

Sociology 150
Sociological Social Psychology
University of California, Berkeley
Fall 2012

Course Details

Instructor: Brian Powers
Email: brpowers@berkeley.edu
Phone: (510) 642-4766
Office: 488 Barrows Hall
Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, 1:15 -2:30; 4:15-5; by appt. when feasible before noon

Lecture: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 3-4
Location: 50 Birge

Required books: O'Brien Jodi. *The Production of Reality: Essays and Readings on Social Psychology* Fifth Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA. Pine Forge-Sage, 2011.

Course reader: Available WHEN ANNOUNCED at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94704

Online readings: Numerous items of required reading are available electronically at the course bSpace site (bspace.berkeley.edu) and through the UCB library's e-books collection (site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/)

Course Background

This course explores the nature of social action and some of the analytical approaches in interactionist social psychology devised to shed light on it. It seeks to fill in the gaps, sometimes gaping, in sociological explanations for social outcomes that rely on demonstrated correlations among explanatory variables. Within sociology, social psychology seeks to answer the process questions concerning the ways and the reasons social forces affect social outcomes, often by affecting the thinking and action of individuals in society.

The course reviews several major analytical perspectives and products of investigations that use them. The strength and fruitfulness of concepts in the classical and theoretical writings are explored in relation to contemporary concerns about gender and racial identities, social compliance and non-conformity, the structuring of identity and personality in workplaces, schools, and other institutional venues, the maintenance of a stable social order or the emergence of volatility, and the reasons behind obedience or the expression of conscience and defiance. In two data gathering projects students will explore individuals' experiences learning or acquiring some facets of their identities and the ways the structure and practices of a specific social setting shape individuals' thinking and action.

Course Requirements

Fall Course Requirements

Assignment	Handout date	Due date	Grade	Notes
1. Occasional one-page overnight quizzes	TBA	TBA	Part of 10% Participation Grade	1 page response to a prompt question based on a specific reading assignment(s) or course themes
2. Reading Reflections	TBA	TBA	Part of 10% Participation Grade	1-2 pages single-spaced reflections on Designated Reading Assignments
3. Field Report 1 on a Direct, Observational Study of a Context Shaping Forms of Identity or Action		September 17	Part of 10% Participation Grade	1-2 pages defining a plan for studying over the semester a social setting or process linked to the formation of a sociologically significant identity or forms of action
4. Paper 1 Comparative Paper on Differences in the Acquisition of Social Identities		October 1	30%	Comparison of the formative experiences and effects of social situations in the development of two different forms of identity in a common social category in two individuals. 5-7 pages based on interview data
5. Field Report 2 Report on First Five Interviews or First Three Observations		October 15	Part of 10% Participation Grade	Status Report on Course Research Project: Early Field Observations
6. Field Report 3 Report on Second Five Interviews or Second Three Observations with Bibliography		October 31	Part of 10% Participation Grade	Status Report on Course Research Project: Emerging Analytical Themes from the Field
7. Field Report 4		November 14	Part of 10% Participation	Status Report on Course Research Project: Thesis, Evidence, and

Preliminary Thesis Statement and Inventory of Data and Bibliography			Grade	your Argument
8. Paper 2 Analysis of Social Influences on Identity and Action		November 30	30%	6-8 Page Paper Report on a Field Study of effects of a social Context on Social Identity Formation
9. Final Exam		December 11, 7-10 pm	30%	Take home essays distributed/posted in the last week of classes.

Note: Make sure your exam schedule does not conflict with obligations for other classes.

Grading and Credit

All requirements must be met for course credit. All assignments must be completed and submitted for this class. A missing assignment, even a quiz, will result in an “F” for the course.

Participation

Full credit for your participation grade requires:

- At least one visit to my office hours. You are welcome to visit alone or in a group. We will schedule occasional Sociological Chat Sessions.
- At least three contributions to the bSpace forum discussions, one in each of three areas:
 - A response or comment that you post on course materials, including readings, lectures, or media.
 - A comment or response you post to another posting already up at a discussion.
 - A comment on an incident, topic, issue on campus or in the real world which you find sociologically interesting and to which you can apply sociological ideas.
- One journal, four field reports, two papers and the final exam. Field reports, the journal, and occasional overnight quizzes covering course content, interpretation, and application of course readings. Quizzes will be counted toward the participation score. They will be announced in advance.

Grades

Grades will be based exclusively on written work. Papers will be graded for their sociological reasoning, and not for writing mechanics or language skills per se, but students’ weaknesses in expository writing and inattention to details of presentation will be noted and can affect grades, especially when they undermine or inhibit the strengths of students’ sociological thinking.

Successful papers are original, well-organized, well-researched and supported, with ideas clearly expressed in solid prose. Papers submitted that literally reflect the guidelines of course assignments, even if they do so in a polished way, are considered “good work,” and can be expected to earn a grade of B. As an incentive for

creative thinking and writing, grades higher than a B reflect students' original contribution to the course material, weaving together themes and material from different parts of the curriculum, reflecting students' creativity, imagination, initiative, independent scholarship and special insights that show initiative, diligence, and add value to the assignment.

Course Schedule

Note: This segment of the syllabus is a map, not a train schedule. Lectures may fall out of sync with the schedule of assigned readings. Please read on schedule to manage the material assigned for the class.

Week A: Preliminaries Overview of Sociological Social Psychology in the Interactionist Tradition: Understanding the Social Bond and its Role in Social structure and Social Action

Friday, August 24

- Jodi O'Brien, "Essay: What is Real?" (in O'Brien, pp. 2-10).
- Eviatar Zerubavel, "Islands of Meaning." (1991) (in O'Brien, pp. 11-27.)

Week 1: Sociology and the Social Psychology of Social Action: Psychological Questions for Sociology; Sociological Questions for Psychology.

Monday, August 27

- Joel Charon, "The Perspective of Social Science," (in O'Brien, pp. 39-48).
- Jodi O'Brien, *Essay: "Shared Meaning as the Basis of Humanness."* (in O'Brien, pp. 50-69.)
- Ernst Cassirer, "The Symbol," (in O'Brien, p. 84-86)

Wednesday, August 29

- Ellen Langer, "Mindfulness and Mindlessness." (in O'Brien 82-86).
- ** Takahiko Masuda and Richard E. Nisbett. "Attending Holistically Versus Analytically: Comparing the Context Sensitivity of Japanese and Americans." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 2001, Vol. 81, No. 5, 922-934.

Friday, August 31

- ** Dacher Keltner, *Born to be Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life.* New York. Norton, 2009. pp. 199-224
- George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, "Metaphors We Live By," (in O'Brien, pp. 87-97).

Week 2: Identities: Interactive Identity Formation

Monday, September 3

LABOR DAY – no classes held

- Jodi O'Brien. "Who Am I? Developing Character," (in O'Brien, pp. 108-120).
- George Herbert Mead. "The Self, the I, and the Me," (in O'Brien, pp. 121-125).

Wednesday, September 5

- Charles Horton Cooley. “The Looking Glass Self ,”(in O’Brien, pp. 126-128).
- Tamotsu Shibutani. “Reference Groups as Perspectives,” (O’Brien, pp. 192-198).
- Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, “Socialization: The Internalization of Society.” (in O’Brien, pp. 189-192).

Friday, September 7

- ** John Van Manaan. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago: UC Press, 1988

Week 3: The Self. A Socially Mediated Personal Construction

Monday, September 10

- Shenyang Zhao, “The Digital Self Through the Looking Glass of Telecopresent Others.” (in O’Brien, pp. 153-161).

Wednesday, September 12

- ** Sherry Turkle. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. NY Basic Books, 2011. Chapter 7, “Communion,” pp. 127-147.

Friday, September 14

Media and Discussion

Week 4: Identity in Social Roles or Subject Positions.

Monday, September 17

- R: Michael Zielenziger. *Shutting out the Sun: How Japan Created Its Own Lost Generation*. New York. Vintage. 2006, pp. 15-38; 93-120; 121-145.

Wednesday, September 19

- Alan Teo (2010). “A New Form of Social Withdrawal in Japan: A Review of Hikikomori.” *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 56(2) pp. 178-185.

Friday, September 21

- Howard S. Becker. “Becoming a Marihuana User,” (in O’Brien, p.140-149).

Week 5: Gender

Monday, September 24

- Michael Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men. Understanding the Critical Years Between 16 and 26*. New York: Harper Collins, 2008. pp 44-69.

Wednesday, September 26

- R: C. J. Pascoe. *Dude, You’re a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2007, pp. 25-83.

Friday, September 28

- R: Rachel Simmons, *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls*, Orlando: Harvest, Harcourt, pp.155-176.

Week 6: Racial Identities

Monday, October 1

- R: Herbert Blumer, (1958) "Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position." *Pacific Sociological Review* 1, pp.3-7.
- R: Stanford M. Lyman and William A. Douglas, "Ethnicity: Strategies of Collective and Individual Impression Management." *Social Research* 40, Summer 1973, pp.348-359.

Wednesday, October 3

- Amir Marvasti, "Being Middle Eastern: Identity Negotiation in the Context of the 'War on Terror'." (in O'Brien, pp. 306-317).
- Pamela Perry, "Shades of White" (in O'Brien, pp. 198-218.)

Friday, October 5

- W.E.B. DuBois. "Double Consciousness and the Veil," (in O'Brien, pp. 474-478).

Week 7: Varieties of the Social Bond: Intimacy, Social Structures, Emotions

Monday, October 8

- Robin Simon, Donna Eder, and Cathy Evans. "The Development of Feeling Norms Underlying Romantic Love," (in O'Brien, p. 228-247).

Wednesday, October 10

- R: Nancy Scheper-Hughes. *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, pp. 340-399.

Friday, October 12

- R: Jonathan Ned Katz, "The Invention of Heterosexuality," in Kathy Peiss, ed., *Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002, pp. 348-355.

Week 8: Self-Making Institutions

Monday, October 15

- R: Erving Goffman, "The Moral Career of a Mental Patient," *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Chicago: Aldine, 1961, pp. 127-169.

Wednesday, October 17

- R: Susanna Kayzen, *Girl, Interrupted*. New York: Vintage. 1993. pp. 5-55.

Friday, October 19

- R: Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (1975)*. Trans. Alan Sheridan New York: Vintage, 1979, 170-194.

Week 9: The Social Psychology of Workplaces and the Market

Monday, October 22

- Joan P. Emerson, "Behavior in Private Places: Sustaining Definitions of Reality in Gynecological Examination," (in O'Brien, pp. 201-214).
- Arlie Hochschild, "The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling," (in O'Brien, pp. 320-324).

Wednesday, October 24

- R: Marie Jahoda, Paul Lazarsfeld, Hans Zeisel, *Mienthal: The Sociography of an Unemployed Community* (1933), Chicago: Aldine Atherton, 1971. "Responses to Deprivation" and "The Meaning of Time." Pp.45-77.

Friday, October 26

- R: Louis Uchitelle, *The Disposable American: Layoffs and their Consequences*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006. pp. "The Consequences – Undoing Sanity," pp. 179 - 204.

Week 10: Communal Breakdown – Cohesion and Social Persecutions -- Salem and Elsewhere

Monday, October 29

- R: Douglas Rushkoff, "Atmospherics" in *Coercion: Why We Listen to What **They** Say*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1999. Pp.73-110.
- ** Robert Shiller. "Bubbles, Human Judgment, and Expert Opinion." Yale International Center for Finance. February 2001.

Wednesday, October 31

- R: Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974, pp. 22-36; 80-109.

Friday, November 2

Week 11: Communal Breakdown – Cohesion and Social Persecutions Salem and Elsewhere

Monday, November 5

- Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. New York: Knopf, 2002, pp. 232-251

Wednesday, November 7

- R: Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, pp. 295-313.

Friday, November 9

Media and Discussion

Week 12: Obedience and Conformity

Monday, November 12

VETERANS' DAY -- no classes held

Wednesday, November 14

- ** Jane Mayer. "The Experiment: The Military Trains People to Withstand Interrogation. Are those Methods being Misused in Guantanamo?" *The New Yorker*. July 11, 2005, p. 60.

Friday, November 16

- ** Stanley Milgram, "The Perils of Obedience," Harper's Magazine, 1974.

Week 13: Contemporary Problems of Order and Security

Monday, November 19

- R: Richard J. Evans. *The Third Reich in Power: 1933-1939*. New York: Penguin, 2005, pp. 20-41 ("Enlightening the People").

Wednesday, November 21

- R: Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Shall be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*, pp. 15-24; 94-99; 132-144; 177-178.

Friday, November 23

THANKSGIVING BREAK -- no classes held

Week 14: Good People, Bad Actions – And Resilience

Monday, November 26

- ** Tara McKelvey, "A Soldier's Tale: Lynndie England." *Marie Claire* (fashion magazine) <http://www.marieclaire.com/world-reports/news/latest/lynndie-england-1>

Wednesday, November 28

- ** Philip Zimbardo. *The Lucifer Effect and the Psychology of Evil. Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*. New York: Random House, 2007. TBA

Friday, November 30

- Final Thoughts

Week 15: Reading, Recitation, and Review Week

- *Monday, December 3 Through Friday, December 7*

NO FORMAL INSTRUCTION – Review and Office Hours

FINAL EXAM GROUP 8 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 7-10 PM

Course Format

This course requires independent reading and synthesis of assigned materials. It is important for you to show in your writings that you understand *the meaning* of the work of particular course authors and course concepts and that you know *how to apply the ideas to issues* in the social world, more than that you simply know what someone said or wrote on a specific topic.

The course has several components:

- Lectures
- Reading assignments
- Research tasks
- Media (audio/video, tables and charts, still images)
- Study guides
- PowerPoint presentations
- Supplementary postings from the news media

These components complement and reinforce one another. They have been chosen to help you understand the content of course ideas and help you apply them to topics in the real world and research papers.

Each class session will address a set of concepts drawn from readings, with some data, references to the real world, or references to course media. To do well in this course you will have to attend lectures. However, success in this class requires more effort. The content of lectures will not be limited to facts you need to know for an exam. Instead, lectures are opportunities for you to observe and practice sociological thinking.

Please do not allow yourself to drift or mistakenly think that nothing of value is taking place in class discussions or presentations. If you find yourself thinking that way, see me for help getting back on track.

Course Sites: bSpace.berkeley.edu and site.ebrary.com/lib/berkeley/

You will need immediate and regular internet access to the course site. At bSpace, I will post:

- Administrative announcements
- Downloadable assignment instructions
- Handouts
- Lecture notes

Access to the course site is also necessary for you to participate in online course discussion groups. Make sure you have an active email account on record with the registrar (bearfacts.berkeley.edu) that you actually look at. I will also email you often via bSpace, which uses an automatically generated course mailing list from the registrar's data base of student information. I will use the course web site starting today, to which you will have access automatically as an enrolled student.

Course Materials

PowerPoint slides, lecture notes and study guides will be posted online. These will summarize and supplement lectures and conversations in class. These items will be posted at the "Resources" tab at the course site. Please use these materials to help integrate readings, lectures and class discussions in your understanding of the course.

Office Hours and Contact Information

Email is the best way to communicate with me, at brpowers@berkeley.edu. You may also leave messages for me with the Sociology office, (510) 642-4766.

My office hours will be in 488 Barrows Hall, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:15-2:30, and 4:15-5 pm. I may also be available by appointment. Advance requests for office hours get priority. If others are waiting, please circulate a sign-up sheet to establish an order.

Each student must visit at least one office hour with me either as an individual or in group before Week 6. We can arrange conversations on particular topics as the semester moves along.

Assignments

All assignments must be submitted on paper in class and electronically through bspace site under the “Assignments” tab. PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL WORK TO US WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION.

Course papers must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the page. You are responsible for keeping a backup of all work submitted. If any work is misplaced, you must be able to furnish a duplicate.

You will be assigned to a reader group. After you are assigned, you must write the reader’s name and reader group number on all work submitted. Work not labeled with your reader group and reader name will be penalized by a reduction in one grade step (e.g., A- to B+).

Course Citizenship

Email Etiquette

When you use email, please remember to write clearly and professionally. Imagine that you are speaking directly to your recipient when you write an email, and monitor the content, tone, and attitude of your message accordingly. Please avoid writing emails in a state of panic or extreme stress. If you do not receive a response from me when you wish, please remember there other students in the course who may be contacting me, and I have other obligations as well, so I will appreciate your patience.

Despite the many advantages of email, it may not be the best venue for all concerns students have. For example, it is not a good means to resolve issues you may have about the evaluation and grading of your work. It is better to come to office hours to discuss such a topic.

Some emails are not always welcome, especially those that re-ask a question that has been addressed in class, at the course site as an announcement, or in an email to the class. Pay attention to notifications of updates, schedule changes, new materials, and other clarifications. By all means use email for clarification, but monitor your use. Before hitting the send button on a message for information about course procedures, please double check for earlier information and updates.

Emailing the reader(s)

Remember, course readers are not graduate student instructors (GSIs) and they are paid quite differently. Please address your questions about the substance of the course and its procedures directly to me. Respect readers' limited responsibilities to a course and its students. The most common topic you will need to email your assigned reader about is your attendance at the office hour scheduled to discuss the grade whenever a major paper assignment is returned. Emails to readers on any other topic are not appropriate. If they require an answer, they will be forwarded to me to answer.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty

You should be aware that we will be especially vigilant in responding to academic dishonesty and plagiarism in this class. You must properly cite sources of all work that is not your own. Consult me for advice in case of uncertainty. You should be aware that penalties for plagiarism are outlined by the university and can include expulsion. Students in my classes have been failed for the entire course for breaching rules of academic honesty. When in doubt about proper use and citations of other's writings in your work, ask for guidance.

A mutual agreement

In Sociology 150, I will be present during lectures with an agenda for discussion and reflection based on curricular readings and supplemental sources. I will be available for questions and discussion in office time and via email. I will work at mastering new electronic technologies for to support your learning and use those that I already know. I will post lecture notes, reading summaries, and study questions, along with power point presentation files at the course website. I will offer staged guidance as you conduct your research, including written handouts, in class elaborations, demonstrations, and help provide the tools to enable you to carry it out successfully. I will work with course readers to assure that your work is evaluated thoughtfully, constructively, and fairly.

If you enroll in this course I expect that you will complete all course assignments, make an effort to introduce yourself to me or the reader(s), keep up with the readings and devote as much time to this course and its learning tasks as you devote to other courses with equivalent unit value, especially those closest to your professional aspirations and academic specialization.

I ask that you open your mind to theories about society that are unfamiliar to you; seek out opportunities to learn with and learn from your co-course members; and continually think about ways to participate in the class sessions, especially to teach your co-course members about the social world you know about may be different from theirs;

I hope that you will listen respectfully and openly to ideas that may challenge your own, and contact course personnel if you need help sorting through new ideas about new parts of the social world.

I expect you to attend all lectures, including video showings, and **reserve the right to take attendance at different points in the semester**. I ask that you be prepared to participate in discussions that emerge during class sessions.

Entering the scholarly conversation

The best way to grow intellectually through the material in the class is to develop your own dialogue with it. Sociology is a skeptical field, asking questions about the world in an effort to make some novel sense of it. You should feel free to be as demanding of sociology as it is of the world it analyzes. Do not expect to get much from this course unless you invest time and energy in the readings, lectures and research.

Following the Direction of the Course

Consider this syllabus a map of the territory in sociology and the social world we will cover in readings, lectures, and other course activities. It does not describe a strict timetable for what will be covered and exactly when materials will be explicitly addressed. Lectures and class activities may move in and out of sync with the schedule of assigned readings. When this happens, I will always tell you which readings are relevant to particular lectures, media presentations, or course activities.

Topics and Learning Goals

- Students recognize how psychological theories and social psychological research are often concerned with socially situated learning processes linked with the development of self-understanding, identity, and motivation of social behavior at the individual level, and in aggregate and institutional terms.
- Students understand how different components of a social setting or structural location affect individuals' perceptions, beliefs, values, identities, and thus, contribute to socially consequential forms of action.
- Students recognize opportunities to explore additional dimensions of the relationships sociological researchers identify among variables in social life, through social psychological inquiry into the motives, beliefs, and values that underlie readily observable and measurable patterns of behavior.
- Students appreciate the differences and commonalities in the assumptions, methods, and reasoning in different schools of social psychological theory as they highlight different human endowments and processes of learning and communication to explain social action and social outcomes.
- Students appreciate the socially structured character of many features of human subjectivity – personal values, goals, aspirations, and motives -- and recognize how changing social environments are likely to affect thinking, perception, belief, and other individual-level, subjective traits.
- Students familiarize themselves with the processes scholars have described for the construction and communication of meaning among individuals in social settings.
- Students appreciate the role of direct interaction and mediated communication through institutions and their technologies in influencing the perceptions and motivations of social actors.
- Students' writing show their nuanced understanding of the importance of actors' acquired motives and subjective cognition in social action.

Topical and Controversial Material

Conversations about social structure and the self inevitably touch on the subject of differences and disparities in the experiences of individuals and members of social groups, including those defined by race and other socially-defined characteristics. These can be sensitive matters to address, mostly because we are unused to talking about them in analytical terms as artifacts of social processes, as opposed to speaking of them as “natural” differences or regarding them in moralistic and judgmental terms, regarding them as matters of personal opinion

or experience. It is easy for them to stir up passions and fan misunderstandings because the ideas often touch on our identities and experiences. This class looks directly at experiences and disparities of the races, genders and other groups, but you should pay close attention to the *institutional* view it follows in exploring group disparities and the ways we think about them analytically.

Since we assume that race is a concept that is a creation of the social world which somewhat impersonally imposes interpretations of their attributes upon individuals and groups, in sociology we feel a bit more comfortable taking up topics often viewed as too hot to handle in general conversation. Based in the approaches available in sociology, this course shows the parts institutions have played in creating and making use of racial and other forms of categorical classifications in the US.

Social Ideals and Human Possibilities: Fairness

Most sociologists are motivated by hopes that the benefits of systems of human cooperation be fully realized and distributed fairly and widely among individuals or groups differently situated in the social order. American ideals about equality, fair play, and shared values define a high standard for societies to live up to, with hopes and expectations of the fruits of social cooperation equally high. The realities of social life are often experienced as disappointing. Sociology helps us measure the distance between reality and the ideals and potential of society. It also suggests reasons for the gaps between hopes and disappointing realities and it sketches out possible pathways and strategies of action to narrow the gap between them.

This is an important point for anyone considering this class to consider. To follow the logic of the course. Students may need to entertain some different assumptions about the world they already know pretty well, including topics on race and other social differences. The course has been designed to create space for rational and research-based reflection about different kinds of experiences in the US. In examining the workings of social institutions and their effects on individuals' attainments and life experiences, we want to avoid the "blame game" that can emerge or is thought to emerge when this set of topics arise. Please remember we are not trying to assign personal responsibility or induce guilt for aspects of US historical and social development that have worked out differently for different groups in the population.