

## SOCIOLOGY 4E03 – SELF AND IDENTITY

Fall, 2018  
Wednesdays 7:00-10:00pm  
Class Location TSH-122

Instructor: Dr. P. G. Watson  
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Office Hours: Mon. 12:00-1:30, Thurs 5:00-6:00  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course examines in close detail the accomplishment of personal identity as a social phenomenon from a broadly Sociological Social Psychology perspective. This will include interrogating the sociological traditions of American Pragmatism, Chicago School Social Psychology (symbolic interactionism), Social Constructivism, Dramaturgical Method and Ethnomethodology. The course will be divided in two parts – theory and practice – with the second half of the course devoted to examinations of substantive areas of self and identity including Race, Gender, Age, Nationality, Work, Deviance and Digital Identity.

**OUTLINE:** The course will follow a classical seminar format. We will begin with two introductory, instructor led seminars with open discussion, followed by student led seminars. In week one, students will be divided into groups of two or three members. Each group will be assigned a seminar week and members will give a presentation on that weeks' key and supplemental readings. A second group will be tasked each week with preparing a response, followed by an open discussion amongst class members. **Attendance to all seminars is mandatory.** Senior level seminar courses rely on a high degree of interaction between the instructor and students, and failure to attend classes will result in sanctions including grade reductions. In the event of illness, accident or personal emergency, students must inform the instructor in advance (i.e. via email or telephone) and make appropriate arrangements to maintain the learning environment.

**\*\*NOTE – READING LIST IS PROVISIONAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE\*\***

### **WEEK 1: The Issue of Understanding Action and Rationality** September 5<sup>th</sup>

Weber, M. (1952). Bureaucracy. In H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds) *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul. Pp. 196-240.

Parsons, T. (1947). Weber's Methodology for Social Science. In Talcott Parsons (ed.) *Max Weber: The Theory of Social and Economic Thought*. New York, NY: The Free Press. Pp. 8-29.

Levin, N. D. (1981). Rationality and Freedom: Weber and Beyond. *Sociological Inquiry*. 51(1): pp. 5-25.

Kalberg, S. (1980). Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Process in History. *The American Journal of Sociology*. 85(5): 1145-1179.

Parsons, T. (1937). *The Structure of Social Action*. New York, NY: The Free Press: "The Unit Act of Action Systems", pp. 43-48.

## **WEEK 2: American Pragmatism**

September 12<sup>th</sup>

Olafson, J. (2009). Dewey and Radical Action: Thoughts on Dewey's Political Philosophy. In Sami Pihlström and Henrik Rydenfeld (eds). *Pragmatists Perspectives*. Acta Philosophica Fennica vol. 86. Helsinki: Societas Philosophica Fennica, 2009, p. 211-222.

Dewey, J. (2012). Search for the Public. In Melvin L. Rogers (ed.). *The Public and It's Problems: an essay in Political Inquiry*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press. Pp. 41-60.

Pierce, C. S. (1905). What is Pragmatism? *The Monist*. Vol. 15(2): 161-181.

Pierce, C. S. (1905). Issues for Pragmatism. *The Monist*. Vol. 15(4): 481-499.

## **WEEK 3: The Chicago School (1)**

September 19<sup>th</sup>

Cooley, C. H. (1998). The Looking-Glass Self: The Social Self—the Meaning of “I”. in Hans-Joachim Schubert (ed.). *Charles Horton Cooley: On Self and Social Organization*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 155-178.

Mead, G. H. (1934). Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviourist. *Collected Works*. Vol. 1.

Stebbins, R. A. (1969). Studying the Definition of the Situation: Theory and Field Research Strategies. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*. Vol. 6(4): 193-211

## **Week 4: The Chicago School (2)**

September 26<sup>th</sup>

Blummer, H. (1969). *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press. Chpt. 3. “Society and Symbolic Interaction”. Pp. 78-89.

Becker, H. S. and Geer, B. (1957). Participant Observation and Interviewing: A Comparison. *Human Organization*. Vol. 16(3): pp. 28-32.

## **Week 5: Dramaturgy and Phenomenology**

October 3<sup>rd</sup>

Goffman, E. (1956). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh, UK: University of Edinburgh Press. Chpt. 1: “Performances”. Pp. 10-46.

Goffman, E. (1959). The Moral Career of the Mental Patient. *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*. Vol. 22(May): pp. 123-142.

Schutz, A. (1944). The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology. *American Journal of Sociology*.

Vol. 49(6): 499-507.

Schutz, A. (1945). The Homecomer. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 50(5): 369-376.

## READING WEEK – NO CLASS OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup>

### Week 6: Social Constructivism and the Self

October 17<sup>th</sup>

Bowker, G. C. and Starr, S. L. (1999). *Sorting Things Out: Classification and its Consequences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Chpt. 2. “The Kindness of Strangers: Kinds and Politics in Classification Systems”

Hacking, I. (1999). *The Social Construction of What?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chpt. 2. “Too Many Metaphors” pp. 36-62.

Coulter, J. (2001). Ian Hacking on Social Constructivism. *Science, Technology & Human Values*. Vol. 26(1): pp. 82-86.

### Week 7: Ethnomethodology

October 24<sup>th</sup>

Sacks, H. (1974). On the Analysability of Children’s Stories. In Roy Turner (ed.) *Ethnomethodology*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Education.

Garfinkel, H. (1964). Studies in the Routine Grounds of Everday Activities. *Social Problems*. Vol. 11(3): pp. 225-250.

Garfinkel, H. and Sacks, H. (1970). On Formal Structures of Practical Action. In McKinnney and Tiryakian (eds) *Theoretical Sociology*. New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Sharrock, W. W. (1989). Ethnomethodology. *British Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 40(4): 657-677.

### Week 8: Gender

November 31<sup>st</sup>

hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*. South End Press.

Carastathis, A. (2014). The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory. *Philosophy Compass*. Vol. 9(5): 315-324.

West, C. and Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing Gender. *Gender and Society*. Vol. 1(2): pp.125-151.

### Week 9: Deviance

November 7<sup>th</sup>

Becker, H. (1953). Becoming a Marihuana User. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 59(3): pp. 235-242

Sacks, H. (1979). Hotrodder: A Revolutionary Category. In Psathas, G. (ed.) *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology*. New York, NY: Irvington Publishers.

Chambliss, W. (1973). The Saints and the Roughnecks. *Society*. Vol. 11(1): pp. 24-31.

Becker, H. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York, NY: The Free Press. Chpt. 10: "Labelling Theory Reconsidered. Pp. 177-212.

### **Week 10: Race**

November 14<sup>th</sup>

Kerrison, E. M., Cobbina, J. & Bender, K. (2018). "Your Pants Won't Save you": Why Black Youth Challenge Race-Based Police Surveillance and the Demands of Black Respectability Politics. *Race and Justice*. 8(1): 7-26.

Raudenbush, D. T. (2012). Race and Interaction on Public Transportation: Social Cohesion and the Production of Common Norms and a Collective Black Identity. *Symbolic Interaction*. 35(4): 456-473.

Duck, W. (2015). *No Way Out: Precarious Living in the Shadow of Poverty and Drug Dealing*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press – Chpt. 6: Collective Punishment: Black Men's Reflections on Everyday Life in Bristol Hill.

Aptekar, S. (2017). Looking Forward, Looking Back: Collective Memory and Neighbourhood Identity in Two Urban Parks. *Symbolic Interaction*. doi:10.1002/symb.271

### **Week 11: Digital Identity**

November 22<sup>nd</sup>

Turkel, S. (1984). *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster. Chpt. 8: "Thinking of Yourself as a Machine". Pp. 271-305.

boyd, d. (2012). Networked Privacy. *Surveillance & Society*. 10(3/4): 348-350.

Gottschalk, S. (2010). The Presentation of Avatars in Second Life: Self and Interaction in Virtual Spaces. *Symbolic Interaction*. Vol. 33(4): 501-525

Bullingham, L. and Vasconcelos, A. C. (2013). The Presentation of Self in the Online World: Goffman and the Study of Online Identities. *Journal of Information Science*. 39(1): 101-112.

### **Week 12: Administration and catch-up**

November 29<sup>th</sup>

### **Week 13: Conclusion**

December 5<sup>th</sup>

**TEXTS:** All readings will be available on the course Avenue to Learn page in PDF format. Readings will be divided into ‘key’ readings and ‘supplemental’ readings. All students must attend seminars having prepared (i.e. read and taken notes on) the key reading.

**METHOD OF EVALUATION:**

Seminar Presentation	-	25%
Seminar Response	-	15%
Seminar Participation	-	10%
Term Paper Proposal	-	10% (Due October 19 <sup>th</sup> )
Term Paper Final	-	40% (Due December 7 <sup>th</sup> )

**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. (e.g. following style guide, accrediting work to incorrect sources, omitting sources, etc.)
2. Improper collaboration in group work. (e.g. term paper assignment not being sufficiently unique)
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically via Avenue to Learn; it will be checked for academic dishonesty.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, [University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#)).

1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge: we will develop advanced analytical and theoretical understanding of concepts crucially important to sociology and social psychology
2. Knowledge of Methodologies: particularly in relation to observational or field-work based sociological research
3. Communications Skills: synthesizing and presenting detailed summations of sociological literature in both verbal and written formats, as well as responding to verbal reports.
4. Autonomy and Professional Capacity: particularly in the interest of developing future professional sociological researchers, working effectively with others, managing one's own learning, etc...

## **DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

Do NOT fax 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

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, the white board 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, class cancellations, TA job postings, 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.

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.

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.

