

Sociology 706 (Fall 2011)

# Cultural Analysis

Prof. Seio Nakajima

Wednesday 12:00-2:30 p.m., KUY 401

Office hours: Wed. 2:30-3:30 p.m. or by appointment  
208 Saunders Hall  
seio@hawaii.edu

## Course Description:

This seminar has three major goals: (1) to familiarize students with the evolution and the current state of theories in “sociology of culture/cultural sociology” by discussing both classical sociologists (e.g., Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel) and contemporary theorists (e.g., Habermas, Foucault, Bourdieu, British cultural studies, critical theory) (mastering of theory); (2) to consider how theories we learn both inform and draw from actual empirical research conducted in a number of substantive topics (e.g., “Culture, Class, and Status,” “Culture, Economy, Organizations, Occupations and Work”) (mastering of application of theory to empirical research in substantive topics); (3) to prepare a research proposal on a subject of the student’s choosing (mastering of methods and research design).

## Notes:

- Although the formal title of the course is “cultural analysis,” which could broadly include many non-sociology theorists (, some of whom we indeed will discuss), the course targets explicitly on contemporary “sociology of culture/cultural sociology,” particularly American interpretations, applications, and developments.
- We do discuss “theory,” but the emphasis is “putting cultural theories to work” in concrete, empirical research settings. So, we will not talk theories in the abstract, but always deal with “theories in action.” Roughly 30% of time and effort will be spent for achieving goal (1) above, 50% for goal (2), and 20% for goal (3).
- Students should be aware that this is an extremely reading and discussion-intensive course. Seminar participants are expected to be prepared for every class.
- In addition to the three major goals above, whenever appropriate, we will discuss miscellaneous technical “know-how” of doing academic research. E.g., how to find relevant academic literature, use of citation software for organizing references, etc. What to discuss each semester largely depends on the needs and interests of the students taking the course.
- Although each reading is assigned to a weekly topic (e.g., “Culture, Social Structure, and Agency,” “Boundary Processes”), many, if not all, of the readings are relevant to a number of weekly topics. So, when you do the readings, try to bring in what you’ve learned in other weeks to organically connect multiple topic areas to discuss the week’s readings.
- Because I understand students come from diverse disciplinary background, I do *not* expect all students to have graduate-level knowledge in sociological theory and methods. I will provide “mini-lectures” on sociology (and other topics) whenever necessary so every student has an equal opportunity to learn from and enjoy this seminar!
- This seminar counts as an elective course for the International Cultural Studies Graduate Certificate Program.

## Required Texts:

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. *Cultural Theory: An Introduction, Second Edition*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. Available at the campus bookstore.
- A coursepack of readings (available at Professional Image, 2633 South King St., ph: 973-6599). Marked with \* in the reading list.
- Readings available at UH Library Electronic Resources or publicly available on the Internet (students obtain themselves). Marked with @ in the reading list.

## Course Requirements:

### 1) Active participation in seminar discussions.

Remember the aphorism: "Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal." (Ludwig Wittgenstein). So, don't be shy and speak up!

### 2) Weekly reading notes.

Every week you will submit reading notes (approx. 1-2 pages) to Laulima by **11:59 p.m., Tuesday, on the eve of the class**. The reading notes should be a reaction/critical engagement rather than a simple summary of the readings assigned for the week. You might focus on the questions you want to ask in the class, or point to gaps and conflicts in one or more readings. The purpose of these reading notes is to stimulate class discussion.

### 3) Being a discussant for two class sessions.

A discussant will be responsible for leading at least a brief discussion around the points raised in his/her weekly reading notes.

### 4) A Research proposal.

A research proposal on a topic of student's own choosing in consultation with the instructor (approx. 20 double-spaced pages; 30 pages max.) With the instructor's approval, students may substitute a completed research paper for the research proposal. The following schedule will be in effect (tentative):

**October 5:** Short initial proposal (1-2 pages) due at Laulima by 11:59 p.m.

**November 16:** A full rough first draft of the research proposal due at Laulima by 11:59 p.m.

**December 14:** The final draft due at Laulima by 11:59 p.m.

---

## Week 1: August 24: Introduction

No required reading. Get acquainted.

---

## Week 2: August 31: What Is Culture?

Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Introduction: What is Culture? What is Cultural Theory?" Pp. 1-5 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.

@Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51:273-286.

\*Sewell, William, Jr. 1999. "The Concept(s) of Culture." Pp. 35-61 in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, edited by V. E. Bonnell and L. Hunt. Berkeley: University of California Press.

@Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2002. "The Strong Program in Cultural Theory: Elements of a Structural Hermeneutics." Pp. 135-150 in *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, edited by J. H. Turner.

New York: Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers.  
([http://research.yale.edu/ccs/alexander/articles/2002/alexsmith\\_strongpr.pdf](http://research.yale.edu/ccs/alexander/articles/2002/alexsmith_strongpr.pdf))

Discussant (s): No assigned discussant. Discuss together.

---

### **Week 3: September 7: Lineages of Classical Theory**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Culture in Classical Social Theory." Pp. 6-25 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Culture and Social Integration in the Work of Talcott Parsons." Pp. 26-33 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Culture as Ideology in Western Marxism." Pp. 34-53 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "The Durkheimians: Ritual, Classification, and the Sacred." Pp. 69-91 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing

Discussant (s):

---

### **Week 4: September 14: Culture, Social Structure, and Agency**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Structuralism and the Semiotic Analysis of Culture." Pp. 92-110 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "The Poststructural Turn." Pp. 111-127 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Culture, Structure, and Agency: Three Attempts at Synthesis." Pp. 128-143 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Sewell, William, Jr. 1992. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation." *American Journal of Sociology* 98:1-29.
- @Vaisey, Stephen. 2009. "Motivation and Justification: A Dual-Process Model of Culture in Action." *American Journal of Sociology* 114:1675-1715.

Discussant (s):

---

### **Week 5: September 21: Culture, Class, and Status**

- \*Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Excerpt: Introduction, Chapter 1, and Conclusion.
- @Erickson, Bonnie H. 1996. "Culture, Class, and Connections." *American Journal of Sociology* 102:217-251.
- @Bryson, Benthany. 1996. "'Anything But Heavy Metal': Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes." *American Sociological Review* 61:884-899.
- @Sallaz, Jeffrey J. and Jane Zavisca. 2007. "Bourdieu in American Sociology, 1980-2004." *Annual Review of Sociology* 33:21-41.

Discussant (s):

---

---

**Week 6: September 28: Culture in Interaction**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Culture as Action in Symbolic Interactionism, Phenomenology, and Ethnomethodology." Pp. 54-68 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Eliasoph, Nina and Paul Lichterman. 2003. "Culture in Interaction." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:735-794.
- @Fine, Gary Alan. 1992. "The Culture of Production: Aesthetic Choices and Constraints in Culinary Work." *American Journal of Sociology* 97:1268-94.
- @Jerolmack, Colin. 2007. "Animal Practices, Ethnicity, and Community: The Turkish Pigeon Handlers of Berlin." *American Sociological Review* 72:874-894.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 7: October 5: Production of Culture****SHORT INITIAL PROPOSAL DUE AT LAULIMA BY 11:59 P.M.**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "The Production and Reception of Culture." Pp. 158-175 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Peterson, Richard and N. Anand. 2004. "The Production of Culture Perspective." *Annual Review of Sociology* 30:311-334.
- @Peterson, Richard and David G. Berger. 1975. "Cycles in Symbol Production: the Case of Popular Music." *American Sociological Review* 40:158-173.
- \*Bourdieu, Pierre. 1993. *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press. Excerpt: Chapter 1.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 8: October 12: Consumption, Reception, and Appropriation of Culture**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "British Cultural Studies." Pp. 144-157 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Griswold, Wendy. 1987. "The Fabrication of Meaning: Literary Interpretation in the United States, Great Britain, and the West Indies." *American Journal of Sociology* 92:1077-1117.
- @JoEllen, Shively. 1992. "Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films among American Indians and Anglos." *American Sociological Review* 57.
- \*Nakajima, Seio. 2006. "Film Clubs in Beijing: The Cultural Consumption of Chinese Independent Films." Pp. 161-208 in *From Underground to Independent: Alternative Film Culture in Contemporary China*, edited by P. G. Pickowicz and Y. Zhang. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- \*Chartier, Roger. 1995. "Popular Appropriations: The Readers and Their Books." Pp. 83-97 in *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences From Codex to Computer*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Discussant (s)

---

---

**Week 9: October 19: Culture, Economy, Organizations, Occupations and Work**

- @Fligstein, Neil. 1996. "Markets as Politics: A Political-Cultural Approach to Market Institutions." *American Sociological Review* 61:656-673.
- @MacKenzie, Donald and Yuval Millo. 2003. "Constructing a Market, Performing Theory: The Historical Sociology of a Financial Derivatives Exchange." *American Journal of Sociology* 109:107-145.
- \*DiMaggio, Paul. 1991. "Constructing an Organizational Field as a Professional Project: U.S. Art Museums, 1920-1940." Pp. 267-1292 in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, edited by W. W. Powell and P. J. DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- @Fourcade, Marion. 2006. "The Construction of a Global Profession: The Transnationalization of Economics." *American Journal of Sociology* 112:145-195.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 10: October 26: Boundary Processes**

- @Lamont, Michele and Virag Molnar. 2002. "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28:167-195.
- @Lamont, Michele and Virag Molnar. 2001. "How Blacks Use Consumption to Shape their Collective Identity." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 1:31-45.
- @Tilly, Charles. 2004. "Social Boundary Mechanisms." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 34:211-236.
- @Bail, Christopher A. 2008. "The Configuration of Symbolic Boundaries against Immigrants in Europe." *American Sociological Review* 73:37-59.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 11: November 2: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Postmodern and Poststructural Critical Theory." Pp. 228-240 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Cultural Theories of Race and Gender." Pp. 241-261 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childbearing in Black Families and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67:747-776.
- @Binder, Amy. 1993. "Constructing Racial Rhetoric: Media Depictions of Harm in Heavy Metal and Rap Music." *American Sociological Review* 58:753-767.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 12: November 9: Culture, Gender, Sexuality, and the Body**

- @Collins, Patricia Hill. 1986. "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought." *Social Problems* 33:S14-S32.
- @Tavory, Iddo and Ann Swidler. 2009. "Condom Semiotics: Meaning and Condom Use in Rural Malawi." *American Sociological Review* 74:171-189.
- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "The Body in Cultural Theory." Pp. 262-279 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Wacquant, Loïc. 1995. "The Pugilistic Point of View: How Boxers Think and Feel About Their Trade." *Theory and Society* 24:489-535.  
([http://sociology.berkeley.edu/faculty/wacquant/wacquant\\_pdf/PUGILISTICPTOFVIEW.pdf](http://sociology.berkeley.edu/faculty/wacquant/wacquant_pdf/PUGILISTICPTOFVIEW.pdf) )

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 13: November 16: Politics and Culture****FULL ROUGH FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE AT LAULIMA BY 11:59 P.M.**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "Culture as Text: Narrative and Hermeneutics." Pp. 176-194 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Alexander, Jeffrey C. and Philip Smith. 1993. "The Discourse of American Civil Society: A New Proposal for Cultural Studies." *Theory and Society* 22:151-207.  
([http://research.yale.edu/ccs/alexander/articles/1993/alexsmith\\_amcivsoc.pdf](http://research.yale.edu/ccs/alexander/articles/1993/alexsmith_amcivsoc.pdf) )
- @Jacobs, Ronald. 1996. "Civil Society and Crisis: Culture, Discourse, and the Rodney King Beating." *American Journal of Sociology* 101:1238-1272.
- @Medvetz, Thomas M. 2006. "The Strength of Weekly Ties: Relations of Material and Symbolic Exchange in the Conservative Movement." *Politics and Society* 34:343-368.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 14: November 23: Religion and Moral Order**

- @Kurien, Prema A. 2006. "Multiculturalism and 'American' Religion: The Case of Hindu Indian Americans." *Social Forces* 85:723-741.
- @Stamatov, Peter. 2010. "Activist Religion, Empire, and the Emergence of Modern Long-Distance Advocacy Networks." *American Sociological Review* 75:607-628.
- @Wagner-Pacifci, Robin and Barry Schwartz. 1991. "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past." *American Journal of Sociology* 97:376-420.
- @Quinn, Sarah. 2008. "The Transformation of Morals in Markets: Death, Benefits, and the Exchange of Life Insurance Policies." *American Journal of Sociology* 114:738-780.

Discussant (s)

---

**Week 15: November 30: Knowledge, Science and Technology, and Materiality**

- @Gieryn, Thomas F. 1983. "Boundary-work and the demarcation of science from non-science: strains and interests in professional ideologies of scientists." *American Sociological Review* 48:781-795.
- @Gross, Neil. 2002. "Becoming a Pragmatist Philosopher: Status, Self-Concept, and Intellectual Choice." *American Sociological Review* 67:52-76.
- @Frickel, Scott and Neil Gross. 2005. "A General Theory of Scientific/Intellectual Movement." *American Sociological Review* 70:204-232.
- @McDonnell, Terence E. 2010. "Cultural Objects as Objects: Materiality, Urban Space, and the Interpretation of AIDS Campaigns in Accra, Ghana." *American Journal of Sociology* 115:1800-1852.

Discussant (s):

---

**Week 16: December 7: Modernity, Postmodernity, Globalization, and World Society**

- Smith, Philip and Alexander Riley. 2009. "The Cultural Analysis of Postmodernism and Postmodernity." Pp. 207-227 in *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*: Blackwell Publishing.
- @Guillén, Mauro F. 2001. "Is Globalization Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble? A Critique of Five Key Debates in the Social Science Literature." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27:235-60.
- @Meyer, John W., John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco Ramirez. 1997. "World Society and the Nation-States." *The American Journal of Sociology* 103:144-181.
- \*Fligstein, Neil. 2001. "Globalization." Pp. 191-222 in *The Architecture of Markets: An Economic Sociology of Twenty-First-Century Capitalist Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Discussant (s):

---

**December 14:**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL FINAL DRAFT DUE AT LAULIMA BY 11:59 P.M.** (Early submissions welcome.)

---

---

**Academic Honesty:** “Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- b. Furnishing false information to any UH official, faculty member, or office.
- c. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any UH document, record, or form of identification.

The term ‘cheating’ includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the UH faculty, staff or student (4) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.

The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.”

[E7.208 UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEMWIDE STUDENT CONDUCT CODE, July 2009]

**Kokua Statement:** “Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.”

**eCAFE:** “The Department of Sociology is committed to a continual improvement of the quality of its course offerings. To allow for this to occur, your help, as the consumers of these courses is needed. You are there and only you can tell us about your educational experience in your classes. Towards the end of the semester, you will be informed that the eCAFE system is available to you to complete your course evaluation. We encourage you to login to <http://www.hawaii.edu/ecafe/> to submit your evaluations.”

---