

SOCIOLOGY 105: DOING SOCIOLOGY

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Office Hours –Mondays 11:30-12:30 and Wednesdays 12:00-1:00
or by appointment

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OPEN TO FIRST YEAR STUDENTS ONLY

Why do male and female students participate in class discussions differently? Did the students of color always sit together in your high school cafeteria? Why is Africa so poor? Sociology has answers to all of these questions. The goal of this class is to help you develop your sociological imagination. It is to learn to see sociology all around you and to give you tools and concepts to help you analyze what you see. It is to introduce students to different sociological sub-fields, to familiarize them with different analytical techniques and methods, and to learn new theories and concepts. Normally, students will be asked to do reading and an exercise in preparation for each class. Class time will be organized around lectures, discussions, and in-class group projects. Students will work individually, in pairs, and in small groups. There will also be several guest lectures during the semester, scheduled in the late afternoons. I expect students to attend at least two of these events. We will also receive mini-trainings on doing database research, writing, and public speaking.

Coming to class prepared and participating actively in class activities is key to the success of this experience. Your grade will be based on your participation (40%) and three short written assignments (20% each) that will be distributed throughout the semester. I also ask that students visit me during office hours at least once before the middle of the semester.

The following books on reserve at Clapp Library, available for purchase at the bookstore, or available as an E-book:

MacLeod, Jay. *Ain't No Makin' It*. Westview Press
Brooks, David. *Bobos in Paradise*. Simon and Shuster
Lareau, Annette *Unequal Childhoods*. University of California Press
Bourgois, Philippe *In Search of Respect* Cambridge University Press
Ehrenreich, Barbara, *Nickel and Dimed* Metropolitan Books
Grasmuck, Sherri. *Protecting Home*. Rutgers University Press. Available as an E-book.

Rivoli, Pietra *The Travels of a T-Shirt in a Global Economy*. Wiley and Sons.
Levitt, Peggy *The Transnational Villager* University of California Press

WEEK ONE – JANUARY 29TH INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND THE DISCIPLINE

View the film *Spellbound*. What is sociological about what we have seen? How does sociology help us understand it?

WEEK TWO – FEBRUARY 5TH THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

- A. Before Class** – Read the e-reserve excerpt from C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*. Bring in an article from the newspaper that you think is about a sociological issue or debate.
- B. In-Class** – Lecture and discussion on what sociology is, its methods and some important concepts we will work with during the semester. Lecture by research librarian who will demonstrate how to use the library databases. Newspaper exercise based on articles students bring in and others I distribute.

WEEK THREE - FEBRUARY 12TH THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION- AN EXAMPLE

- A. Before Class** – Read David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise*. Spend the afternoon in the town of Wellesley and observe what is bohemian and what is bourgeois about it. Do you agree with Brook's argument? Write a 3-5 page paper on why. Guidelines to be distributed.
DUE ON FEBRUARY 26TH
- B. In Class** – Discuss the book and the findings of your observations. Lecture by PLTC tutor on public speaking. Group Exercise – Analyze materials from old WC yearbooks and alumnae materials. What were the cultural expectations then? How do they compare to what Brooks says they are now?

WEEK FOUR NO CLASS – PRESIDENT'S DAY.

WEEK FIVE – FEBRUARY 26TH INEQUALITY IN CHILDHOOD

- A. Before Class** – Read Annette Laureau's *Unequal Childhoods*. Review at least two parenting or women's magazines for evidence in support or against Laureau's argument.
- B. In class** – Lecture on social stratification. Discussion of book and magazine exercise. Group public policy exercise – Do you think that public policies should redress childhood inequalities? Preparations for in-class debate next week. Presentation by Writing Tutors. Meet with Vivian Louie, School of Education, Harvard University who will talk about sociologists at work.

GUEST LECTURE – VIVIAN LOUIE – GROWING UP IN TRANSNATIONAL WORLDS: IDENTITIES AMONG SECOND GENERATION CHINESE AND DOMINICANS 4:30-6.

WEEK SIX – MARCH 5TH - INEQUALITY AT SCHOOL

- A. Before class** – Read MacLeod’s *Ain’t No Makin’ It*. Assignment to be distributed – Conduct interviews with juniors and seniors about the differences in dorm culture at WC or the differences in Wellesley culture compared to other schools in the area. Which cultures are valued and which are marginalized? What do you learn about how different cultures work? Write a 3-5 page paper on an aspect of cultural production and reproduction. **DUE MARCH 26TH**
- A.**
- B. In-class** – Lecture on culture. Discussion of before-class exercise results. Group exercise on the sanctioning of culture. Who gets to decide what is good and bad culture – the dominant culture and its minority counterparts? What kind of culture should be taught in schools?

WEEK SEVEN – MARCH 12TH CULTURE VERSUS STRUCTURE

- A. Before Class** – Read Philippe Bourgois’ *In Search of Respect*. Bring in statistics you find about racial and ethnic variations in poverty. What do you think explains these differences?
- B. In Class** – Discussion of book. What is the culture that Bourgois describes? In class debate on structure vs. culture. Meet with Tamara Kay, Sociology Department, Harvard University who will talk about sociologists at work

GUEST LECTURE – TAMARA KAY, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, TRANSNATIONAL LAW, GOVERNANCE, AND LABOR MOVEMENTS: THE EMERGENCE OF A LABOR RIGHTS REGIME IN NORTH AMERICA 4:30-6

SPRING BREAK MARCH 19TH

WEEK EIGHT – MARCH 26TH INEQUALITY AS SEEN THROUGH INSIDE CULTURE

- B. Before Class** – Read selection from David Halle’s *Inside Culture* (on e-reserve) Exercise on Analyzing Dorm culture – What can you tell about the culture of your dorm based on how residents decorate their rooms?

- C. **In-class** - Discussion of reading and before class exercise. Group work on analyzing culture based on homework and materials I distribute.

WEEK NINE – APRIL 2ND INEQUALITY AS SEEN THROUGH THE PRISM OF GENDER AND SPACE

- A. **Before Class** – Read Sherri Grasmuck’s *Protecting Home*.
- B. **In-Class** - Lecture on Gender. Discussion of book. Group exercise – content analysis of personal ads by class. Discussion of article about Nigerian Beauty Contests and analysis of the presentation of gender in the media. Write a 3-5 page paper on citizenship in a transnational age (guidelines to be distributed). **DUE ON APRIL 30th**

WEEK ELEVEN – APRIL 9TH GENDER INEQUALITY CONTINUED

- A. **Before Class** – Read Barbara Ehrenreich’s *Nickel and Dimed*
- B. **In-Class** – Lecture on Women in the work force from a historical perspective. Discussion of book. Review report from Wellesley Centers for Women on women and Boards of Directors.

WEEK TWELVE – APRIL 17TH GLOBALIZATION *NOTE THIS IS A TUESDAY

- A. **Before Class** – Read Peggy Levitt’s *The Transnational Villagers*.
- B. **In-Class** – Lecture on globalization. Discussion of book. Watch movie, The Sixth Section. Meet with Bruce Whitehouse, PhD Candidate, Anthropology, Brown University about the work of social scientists

GUEST LECTURE BY BRUCE WHITEHOUSE, BROWN UNIVERSITY "EXILE KNOWS NO DIGNITY: AFRICAN TRANSNATIONAL MIGRANTS AND THE ANCHORING OF IDENTITY." 4:30-6.

WEEK THIRTEEN – APRIL 23RD GLOBALIZATION CONTINUED

- A. **Before Class** – Read *The Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy*. Find out as much as you can about the production and distribution chains of your favorite food or article of clothing.
- B. **In-Class** – Discuss reading. Second lecture on globalization. In-class exercise – How Global is Wellesley? Meet with Bruce Whitehouse, graduate student in anthropology at Brown University about social scientists at work.

WEEK FOURTEEN – APRIL 30TH GLOBALIZATION CONTINUED

- A. **Before Class** – Read a short story to be distributed. Prepare for in-class debate on free trade.
- B. **In Class** – Discuss reading and the reflection of the social in art. In-class debate

WEEK– FIFTEEN – MAY 7TH RELIGION AND GLOBALIZATION

- A. **Before Class** – Prepare and carry-out an on-line survey among your dorm mates about religious beliefs. Read articles on religion on e-reserves.
- B. **In Class** - Discussion of readings and survey findings. View *Inherit the Wind* and discuss recent debates about teaching creationism in schools.