

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL
Spring, 2007

Sociology of Culture

(SOCI 870)

Monday, 11:45–2:15 Hamilton 151

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Goals

1. To survey the literature in the sociology of culture, with an emphasis on current approaches to culture
2. To stimulate ideas for empirical work in cultural sociology
3. To offer cultural tools for application to empirical research

Requirements

1. Attendance and active participation in class discussions
2. Two team-based presentations of readings and discussion leadership
3. An in-depth writing project related to cultural sociology

COURSE FORMAT

Readings and Discussion

Each week, we will read a selection of works in a particular area of cultural sociology. A team of students will be charged with organizing and leading discussion of the readings. Each week's team is responsible for:

- Preparing a “seminar paper,” to be distributed via Blackboard to the rest of the class no later than 12:00 noon the day before class. The seminar paper need not be a polished product; it should raise ideas, issues, concerns, and opportunities presented by the readings, and thereby form the basis for the class discussion; and
- Organizing and directing class discussion of the readings for the first half of class.

Because of the sheer volume of great work in cultural sociology, it will be impossible to talk about each reading separately at each class meeting. The team, and to a lesser extent the rest of the class, should decide how best to structure discussion about the selections as a whole.

Snack Break

Each week, the team that presented the previous week should arrange to bring a small snack to keep the class lively for the second half. I will provide snacks for the first two classes.

Workshop

Beginning with the February 5 class, the second half of each class will be structured around discussion of students' research work in progress. Each student will present informally twice during the course of the semester, and the rest of the class will provide insight and advice. This will underscore the class's workshop character.

READINGS AND RESOURCES

There will be a site for this course created at <http://blackboard.unc.edu>. We will use this course to post documents and seminar papers as well as for general discussion.

Students taking this class may also be interested in joining the ongoing Cultural and Political Sociology Workshop at UNC. I will be happy to provide information. Also, students may be interested in joining the ASA Section on the Sociology of Culture, a vibrant intellectual home for a wide variety of cultural sociologists.

Most required readings that are not in the books listed below are available for download from the course readings site, <http://perrin.socsci.unc.edu/readings>, or via Blackboard. You will need a username and password to access the readings site; these will be provided in class.

The recommended readings listed under many class sessions are suggestions for further reading in the field. Students presenting on those dates, and those with particular interests in the areas, may find them useful.

Required Books

Elizabeth Long. *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life* (University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Mauro F. Guillen. *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical: Scientific Management and the Rise of Modernist Architecture* (Princeton University Press, 2006).

Bethany Bryson. *Making Multiculturalism: Boundaries and Meaning in U.S. English Departments* (Stanford University Press, 2005).

Robin Wagner-Pacifici. *Discourse & Destruction: The City of Philadelphia vs. MOVE* (University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Laura Grindstaff. *The Money Shot: Trash, Class, and the Making of TV Talk Shows* (University of Chicago Press, 2002).

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 22 Introduction and course organization

- **Lecture:** A history of, and agenda for, cultural sociology
- Adam Kuper, "Introduction: Culture Wars." pp. 1–20 in *Culture: The Anthropologists' Account*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999)
- Jeffrey Alexander and Philip Smith. "The Strong Program in Cultural Sociology: Elements of a Structural Hermeneutics." pp. 11–26 in Alexander, *The Meanings of Social Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *ASR* 51(April 1986): 273–286 <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28198604%2951%3A2%3C273%3ACIASAS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B>

January 29 Contemporary Debates in Theory and Method

First half:

- Michael Schudson, "How Culture Works: Perspectives from Media Studies on the Efficacy of Symbols." *Theory and Society* 18:2 (Mar., 1989), pp. 153-180. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0304-2421%28198903%2918%3A2%3C153%3AHCWPFM%3E2.0.CO%3B2-G>
- Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, "The Sociology of Critical Capacity." *European Journal of Social Theory* 2:3 (1999): 359-377
- Nina Eliasoph and Paul Lichterman. "Culture in Interaction." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:4 (Jan2003), p735, 60p <http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=10375843&db=afh>
- John Levi Martin, "What Is Field Theory?" *American Journal of Sociology* 109:1 (Jul2003). <http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=11652039&db=afh>
- Eviatar Zerubavel, "Lumping and Splitting: Notes on Social Classification." *Sociological Forum* 11 (1996): 421-33.

Recommended:

- William H. Sewell, Jr. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation," *AJS* 98:1 (July, 1992): 1-29 <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-9602%28199207%2998%3A1%3C1%3AATOSDA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>
- Lisa Wedeen, "Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 96:4 (December 2002): 713-728. <http://www.journals.cambridge.org/issue/AmericanPoliticalScienceReview/Vol96No04>
- Peter Wagner, "Power, Uncertainty, and Institution in Recent French Debates." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 2(3): 270-289

Second half:

- Ron Jepperson and Ann Swidler, "What Properties of Culture Should We Measure?" *Poetics* 22 (1994): 359-371 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0304-422X\(94\)90014-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0304-422X(94)90014-0)
- Ronald Breiger, "A Tool Kit for Practice Theory." *Poetics* 27 (2000): 91-115.
- Wendy Griswold, "A Methodological Framework for the Sociology of Culture." *Sociological Methodology* 17(1987): 1-35. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0081-1750%281987%2917%3C1%3AAMFFTS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-6>
- John W. Mohr, "Measuring Meaning Structures." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 345-370. <http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.345>
- Andrew Perrin, "Who's Afraid of Linear Regression?" *Culture* 18:3 (Spring, 2004) <http://www.ibiblio.org/culture/newsletter/cult183.pdf>, and replies at <http://www.ibiblio.org/culture/newsletter/cult191.pdf>
- Shalom H. Schwartz, "Mapping and interpreting cultural differences around the world." pp. 43-73 in Henk Vinken, Joseph Soeters, and Peter Ester, eds. *Comparing Cultures: Dimensions of Culture in a Comparative Perspective*. (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

February 5 Art, Music, and Literature I

- Howard S. Becker, "Art As Collective Action." *American Sociological Review* 39:6 (Dec., 1974), pp. 767-776. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28197412%2939%3A6%3C767%3AAACA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Z>
- Richard Peterson and Roger Kern, "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore." *ASR* 61:5 (October, 1996): 900-907. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28199610%2961%3A5%3C900%3ACHTFST%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>
- Bryson, "‘Anything But Heavy Metal’: Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes." *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 61, No. 5. (Oct., 1996), pp. 884-899. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28199610%2961%3A5%3C884%3A%22BHMSE%3E2.0.CO%3B2-0>
- Babon, Kim. "Composition, coherence, and attachment: The critical role of context in reception." *Poetics* 34 (2006): 151-179.
- Eck, Beth. "Nudity and Framing: Classifying Art, Pornography, Information, and Ambiguity." *Sociological Forum* 16:4 (December, 2001): 603-632.

- Nicola Beisel, "Morals Versus Art: Censorship, The Politics of Interpretation, and the Victorian Nude." *American Sociological Review* 58:2 (Apr., 1993), pp. 145-162. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28199304%2958%3A2%3C145%3AMVACTP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>

Recommended:

- Bourdieu, *Distinction*, ch. 7 ("The Choice of the Necessary")
- Stephen Dubin, *Displays of Power*
- Judith Blau, *The Shape of Culture*
- Blau, Judith R. 1996. "The Toggle Switch of Institutions: Religion and Art in the U.S. in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries." *Social Forces* 74: 1159-1177.

February 12 Long, Elizabeth. *Book Clubs*.

February 19 Art, Music, and Literature II

- T.J. Dowd, K. Liddle, K. Lupo and A. Borden. "Organizing the Musical Canon: The Repertoires of Major U.S. Symphony Orchestras, 1842 to 1969." *Poetics* 30 (1-2): 35-61.
- Stamatov, Peter. 2002. "Interpretive Activism and the Political Uses of Verdi's Operas in the 1840s" *American Sociological Review* 67: 345-366.
- Shyon Baumann, "Intellectualization and Art World Development: Film in the United States." *American Sociological Review* 66:3 (Jun., 2001), pp. 404-426. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28200106%2966%3A3%3C404%3AIAWDF%3E2.0.CO%3B2-V>
- Deresiewicz, William. "The Salome factor: how the sexualization of concert dance helped end a golden age." *American Scholar* 74.2 (Spring 2005): 112(5). <http://find.galegroup.com/itx/infomark.do?&contentSet=IAC-Documents&type=retrieve&tabID=T002&prodId=GRGM&docId=A131762273&source=gale&srcprod=GRGM&userGroupName=uncbrcr&version=1.0>
- Glynn, Mary Ann. 2002. "Chord and Dischord: Organizational Crisis, Institutional Shifts, and the Musical Canon of the Symphony." *Poetics* 30: 63-85.
- DiMaggio, Paul. 1987. "Classification in Art." *American Sociological Review* 52: 440- 455.
- Levine, Lawrence W. 1984. "William Shakespeare and the American People: A Study in Cultural Transformation." *American Historical Review* 89:34-66.
- Paul DiMaggio. 1991. "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America." Pages 374-397 in *Rethinking Popular Culture*, edited by Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (also *Media Culture and Society* 4: 33-50)

February 26 Culture, Cognition, Narrative, Memory

- Larry J. Griffin. "'Generations and Collective Memory' Revisited: Race, Region, and Memory of Civil Rights." *American Sociological Review* Aug 2004. Vol. 69, Iss. 4; p. 544
- Olick, "What Does it Mean to Normalize the Past?: Official Memory in German Politics since 1989" *Social Science History* 22, 4 (1998): 547-571
- Robin Wagner-Pacifici and Barry Schwartz. "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past." *The American Journal of Sociology* 97:2 (Sep., 1991), pp. 376-420. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-9602%28199109%2997%3A2%3C376%3ATVVMCA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-1>
- Hiro Saito, "Reiterated Commemoration: Hiroshima as National Trauma." *Sociological Theory* 24:4 (December, 2006). <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2006.00295.x>
- Paul DiMaggio, "Culture and Cognition." *Annual Review of Sociology* Aug 1997, Vol. 23: 263-287. <http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev.soc.23.1.263>
- Olick & Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24(1998): 105-140. <http://soc.annualreviews.org/cgi/reprint/24/1/105.pdf>

Recommended:

- Jeffrey K. Olick and Daniel Levy. "Collective Memory and Cultural Constraint: Holocaust Myth and Rationality in German Politics." *American Sociological Review* 62:6 (Dec., 1997), pp.921-936. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28199712%2962%3A6%3C921%3ACMACCH%3E2.0.CO%3B2-7>
- Gary Alan Fine. "Reputational Entrepreneurs and the Memory of Incompetence: Melting Supporters, Partisan Warriors, and Images of President Harding." *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 101, No. 5. (Mar., 1996), pp. 1159-1193. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-9602%28199603%29101%3A5%3C1159%3AREATM0%3E2.0.CO%3B2-I>
- Patricia Ewick and Susan Silbey, "Narrating Social Structure: Stories of Resistance to Legal Authority." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:6 (May, 2003): 1328-1372.
- Maurice Halbwachs, "Language and Memory" and "The Reconstruction of the Past," pp. 43-51 in *Maurice Halbwachs on Collective Memory* (Lewis Coser, ed. and trans.; University of Chicago Press, 1992)
- Eviatar Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

March 5 Boundaries and Distinctions

- Wendy Griswold, "The Writing on the Mud Wall: Nigerian Novels and the Imaginary Village." *American Sociological Review* 57:6 (Dec., 1992), pp. 709-724. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28199212%2957%3A6%3C709%3ATWOTMW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-1>
- Abigail Saguy, "Sexual Harassment in France and the United States" in Michèle Lamont and Laurent Thévenot, eds. *Rethinking Comparative Cultural Sociology* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Myra Marx Ferree, "Resonance and Radicalism: Feminist Framing in the Abortion Debates of the United States and Germany." *American Journal of Sociology* 109:2 (September, 2003): 304-344. <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/AJS/journal/issues/v109n2/070143/070143.web.pdf>
- Jeffrey C. Alexander and Philip Smith. "The Discourse of American Civil Society: A New Proposal for Cultural Studies." *Theory and Society* 22:2 (Apr., 1993), pp. 151-207. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0304-2421%28199304%2922%3A2%3C151%3ATDOACS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-L>
- Michèle Lamont and Virag Molnar, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences." *Annual Review of Sociology* 2002. <http://soc.annualreviews.org/cgi/reprint/28/1/167.pdf>
- Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values." *American Sociological Review*, 65:1 (Feb., 2000), pp. 19-51. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0003-1224%28200002%2965%3A1%3C19%3AMCCATP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-E>

Recommended:

- Michèle Lamont and Laurent Thévenot, "Introduction: Toward a Renewed Comparative Cultural Sociology," in Lamont and Thévenot
- Michèle Lamont, "The Rhetorics of Racism and Anti-Racism in France and the United States" in Lamont and Thévenot
- Rick Fantasia. "Fast Food in France." *Theory and Society* 24:2 (Apr., 1995), pp. 201-243. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0304-2421%28199504%2924%3A2%3C201%3AFFIF%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B>
- Wendy Griswold, "The Fabrication of Meaning: Literary Interpretation in the United States, Great Britain, and the West Indies." *The American Journal of Sociology* 92:5 (Mar., 1987), pp. 1077-1117. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-9602%28198703%2992%3A5%3C1077%3ATFOMLI%3E2.0.CO%3B2-G>
- Adam Gopnik, "Like a King: How to have a baby in France." *The New Yorker* January 31, 2000.
- Paul A. Silverstein, Review of Lamont & Thévenot. *AJS* 107:2 (September, 2001). <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/resolve?AJS107215PDF>
- Stephenson, "Going to McDonald's in Leiden: Reflections on the Concept of Self and Society in the Netherlands," *Ethos* 17 (June 1989), pp. 226-247

- Lamont, *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Imagination*
- Abigail Saguy, *What is Sexual Harassment? From Capitol Hill to the Sorbonne*. University of California Press, 2003.
- Ronald Inglehart and Marita Carballo, "Does Latin America Exist? (And Is There a Confucian Culture?): A Global Analysis of Cross-Cultural Differences." *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 1. (Mar., 1997), pp. 34-47. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=1049-0965%28199703%2930%3A1%3C34%3ADLAE%28I%3E2.0.CO%3B2-2>
- Ronald Inglehart, "Culture and Democracy." pp. 80–97 in Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington, eds. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*. (New York: Basic Books, 2000)

March 19 Culture and Institutions

- Andrew Leyshon, Shaun French, Nigel Thrift, Louise Crewe, Peter Webb. "Accounting for e-commerce: abstractions, virtualism and the cultural circuit of capital." *Economy and Society* 34:3 (August, 2005).
- Melissa J. Wilde. "How Culture Mattered at Vatican II: Collegiality Trumps Authority in the Council's Social Movement Organizations." *American Sociological Review* 69: 4 (August 2004), 576.
- Hayagreeva Rao, Philippe Monin, and Rodolphe Durand. "Institutional Change in Toque Ville: Nouvelle Cuisine as an Identity Movement in French Gastronomy." *American Journal of Sociology*, 108:4 (Jan2003), p795, 49p, 7 charts. <http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=10375850&db=afh>
- Donald MacKenzie and Yuval Millo. "Constructing a Market, Performing Theory: The Historical Sociology of a Financial Derivatives Exchange." *American Journal of Sociology* 109:1, (Jul 2003). p107, 39p. <http://search.epnet.com/direct.asp?an=11652037&db=afh>

March 26 Guillen, *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical*

April 2 Bryson, *Making Multiculturalism*

Note: This session may need to be rescheduled

April 9 Political culture

- Perrin, Andrew J. "Political Microcultures: Linking Civic Life and Democratic Discourse." *Social Forces* 84:2 (December, 2005), 1049–1082.
- Marc W. Steinberg, "The Dialogue of Struggle: The Contest over Ideological Boundaries in the Case of London Silk Weavers in the Early Nineteenth Century." *Social Science History* 18:4 (Winter, 1994): 505–541.
- Ronald Jacobs, "Civil Society and Crisis: Culture, Discourse, and the Rodney King Beating," *AJS* 101:5 (March, 1996), 1238–1272. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-9602%28199603%29101%3A5%3C1238%3ACSACCD%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H>
- Nina Eliasoph, "'Close to Home': The Work of Avoiding Politics." *Theory and Society* 26:5 (Oct., 1997), pp. 605-647. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0304-2421%28199710%2926%3A5%3C605%3A%22THTW0%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H>
- Richard Biernacki, "Labor As an Imagined Commodity." *Politics & Society* 29:2 (June, 2001): 173–206

Recommended:

- Lisa Weeden, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1999)
- Nina Eliasoph, *Avoiding Politics: How Americans Produce Apathy in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998)
- Paul Lichterman, *The Search for Political Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996)

- Myra Marx Ferree, William Anthony Gamson, Jürgen Gerhards, and Dieter Rucht. *Shaping Abortion Discourse: Democracy and the Public Sphere in Germany and the United States*. (Cambridge University Press, 2002)
- Walsh

April 16 Discourse and Political Culture

- Robin Wagner-Pacifici, *Discourse and Destruction*

Recommended:

- George Lakoff, *Moral Politics*
- Robin Tolmach Lakoff, *The Language War*

April 23 Grindstaff, *The Money Shot*