

SOCIOLOGY 101: Classical Social Theory

Fall 2012: Tu/Th 12:40-14:00, A1 Hearst Annex

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 14:10-15:30 & by appointment

Graduate Student Instructors: Mario Castillo, Andy Scott Chang, Laura Nelson, and Rachel Wetts

This course is an introduction to “classical social theory.” Broadly speaking, classical social theory sought to describe and explain the profound transformations in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe: the triple revolution of industrial capitalism, modern democracy, and the making of modern identities. Rather than presenting a genealogy of social theory, the course will focus on six major texts. I hope that you will engage in close reading and in so doing not only to enhance your basic competencies in reading, writing, and thinking but also to glean a sense of the astonishing ambition and continuing relevance of classical social theory.

TEXTS

Arendt, Hannah. 2006 [1963]. Eichmann in Jerusalem. Penguin.

Marx, Karl. 1992 [1867]. Capital, Vol.1, tr. David Fernbach. Penguin.

Mills, C. Wright. 1959. The Sociological Imagination. Oxford University Press.

Tocqueville, Alexis de. 2011 [1856]. The Ancien Régime and the French Revolution, tr. Arthur Goldhammer. Cambridge University Press

Veblen, Thorstein. 2007 [1899]. The Theory of the Leisure Class. Oxford University Press.

Weber, Max. 2002 [1904/05]. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, tr. Peter Baehr. Penguin.

EVALUATION

Two short papers (800 words each): 20% x 2 = 40%

Two examinations: 20% x 2 = 40%

Oral examination and class participation: 20%

READING SCHEDULE

23 August: Introduction

Part I: Industrial Capitalism

28 August: Begin Weber

30 August: Continue Weber

4 September: Continue Weber

6 September: Finish Weber

11 September: Marx, Part 8

13 September: Marx, pp.89-103, Chaps.1 (focus on pp.163-177), pp.270-292

18 September: Marx, Chaps.10 (esp. Sections 1-3, 5), 12, 15 (focus on Sections 1, 3, 5)

20 September: Marx, pp.762-802

Part II: Modern Politics

25 September: Begin Tocqueville

27 September: Continue Tocqueville

FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE ON 28 SEPTEMBER

2 October: Continue Tocqueville

4 October: Finish Tocqueville

9 October: Begin Arendt

11 October: Continue Arendt

16 October: Continue Arendt

18 October: Finish Arendt

23 October: Extended Office Hours with GSIs

25 October: **MID-TERM EXAMINATION**

Part III: Social Theory and American Life

30 October: Begin Veblen

1 November: Continue Veblen

6 November: Finish Veblen

8 November: Begin Mills

13 November: Continue Mills

15 November: Finish Mills

20 November: None

22 November: THANKSGIVING

27 November: Oral examination (to be scheduled individually)

29 November: Oral examination (to be scheduled individually)

SECOND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE on 30 November

FINAL EXAMINATION ON 14 DECEMBER