

*The University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology*

*Sociology 077.446 – “Advanced Sociological Theory”
Fall Term, Section S01, 3 Credit Hours*

Instructor: Chris Powell
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Meeting Location: 335 Isbister Building
Meeting Times: Tuesdays, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Course Summary

From Structuralism to Post-Structuralism: Subjectivity, Truth, Politics

From Foucault to Derrida, Lyotard to Deleuze, the loose constellation of writings called ‘post-structuralism’ has been one of the most important developments in late-twentieth-century social thought. But what is post-structuralism, exactly? What implications does it have for sociology? And how is it related to that other ‘post’, post-modernism? This course addresses these questions by examining a selection of post-structuralist and post-modern writers in relation to their structuralist predecessors.

The course begins with the structuralist anthropology of Marcel Mauss and Claude Lévi-Strauss. These readings raise several issues that will stay with us throughout the course: the relationship between ideology and social structure; the status of science’s claim to speak the truth about social relations; and the ‘nature’ of social subjects. After a brief refresher in Marx, we then turn to the structuralist Marxism of Louis Althusser. Substantial time is spent taking a look at the work of Michel Foucault, which manages to problematize both the social subject and social-scientific truth at the same time; we’ll explore what implications this has for programs of concrete social and political change, especially feminism. We then take the ‘linguistic turn’, going back to the linguistic structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes, as preparation for taking on the difficult topic of deconstructionism. After finally getting to the bottom of what postmodernism is all about, we finish off by examining Jürgen Habermas’ criticisms of post-structuralism and some of the responses to them.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to give students a greater facility with social theory in general by conducting an in-depth engagement with one particular theoretical trajectory. It is designed to be intellectually stimulating and academically challenging, and aims to provide the student with the opportunity:

- a) to engage with key primary texts in twentieth-century social theory;
- b) to gain exposure to important analytic concepts, themes and ideas that inform current debates over post-structuralism and post-modernism;
- c) to cultivate their analytical skills in assessing the strengths and limitations of the various arguments in these debates; and
- d) to further develop their reading, writing, and verbal skills.

Required Textbooks

- 77.446 Coursepack. (available at the University bookstore)

Recommended Textbooks

- John Lechte, 1994. *Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers: From structuralism to postmodernity*. London: Routledge.

Format and Assessment

A. Seminar Classes

Each week we will meet for a three-hour seminar session. The seminars are an opportunity for students to discuss the assigned readings, in depth and critically, and to develop their own ideas. *They are not lectures*. Although I will probably say a few introductory words at the beginning of each class to frame the issues, my chief role as instructor will be to facilitate student discussion. Inevitably, some students are more comfortable with speaking up in class than others, but my goal is to create a safe, welcoming environment that invites you to participate freely in an ongoing conversation about these readings and about social theory in general.

B. Assessment

Formal evaluation for this course is organized in the following manner:

1. Class Participation – 20 % of final grade

- Students will participate on an ongoing basis in classroom discussion. Each week, on a rotating basis, some students will act as ‘discussants’ preparing a brief summary of part of the assigned readings, along with one or two questions to help start discussion of the reading.

2. Midterm Assignment – 30% of final grade. **Due October 21st.**

- A written assignment, in essay style, of between 8 and 12 pages in length. The exact format of this assignment will be determined by the instructor in consultation with the students during the first class.

3. Final Research Essay – 50% of final grade. **Due December 16th.**

- A research essay between 15 and 20 pages in length addressing an empirical or theoretical question relating to the course material. Students must ‘OK’ their essay topic with the instructor before November 25th.

Note that assignments delivered by email or in other electronic format will not be accepted; you must submit a paper copy.

C. Late Penalty

Please be advised that a late penalty of 1% per day, including weekends, will be applied to all papers that are handed in after the specified deadline. Medical documentation will be required in order to waive this penalty.

D. Special Needs

Students with special learning needs who may require special accommodation with respect to the course assessment should meet with the instructor at the beginning of the term so that we can arrange suitable accommodation.

E. Religious Holidays

The university recognizes the right of all students to observe recognized holidays of their faith which fall within the academic year. If you will have to miss any classes or will require an extension for an assignment due to a religious holiday, *please notify the instructor* at the beginning of the term or at least three weeks in advance of the relevant date.

F. Grading Scheme

Generally speaking, the following letter/percentage/GPA/descriptive scale will be used.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>GPA</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	90-100%	4.5	Exceptional
A	80-89%	4.0	Excellent
B+	75-79%	3.5	Very Good
B	70-74%	3.0	Good
C+	65-69%	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-64%	2.0	Adequate
D	50-59%	1.0	Marginal
F	49% or less	0	Failure

G. Final Drop Date

Although I hope that no one will want to drop out of this course, please be advised that the last day for voluntary withdrawal from first term courses is Wednesday, November 12th. You will have received the grades for the first assignment by that date.

Guidelines for Written Work

1. All written work is to be typed in 12-point Times or Times Roman (or equivalent font). Please do not use sans serif fonts such as **Helvetica** or **Arial**; these fonts are for titles and headings only.
2. Your work should have one inch margins and be double-spaced.
3. Each assignment should have a title page that includes your name, student number, my name, and the number of the course. No binders or assignment covers please.
4. Please use in-text citations, e.g. (Weber 1978: 83) to cite your work. Each assignment should include a bibliography that lists your references alphabetically by author. Full bibliographic information should still be provided for sources in the course pack. Your bibliography should follow this format or something similar:

Gleick, James, 1987. *Chaos: Making A New Science*. New York: Penguin Books.

Law, John, 1992. *Notes on the theory of the Actor Network: Ordering, Strategy and heterogeneity*. Website:

<http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology/soc054jl.html>. Last updated: 16 June 2001. Last accessed: 13 March 2003.

Rip, Arie, 1986. "Mobilising Resources Through Texts." pp. 84-99 in *Mapping the Dynamics of Science and Technology: Sociology of Science in the Real World*, edited by M. Callon, J. Law, and A. Rip. London: MacMillan Press.

Ward, Steven, 1996. "Filling the world with Self-Esteem: A Social History of Truth-Making." *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, v.21(1), pp. 1-23.

5. Please use gender-inclusive language in your written assignments, even if your sources do not. For tips on gender-inclusive language, see my web page at:

<http://www.carleton.ca/~cjpowel/writingtips.htm>

However, please note that when quoting directly from other authors, you should not 'correct' their language to make it gender-inclusive.

6. The maximum lengths indicated for each assignment do not include the title page or the bibliography.
7. Please retain a clean hard copy of each assignment that you submit. The instructor will not be responsible for misplaced assignments.

Instructional Offences

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense, with grave consequences. Students should acquaint themselves with the University of Manitoba's policy on 'Examinations: Personations' (p.28) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (p.29) found in the *Undergraduate Calendar* (graduate students see pp. 23-24 in the *Graduate Calendar*).

Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty are severe. The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism in a written assignment, test or examination is "F" on the paper and "F" for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as the purchase of an essay or cheating on a test or examination, the penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department in Arts or from all courses taught in the Faculty. The Faculty of Arts also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be defined as passing off someone else's work as your own. Plagiarism involves taking another person's words (written or spoken), ideas, theories, facts (that are not considered general knowledge), statistics, art work, etc. and presenting them as your own. Simply changing the wording of the information you are using still constitutes plagiarism if you do not acknowledge your source.

It is acceptable, and usually necessary, to present other people's ideas in your work. However, to avoid plagiarizing, you must cite your sources diligently. You should provide an in-text citation in each of the following cases:

- all direct quotations of other authors
- close paraphrases of statements by other authors
- important ideas or points taken from another author's work

If you copy the exact words of another author you must place these words in quotation marks and provide their source. But note that you do not have to quote someone directly in order to cite them! Your papers should be littered with citations even if they do not contain a single direct quotation.

Student Support Services

The University of Manitoba provides a number of support services to students that can help you to write your term paper, develop your study skills, or get through a stressful situation. Many of these services are described online at:

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>

If you're not already familiar with these services, I encourage you to spend some time getting to know about them; they can help you improve your academic performance and get the most out of your time at university. Some key resources include:

- **Student Counselling and Career Centre**
474 University Centre
(204) 474-8592
<http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/counselling>
- **Disability Services**
155 University Centre
(204) 474-6213/TTY: 204 474-9790/Fax: 204 261-7732
Email: disability_services@umanitoba.ca
http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/resource/disability_services/index.shtml
- **Learning Assistance Centre**
520 University Centre
(204) 474-9251
<http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/resource/learning>

Summer Reading

If you are feeling especially keen, you may want to get a head start on this course by reading *Tristes Tropiques*, by Claude Levi-Strauss. This book is a well-written memoir of Levi-Strauss' travels and researches as an anthropologist. Part 'travel narrative', part field notes, part theoretical meditation, this accessible and interesting book was enormously influential for a generation of French intellectuals, and will give you a feel for the general attitude that underlies the structuralist approach to social science.

***Sociology 77.446 – “Advanced Sociological Theory”
Schedule of Readings***

WEEK ONE – 9 SEPTEMBER 2003 – INTRODUCTION

- Introduction

WEEK TWO – 16 SEPTEMBER 2003 – STRUCTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY I: MAUSS

- Mauss, Marcel, 1964. “Introductory” and “Chapter I: Gifts and the Obligation to Return Gifts”, pp. 1-16 in *The Gift*. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Hubert, Henri, and Marcel Mauss, 1964. “Chapter I: Definition and unity of the sacrificial system”, pp. 9-18 in *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*. London: Cohen & West.
- Durkheim, Émile and Marcel Mauss, 1963. “Chapter One: The Australian Type of Classification”, pp. 10-26 in *Primitive Classification*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mauss, Marcel, 1979. “Part III: A Category of the Human Mind: the Notion of Person, the Notion of ‘Self’”, pp. 57-94 in *Sociology and Psychology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

WEEK THREE – 23 SEPTEMBER 2003 – STRUCTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY II: LÉVI-STRAUSS

- Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1978. “The Meeting of Myth and Science”, pp. 5-14 in *Myth and Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1955. “The Structural Study of Myth” in *Journal of American Folklore*, v. 68, no. 270, pp. 428-444.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1976. “Four Winnebago Myths”, pp. 198-210 in *Structural Anthropology, vol. II*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1966. “History And Dialectic”, pp. 245-269 in *The Savage Mind*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

WEEK FOUR – 30 SEPTEMBER 2003 – STRUCTURAL MARXISM I: MARX

- Marx, Karl, 1988. “The Materialist Concept of History”, pp. 3-20 in David McLellan (ed.), *Marxism: Essential Writings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Marx, Karl, 2000. “Commodities: Use-Value and Exchange-Value”, pp. 458-472 in David McLellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Marx, Karl, 2000. “The General Formula for Capital”, “The Sale of Labour-Power”, and “The Production of Surplus Value” pp. 482-507 in David McLellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Marx, Karl, 1976. “The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret”, pp. 163-177 in *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Volume I*. Ben Fowkes, trans. London: Penguin Books.

WEEK FIVE – 7 OCTOBER 2003 – STRUCTURAL MARXISM II: ALTHUSSER

- Althusser, Louis, 1968. “Marx’s Immense Theoretical Revolution”, pp. 182-193 in Louis Althusser and Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, Ben Brewster, trans. London: Verso.
- Althusser, Louis, 1971. “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”, pp. 127-186 in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Ben Brewster, trans. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Althusser, Louis 1969. “Marxism and Humanism” (selection), pp. 221-231 in *For Marx*, Ben Brewster, trans. London: Verso.

WEEK SIX – 14 OCTOBER 2003 – FOUCAULT PART I: POWER/KNOWLEDGE

- Foucault, Michel, 1972. “Discursive Formations”, pp. 31-39 in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A. M. Sheridan Smith, trans. London, Tavistock Publications.
- Foucault, Michel, 1980. “Two Lectures”, pp. 78-108 in Colin Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. Kate Soper, trans. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, Michel, 1995. “Docile Bodies”, pp. 135-169 in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Second Edition. Alan Sheridan, trans. New York: Vintage Books.

WEEK SEVEN – 21 OCTOBER 2003 – FOUCAULT PART II: TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SELF

- Foucault, Michel, 1984. “The Repressive Hypothesis”, pp. 301-329 in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, Michel, 1990. “Method”, pp. 92-102 in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. Robert Hurley, trans. New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, Michel, 1988. “Technologies of the Self”, pp. 223-251 in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984 Volume I*. New York: The New Press.

WEEK EIGHT – 28 OCTOBER 2003 – FEMINISM AND FOUCAULT

- McNay, Lois, 1992. “Power, Body and Experience”, pp. 11-47 in *Foucault and Feminism*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Bartky, Sandra Lee, 1988. “Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power”, pp. 61-86 in Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby (eds.), *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Grosz, Elizabeth, 1990, “Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity” (selections), pp. 59-63, 80-92, and 103-111 in Sneja Gunew (ed.), *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct*. London: Routledge.

WEEK NINE – 4 NOVEMBER 2003 – LINGUISTIC AND SEMIOTIC STRUCTURALISMS

- Saussure, Ferdinand de, 1972. “From *Course in General Linguistics*”, pp. 59-79 in Richard T. De George and Fernande M. De George, *The Structuralists: From Marx to Lévi-Strauss*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
- Barthes, Roland, 1972. “The Structuralist Activity”, pp. 213-220 in *Critical Essays*. Richard Howard, trans. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Barthes, Roland, 1982. “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives”, pp. 251-295 in Susan Sontag (ed.), *A Barthes Reader*. New York: Hill and Wang.

WEEK TEN – 11 NOVEMBER 2003 – DECONSTRUCTION I: READING

- ***NO CLASS this week (Remembrance Day)***
- Read for next week:
 - Culler, Jonathan, 1982. “Deconstruction”, pp. 85-156 in *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

WEEK ELEVEN – 18 NOVEMBER 2003 2003 – DECONSTRUCTION II: POLITICS

- Culler, Jonathan, 1982. “Deconstruction” (cont’d), pp. 156-180 in *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Grosz, Elizabeth, 1990, “Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity”, pp. 92-103 in Sneja Gunew (ed.), *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct*. London: Routledge.
- Derrida, Jacques, 1995. “Choreographies”, pp. 89-108 in Elisabeth Weber (ed.), *Points ... Interviews, 1974-1994*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, 1990. “An Interview”, pp. 32-34 in *Radical Philosophy*, no. 54.
- Bhaba, Homi K., 2001. “Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse”, pp. 414-421 in Martin McQuillan (ed.), *Deconstruction: A Reader*. New York: Routledge.

WEEK TWELVE – 25 NOVEMBER – POSTMODERNITY

- Lyotard, Jean-François, 1990. “The postmodern condition.” Pp. 330-341 in *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates*, edited by Jeffrey C. Alexander and Steven Seidman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyotard, Jean-François, 1989. “One of the Things at Stake in Women’s Struggles”, pp. 111-121 in Andrew Benjamin (ed.), *The Lyotard Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Bauman, Zygmunt, 1993. “The Fall of the Legislator”, pp. 128-140 in Thomas Docherty (ed.), *Postmodernism: A Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Jameson, Fredric, 1993. "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism", pp. 62-92 in Thomas Docherty (ed.), *Postmodernism: A Reader*. New York: Columbia

WEEK THIRTEEN – 2 DECEMBER 2003 – CRITIQUES AND RESPONSES

- Habermas, Jürgen, 1992. "Modernity: An Unfinished Project", pp. 38-55 in Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib (eds.), *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Rorty, Richard, 1985. "Habermas and Lyotard on Postmodernity", pp. 161-175 in Richard J. Bernstein (ed.), *Habermas and Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Foucault, Michel, 1988. "What is Enlightenment?", pp. 303-319 in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984 Volume I*. New York: The New Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen, 1989. "Taking Aim at the Heart of the Present: On Foucault's Lecture on Kant's *What is Enlightenment?*", pp. 173-179 in Shierry Weber Nicholsen (ed.), *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.