

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY II

Soc 102 – Class #:23436

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11am-12:30pm,

Physics Building 4

Fall 2023

Faculty Instructor:

Prof. Ricarda Hammer

(ricarda.hammer@berkeley.edu)

Department of Sociology

Graduate Student Instructors:

Anthony Palafox (anthony.palafox@berkeley.edu)

Tim Ahn (timahn7@berkeley.edu)

Jenae Carpenter (jmcarpenter@berkeley.edu)

Will Rathje (wraithje@berkeley.edu)

Student hours:

Mondays 3:45-5:45 pm,

Social Sciences Building, Office 460 or Zoom

Sign up here:

<https://calendly.com/ricardahammer/student-hours>



Artwork: Ken Daley, "Free as a Bird"

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is the second half of the Sociology Department's year-long sequence in Sociological Theory. In this course, we will cover some of the core theoretical debates in social theory throughout the 20th and 21st century. We will pay specific attention to critical genealogies, such as works in anticolonial and postcolonial thought, critical theories of gender/sexuality, and indigenous thought. We will ask: How can social theory help us make sense of a complex world, craft transgressive solidarities, and engage in collective political action? How can we think beyond dominant categories that we often take for granted? How does power shape our sense of self and what are the possibilities for resistance? How can we demystify and learn to overcome structures of colonialism, racism and

patriarchy? Throughout the class, we will discuss how theorists’ historical contexts and social positions might shape their theoretical concerns. We will learn how to read texts generously, while also discussing their limits. Overall, the class aims to sharpen your ability to engage theoretical debates with an eye towards building your own sociological imagination.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Engage actively, generously, and critically with the works of key theorists from the 20th and 21st century;
- Compare and contrast different theoretical approaches;
- Debate the limits of theoretical approaches and their applicability to specific case studies;
- Apply insights from theorists to current events;
- Use theoretical concepts to better understand your own lived experiences and
- Bring these theoretical perspectives to your own writing.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

Lecture attendance

Attendance in lectures is mandatory. During lecture, we will engage closely with the week’s readings and situate them within a broader historical/geographical context, as well as a wider set of intellectual debates. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to seek out the information and announcements you missed.

Section attendance

In addition to lectures, you must attend one of the following eight sections:

SECTION #	CCN	INSTRUCTOR	DAY & TIME	LOCATION
102.101	23451	Tim Ahn	TR 8-9	121 Latimer
102.102	23452	Tim Ahn	TR 9-10	122 Latimer
102.103	23453	Will Rathje	TR 10-11	279 Dwinelle
102.104	23454	Will Rathje	TR 1-2	122 Latimer
102.105	23669	Jenae Carpenter	MW 8-9	5 Evans
102.106	23670	Jenae Carpenter	MW 9-10	121 Latimer

102.107	30702	Anthony Palafox	MW 10-11	134 Dwinelle
102.108	30703	Anthony Palafox	MW 11-12	134 Dwinelle

Your GSI will contact you to let you know when the first section will take place. Section attendance is mandatory, and your GSIs will take attendance. While sections are mandatory, protecting your physical and mental health is important, so you can miss up to four sections before it will affect your grade (see below). However, we ask that you please email your GSI to let them know about your absence before the section. GSIs will announce their student hours in section.

Readings & bCourses

All course readings will be made available electronically on bCourses, under Files > Week [x]. I will also post about class assignments and announcements, so be sure to check it regularly.

Email

Anthony Palafox (anthony.palafox@berkeley.edu) is the head GSI for the course. Please send all course-related questions to Anthony. For section questions, please consult your section GSI. Before emailing Anthony or your section GSI with a question about the course, please first make sure that your question is not already answered here in the syllabus. Almost everything you need to know about the course can be found here. If you have longer questions about the course material, come to talk to me by signing up for student hours at the link on the first page of this syllabus.

Academic Honesty

Honesty, integrity and ethical behavior are central values in all facets of life, and indeed also the core of academic work. Cheating on exams and plagiarism are examples of violations in the realm of ethics and integrity. Before conducting academic work, please carefully check the University's policy for [academic honesty](#). For example, the papers for this class must include bibliographies and follow proper citation practices. If you have questions about proper citation or doubts if something constitutes plagiarism, please consult your GSI. In case there are violations of academic integrity, then the standard penalty for this course will be a grade of 0% on the assignment. I know that undergraduate student life can be stressful and that academic dishonesty often comes from a place of desperation. If you are having difficulties with the class, please email me or come to student hours and we will find an effective solution.

GRADED COMPONENTS

Your grade will be based on section participation, 6 weekly memos, and two papers:

Section Attendance	20%
Reading Memos	20%
Mid-term Paper	30%
Final Paper	30%

Section Participation (20%)

We learn theory in community with one another, so sections constitute a central learning component for this class. In section, you will discuss the theories' merits, work to apply key concepts, practice close reading, and engage in thoughtful dialogue with one another. It is therefore imperative that you read the text closely before coming to section: The more deeply you read, the higher the level of discussion will be. To create a productive learning environment, please engage your peers respectfully and with care. Needless to say, disrespectful or demeaning language has no place in the classroom.

Your participation will be graded on a 3-point scale (0, 1, 2). If you come to section, respectfully participate in the discussion and actively listen, you will receive full credit for this section (2 points). We will deduct a point if you come to class but are visibly distracted, interrupt your peers or show disrespectful behavior (1 point). You will not get credit for unexcused absences (0 points). We will disregard your worst 4 section grades.

Weekly Memos (20%)

Throughout this course, you will write 6 short memos in preparation for your work in sections. These written assignments will help you reflect on the readings prior to class and allow you to develop your critical reading and writing skills. The memos are short writing challenges that allow you to practice applying theoretical applications prior to the papers.

In the memos, try to address the following points:

- What is one central insight you got from this reading?
- Can you articulate the text's argument in your own words?
- How does this insight help you think about the world?
- What questions were you left with? You should end your memo with one question you would like to pose to the class.

You can choose the weeks where you will be writing memos at your own discretion. If you are writing memos for a given week, they should be between 300-500 words long and should be uploaded to bCourses **the day before your section, by 1pm.**

The memos will be graded on a 3 point rubric (0, 1, 2). Remember that the memos are low-pressure ways to engage with the reading and formulate questions for section discussion. If you include the above questions/points in your memo, you will receive full credit for the assignment (2 points). If your memo lacks reflection or is markedly shorter than we asked for, you will receive 1 point. If you write less than the 6 required memos, you will receive 0 points for the missing assignments.

Two Papers (60%)

You will write two papers for this class. These papers are designed to help you engage the theoretical questions we discuss in lecture and sections, and they should help you develop your own sociological imagination. This means that you should try to apply a theoretical concept to a specific case study.

Mid-Term Paper (30%)

The mid-term exam will be 5 double-spaced pages in length and will be due on **Thursday, 5 October at 11:59pm.** For the mid-term paper, I will share with you an essay prompt two weeks before the due date and I will ask you to answer the prompt using the theorists we have studied up to that point. The rubrics for how this paper will be graded will be discussed during lecture.

Final Paper (30%)

The final paper will be 6-8 double-spaced pages in length and will be due on **Wednesday, 13 December at 11:59pm.** The final paper will be more open-ended and you will have the opportunity to pick a case study that is of interest to you. You will be asked to share paper ideas in your section three weeks before the papers are due. The rubrics for how this paper will be graded will be discussed during lecture.

Grade Grievances

If you wish to contest a grade, you must first submit to your GSI a one-page statement explaining why you believe the grade is unfair. Only if you are still dissatisfied should you come to me. Before I listen to your case, I will consult your GSI. I will not change your grade without first consulting your GSI. Please bear in mind that your grade could move upwards or downwards should I decide to re-grade your paper.

STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING

How to read theory

Engaging with theory requires a different set of skills than reading other genres of academic writing. One of the central skills you will gain from this course is greater familiarity with reading theory, so do not be discouraged if you find the texts difficult in the beginning of the semester. Reading theory is hard, but it is also very rewarding, and it might change the way you see the world! Here are some pointers for how to get started:

- Find a quiet, comfortable place to read with minimal distractions.
- As you first approach the text, do not get distracted by details, but try to get a sense of the author's overall point/argument.
- Then read a text slowly; and you may even have to read it multiple times.
- Try to note which concepts/words appear repetitively throughout the text and try to understand what the author means by them.
- As you approach the text, it might be helpful to think about the author's position in society and the historical context they are grappling with.
- Mark passages that confuse you, take note of your questions, and bring them to lecture, section or student hours! Remember that learning is a collective process, and we are here to help.

For more tips, check out [this post](#) by Dr. Nikki Usher.

Academic accommodations

The purpose of academic accommodations is to ensure that all students have a fair chance at academic success. Disability, or hardships such as basic needs insecurity, uncertain documentation and immigration status, medical and mental health concerns, pregnancy and parenting, significant familial distress, and experiencing sexual violence or harassment, can affect a student's ability to satisfy particular course requirements. Students have the right to reasonable academic accommodations, without having to disclose personal information to instructors. For more information about accommodations, scheduling conflicts related to religious creed or extracurricular activities, please see the [Academic Accommodations hub website](#). This website also provides a range of helpful campus resources.

Learning accommodations

UC Berkeley is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body, including students with disabilities. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me.

If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, you can work with the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) to request an official accommodation. The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is the campus office responsible for authorizing disability-related academic accommodations, in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. You can find more information about DSP, including contact information and the application process here: dsp.berkeley.edu. If you have already been approved for accommodations through DSP, please meet with me so we can develop an implementation plan together.

COURSE SCHEDULE

** Please note that this syllabus may change throughout the semester. Changes will be announced in advance in class and on bCourses.*

Week 1: INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

Class 1: Thursday, 24 August

No readings

Week 2: WHAT IS THEORY?

Class 2: Tuesday, 29 August

- hooks, bell. 1991. Theory as liberatory practice. *Yale JL & Feminism*, 4, 1.
- Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. International Publishers. ["The Study of Philosophy: Some Preliminary Points of Reference," (pp. 323-324)]

Class 3: Thursday, 31 August

- Patricia Hill Collins. 1990. "Black Feminist Epistemology." In *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Unwin Hyman. [pp.251-271.]

Week 3: THEORIES OF THE SELF I

Class 4: Tuesday, 5 September

- Mead, George H. 1934. *Mind, Self, and Society*. University of Chicago Press. [pp.135–144; 154-156; 173–178; 197-198]

Class 5: Thursday, 7 September

- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1903. *Souls of Black Folk*. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago. [“Of our Spiritual Striving”]

Week 4: THEORIES OF THE SELF II

Class 6: Tuesday, 12 September

- Fanon, Frantz. 2007. *Black Skins, White Masks*. Grove Press. [“The Fact of Blackness”]

Class 7: Thursday, 14 September

- Fanon, Frantz. 2008. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Grove Press. [“Concerning Violence,” (p.35-47, p.52-55, p.61-p.66, p.92-95, p.101-106)]

Week 5: STRUGGLES OVER HISTORY

Class 8: Tuesday, 19 September

- Baldwin, James. 1962. A letter to my nephew. *The Progressive*, 1, 160-164.

Class 9: Thursday, 21 September

- Trouillot, M. R. 2015. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Beacon Press. [“The Power in the Story”]
- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1935. *Black Reconstruction in America*. Free Press. [“The Propaganda of History”]

Week 6: RETHINKING CAPITALISM I

Class 10: Tuesday, 26 September

- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1935. *Black Reconstruction in America*. Free Press. [“To the Reader”; “The Black Worker”]

Class 11: Thursday, 28 September

- Taylor, K. Y. 2008. WEB Du Bois–Black reconstruction in America 1860–1880. *International Socialist Review*, 57.

Week 7: RETHINKING CAPITALISM II

Class 12: Tuesday, 3 October

- Federici, Sylvia. 2004. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Autonomedia. [“The Accumulation of Labor and the Degradation of Women,” (pp. 71-75; 86-99)]

Class 13: Thursday, 5 October

- Vergès, Françoise. 2020. *The Wombs of Women: Race, Capital, Feminism*. Duke University Press. [“The Wombs of Black Women, Capitalism and the International Division of Labor,” (pp. 49-62)]

Midterm exam due: 5 October at 11:59pm

Week 8: CONJUNCTURES & HEGEMONY

Class 14: Tuesday, 10 October

- Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Ed. Quitin Hoare. New York : International Publishers. [Excerpts from “State and Civil Society”]

Class 15: Thursday, 12 October

- Hall, Stuart. 2006. *Gramsci’s relevance for the study of race and ethnicity*. Routledge. [pp.422-452]

Week 9: CRISIS OF HUMANISM

Class 16: Tuesday, 17 October

- Césaire, Aimé (1950) *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press. [pp.31-46]

Class 17: Thursday, 19 October

**No Readings - Guest speakers in class*

Week 10: DISCOURSE & POWER I

Class 18: Tuesday, 24 October

- Foucault, Michel. 1995 [1975]. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. ["The Body of the Condemned," (pp. 3-31)]

Class 19: Thursday, 26 October

- Foucault, Michel. 1995 [1975]. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. ["Panopticism," (pp. 195-226)]

Week 11: DISCOURSE & POWER II

Class 20: Tuesday, 31 October

- Michel Foucault. 1982. "The Subject and Power." *Critical Inquiry* 8 (4). pp. 777-795.

Class 21: Thursday, 2 November

- Said, Edward. 1979. *Orientalism*. Vintage Books edition [Chapter 1: "The scope of Orientalism - Knowing the Oriental," (pp.31-49)]

Week 12: POLITICS WITHOUT GUARANTEES

Class 22: Tuesday, 7 November

- Hall, Stuart. 1997. Media and Representation [*Lecture Transcript*].
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84depWskwu0>

Class 23: Thursday, 9 November

- Hall, Stuart. 1987. Minimal Selves. *Identity Documents*.
- Hall, Stuart. 1997. Race the Floating Signifier [*Lecture Transcript*].
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PodKki9g2Pw>

Week 13: QUEER THEORY

Class 24: Tuesday, 14 November

- Butler, Judith. 1990. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. ["Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire," (pp. 1-46)]

Class 25: Thursday, 16 November

- Cohen, Cathy J. 1997. Punks, bulldaggers, and welfare queens: The radical potential of queer politics?. *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Vol 3(4).

Week 14: BORDER THINKING

Class 26: Tuesday, 21 November

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Aunt Lute Book Company. ["Preface," "The Homeland, Aztlán / El otro México"; "Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan," (pp. 1-25)]

Class 27: Thursday, 23 November

**No class - Thanksgiving Break*

Week 15: INDIGENOUS THOUGHT

Class 28: Tuesday, 28 November

- Smith, Linda T. 2021. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Bloomsbury Publishing. ["Imperialism, History, Writing and Theory"]
- Estes, Nick. 2019. *Our history is the future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the long tradition of Indigenous resistance*. Verso Books. ["Prophets"]

Class 29: Thursday, 30 November

- Tuck, Eve, & Yang, K. Wayne . 2021. Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Tabula Rasa*, (38), pp.61-111.

Final exam due: 13 December at 11:59pm

OTHER CAMPUS RESOURCES

[UHS Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) supports the emotional, psychological, educational, social, and cultural development of all UC Berkeley students through a wide range of multiculturally based counseling, psychiatric, career, consultation, training, and educational services.

[PATH to Care](#) is the campus's comprehensive resource for all support related to sexual violence/harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking.

[University Health Services](#) (UHS) provides comprehensive medical, mental health, and health promotion services to all Cal students and a variety of occupational health services to faculty and staff.

[Student Learning Center](#) (SLC) provides various academic resources and support, including peer writing tutors.

[Basic Needs Center](#) is a virtual and physical hub that provides and connects students to essential services that impact health, belonging, and overall well-being, including both short-term emergency relief and long-term support services addressing students' basic needs (i.e., food security, housing security, and financial stability).