

Principles of Sociology: American Cultures (Spring 2024)

Sociology 3AC

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MWF 1:00P-1:59P - 2050 - Valley Life Sciences

Office hours: TBD

Course Catalog Description

Comparing the experience of three out of five ethnic groups (e.g. African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicano/Latino, European Americans, and Native Americans) we shall examine historically how each people entered American society and built communities and transformed their cultures in the process. Students will be introduced to the sociological perspective, characteristic methods of research, and such key concepts as culture, community, class, race, social change, and social movements.

Course Description

This is a general introduction to sociology oriented around a core set of themes and topics such as culture, socialization, deviance, groups, immigration, race, ethnicity, and social change. This course emphasizes several key themes in sociology such as the sociological imagination, knowledge, power and social stratification and the principle of social *embeddedness* (human behavior and knowledge is shaped by social relations) that guides most sociological research. We will begin the semester by developing a strong foundation in sociological theory which will enable us to contextualize, organize and analyze our social worlds. From there we will explore how these categories of understanding overlap, impinge on one another, and intersect. The semester will end with a mapping of group formation, contestation, and transformation.

Classroom Policies

Laptops: No laptops allowed in class unless you have a documented need. Your grade, and that of your fellow students, will improve according to the research found [here](#).

Cellphones: No cellphones. No pictures of notes or recordings of the lecture are allowed. No texting. This covers all electronic devices such as PDAs, etc...If you must receive or make a call kindly leave the classroom.

Slides: There is no substitute for attending lectures. Slides will not be posted except on occasion

Required readings

- Articles will be available free of charge on bCourse for direct download or viewing. Check each weekly module and the syllabus.

Assignments and Grading:

Quizzes: There will be occasional quizzes based on the readings and lectures. You will be granted one unexcused absence for the quizzes after which a missed quiz is an automatic zero on that assignment.

Term Paper: Each student is expected to write an 8–10 page paper (1800-2200 words) in 12-point times new roman font with 1" margins. The paper should be based on one of the topics or theorists covered in class. The paper is due on **Monday, April 24**, and will be vetted by "Turnitin" which will check for plagiarism.

Exams: There will be two examinations: a midterm and a final. Both examinations will have multiple choice and T/F questions and will require not only knowledge of the course material but also the capacity to analyze various paradigms and perspectives. **All students will take the exams on specified dates: exceptions will not be granted unless the requests conform with the accommodations policy of the campus.**

Grading Structure:

Quizzes: 10%

Midterm: 30%

Paper: 30%

Final: 30%

Academic honesty

Plagiarism and cheating will result in disciplinary proceedings. If you have questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism and what the consequences are read this: [Definitions & Examples of Academic Misconduct | UC Berkeley: Division of Student Affairs](#). The standard penalty for violations of academic integrity in this course will be a grade of 0% on the assignment and reporting to Student Judicial Affairs which may result in a permanent mark on your record.

Mental Health and Wellness

All students — regardless of background or identity — may experience a range of issues that can become barriers to learning. These issues include, but are not limited to, strained relationships, anxiety, depression, alcohol and other drug problems, difficulties with concentration, sleep, and eating, and/or lack of motivation. Such mental health concerns can diminish both academic performance and the capacity to participate in daily activities. In the event that you need mental health support, or are concerned about a friend, UC Berkeley offers many services, such as free short-term counseling at University Health Services. An excellent campus website having links to many resources is: <http://recalibrate.berkeley.edu/>. Another campus website addressing mental health services in specific reference to this time of the coronavirus pandemic is: <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/coronavirus/student-mental-health>. **Remember that seeking help is a good and courageous thing to do — both for yourself and for those who care about you.**

Class Schedule

****All readings and schedule subject to change. Check bCourses regularly for developments.***

Week 1: Why do sociology?

1. Mills, C Wright. "The Sociological Imagination"
2. Giddens, Anthony. "What is Sociology?"
3. Cieslik, M. (2015). "Not Smiling but Frowning": Sociology and the "Problem of Happiness." *Sociology*, 49(3), 422–437.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/44016674>

Suggested: [Collins, Randall. \(1994\). "Prologue: The Rise of the Social Sciences" in *Four Sociological Traditions*, Oxford University Press. pp. 3-46.](#)

Week 2: The origins of sociology

1. ["August Comte" in Zeitlin, Irving M. \(1994\). *Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory*, 6th ed. New York: Prentice- Hall, pp. 78-86.](#)
2. [Durkheim, Emile. *Suicide* in Durkheim & Thompson, K. \(2004\). *Readings from Emile Durkheim*. London, Routledge, pp. 65-83.](#)
3. [Weber, Max. \(2008\). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism in Max Weber: Readings*. Germany: Wiley, pp. 69-84.](#)

Week 3: The Modern World: Reason to Revolution and Race

1. [Marx, Karl. \(2003\). Original excerpts \(German Ideology, Capital Vol 1&3, Bloch, Engels in Marx and Modernity: Key Readings and Commentary. United Kingdom: Wiley, pp. 53-73.](#)
2. [Marx, Karl. Capital: Volume One. Chapter Thirty-Two: Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation.](#)
3. [DuBois, W.E.B. \(1897\). The Strivings of the Negro People. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1897/08/strivings-of-the-negro-people/305446/> or \(podcast\)](#)
4. [Giddens, A. \(1996\). The consequences of modernity. John Wiley & Sons, pp. 36-45.](#)

Week 4: Culture

1. [Miner, H. \(1989\). Body ritual among the Nacirema.](#)
2. [Anderson, E. \(1994\). The Code of the Streets. *Atlantic Monthly*. 273 \(5\), pp. 81–94.](#)
3. [Kellner, D. \(1995\). Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern. London and NY: Routledge. Ch.](#)

[7 - Television, Advertising and the Construction of Postmodern Identities, pp. 231-262.](#)

4. Watson, J.L. (1997). McDonald's in Hong Kong: Consumerism, dietary change, and the rise of a children's culture. *Golden arches east: McDonald's in East Asia*, pp.77-109.

Week 5: Socialization and Social Interaction

1. [Mortimer, J. T., & Simmons, R. G. \(1978\). Adult socialization. *Annual review of sociology*, 4\(1\), 421-454.](#)
2. [Granfield, R. \(1991\). Making it by faking it: Working-class students in an elite academic environment. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 20\(3\), 331-351.](#)

Week 6: Socialization and Social Interaction

1. [Khan, S. R. \(2011\). Privilege: The making of an adolescent elite at St. Paul's School. Princeton University Press. Chapter 3, pp. 77-113.](#)
2. [Morris, Joan M. Grimes, Michael D. \(2020\) "Moving Up from the Working Class" in Down to Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings, pp. 318-326](#)

Week 7: Groups, Organizations and Conflict

1. [Dyer, G. \(2002\). Anybody's son will do. *Mapping the social landscape: readings in sociology*. pp.144-154.](#)
 2. [Jankowski, M. S. \(1991\). *Islands in the street: Gangs and American urban society*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Excerpt.](#)
 3. Lovaglia, M. J. (2003). From summer camps to glass ceilings: The power of experiments. *contexts*, 2(4), 42-49.
- Asch Conformity Experiment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyDDyT1IDhA>
 - Stanley Milgram Experiment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOUEC5YXV8U>
 - Edgewood Experiments <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/manufacturing-madness>

Week 8: Review & Exam week

1. Film
2. Exam Wednesday
3. Exam Friday

Week 9: Deviance and Social Control

- [Becker, Howard. \(1963\) *The Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, Free Press. pp. 1–18. \(reprint\)](#)
- [Spitzer, S. \(1975\). Toward a Marxian theory of deviance. *Social problems*, 22\(5\), 638-651.](#)
- [Alexander, Michelle. \(2010\). *The new Jim Crow: mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York: New Press. pp. 20-58.](#)
- [Pfaff, Jon. \(2017\). *Locked In: The True Causes of Mass Incarceration-and How to Achieve Real Reform*. Basic Books: New York. Introduction and Chapter 5.](#)

Week 10: Class and Stratification

1. [Max Weber, "Class, Status, and Party" \(excerpts\)](#)
2. [Gans, H. J. \(1972\). *The positive functions of poverty*. *American journal of Sociology*, 78\(2\), 275-289.](#)
3. [Alba, R., Lutz, A., & Vesselinov, E. \(2001\). How Enduring Were the Inequalities among European Immigrant Groups in the United States? *Demography*, 38\(3\), 349-356.](#)
4. [Romero, M. \(2002\). *Maid in the USA*. Ch. 4](#)
5. [Khan, S. R. \(2021\). *Privilege: The making of an adolescent elite at St. Paul's School*. Princeton University Press. Excerpts.](#)

Week 11: Colonization, migration, and power

1. [Wirth, L. \(1927\). The ghetto. *American Journal of Sociology*, 33\(1\), 57–71. <https://doi.org/10.1086/214333>](#)
2. [Lenski, G. \(1966\). *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification*. United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill. Excerpt.](#)
3. Noel, Donald L. (1968). A Theory of the Origin of Ethnic Stratification, *Social Problems*, 16 (2), 157–172. <https://doi.org/10.2307/800001>

4. [Blauner, R. \(1969\). Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt. *Social Problems*, 16\(4\), 393–408.](https://doi.org/10.2307/799949) <https://doi.org/10.2307/799949>

Week 12: Immigration, industrialization and assimilation

1. Massey, D. S. (2011). Epilogue: The past and future of Mexico–U.S. migration. In O.-V. Mark (Ed.), *Beyond la frontera: The history of Mexico–U.S. migration*. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 241–265.
2. [Ignatiev, N. \(2012\). *How the Irish became white*. Routledge. pp. 34-62.](#)
3. Tolnay, Stewart. (2003). The African American ‘Great Migration’ and Beyond. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 29:209-232.
4. Hirschman, Charles. (1983). America’s Melting Pot Reconsidered. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 9: 397-423.
5. Sampson, Robert J. (2015). [Immigration and America's Urban Revival](#). *American Prospect*, 20-24.
6. Gans, Herbert J. (1979). Symbolic Ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*: 2: 1-20.
7. Videos: ["Way Out Here"](#) (2010, with Josh Thompson) and ["The House I Live In"](#) (1945, with Frank Sinatra).

Week 13: Counter politics and countercultures

1. Smith, Sherry L. (2012). *Hippies, Indians, and the Fight for Red Power*. New York: Oxford University Press. [Introduction](#) and [Chapter 3](#), pp. 3-17, 78-112.
2. Krech, S. (1999). *The ecological Indian: Myth and history*. WW Norton & Company. Intro & Epilogue.

Week 14: Assimilation and globalization

1. [Zhou, M. \(2004\). Are asian americans becoming “white?”. *Contexts*, 3\(1\), 29-37.](#)
2. Mora, Christina G. (2014). *Making Hispanics: How Activists, Bureaucrats, and Media Constructed a New American*. Introduction. pp. 1-16.
3. Levitt, Peggy. (2001). *The Transnational Villagers*. Introduction. pp. 1-28, 97-124.

Week 15

Reading/Review/Recitation Week

Week 16 Final Exam Week

Tue, May 7 • 8:00A - 11:00A • Exam Location TBD