

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Sociology 475, Section 3
Fall semester 2008
Monday/Wednesday 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.
Classroom: Ingraham 122

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Overview

In this course we investigate and assess the ideas of four theorists whose works are foundational for sociology: Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859), Karl Marx (1818-1883), Max Weber (1864-1920), and Emile Durkheim (1858-1917). We examine their ideas as efforts to understand and resolve the key social problems and conflicts that transformed Europe (and the United States) in the nineteenth century. At the same time, we seek to understand how classical social theory remains relevant for understanding the problems of twenty-first century societies. The course focuses on the themes of freedom, rationality, individuality, inequality, and solidarity.

Course Requirements

Reading

Sociology 475 involves intensive reading of primary sources rather than textbooks. You will be required to do a heavy amount of reading (roughly 80 pages per week) and to complete each reading assignment before the class meets. To pass this course, you must be prepared to complete the reading assignments consistently throughout the semester. **If you are unable or unwilling to do this much reading, you should drop the course now.** You are also required to bring the assigned readings to class with you each day.

Attendance and class participation

The course will involve a combination of lecturing and discussion. You are expected to attend class regularly, arrive prepared and on time, and participate actively in class discussion based on the readings. I encourage you to raise questions about the texts (this counts as participation). You do not need to explain or justify occasional absences, but frequent tardiness, absences, or lack of participation will reduce your overall grade.

Written assignments

Survival cards: At the start of each class, you will be asked to submit a 3” x 5” index card with an outline, definitions, key ideas, or other material from the day’s assigned reading. After class, I will check the cards and stamp them. I will return the cards to you prior to each in-class exam (see below). You may add any material you would like to the cards after I return them, but you cannot submit additional cards. I will then collect the cards before each exam (to check for stamps) and return them to you at the beginning of the exam.

Two in-class exams: You are required to take two in-class exams that focus on main concepts and arguments from the reading assignments. The exam format is short-answer questions. The midterm exam will cover Tocqueville and Marx, and the final exam will cover Weber and Durkheim. The exams are closed book, but you may use your survival cards (see above). There is no final exam during exam week.

Two essays: You are required to write a mid-term essay and a final essay, 5-7 double-spaced pages each. You may write on any course-related topic of your choice. However, the two essays must discuss different theorists, and final essay must discuss Weber and/or Durkheim. Your essays must be typed and double-spaced, and you must submit a computer file of your essays along with the printed version. Essays handed in late will generally not be accepted unless you have requested and received an extension before the deadline.

Academic misconduct: Academic misconduct of any sort will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic misconduct generally, you must consult <http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html> before proceeding in this course. If you have questions about plagiarism specifically, you must consult the hand-out “Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Acknowledging Sources,” available at the Writing Center (6171 Helen C. White Hall). You are expected to be familiar with these guidelines before you submit any written work in this course; lack of familiarity with these rules in no way constitutes an excuse for acts of misconduct. Any instance of misconduct will be dealt with strictly according to university policy, and severe penalties will be recommended to the Dean of Students.

Your overall grade for the semester will be calculated on a 100-point scale as follows:

Attendance and participation	10 points
Midterm exam	15 points
Final exam	20 points
Midterm essay	25 points
Final essay	30 points

A = 95-100, AB = 90-94, B = 85-89, and so forth.

Reading Assignments

The books listed below are available from the University Book Store. If you are on a tight budget, you can purchase inexpensive used copies from local bookstores or www.fetchbook.info or use the reserve copies at College Library. (If there is a problem with any of the reserve readings, please e-mail me as soon as possible to let me know.) Keep in mind that the page numbers listed below refer to these editions. If you are using a different edition, consult with me to make sure you are reading the correct pages.

Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*. Vol. 1 and 2. New York: Random House, 1972. (The 1990 Vintage Books edition.)

Alexis de Tocqueville. *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*. Trans. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Doubleday, 1955.

Robert C. Tucker, ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Second ed. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978.
Max Weber. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Trans. and eds. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press, 1946.
Max Weber. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Trans. Talcott Parsons. New York: Routledge, 1930.
Emile Durkheim. *The Rules of Sociological Method*. Ed. Steven Lukes. Trans. W. D. Halls. New York: The Free Press, 1982.
Emile Durkheim. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Trans. W. D. Halls. New York: The Free Press, 1984.
Emile Durkheim. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Ed. George Simpson. Trans. John A. Spaulding and George Simpson. New York: The Free Press, 1951.
Emile Durkheim. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Trans. Karen E. Fields. New York: The Free Press, 1995.

All other required reading assignments will be posted on my home page (<http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~cgoldber/>) and available for downloading as PDF files.

On dates followed by an asterisk (*), the lecture may be recorded in advance and made available as a podcast due to a major Jewish holiday. I apologize for the inconvenience.

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE (1805-1859)

September 3 - Introduction to the course

Recommended: Robert A. Nisbet, "The Two Revolutions," chap. 2 in *The Sociological Tradition* (New York: Basic Books, 1966).

September 8 - Liberty and association, despotism and individualism

Democracy in America, Vol. I, Author's Introduction (pp. 3-16), chap. 5 (pp. 60-68, 86-97).
Democracy in America, Vol. II, Book II, chap. 2, 4, 5 (pp. 98-99, 102-110); Book IV, chap. 6 (pp. 316-321).

September 10 – "The social condition of the Americans is eminently democratic"

Democracy in America, Vol. I, chap. 3 (pp. 46-54), chap. 15 (pp. 254-270).
Democracy in America, Vol. II, Book II, chap. 20 (pp. 158-161); Book III, chap. 5 (pp. 177-185).
Recommended: Chad Alan Goldberg, "Social Citizenship and a Reconstructed Tocqueville," *American Sociological Review* 66 (Apr. 2001): 289-315.

September 15 – "Habits of the heart" and the gendered reproduction of civic virtue

Democracy in America, Vol. I: chap. 17 (288, 299, 303-307, 319-323).
Democracy in America, Vol. II: Book I, chap. 5 (pp. 20-28); Book III, chap. 9-12 (198-214).
Recommended: Vol. I, chap. 2 (pp. 26-44); Vol. II, Book II, chap. 15-17 (pp. 143-151).

September 17 - Race and American democracy

Democracy in America, Vol. I, chap. 18 (pp. 331-336, 356-381).
Recommended: The remainder of Vol. I, chap. 18.

September 22 - The French Revolution

The Old Regime and the French Revolution, Foreword; Part II, chap. 2-3, 8-9 (pp. vii-xv, 32-51, 77-96).

September 24 – The French Revolution

Old Regime, Part II, chap. 10-11; Part III, chap. 4, 8 (pp. 97-120, 169-179, 203-211).

KARL MARX (1818-1883)

September 29 - Early writings

“On the Jewish Question” (26-52) and “Estranged Labour” (70-81) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

October 1* - Materialist theory of history

(Please read in this order:)

“Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*: Introduction” (first six paragraphs only, 53-54) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

“Theses on Feuerbach” (143-145) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

“Marx on the History of His Opinions” (3-6) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

“The German Ideology,” excerpts (PDF file).

“On Imperialism in India” (653-664) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

Recommended: Friedrich Engels, “The Rise of Capitalism and the Working Class” (PDF file)

October 6 - Revolutionary program and political writings

“The Manifesto of the Communist Party” (469-500) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

October 8 - Revolutionary program and political writings

“The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte” (594-617) in *The Marx-Engels Reader* and additional excerpts (PDF file).

October 13 - The critique of capitalism

Capital, Vol. I: chap. 1, sections 1 and 4 (302-308, 319-329); chap. 4 (329-336); chap. 6 (336-343); and chap. 7 (344-361) in *The Marx-Engels-Reader*.

October 15 - The critique of capitalism

Capital, Vol. I: chap. 14 (388-403); chap. 15, sections 1, 3, 4, 5, and 9 (403-415); chap. 25 (419-431); chap. 26 (431-434); and chap. 32 (436-438) in *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

Return survival cards to instructor.

October 20 - MIDTERM EXAM ON TOCQUEVILLE AND MARX.

MAX WEBER (1864-1920)

October 22 - Classes, status groups, and socialism

“Class, Status, Party,” chap. 7 in *From Max Weber*, pp. 180-195.

“Socialism” (PDF file).

October 27 – Bureaucracy and democracy

Excerpts from “Parliament and Government in a Reconstructed Germany” (PDF file).

October 29 – Power, legitimacy, and the state

“Politics as a Vocation,” chap. 4 in *From Max Weber*, pp. 77-128.

November 3 - Bureaucracy

MIDTERM ESSAY DUE

“Bureaucracy,” chap. 8 in *From Max Weber*, pp. 196-244.

November 5 - The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, chap. 2 (13-20 [to the end of the first full paragraph]); chap. 4 (53-80).

Recommended: Introduction by Anthony Giddens (vii-xxiv).

November 10 - The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Author’s Introduction (xxviii-xlii); chap. 5 (102-125).

November 12 - The world religions, rationalization, and disenchantment

“Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions,” chap. 13 in *From Max Weber*, pp. 323-359.

November 17 - Rationalization and disenchantment

“Science as a Vocation,” chap. 5 in *From Max Weber*, pp. 129-156.

EMILE DURKHEIM (1858-1917)

November 19 - The sociological method

The Rules of Sociological Method, pp. 50-59, 97-104 (begin with the passage in italics at the top of page 97), 108-117, 119-135, 159-163. The rest of the book is recommended.

November 24 - Social solidarity and the division of labor

The Division of Labor in Society, pp. 1-8, 24-29, 38-44, 60-64, 68-72, 83-86, 101-109, 118-123.

November 26 - Social solidarity and the division of labor

Division of Labor, pp. 154-165, 200-205, 208-212, 291-294, 301-308, 310-316, xxxi-xxxix (please read in that order).

Recommended: Chad Alan Goldberg, introduction to and translation of Emile Durkheim’s “Antisémitisme et crise sociale,” *Sociological Theory* (forthcoming).

THANKSGIVING RECESS NOV. 27 – 30

December 1 - The social logic of suicide

Suicide, pp. 35-39, 46-52, 152-168, 197-216.

December 3 - The social logic of suicide

Suicide, pp. 217-234, 241-258, 276 (footnote 25).

December 8 - The elementary forms of religious life

The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, pp. 1-18, 33-44, 141-149, 207-225, 303-306, 330-331, 340-344, 418-433. (Page numbers are for the Fields translation; please do not use the Swain translation.)

Return survival cards to instructor.

December 10 - FINAL EXAM ON WEBER AND DURKHEIM.

FINAL ESSAY DUE DECEMBER 15