

**Sociology 4461- 001
Critical Thinking in Sociology
Spring 2006**

**Instructor: Dr. Mike Haffey
Class time: T - R, 2 - 3:15 pm
Class location: Ketchum 235**

**Office hours: Thurs. 12 - 2 pm
Office location Ketchum 11A
Office Phone: 303-492-8838**

Welcome to what I think will be a relevant and most intriguing sociology course. As a senior level, "capstone" course we are charged with the task of honing our critical reasoning skills as social analysts to critically examine a sociological topic in-depth. It is this informed, intelligent evaluation of a topic - and resultant quality of mind - that distinguishes sociology students from all others and puts you in a unique position to act intelligibly and purposefully upon your social world.

We will spend the first segment of this course honing both our sociological and critical reasoning skills. We will begin by critically reflecting on some of our discipline's most central philosophical and methodological issues involved in the study of human beings. Through a series of brief and provocative essays, Earl Babbie draws our attention to the structuring of inquiry, modes of observation, analysis of data, and the social context of research. Just what is social reality? How should we go about studying it? What is the relationship between social structure and human agency? These are significant matters for the working social scientist.

We will also explore what's actually involved in the process of critical thinking by which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them. Such thought is cultivated through practice - when and why to ask a series of critical questions. We will be reading Browne and Keeley's guide to critical thinking and practicing these basic reasoning skills. We will elucidate the criteria for evaluating lines of reasoning and developing strong and effective arguments - issue definition, assumptions, values, evidence, cause and effect relationships, solutions and implications.

We will then spend the second half of the semester employing these newly refined skills in critically analyzing key globalization processes. Taking on this most grand of sociological concerns will challenge our critical thinking skills and enable each of us to bring our sociological insights about political economy and imperialism, stratification and inequality, gender and race relations, ideology, militarism and matters sustainability to bear in clarifying these complex global processes. Our text presents us with eighty-two articles written by today's leading scholars, activists and policy-makers from around the world. Each article will serve as a basis for critical examination.

Globalization is the most intense and hotly contested social issue before us today, having the broadest impact on both the social and natural worlds. Virtually every nation state and the lives of billions of people throughout the world are being transformed by globalization - you and I included. The prevailing wisdom continues to hold that globally managed economic growth offers the answer to poverty, environmental security and a strong social fabric, and is an inevitable / natural evolution of economic / social relations. The structure and ideology of the existing Bretton Woods system is geared to an ever-continuing expansion of economic output / economic growth and to the integration of national economies into a seamless global economy.

It is my hope that through a series of shared readings, informed discussion and research findings we will develop a working knowledge of such key global concerns as: the Bretton Woods institutions (WB, IMF, WTO), free-trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT, FTA), neoliberalism, market liberalization, structural adjustment programs, free-trade zones, global sourcing patterns, the debt regime, biopiracy, export agriculture, imperialism, civil society, and resistance movements. Globalization - and its many discontents - is, without a doubt, the biggest sociopolitical gig going. Together, we can hone our critical thinking skills and develop meaningful expertise in this area.

The three required texts for this course are available exclusively at Left Hand Books. 1200 Pearl St. (lower level); 303.443.8252; Cash or check only. No credit cards. Since these books will serve as the basis for our classroom discussions, it is vital that you possess them, make a strong commitment to reading them, and bring them to class with you.

Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking by Browne and Keeley
Observing Ourselves: Essays in Social Research by E. Babbie
Beyond Borders: Thinking Critically About Global Issues ed. by P. Rothenberg

Grading: This class will be organized in seminar fashion, involving regular reading assignments, discussion / debate, and student presentation of material. You will each share in the facilitation of class discussions. I expect you to read the appropriate material for each class meeting and come ready to talk, share, apply, refine, and challenge the topic at hand. It is my hope that we can discuss these matters in a relaxed and comfortable manner. I favor frequent and informed participation. I strongly encourage you to make every effort to become a regular member of this class. Please bring your book(s) to each class meeting. Your grade for this course will be determined as follows:
25% Participation 50% five writing assignments 25% Final Writing Assignment

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide me notification from Disability Services and discuss specific needs with me, preferably during the first two weeks of class. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard Hall, room 322.)

Classroom Behavior Policy: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities.

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**Sociology 3001 - 001
Classical Social Theory
Fall 2006**

**Instructor: Dr. Mike Haffey
Office Hours: Thurs. 12-2pm
Office Location: 11A Ketchum Hall
Office phone #: 303.492.8838**

**Teaching Assistant: Rachel Bandy
Office Hours: Tues. 12:30-2:30pm
Office Location: 35 Ketchum Hall
Office phone #: 303.492.8637**

I consider this course one of the most important you will take during your sociology undergraduate career. Sociological theory serves as the ideational foundation for all sociological investigation: past, present, future, and across all areas of substantive interest. As sociologists, theories provide us the necessary interpretive schemas by which to make sense of the empirical world.

Social theory encourages us to look beyond individual psychology and unique events to the predictable, broad patterns and regular occurrences of social life that influence individual destinies. It frames our understanding and conceptualization of human nature, human behavior, and human organization. Social theory enables us to see. It is an unusual form of vision.

What is society? What are its constituent parts and how are they related? How is the individual and society linked? How do societies retain their unity and continuity while undergoing change? What is the cause of social change? Why and how do vast social, political, and economic inequalities endure?

What is so exciting about these types of questions is that they are the very ones we need to grasp and interpret the complex and dynamic features of modern social life. Looking across the social landscape today - globalization, computerization, spectacle, consumerism and matters of sustainability - it seems most appropriate to pursue our discipline's most fundamental concerns. Classical social theory and the broad range of contemporary social thought it has given rise to has sought to explain social events, patterns, conditions and interactions of all types, and in so doing, provided fundamental insights into matters of social order and social change.

To the casual observer, theorizing may appear quite divorced from the business of gathering facts about the social world. For the working sociologist, it is theory that tells us what is relevant and problematic about groups of facts. It tells us why certain facts are seen as significant, why certain questions are asked, and why certain solutions are accepted.

We will explore the ideas of our discipline's early theorists, including Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Georg Simmel, W.E.B. DuBois, George Herbert Mead and Talcott Parsons - a century of grand sociological thought that still resonates with and offers insight into contemporary society.

The textbook I have chosen for this course was written and designed to facilitate your understanding of a broad range of classical social thought. I think you will find it quite engaging. The author of this text has worked hard to make a number of complex issues as understandable as possible. You must do a little work as well. You will be expected to have read and assimilated the required readings each week. The reading assignments should be done before the topic is discussed in class. Also, please make it a practice to bring your books to class with you.

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**Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory: Seeing the Social World
by Kenneth Allen**

*There will also be several brief articles on e-reserve at Norlin Library.

Exams and Grading:

There will be five (5) exams for this course (Feb. 9, March 2, March 23, April 27, and a cumulative final exam administered during finals week). Each exam will account for 20% of your final grade. Each of these exams will require a familiarity with key concepts and theories, and the capacity to display some of the higher levels of thinking: synthesis, analysis, criticism, and creative application. In determining final grades I do use the "+, -" system." If you are going to miss an exam, it is vital that you notify me prior to the exam.

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Sociology 3001 - 002
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SYLLABUS SOCIOLOGY 4071 [Section 002]

<u>Course Title:</u>	<i>Social Stratification</i>
<u>Time:</u>	Tuesday and Thursday 8:00am - 9:15am
<u>Place:</u>	Hellems 211
<u>Instructor:</u>	<i>Tom Mayer</i>
<u>Instructor's Office:</u>	Institute of Behavioral Science Building 2 1546 Broadway 303-492-2138 Thomas.Mayer@colorado.edu
<u>Office Hours:</u>	Wednesday 2:00 - 4:00 PM or by appointment

Course Description

The analysis of social stratification is often considered the heart of sociology. Every known human society has a system of social stratification. This course examines the structure and dynamics of social inequality with particular attention to the United States. It focuses on three forms of inequality: economic inequality, power inequality, and status inequality. The course begins with a broad survey of economic inequality in America and how this has changed over the last several decades. It then considers the experience of people who work and are still poor, followed by a review of the principal theoretical perspectives on social inequality. The heart of this class is the fourth section, which considers class inequality in the United States. Here we consider both the nature of the main American social classes and the way in which they change over time. This is followed by discussions of inequality based upon gender and race. These discussions focus upon the relationship between gender and race inequality on the one hand and class inequality on the other. The final section considers the future of social inequality. Although the lectures and readings will focus on stratification in the contemporary United States, frequent comparisons will be made with systems of social inequality at other times and other places.

Social stratification is a huge topic, and any single course can only hope to address a small part. Issues of social inequality arise in virtually every sociology class. This course will have a mixture of lectures, class discussions, and student presentations. Student presentations are voluntary, but will not require reading beyond the regular assignments..

Course Requirements

Students in Sociology 4035 are asked to write two short essays on social stratification. There will also be two midterm examinations and a final exam. Grades will be based upon the (a) the two midterm examinations, (b) the final examination, (c) the two essays, and (d) class attendance (which will be taken regularly). By participating regularly in class discussion and by making a voluntary class presentation, students can improve their grade by a small amount. The course requirements have the following (approximate) weights:

Attendance	20%
First midterm exam	15%
Second midterm exam	15%
First essay	15%
Second essay	15%
Final exam	20%

Each of the two essays must be five pages (typewritten and double spaced) or less. The first essay (due on Thursday, February 16) is review and evaluation of either Collins and Yeskel, *Economic Apartheid in America* or Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed* (see

descriptions of these books below) . The second essay (due on Thursday, April 20) involves the formulation and discussion of a testable hypothesis about social stratification.

Critical Dates

February 16	First essay due
March 2	First midterm examination
April 6	Second midterm examination
April 20	Second essay due
May 10 (Wed.)	Final examination (10:30am - 1:00pm)

Required Books

Chuck Collins and Felice Yeskel: *Economic Apartheid in America: A Primer on Economic Inequality and Insecurity*. Revised and Updated Edition. (New York: The New Press, 2005). 254 pages.

An expose of the growing economic gap between winners and losers in the emerging global economy. This book is written with passion and a definite point of view. It reflects the work of scholars associated with the organization *United for a Fair Economy* and contains numerous easily understood charts and cartoons.

Barbara Ehrenreich: *Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America*. (New York: Henry Holt, 2001). 230 pages.

A well known writer tries to survive on low paying jobs as a waitress, house cleaner, nursing home worker, and Wal Mart salesperson. Her experiences at work, efforts to find housing, and the relationships she forms shed new light on the lives of the working poor in the United States. This book has already become a classic of social criticism and popular ethnography.

Harold R. Kerbo: *Social Stratification and Inequality: Class Conflict in Historical, Comparative, and Global Perspective*. Sixth Edition. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006). 690 pages.

A clear and reasonably complete text on social stratification written from a class conflict perspective. The author is an important scholar of social stratification. The original version of this book appeared in 1983. While maintaining the basic organization, it has become deeper and more comprehensive with each subsequent edition. Wherever possible, the various charts and tables have been updated while new research has been added.

Thomas M. Shapiro (ed.): *Great Divides: Readings in Social Inequality in the United States*. Third Edition. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005). 448 pages.

An astute collection of classical and contemporary writings on the sociology of inequality. The selections avoid technical material, but they do include many important recent papers on social stratification. The readings are partitioned into five parts: Opportunity and Inequality in the United States, How Social Stratification is Generated, Class, Race and Ethnicity, Gender, and Education and the Environment.

Class Schedule

A. Economic Inequality in the United States (January 17-29)

1. *Growth of Economic Inequality* (January 17 and 19)

Required reading:

Collins and Yeskel 1-64

2. *Causes of Economic Inequality* (January 24 and 26)

Required reading:

Collins and Yeskel 65-125

B. The Experience of Working Poverty (January 30 - February 12)

3. *What Is a Job Worth?* (January 31 and February 2)
Required reading:
Ehrenreich 1-119
4. *Low Wages and Big Corporations* (February 7 and 9)
Required reading:
Ehrenreich 121-230

C. Theories of Social Inequality (February 13-26)

5. *Conflict Theories of Inequality* (February 14 and 16)
Required reading:
Kerbo 80-103, 125-135
Shapiro 36-43, 57-70, 96-112

First Essay Due on February 16

6. *Functionalist Theories of Inequality* (February 21 and 23)
Required reading:
Kerbo 103-108, 114-126
Shapiro 76-94

D. Class Inequality (February 27 - March 24)

7. *The Upper and Corporate Classes* (February 28 and March 2)
Required reading:
Kerbo 143-203
Shapiro 139-164

First Midterm Examination March 2

8. *The Middle and Working Classes* (March 7 and 9)
Required reading:
Kerbo 204-236
Shapiro 165-185
9. *Social Mobility and Geographic Migration* (March 14 and 16)
Required reading:
Kerbo 367-410
Shapiro 22-26, 71-76, 121-131, 380-391
10. *The Impact of Globalization* (March 21 and 23)
Required reading:
Kerbo 441-468
Shapiro 16-19, 112-120, 132-138

E. Race Inequality (April 3 - 16)

11. *Race, Employment, and Wealth* (April 4 and 6)
Required reading:
Kerbo 325-349
Shapiro 193-199, 224-234, 251-263

Second Midterm Examination April 6

12. *Race, Education, and Residence*
Required reading:
Kerbo 349-366
Shapiro 235-250, 392-417

F. Gender Inequality (April 17 - 30)

13. *The Origins of Gender Inequality* (April 18 and 20)
Required reading:
Kerbo 288-306
Shapiro 292-307, 315-332

Second Essay Due April 20

14. *Gender and Work* (April 25 and 27)
Required reading:
Kerbo 306-324
Shapiro 53-56, 345-353, 366-377

G. Conclusion (May 1 - 5)

15. *The Future of Social Inequality* (May 2 and 4)
Required reading:
Kerbo 547-590

Final Examination Wednesday May 10, 10-30am - 1:00pm