

SOCIOLOGY 1000

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Grande Prairie Regional College
(Fall 2000 - Section C3)

Instructor: Alan Segal

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Office hours: Monday - Thursday: 15 - 15.50 Or By Appointment

Course Prerequisite: None

Texts:

Sociology, 3rd Canadian Edition - John Macionis & Linda Gerber

Assignment:

One Essay

- Due date is the last class of March
- **There is a lateness penalty of 1 stanine per day. A 1-stanine penalty per day will be applied, including weekends. If you do hand it in late, or on the due date, but at a time when I am not likely to be on campus, have another faculty member or regular employee of the college sign and date it. Initials are not acceptable and signatures must be legible.**
- Essays are marked on a 9-point stanine scale
- You may choose whatever topic that interests you that is relevant to sociology
- Critically analyze the topic, using your own and others' ideas. You must utilize some formal sociological theory or ideas. Do not write a descriptive report; think about the ideas you express. Try to explain why these ideas persuade you
- Research beyond the textbooks is required. While your own thinking is the most important requirement, research is valuable and therefore obligatory. The research can be from various sources, but other survey texts are not in themselves

sufficient.

- Three sources are required. One must be an academic book, one must be a reference from an article in an academic journal or academic anthology, and one will be informal, such as something from a newspaper, magazine, or a website. You can use more than three, and more than the minimums in each category. However, failure to use these minimums will result in a lower grade.
- The purpose of the research is to enable you to write an analytical paper. You may use first person words like 'I', but the paper is not a large opinion piece. It is intended to be analytical, based on thought and ideas, not quickly-generated opinions.
- The expected standard is 1200 words. Your mark will be reduced by a half-stantine for inadequate length. This applies only to papers that are too brief.
- All work must clearly stipulate your name, ID number, and course and section numbers. You may hand hard copies of all assignments, or email them to me. Disks are not acceptable.
- References must appear in the main text of your assignment, and in a **Works Cited** section at the end of the paper. Both are required. If either is omitted, your assignment will be reduced by one stantine per section. All documentation [referencing] must be consistent with MLA style. Remember that not all disciplines accept the same approach to writing up reference.
- You must reference more than quotations. Other authors' interpretations, analyses, perceptions, or ideas, deserve credit in your papers. Mentioning them does not disqualify your view of their analyses.
- If you hand in the assignment before the due date, I will comment fully on your essay, and you will have the option of rewriting the paper. Otherwise, I will provide a general comment at the end of your papers.
- Grammar is important to communicating precise meaning. Grammar will not be valued as highly as content, but it will be evaluated.

Three Journals

- Each journal is due the first class of each month, beginning in February
- Each journal is worth a maximum of 1.5 stantines. **However, all journals will be graded on a standard of 1.**
- Journals must be at least one page if typed, and two pages if written out. They must be double-spaced and specify the course and section numbers.
- If you email me your assignment, you don't have to double-space it. Anything pertaining to sociology, class discussions or lectures, class interaction, or course observations and suggestions, is a suitable topic. No research is necessary or expected. The purpose is to allow informal communication with the instructor.

Four Quizzes

- Chapters 1-5, Chapters 17-19 - January 31
- Chapters 15, 16, 7, 8, 12, 13 - February 21
- Chapters 22, 23, 6, 9-11 - March 21
- Chapters 21, 14, 20 - April 4
- Each quiz will be given a percent and then converted to a stanine from 1-9. At the end of the term, all quiz grades will be averaged into a single stanine mark out of 9. This will be added to the total of your other marks.

Discussion Bonus

- Everyone may (but not necessarily will) receive a bonus mark for the QUALITY of your class discussion, based on a combination of the frequency and quality of the participation. You will be eligible only if you display commitment to the course by reading and completing the required assignments. The bonus mark will have a range of 1-3. If you receive a bonus mark, it will added to your overall grade total prior to its conversion to a percentage.

Tabulation of marks

The total of all stanine marks available for assignments is 23.5. Your marks will be totaled out of 23.5, a percentage will be obtained, and the percentage will be reconverted to a final stanine grade according to the following table

Stanine Grade	Percentage Equivalent
9	90 - 100
8	80 - 89
7	72 - 79
6	65 - 71
5	57 - 64
4	50 - 56
3	45 - 49
2	26 - 44
1	0 - 25

NOTE: No class averaging will be done

DISCUSSION SEQUENCE

As you consider the questions below for class discussion, keep in mind that quick judgments, or a quick expression of agreement or disagreement, is not what I expect of you. Think comprehensively and insightfully about these questions. All classes will begin with an overview discussion of the reading, and move on to consideration of specific issues.

1. Introduction to course
2. Chapters 1 & 2, Cyber scope, p. 54-57
 - What is a sociological perspective? What general questions are central to this perspective?
 - What is a paradigm? What paradigms are introduced in these readings? (Don't forget to include feminist perspectives in this.). Which of the theories mentioned, if any, are you drawn to as a good basis for explaining human experience?
 - What do we mean by truth, knowledge, and being knowledgeable?
 - What is the difference between a macro and a micro perspective?
 - Prepare to explain the principles of Max Weber's ideas.
 - What is the difference between primary and secondary analysis?
3. Chapters 3 & 4
 - What is culture? What do we think of when we refer to subcultures? What do we think we mean by multiculturalism? Of what sociological value are sections on countercultures, cultural change, cultural relativity, global culture?
 - Prepare explanations of cultural materialism and sociobiology.
 - What is society?
 - Explain the relationship of culture, nation, state, and society.
 - From your own experience, identify a couple of powerful norms and mores that have influenced your life.
 - What do sociologists mean by rationality? Why did Weber and Marx link rationality to alienation? What is alienation?
 - What are class consciousness and class conflict?

- What is sociologically important about post-materialism?
- Compare the ideas of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim.
- Why inquire about language in a survey book on sociology?
- What are mores and folkways?
- Is anomie an inescapable outgrowth of modernity?
- Is there such a thing as authentic culture, and is virtual culture a less authentic form of it? How can we evaluate 'authenticity' to begin with? Are there universal standards that can help us in this? What are some of those mentioned by people who do believe in universal standards?
- What holds society together? How do you assess the quote attributed to Durkheim on page 103, second column?

4. Chapter 5

- What is socialization? In what ways do we socialize?
- Why mention social experience specifically? Isn't all experience the same?
- What do we mean by the self? Evaluate the sociological perspectives of selfhood as they are discussed in the book. Be ready to explain your analysis of them.
- When we socialize people, are we dealing with selfhood? When we speak of identity and selfhood, are we referring to the same 'thing'?
- Does the concept of agents of socialization enable us to understand society better? What 'agent-examples' can you think of?
- Discuss the quote on nature versus nurture, at the top of page 112, second column.
- The authors suggest that identity confusion is possible. What is meant by this?

5. Chapters 17-19

- What is a social institution?
- In what ways are marriage, religion, and education, examples of social institutions?
- What is a family? Do you agree with how it is described in chapter 17? There are many varieties of groupings that people refer to as families. Do you consider this a reasonable analysis of human cohabitation? Do you see your family in the

- depictions offered in the chapter on the family?
- Speculate about whether romantic marriage is a more or less reliable basis for an enduring marriage, than is arranged marriage. Is the statement on social-exchange analysis [page 437] consistent with your own experience?
- Assess the logic and reasoning of the list of reasons why people divorce.
- What do the authors have in mind when they mention "patterns of descent"?
- What is the hidden curriculum in education? Do you think it exists only in formal schooling experience?
- What are your thoughts on the opening section of chapter 18?
- Do you see any merit in Marx's statement on religion, presented at the bottom of page 460? Ask yourself the same question about Daly's comment at the end of the 'Religion and Patriarchy...' section.
- Before reading these chapters, did you think religion had a sociological function? If so, how does it compare to the authors' statements?
- Explain the types of religious organizations addressed in chapter 18.
- Do you agree with the description of fundamentalism found on page 474?
- Why distinguish between schooling and educating?
- What functions of schooling do the authors consider important?
- Why is academic streaming sociologically interesting?
- Can you foresee a day when all schooling will be accomplished through cyber connections?

6. Chapter 15

- What social products are contained in the general reference to economy?
- What are capitalism and socialism? Within each there are categories and degrees of difference. Explain them.
- What is regional disparity? What are: monopoly, conglomerate, oligopoly?
- What is post-industrialism?
- What is a corporation? Why should sociologists study them?

7 Chapter 16

- Explain power, authoritarianism, and authority. What kinds of authority are mentioned in your text?
- How would you apply the concepts of power and authority to the social institutions we have discussed previously?
- Is our society more inclined toward one type of authority than another?
- What is a scapegoat? Does our society create scapegoats?
- In what ways are the following models of power: pluralist, power-elite, Marxist, revolution?

8 Chapters 7 & 8, and Cyber.scope [pages 216-217]

- What is a social group? What is a crowd? What are the subcategories of each?
- What is conformity?
- What are the characteristics of bureaucracy? What is an oligarchy?
- How do the authors explain deviance and labeling theory? How do deviance and gender overlap?
- Compare Durkheim's and Merton's ideas on deviance.
- Are references to primary and secondary deviance helpful to our understanding of people?
- Why include a section on 'deviance and power' in this chapter?
- Have you ever been deviant? Was this your self-appraisal or something others saw in you?
- Of what sociological value is a discussion of types of organization? Which types are cited by Gerber and Macdonis?

9 Chapter 12, & Cyber.scope [page 370-1]

- Do you see psychological and physical parallels in our society, to what is described in the opening section of this chapter?
- How do the authors explain patriarchy and gender?
- What do they mean by patriarchy and sexism?
- What is gender stratification?
- What are the classifications of feminist thought described in this chapter?
- Kinsey's study of sexual same-sex sexual behaviour gave some

prominence to orgasms. Was this a reasonable basis for analysis? Can you think of other factors you would consider using if you were a researcher studying the same work?

- Would you investigate masculinity similarly to how it is discussed in the bottom paragraphs on page 300.
- Have you seen or personally experienced gender differences in sports?

10. Chapter 13

- What is race?
- What is ethnicity?
- Why are these politically volatile concepts?
- What are stereotypes?
- What are assimilation, and its relationship to minorities? What is pluralism?
- What sociological explanations do the authors provide for 'minority, ethnicity, and racism'?
- What is cultural theory?
- What is meant by social standing?

11. Chapters 22 & 23

- What is social change?
- Distinguish between collective behaviour and social movements.
- What is mass behaviour?
- What theories do the authors mention when they discuss social movements? Are they logically justifiable? Are all widespread movements social movements?
- Ask the same questions about crowd behaviour and social change.
- What are modernity, modernization, and postmodernity?

12. Chapter 6

- What is the difference between ascribed and achieved status?
- What is a master status?

- What are role, role conflict, and role strain?
- Does the Thomas Theorem apply to virtual reality? What did Goffman mean by the presentation of self? Can you offer examples from your own experience that support or challenge his analysis?

13. Chapters 9-11

- What is social stratification?
- What is caste?
- What is a class system? How does it connect to social stratification?
- What is social mobility and what affects it?
- What is meritocracy?
- What do sociologists mean by social inequality, and what contributes to or reduces it? What theories explain inequality?
- What do sociologists mean by status consistency?
- What is ideology?
- What is dependency theory?

14. Chapter 21

- What are demography, sex ratios, and demographic transition theory?
- What political conditions have pushed urbanization in this country? What sociological theories are presented to explain urbanization?
- Why did Durkheim write of mechanical and organic solidarity?
- What is meant by "urban political economy?"

14. Chapters 14 & 20

- Given all that we have discussed in the course so far, explain why sociologists should look at aging.
- What is gerontocracy?
- What is an eating disorder?
- Explain health.
- What concepts of medicine compete for our allegiance?

- Why talk about a medical establishment?
- Do you think about aging? If so, what are your perceptions, hopes or fears about growing old?
- Have you now or have ever had a close tie with an elderly person? If so, has this influenced your perceptions of that period of our lives?
- Do you think you will understand differently what health is when you are old, compared to what you think it is today?
- Do you agree with the "Health and Society" list on page 506?
- Do you think masculinity is a threat to health, as is stated on page 510?