

## SOCIOLOGY 2KK3E

Fall, 2019

Instructor: Professor Cyril Levitt

Day/Time of Classes: Wednesdays 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Ext.: 23600

Class Location: TSH-B105

Office Hours: Wednesdays. 5:45-6:45 p.m.

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OUTLINE, TEXTS AND METHOD OF EVALUATION:

This course will serve as an introduction to classical sociological theory and the text is available as a publication of course ware by the McMaster University Bookstore. Written by Professors Levitt and Fleming and the late Professor Roy Hornosty it was prepared as an accessible introduction for beginning students to the earliest theories of society in the post-Napoleonic era in Europe and the United Kingdom and then in post-Civil War United States. It was initially designed to be used over two semesters. Since our course is one semester long, we will focus on selective authors and their theories covered in the text.

The chapters which we will cover in this course include those on the following authors: Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Sigmund Freud. Emile Durkheim was the first person to hold a chair in sociology in France, although the term itself was coined by August Comte, a philosopher who folded his understanding of sociology into his larger philosophical vision. Karl Marx was not a professor and in fact did not take kindly to the sociology with which he was familiar, namely that found in the works of Comte just mentioned and those of Herbert Spencer who both challenged some of the leading ideas of Comte while developing some of the implications of evolutionist ideas of which he, Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace had developed in the middle and later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Karl Marx considered himself a revolutionary and not simply the author of another theory of society. He believed that in his writings he was giving expression to the real movement of society through both the evolutionary and revolutionary changes in its economic and social organization. Max Weber was arguably the most influential of the first generation of German sociologists in the last few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Weber largely rejected the evolutionist framework otherwise so popular during his lifetime in favour of a sociology influenced by the neo-Kantian philosophy which enjoyed a certain predominance in German academic life especially at the universities in Heidelberg and Marburg. Accordingly, Weber focussed on the meaning of social action for the actors themselves in an attempt to understand and thus to explain the nature of the social action.

Sigmund Freud, it would seem, fits poorly in this gallery of luminaries in sociology. Freud has been misinterpreted as a thinker only interested in individual psychology, developing a fixed

notion of human nature based on fundamental and unalterable instincts to be tamed by civilization. But Freud himself made the point: “In the individual's mental life someone else is invariably involved, as a

model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent; and so from the very first individual psychology, in this extended but entirely justifiable sense of the words, is at the same time social psychology as well.

The relations of an individual to his parents and to his brothers and sisters, to the object of his love, and to his physician—in fact all the relations which have hitherto been the chief subject of psycho-analytic research—may claim to be considered as social phenomena...” Freud has also been accused of developing a psychology based on heteronormativity and dominated by patriarchal assumptions. This is, to some extent, true but two things have to be said in this connection: First, from the very beginning within the psychoanalytic movement feminist voices were raised in opposition to Freud and second, that some of the most creative work in psychoanalysis today is being done by feminist clinicians and theoreticians such as Julia Kristeva, Juliet Mitchell, Luce Irigaray and Nancy Chodorow, among many others. We will look at the writings of Karen Horney, a proto-feminist analyst who challenged and attempted to revise some of Freud’s fundamental ideas regarding human sexuality already in the 1920s and 1930s And third, within sociology itself, psychoanalysis has enriched the discipline through writings by Erich Fromm, Eric Erickson, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Harry Stack Sullivan, and others.

By the end of the course students should have basic knowledge of the different approaches to sociological theory, fundamental assumptions and approaches, and contrasting methodology of the leading classical thinkers in the discipline.

### Course Requirements

The final grade in the course will be derived from three exams given in the multiple-choice format. The first will be held after we have covered the first section of the course on Durkheim and the first section on Marx, likely in early to mid-October. The second will be given after we’ve looked the last sections of Marx and Weber roughly in early November and the final exam during the official examination period after classes end in December and will cover the material taken up after the second exam and focus on Freud and Horney and include questions which cover the entire course. The breakdown of the grades will be as follows:

First Examination.....	30% of final grade
Second examination.....	30% of final grade
Final examination.....	40% of final grade

### Structure of the Course

The course will be built around the lectures that will take place every Wednesday from 7:00-10:00 p.m. The lectures themselves will be built around the readings that will be announced in advance. In addition, there will be periods of consultation during office hours in which Prof. Levitt will be available to go over the material one on one over the course of the semester. The examinations will be based entirely on the readings and the material covered in the lectures. Office hours will be held between 5:45-6:45 p.m. on Wednesdays.

## Why There is no Weekly Timetable for Readings or Lectures

Students often ask why there is no timetable that provides an overview of which readings and what topics will be covered in the individual lecture period over the course of the semester. Experience has shown that it is difficult to know in advance where we will be in the text/lectures on any given day. That depends on the rhythm of the class, the number of questions asked, possible (if unlikely cancellations), etc. In the past this has led to attempts to speed up the lectures to keep on schedule or to slow them down by telling jokes, talking about extraneous matters, and other ways of killing time. Students, however, should be apprised of the fact that the lectures will closely parallel their readings and that we will proceed through the books at our own pace. Dr. Levitt will try to let the class know approximately what will be covered in the following lecture or two.

## Texts

*An Introduction to Classical Sociological Theory*, Berkely Fleming, Roy Hornosty, Cyril Levitt, custom courseware, McMaster University Bookstore.

Karen Horney, The Flight from Womanhood: The Masculinity-Complex in Women, as Viewed by Men and Women, *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 7: 324-339, 1926

Karen Horney, The Denial of the Vagina – A Contribution to the Problem of the Genital Anxieties Specific to Women, *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 14: 57-70, 1933

**Please Note:** The two essays by Karen Horney will be found on reserve at the Mills Library under the course number at the front desk.

## **NOTE:**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see <http://ccl.mcmaster.ca/COU/degree/undergraduate.html>). First, sociological theories are diverse in their claims and in their focus. Gaining knowledge of these diverse theories, will expand the student's depth and breadth of knowledge. Second, there is no single sociological theory accepted as the final or best approach. As such, this course requires that students consider and critically evaluate competing theoretical approaches. In so doing, students will gain an awareness of limits of knowledge. Finally, this course will encourage students to discuss theoretical issues in class and grading is based on multiple choice exams. In each case, the student's communication skills will be challenged and enhanced.”

## **DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

Do NOT email assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers. Results of the first two examinations will be communicated to each student on Avenue to Learn. The final grade for the course will be communicated to each student by the Office of the Registrar.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

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It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

## **Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

### IMPORTANT DATES

Term I (3 units) Sept. 3- Dec. 4

Term II (3 units) Jan. 6 - Apr. 7

Terms A&B (6 units) Sept. 3 - Apr. 7

Last day of Drop and Add: Term I: Wed. Sept. 11; Term II: Tues. Jan. 14

No Classes on: Good Friday, Apr. 10

Mid-term recess: Term 1 Mon. Oct. 14 – Sun. Oct. 20; Term 2: Mon. Feb. 17 - Sun. Feb. 23

Examination period: Term 1: Dec. 6 - Dec. 19; Term 2: Apr. 13 – Apr. 28

Deferred Exam period: Term 1: Feb. 18 – Feb. 21; Term 2: June 22 – June 25

### EXAMINATION BAN

Please be aware of the examination ban when you are setting deadlines for tests and exams. No exam or test can be given the last week prior to the formal examination period. In the fall: Thurs. Nov.28 – Thurs. Dec. 5; in the spring: Thurs., Apr. 2 - Sat., Apr. 11.

This year the deadlines for dropping a class are: Term 1 - Fri. Nov. 8, and Term 2 - Fri. Mar.13.