

Sociology 319. *Contemporary Sociological Theory*
Spring 2009

Class Meets: M W 2:55 – 4:10
Goldwin Smith 236

Instructor: David Strang
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Introduction to some main ideas in contemporary sociology, from the emergence of the field in the American academy to the present. The class is organized around the contributions of some exemplary American sociologists, from Merton to Meyer. Topics include the development of distinctive lines of argument in areas like the study of the face-to-face group, the modern organization, social movements and social revolutions, inequality, and social mobility.

Requirements: Two take-home prelims (mid and end –of semester), seminar paper, class participation. Each counts 25% of grade.

Week of:

Jan 19 Course Introduction

Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore, “Some principles of stratification.” *American Sociological Review* 10 (1944): 242-9.

Jan 26 Sociological Patrician

Robert K. Merton, “Social structure and anomie.” *American Sociological Review* 3 (1938): 672-82.

Robert K. Merton, “The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy.” Pp. 475-490 in R.K. Merton, **Social Theory and Social Structure**. Free Press, 1968 [1957].

Robert K. Merton, “The Matthew effect in science.” *Science* 159, 3810 (Jan 5, 1968), pp. 56-63.

Feb 2 Big Man on Campus

James Coleman, Elihu Katz, and Herbert Menzel, "The diffusion of an innovation among physicians." *Sociometry* 20 (1957): 253-70.

James S. Coleman, **The Adolescent Society**, Chs 1-2 ("The Emergence of an Adolescent Subculture...", "The Adolescent Culture"). Free Press, 1961.

James S. Coleman, "Social capital in the creation of human capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988): S95-S120.

Feb 9 Everyday Artists

Erving Goffman, selections from 'On Cooling the Mark out' (Psychiatry 1952), **The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Interaction Ritual, Asylums, and Frame Analysis.**

Harold Garfinkel, "Studies of the routine grounds of everyday activities." *Social Problems* 11 (1964): 225-50.

Feb 16 Fringe Player on the Inside

Howard S. Becker, **Outsiders**, Ch 1 ("Outsiders."). Free Press, 1963.

Howard S. Becker, "The professional dance musician and his audience." *American Journal of Sociology* 57 (1951): 136-44.

Howard S. Becker, **Art Worlds**. Ch 8 ("Integrated Professionals, Mavericks, Folk Artists, and Naïve Artists.) University of California Press, 1982.

Feb 23 Exchange Student

Peter M. Blau, "Co-operation and competition in a bureaucracy." *American Journal of Sociology* 59 (1954): 530-5.

Peter M. Blau, "A theory of social integration." *American Journal of Sociology* 65 (1960): 545-56.

Peter M. Blau, "A fable about social structure." *Social Forces* 58 (1980): 777-88.

Mar 2 *Conflicted Genius*

Randall Collins, "A conflict theory of sexual stratification." *Social Problems* 19 (1971): 3-21.

Randall Collins, "Why the social sciences won't become high-consensus, rapid-discovery science." *Sociological Forum* 9 (1994): 155-77.

Randall Collins, "Prediction in macrosociology: the case of the Soviet collapse". *American Journal of Sociology* 100 (1995): 1552-91.

Mar 9 *Review and Prelim*

<spring break>

Mar 23 *Sociologies of Power*

Richard M. Emerson, "Power-dependence relations." *American Sociological Review* 27 (1962): 31-41.

Edna Bonacich, "A theory of middleman minorities." *American Sociological Review* 38 (1973): 583-94.

Michel Foucault, **Discipline and Punish**. Ch 1 ("The body of the condemned"). Vintage, 1979.

Mar 30 *Two Revolutionary Democrats*

Theda Skocpol, **States and Social Revolutions**. Cambridge, 1978. Ch 1, selections.

Ann Shola Orloff and Theda Skocpol, "Why not equal protection? Explaining the politics of public social spending in Britain, 1900-1911 and the United States, 1880s-1920." *American Sociological Review* 49 (1984): 726-50.

Charles Tilly, **Huge Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons**. Ch 1 ("Intellectual Equipment"). Russell Sage, 1984.

Charles Tilly, "Contentious repertoires in Great Britain, 1758-1834". *Social Science History* 17 (1993): 253-80.

Apr 6 High Priest of the West

John W. Meyer, "The charter: conditions of diffuse socialization in schools." Pp. 564-78 in *Social Processes and Social Structure*, ed W.R. Scott. Rinehart, Holt.

John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized organizations: formal structure as myth and ceremony." *American Journal of Sociology* 83 (1977): 340-63.

John W. Meyer, "The world polity and the authority of the nation-state." Pp 109-37 in A. Bergesen, ed., **Studies of the Modern World System**. Academic, 1980.

Apr 13 Sociologies of organization

Michael T. Hannan and John R. Freeman, "The population ecology of organizations." *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977): 929-64.

Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, "The iron cage revisited" institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields." *American Sociological Review* 48 (1983): 147-60.

Rosabeth M. Kanter, **Men and Women of the Corporation**. Ch 6 ("Power"). Basic, 1993.

Apr 20 Sociologies of spread

Mark S. Granovetter, "The strength of weak ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1973): 1360-80.

Paul M. Hirsch, "From ambushes to golden parachutes: corporate takeovers as instances of cultural framing and institutional integration." *American Journal of Sociology* 91 (1986): 800-37.

Abrahamson, Eric and Gregory Fairchild (1999). "Management fashion: lifecycles, triggers, and collective learning processes." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 44: 708-740.

Apr 27 Review and discussion of seminar papers