

University of Manitoba, Department of Sociology
Soc 4560 (CRN), 3 credit hours

Advanced Sociological Theory

Winter 2015 (Jan 6 – April 10)

8.30 – 11.30 AM Tuesdays, Isbister 335

Dr. Mara Fridell, office Isbister 311, email fridellm@umanitoba.ca, phone 474-8150

Office hours: Tuesdays 14.30-15.30 or by appt.

Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline: March 19, 2015

SYLLABUS

"Accountability is what's left when you take out responsibility." –Pasi Sahlberg

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This Advanced Sociological Theory course will illuminate some of the most influential as well as promising perspectives on institutional and dispositional reform and societal change in the modern era of patrimonial capitalist inequality. We will review dominant strains of contemporary conservative-liberal social theory articulated in opposition to historical-materialist-speculative theories emerging from the Western classical and Enlightenment movements and ideas. We will use these contrasting theoretical approaches to comprehend pillars of social change in our time, including *Herrenvolk* / patrimonial capitalist power restoration, financialization and privatization via housing policy reform, and liberal punishment reform and the development of the carceral state.

- * The readings will be challenging in order to propel comprehension development. As social theorist Mary Wollstonecraft as well as John Dewey and more recently Wirth & Perkins have maintained, people poised for lifelong development and democratic participation and leadership need a more rigorous education, so that they can develop *a methodological approach to knowledge, learn to generalize and analyze causation, compare their own observations with theory, and pursue a branch of learning with the discipline necessary to develop mental faculties and improve judgment*. If we will agree to approach the class in good faith as a collective intellectual adventure, the class will provide your support in this intellectual growth period.

Questions this term's course texts engage include:

- What distinguishes the sociological approach, including and focusing on the role of theory in inquiry? That is,
- How can we recognize and interpret, and address with potency, impactful modern forms of **social theory** (including identifying assumptions and implications) **in opposition to** the comparative, Enlightenment-based and -expanding **sociological imagination**?

- How have such anti-sociological forms of social theory, while restoring *Herrenvolk* confidence and while restoring the prestige of philosophy, contributed to the contemporary conservative-liberal **institutionalization of inequitable resource and crisis distribution**?
- How are **sociological and theoretical craft traditions**, focusing here on Bourdieu's and the critical realist approaches, built for grappling with oppositional arguments and **reasserting** the power of the **sociological imagination**?
- Why do we **distinguish social science** as the collective pursuit of knowledge requiring both scientific methods and speculative philosophical or normative specification?
- How do **theories**, including their **assumptions**, mutually determine **methods** and **research questions**?

Required readings

- 2 Required books (available at the Bookstore):

- **Bourdieu**, Pierre. 2005. *The social structure of the economy*. Cambridge: Polity.
- **Callinicos**, Alex. 2006. *The resources of critique*. Polity. 978-0745631615. (Read Intro, Intro to Part I, Ch 2, Part II).

Required additional readings (syllabus, chapters, articles, excerpts) *will be available to copy in the mailroom, or posted in D2L:*

- **This syllabus**. You are expected to read and consult this syllabus.
- **Murakawa**, Naomi. 2014. Excerpts from *The first civil right: How liberals built Prison America*. Oxford. 978-0199892808. Listen to Henwood interview in class. Ebook at <http://umanitoba.ca/outreach/evidencenetwork/archives/20803>.
- **Anderson**, Perry. 2007. Ch. 1 "The intransigent Right: Michael Oakeshott, Leo Strauss, Carl Schmitt, Friedrich von Hayek" pp. 3-28 in *Spectrum: From right to left in the world of ideas*. Verso. 9781844671359.
- **Wood**, Ellen Meiksins. 2014. "Capitalism's gravediggers." *Jacobin*, December. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/12/capitalisms-gravediggers/>
- **Losurdo**, Domenico. 2004. Excerpts (Ch.s 7 & 13) from *Hegel and the Freedom of the Moderns*. Duke University Press.
- **Losurdo**, Domenico. 2011. Excerpt from Ch. 9, pp. 297-318, in *Liberalism: A Counter-history*. Verso.
- **Scarry**, Elaine. 1987. Excerpts from *The body in pain: The making and unmaking of the world*. Oxford. 978-0195049961.

- **Callewaert**, Staf. 2006. Excerpts from “Bourdieu, Critic of Foucault: The case of empirical social science against double-game philosophy.” *Theory, culture & society* 23: 73-98.

Assignments:

- **3 C-Briefs, including:**
 - **2 Written Cabinet Briefs on the assigned reading(s).** The written Cabinet Briefs will be worth 30 pts each. Failure to submit a C-Brief on time will result in a grade of zero for that required assignment. Specifications for writing a C-Brief will be provided.
 - Sign up for your C-Brief dates on the first day of class. C-Briefs are due to be posted in D2L in electronic version on the Sunday before the class for which the reading is assigned. Stapled, final-edited hardcopies are due to the professor in class on the day of the class for which the reading is assigned. *Late C-Briefs will be docked 3% per day including weekends.*
 - You will be required to map out and provide a logically-related analysis of the week’s assigned reading argument in the C-Brief format, including answering the Arts seminar reading comprehension questions **What does the text say? What does it mean? What is at stake?**, and synthetic analysis is recommended.
 - Assignment grades will be available to the student in D2L two weeks after the professor receives the completed assignment.
 - **1 Orally-presented Cabinet Brief** on the assigned reading(s). The oral Cabinet Brief will be worth 25 points.
- **Course Scholarly Engagement & Participation.** 15 points.

Composition specs

*See C-Brief example, TBD. Otherwise, generally, for submitted written material: use ASA style guidelines. Generally: 12 pt font, 1 inch margins, 1 or 1.5 spacing, paginated, **with your name on top.** Use **subheadings** to switch topics when you can’t compose a smooth transition.*

- 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+	96-100%	4.5	Extraordinary
A	90-95%	4.0	Excellent
B+	86-89%	3.5	Very Good
B	76-85%	3.0	Good
C+	70-75%	2.5	Sufficient
C	60-69%	2.0	Average
D	50-59%	1.0	Insufficient
F	49% or less	0	Failure

Schedule: Assignment due dates

WEEK 1

Jan 6

Reading assignment: This syllabus

What are the expectations for this course?

WEEK 2

Jan 13

Murakawa

How has the liberal-conservative compromise on civil rights and (therapy + punishment) produced mass incarceration?

WEEK 3

Jan 20

Losurdo 2004, Ch VII pp. 153-179

How does Notrecht (emergency law) and the absolute right to property work in liberal societies, according to Hegel?

WEEK 4

Jan 27

Losurdo 2004, Ch XIII, pp. 290-310

How did Hegel illuminate the conflicts between different kinds of freedom and the oppressions they entail?

WEEK 5

Feb 3

Losurdo 2011, Excerpt from Ch. 9, pp. 297-318

Wood, Ellen Meiksins 2014.

What distinguishes liberal social theory? What distinguishes Marxist theory?

WEEK 6

Feb 12

Anderson

What is the Right's contribution to contemporary social theory?

WEEK 7

Feb 17 Mid-winter break

WEEK 8

Feb 24

Bourdieu pp. 1-17; excerpts from Callewaert pp. 79 (quote), 82, 84, 87, 89-92, 95-96.

How does Bourdieu analyze neoliberalism using the sociological craft?

WEEK 9

March 3

Bourdieu pp. 89-125

How was the state reformed to reconstruct the market?

WEEK 10

March 10

Scarry

How are humans homo faber, and how does that become perverted in unmaking?

Relate to commodification/decommodification.

WEEK 11

March 17

Callinicos pp. 1-14

Class does not meet. Work week.

WEEK 12

March 24

Callinicos pp. 153-181

What is Callinicos' conceptualization of critical realist ontology?

WEEK 13

March 31

Callinicos, pp. 182-216

How does recognizing contradiction help us think about the social from a transformative perspective?

WEEK 14

April 7

Callinicos, pp. 217-258

What does it mean that social theory (as a component of social science) requires the specification of substantive principles of justice (its normative basis)?

Course and university procedures and regulations:

Your Learner Disposition: Requirements and Evaluation

This course is a senior undergraduate text-focused seminar in a university. It is understood and expected that you have and are responsible for maintaining a greater-than-average interest in the material, an enthusiastic and collegial attitude toward both study and participation, and a firm and observable respect for scholarship and scholars. The expectation is that you will attend each meeting, study the reading thoroughly and in advance, do your assignments with dedication and on time (before their due date), and participate actively in class, with collegiality consistently demonstrated for your classmates and respect consistently demonstrated for your professor both in and out of class.

It should go without saying that students should make every effort to arrive on time for class; students who arrive late miss important class material, create a culture of disrespect for learning and the community of learners, and disrupt the class. If you miss the time reserved for class, your option is to ask a classmate to catch you up. Students who have studied and attended classes are warmly welcomed to visit the professor in her office hours.

Students are always expected to be respectful to their colleagues and to the professor during class discussions and in office hours. Disruption will initially result in the student being asked to leave the classroom; any disruption after that warning will result in the student being given the choice to avail himself or herself of the Voluntary Withdrawal date or may be subject to disciplinary action such as being debarred from the class.

Academic dishonesty

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, exam personation, ("**Personation at Examinations**" (Section 5.2.9) and "**Plagiarism and cheating**" (Section 8.1)) and duplicate submission by reading documentation provided at the Arts Student Resources web site at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/index.html>. Ignorance of the regulations and policies regarding academic integrity is not a valid excuse for violating them.

Late penalty

No extensions will be given without medical documentation, or other documentation of comparable seriousness, that will normally be required to avoid a late penalty. Please be advised that a late penalty of 3% per day, including days on weekends, will be applied to all papers that are handed in after the specified deadlines.

If the student has a binding and documented reason to be absent from class on a specified date, the student must notify the professor as early as possible, so that if the reason is accepted by the professor, the student and professor can make substitute arrangements for the student to complete and submit assigned work.

Athletic championships & identity-group 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 an athletic championship or identity-group holiday, please notify the professor at the beginning of the term or at least three weeks in advance of the relevant date.

Unclaimed term work disposal

Any term work that has not been claimed by students will be held for four (4) months from the end of the final examination period for the term in which the work was assigned. At the conclusion of this time, all unclaimed term work will become property of the Faculty of Arts and be destroyed according to FIPPA guidelines and using confidential measures for disposal.