

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL
Fall, 2002

Sociology of Culture

(SOCI 266)

Friday, 9:00–11:30 Hamilton 151

Andrew Perrin

Office: Hamilton 269

Office hours: Monday, 10:00–12:00; Thursday, 2:00–4:00

Phone: 962-6876

E-mail: andrew_perrin@unc.edu • <http://www.unc.edu/~aperrin>

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

Assignment	Grade percentage
Attendance & Participation	20%
Team presentations	30%
Writing Project	50%

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 by e-mail 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.

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

The second half of each class will be structured around discussion of students' research work in progress. Please come to *every* class prepared to give at least a brief summary of the topic(s) you are working on and the status of your research. This will underscore the class's workshop character and also provide a smooth transition from course to final paper to further work.

READINGS AND RESOURCES

I have put many of the required and recommended books on reserve in the Sociology and Political Science Library, 271 Hamilton Hall. Many of the articles and chapters from other sources are available there as well.

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>. You will need a username and password to access this 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.

There will be a course e-mail list set up to facilitate out-of-class discussion of readings and other issues. The course list e-mail address will be soc266fall102@listserv.unc.edu.

Required Books

Pierre Bourdieu. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Harvard University Press, 1984).

Émile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss. *Primitive Classification* (University of Chicago Press, 1963).

Lyn Spillman, ed.. *Cultural Sociology* (Blackwell, 2001).

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

Viviana Zelizer. *The Social Meaning of Money: Pin Money, Paychecks, Poor Relief, and Other Currencies* (Princeton University Press, 1997).

Recommended

Karen A. Cerulo, ed.. *Culture in Mind: Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition* (Routledge, 2002).

Michèle Lamont and Laurent Thévenot, eds.. *Rethinking Comparative Cultural Sociology: Repertoires of Evaluation in France and the United States* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

COURSE SCHEDULE

August 23 Introduction and course organization

August 30 History and classical theory of "culture"

- Durkheim & Mauss, *Primitive Classification*, pp. 3–27, 81–88
- Levi-Strauss, “The Structural Study of Myth,” pp 206–231 in *Structural Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1963)
- Malinowski, “What is Culture?,” in *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1944)
- Marx, from *Capital*: Part I, Chapter I, Section 1 (pp. 302–308 in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed.)
- Geertz, “Thick Description,” in Spillman.
- Saussure, from *Course in General Linguistics*, pp. 718–726 in Adams, ed. *Critical Theory Since Plato* (Fort Worth: HBJ, 1992).
- Burke, “Literature as Equipment for Living,” pp. 921–924 in Adams, ed. *Critical Theory Since Plato* (Fort Worth: HBJ, 1992)

Recommended:

- The remainder of Durkheim & Mauss, *Primitive Classification*

September 6 “High” and “Popular” culture

- Bourdieu, *Distinction*:
 - Introduction (1–8)
 - Chapter 5 (260–317)
 - Chapter 7 (372–396)
 - Conclusion (466–484)
- Bryson, “Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes,” in Spillman.
- Baumann, “Intellectual Discourse and the Rise of Film as Art.” *ASR* 66:3 (June, 2001): 404–426

Recommended:

- Stephen Dubin, *Displays of Power*
- Judith Blau, *The Shape of Culture*
- Bourdieu, *Distinction*, remainder, esp. 397–465

September 13 Multiculturalism

- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, “The Language of African Literature,” pp. 4–33 in *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London, Nairobi, Portsmouth: James Currey Heinemann, 1986)
- Richard Rive, “Rio & Miami to Texas,” pp. 155–166 in *Writing Black* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1981).
- Darnell Hunt, “Raced Ways of Seeing,” in Spillman.
- Pamela Perry, “White Means Never Having to Say You’re Ethnic: White Youth and the Construction of ‘Cultureless’ Identities.” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 30:1 (February, 2001): 56–91
- Sherry Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” and “So, *Is* Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?,” pp. 21–42 and 173–180 in *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture* (Boston: Beacon, 1996)

Recommended:

- Anything by bell hooks
- Patricia Hill Collins, *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice*

September 20 Cross-culture

- 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
- Abigail Saguy, "Sexual Harassment in France and the United States" in Lamont and Thévenot
- Barry Schwartz and MiKyoung Kim, "Honor, Dignity, and Collective Memory: Judging the Past in Korea and the United States," in Cerulo
- Deborah Tannen, "Ethnic Style in Male-Female Conversation," pp. 177–194 in *Gender & Discourse* (Oxford, 1994)

Recommended:

- 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*

September 27 Religion

- Michael Emerson, Christian Smith, and David Sikkink. "Equal in Christ, But Not the World: White Conservative Protestants and Explanations of Black-White Inequality." *Social Problems* 46(3) (August, 1999): 398-417
- Mark Regnerus and Christian Smith. "Who Gives to the Poor?: The Role of Religious Tradition and Political Location on the Personal Generosity of Americans Toward the Poor." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37(3) (September, 1998): 481-493.
- Greeley, Andrew, and Michael Hout. "Americans' Increasing Belief in Life After Death: Competition and Assimilation." *ASR* 65 (December, 1999): 813–836
- Nancy Ammerman, "Telling Congregational Stories" *Review of Religious Research* 35:4 (1994):289-301
- Michael Hout and Claude S. Fischer, "Why More Americans Have No Religious Preference: Politics and Generations." *ASR* 67 (2002) 165–90

October 4 What is culture? Contemporary Theory and Method

- David Altheide, "Tracking Discourse," in Cerulo
- Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, "The Sociology of Critical Capacity." *European Journal of Social Theory* 2:3 (1999): 359–377
- 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.O.CO%3B2-6>
- Ron Jepperson and Ann Swidler, "What Properties of Culture Should We Measure?" *Poetics* 22 (1994): 359–371
- Michael Schudson, "How Culture Works," in Spillman
- 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.O.CO%3B2-9> (also in Spillman)
- 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.O.CO%3B2-B>

October 11 Contemporary Studies in Culture

- Peter Bearman and Katherine Stovel, “Becoming a Nazi: A Model for Narrative Networks.” *Poetics* 27 (2000): 69–90
- Mabel Berezin, “Cultural Form and Political Meaning: State-Subsidized Theater, Ideology, and the Language of Style in Fascist Italy,” in Spillman
- Ronald Breiger, “A Tool Kit for Practice Theory.” *Poetics* 27 (2000); 91-115.
- Wendy Griswold, “American Character and the American Novel,” in Spillman
- Richard Peterson, “Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music,” in Spillman
- 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>
- Magali Sarfatti-Larson, “Behind the Postmodern Façade: Architectural Change in Late Twentieth-Century America,” in Spillman

October 18 No class (October break)

October 25 Political culture I: Theory

- Jeffrey Alexander and Philip Smith, “The Discourse of American Civil Society,” in Spillman
- Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” pp. 217–252 in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1968)
- Horkheimer and Adorno, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, in Spillman
- William H. Sewell, Jr., “Ideologies and Social Revolutions: Reflections on the French Case.” *Journal of Modern History* 57:1 (1985): 57–85. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-2801%28198503%2957%3A1%3C57%3AIASRR0%3E2.0.CO%3B2-9>
- Theda Skocpol, “Cultural Idioms and Political Ideologies in the Revolutionary Reconstruction of State Power: A Rejoinder to Sewell.” *Journal of Modern History* 57:1 (1985): 86–96. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0022-2801%28198503%2957%3A1%3C86%3ACIAPII%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>

Recommended:

- 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?ijkey=080Q69x0hutyA&keytype=ref&siteid=arjournals>

November 1 Political culture II: Empirical studies

- Nina Eliasoph, “Close to Home,” in Spillman
- Karen Cerulo, “Deciphering Violence,” in Spillman
- Andrew Perrin, “Political Microcultures” (manuscript)
- Paul Lichterman, “The Search for Political Community,” in Spillman
- 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> (also in Spillman)
- 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)

November 8 Discourse and Political Culture

- Robin Wagner-Pacifici, *Discourse and Destruction* (entire)

Recommended:

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

November 15 Culture and Economy

- Viviana Zelizer, *The Social Meaning of Money*, Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7

November 22 Culture, Cognition, Narrative, Memory

- Gary Alan Fine, “Thinking About Evil: Adolf Hitler and the Dilemma of the Social Construction of Reputation,” in Cerulo
- 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)
- 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>
- Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz, “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past,” in Spillman
- diMaggio, “Why Cognitive (and Cultural) Sociology Needs Cognitive Psychology,” in Cerulo
- Gamson, “How Storytelling Can Be Empowering,” in Cerulo
- Belsey, *Critical Practice* (Routledge, 1980), pp. 67-75
- Tilly, “The Trouble With Stories,” in Bernice A. Pescosolido and Ronald Aminzade, “The social worlds of higher education: handbook for teaching in a new century” (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1999)

November 29 No class (Thanksgiving break)