Sociology 706 (Fall 2009)
Cultural Analysis
Prof. Seio Nakajima
Monday 9:00-11:30am, SAUND 635

Office hours: Monday, 4-5 p.m. or appointment
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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" 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 (whom we indeed will read some), the course targets explicitly on contemporary "sociology of culture," 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 EndNote 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 and Social Structure,” “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.
・Because we lose one class session to Labor Day holiday, depending on students’ preferences, we may schedule one extra session during the exam week. Details to be confirmed.
・This seminar counts as an elective course for the International Cultural Studies Graduate Certificate Program.
Required Texts:

- 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 electronic reading notes.
   Every week you will submit reading notes (approx. 1-2 pages) to the class by e-mail by **11:59pm, Sunday, 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 electronic 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 in class.
   - **November 9**: A full rough first draft of the research proposal due.
   - **December 7**: The final draft due.

**Week 1: August 24: Introduction**

No required reading. Get acquainted.

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


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

Week 3: September 7: Labor Day-HOLIDAY-NO CLASS

Week 4: September 14: Lineages of Classical Theory


Discussant (s):

Week 5: September 21: Culture, Social Structure, and Agency


Discussant (s):

Week 6: September 28: Culture, Class, and Status


Discussant (s):
Week 7: October 5: Culture in Interaction

RESEARCH PAPER SHORT INITIAL PROPOSAL (1-2 pages) DUE IN CLASS


Discussant (s):

Week 8: October 12: Production of Culture


Discussant (s):

Week 9: October 19: Consumption, Reception, and Appropriation of Culture


Discussant (s):
Week 10: October 26: Culture, Economy, Organizations, Occupations and Work


Discussant(s):

Week 11: November 2: Boundary Processes


Discussant(s):

Week 12: November 9: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity

FULL ROUGH FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS


Discussant(s):
Week 13: November 16: Culture, Gender, Sexuality, and Body


Discussant (s):

Week 14: November 23: Political Culture


Discussant (s):

Week 15: November 30: Religion and Moral Order


Discussant (s):
Week 16: December 7: Knowledge, Science and Technology, and Materiality

RESEARCH PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE IN CLASS


Discussant (s):

Week 17: Extra Session During the Exam Week? (Details TBA): Modernity, Postmodernity, Globalization, and World Society


Discussant (s):
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 Lil'iuokalani Center for Student Services

Plagiarism  The following definition of plagiarism comes from the UH-Manoa Student Conduct Code: Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or "drylabbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms.

University of Hawai‘i at Manoa Student Conduct Code (1992), p. 6