

Sociology 200
Classical Sociological Theory
Wellesley College, Fall 2006

Thomas Cushman
Office Hours, PNE334
Monday 4:00-6:00; Thursday, 4:00-5:00

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the thought of several key figures who are considered the founders of sociology as a discipline in the 19th and early 20th century. Our particular focus is on how these thinkers experienced, wrote and thought about the nature of social order as well as the causes and consequences of the transition from feudal society to industrial society, or what sociologists refer to as modernity.

Required Texts

The following texts are available at Wellesley College Bookstore and on reserve at Knapp:

Ken Morrison, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber: Formations of Modern Social Thought (Second Edition) Sage Publications, 2006.
Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Routledge, 2001.
Emile Durkheim, On Morality and Society, University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Additional required readings will be available in the E-reserve section of the course conference and will be noted in each section of the syllabus.

Course Requirements

- A. Mid-Term Exam (short answer and essays on lectures and readings), in class, Monday, October 23
- B. Final Examination (self-scheduled, in class, blue book)
- C. Three Papers on topics to be announced: Due dates: Paper 1, October 5; Paper 2, November 13; Paper 3, December 12. All papers are due in class, late papers will be penalized ½ letter grade for each day late.

D. Class Attendance and Participation: is mandatory and will be taken each class period.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

September 7: Introduction to the class and its objectives. What is theory? What is sociological theory? Why is theory important?

September 11-15 Historical Origins and Foundations of Sociological Theory.

Reading: Ken Morrison, Introduction

September 18-25 The Early Positivists: Adolphe Quetelet and Auguste Comte.

Reading: Adolphe Quetelet, "On Man, Introductory" ;
"Of the Development of the Propensity to Crime,"
"Book IV, Ch. 1, "On the Average Man."

Lewis Coser, "Auguste Comte" (er)

Auguste Comte, "Population Increase and the Law of Three Stages" (er)

September 28-October 2 Social Evolutionism: Herbert Spencer

Reading: Lewis Coser, "Herbert Spencer", chapter to be handed out in class

Herbert Spencer, "Social Structure and Function" ; Progress: Its Law and Cause (er),

October 5 - 19 Historical Materialism and Practice: Karl Marx

Reading: Ken Morrison, Chapter 2 on Marx (in entirety) Karl Marx (all er), "Reflections of a Youth on Choosing an Occupation" ; "Theses on Feuerbach" ; "The Preface to a Critique of Political Economy"

(above :basic assumptions, models, philosophy)

(below: specific workings of capitalism and program for change)

"Wage Labor And Capital" , "The Exploitation of the Workers under Capital and the Worker's Response' " ; "The Communist Manifesto" , in entirety
at "<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/>

Mid-term Exam, in class, October 23

October 26-November 9 Moral Bases of Society, Social Solidarity, and Social Disorganization: Emile Durkheim

Reading: Ken Morrison, Chapter 3 on Durkheim

Robert Bellah, "Introduction in *On Morality and Society*

Emile Durkheim, Chapters 1- 5 (Intellectual background)

Chapters 6-9 (Social Solidarity, Division of Labor)

Chapter 10 (Dualism of Humans)

Chapters 11-12 (Religion)

(Readings listed for Durkheim in clusters to be discussed in specific classes)

November 13 -30 Action, Rationalization, Power, and Modernity: Max Weber

Reading: Ken Morrison, Chapter 4 on Weber

Max Weber, "The Rationalism of Western Civilization" (er) (Rationality)

"The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" , in entirety

(Rationalization)

"Bureaucracy" , (er) (Power and Domination)

November 30-December 11 On Individuality and Social Forms: Georg Simmel

Reading: Georg Simmel, "How is Society Possible? (er),

"Conflict" (er) (Social Order)

"The Stranger" ; "The Poor" (er))

(Social Types)

"The Metropolis and Mental Life "

(Modernity)