview.

Week 3 (Jan 29)

Marx

- **Topics:** Social change; historical materialism; ideology; false consciousness; class conflict; social inequality

- **Reading:**

Pampel: Marx chapter

In *The Marx-Engels Reader*

"The German Ideology," pp. 148-175.

"Manifesto of the Communist Party," pp. 473-83.

Week 4 (Feb 5)

Marx

- **Topics:** The structure of capitalism; use value and exchange value; the fetishism of commodities; reification; alienation

- **Reading:**

In *The Marx-Engels Reader*

"Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*," pp. 3-6;

Selections from the *1844 Manuscripts*, pp. 66-93

"The Coming Upheaval," pp. 218-219

Selections from *Capital*, Volume One, pp. 302-329

Excerpt:

*Shawn, Wallace. 1991. "The Fever." New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. (p. 19)

Week 5 (Feb 12)

Weber

- **Topics:** Legitimate Authority, the State, and Rationalization; charisma; person and position; bureaucracy; routinization; standardization; objectivity; ideal type

- **Reading:**

Pampel: Weber chapter

*"Class, Status, Party" and *"Politics as a Vocation" (first 7 pp: up to "...yields a sufficient income."

*"The Types of Legitimate Domination" and *"Bureaucracy"

*"Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy"

*"Definitions of Sociology and Social Action" (pp. 4-24) and *"Types of Social Action" (pp. 24-26) (note that these two are in the same document)

Week 6 (Feb 19)

Marx and Weber Synthesis

- **Topics:** Using classical theory; applying, building on, and adapting works by Marx and Weber

- **Reading:**

In *The Marx-Engels Reader*, re-read/review pp. 66-93 (selections from the *1844 Manuscripts*)

*Kurzman, Charles, Chelise Anderson, Clinton Key, Youn Ok Lee, Mairead Moloney, Alexis Silver, and Maria W. Van Ryn. 2007. "Celebrity Status." *Sociological Theory* 25: 347-367.

*Snyder, Benjamin H. 2013. "From Vigilance to Busyness A Neo-Weberian Approach to Clock Time." *Sociological Theory* 31: 243-266.

*Thompson, Edward P. 1967. "Time, Work-discipline, and Industrial Capitalism." *Past and Present* 38: 56-97.

*Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, pp. 8-36, 69-87, 98-122.

Week 7 (Feb 26)

Durkheim

- **Topics:** The nature of human society and how to study it

- **Reading:**

Pampel: Durkheim chapter

Excerpts:

**The Rules of The Sociological Method*

**Suicide*

*Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (pp. 50-58)

Week 8 (Mar 5)

Durkheim

- **Topics:** Collective emotions and ritual process

- **Reading:**

Excerpts:

**The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and *Essays on Morals and Education* ("A Discussion on Sex Education")

*Collins, Randall. 1990. "Stratification, Emotional Energy, and the Transient Emotions." Pp. 27-57 in *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*, edited by T. Kemper. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. (pp. 27-34).

*Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (pp. 95-129).

*Goffman, Erving. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. New York: Pantheon (pp. 53-6).

Week 9 (Mar 12)**No class**

Week 10 (Mar 19)**Simmel**

- **Topics:** Urbanism, impersonality; anonymity; intimacy; secrecy and privacy

- **Reading:**

Pampel: Simmel chapter

*"The Metropolis and Mental Life"

*"The Stranger"

*"The Secret and the Secret Society"

Week 11 (Mar 26)**SPRING BREAK**

Week 12 (Apr 2)**Mead**

- **Topics:** The development of the self, mind, and society

- **Reading:**

Pampel: Mead chapter

Mind, Self, and Society

pp. 42-51 (Part II: Mind, 7: "Wundt and the Concept of the Gesture")

pp. 117-125 (Part II: Mind; 16: "Mind and the Symbol")

pp. 135-164 (Part III: The Self, 18: "The Self and the Organism," 19: "The Background of the Genesis of the Self," and 20: "Play, the Game, and the Generalized Other")

pp. 173-175 (Part III: The Self, 22: "The 'I' and the 'Me'")

*Irvine, Leslie. 2003. "George's Bulldog: What Mead's Canine Companion Could Have Told Him About The Self." *Sociological Origins* 3:46-49.

Excerpt:

*Cooley, Charles Horton. 1902. "The Looking-Glass Self." Pp. 179-185 in *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: Scribner's.

Week 13 (Apr 9)**DuBois**

- **Topics:** Race in America; discrimination; education; the "color line"

- **Reading:**

Pampel: DuBois chapter

The Souls of Black Folk

Week 14 (Apr 16)**Postwar American Sociology**

- **Topics:** Opposing perspectives on the role of theory; the development of a distinctly American theory

- **Reading:**

Symbolic Interactionism, pp. 1-61 and 78-90.

*Mills, C. Wright. "Grand Theory" (Chapter 2) and "Abstract Empiricism" (Chapter 3) pp. 25-75 from *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.

*Parsons, Talcott. 1964. "The School Class as a Social System: some of its Functions in American Society," pp. 130-141 in *Social Structure and Personality*. London: Free Press.

Week 15 (Apr 23)**Garfinkel**

- **Topics:** “common sense” knowledge; sexuality; gender; the local production of institutional orders
- **Reading:**
Studies in Ethnomethodology, Chapters 1-5 **and** appendix to Chapter 5.
(Chapters 6-8 optional, but strongly recommended.)
*West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman 1987. “Doing Gender.” *Gender & Society* 1:125-151.

Week 16 (Apr 30)**Foucault**

- **Topics:** The making of the subject; knowledge/power; sexuality; the local production of institutional orders; synthesizing theory, methods, and analysis
- **Reading:**
Excerpts
Discipline and Punish
The History of Sexuality
*McHoul, Alec. 1986. “The Getting of Sexuality: Foucault, Garfinkel and the Analysis of Sexual Discourse.” *Theory, Culture, & Society* 3: 65-79.

RELEVANT CU POLICIES

Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter from Disability Services within the first two weeks of class so that we can address your needs. Disability Services determines accommodations based on *documented* disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>"

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty members have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity, and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

Academic Integrity

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students found in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). For other information on the Honor Code, see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please notify me early in the semester if religious observance will cause you to miss a class, test, or assignment. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policies on Discrimination and Harassment (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html>) Sexual Harassment, and Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. For information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment, see <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>