CLASSICAL SOCIAL THEORY
SOSC6030J

Fall 2019
Thursdays 9:00-11:50
CYTG001

Instructor: Joel Andreas
jandreas@jhu.edu
Office hours: Wednesdays 11:00-1:00
Office: Room 3387

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

Course description

This course will focus on three classical theorists whose ideas have fundamentally influenced the ways we study and understand society: Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. In the section on Marx, we will also read contributions by his close collaborator, Frederick Engels.

Requirements

1. Write short memos (about two single-spaced pages) on the weekly readings; nine reading memos will be required. Memos should concisely summarize the main arguments of each reading and then comment on the group of readings. First note the strong points of a reading before critiquing the readings. If there are more than three readings, you may focus on the three most significant or compelling works. You must turn in your memos at the end of each week’s class.

2. Formulate a discussion question in response to the weekly readings and post it on the Canvas course website before 9pm on the evening before class.

3. Write a final essay (about six single-spaced pages) applying theoretical approaches we have studied to an empirical topic of their choice. In the essay you should develop an analytical strategy informed by ideas of at least one of the theorists we have studied, developing a theoretical framework and posing a research question and possible hypotheses derived from this framework. You should refer to the theories and findings of scholars who have investigated similar empirical problems and then distinguish their own analytical strategy from the others. This is not a research paper; it is an opportunity to discuss in a nuanced way the ideas of different theorists and explore how they might be used to analyze a particular practical problem. This assignment is designed to help students think about possible theoretical frameworks for their own research.

Final grades will be based on your memos (45%) and final essay (55%). In borderline cases, consideration will be given to participation in class and in posting discussion questions.
Readings

Most of the readings are in the following books:


Readings marked with an * in the reading list below will be made available to students by the instructor.

Reading List and Schedule

*Week 1: September 5*
Introduction (no memo)
Royce, pp 1-17

*Week 2: September 12*
Marx and Engels: Family, community, class and changing modes of production (98)
Royce, pp. 21-31 and 168-177
Marx and Engels, “The German Ideology” in Tucker, pp 148-163, and 176-200 [include a few pages?]
Marx, “Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,” in Tucker, pp 3-6
Marx, “The So-Called Primitive Accumulation” (part of “Capital”) in Tucker, pp. 431-436

Recommended:
Marx, “The Grundrisse,” in Tucker, pp 221-244 and 261-276

*Week 3: September 19*
Marx and Engels: Capitalism (78)
Royce, pp 31-47 and 130-138 (26)
Marx, “Crisis Theory” in Tucker, pp 448-455 (8)

Recommended:
Marx, “Classes” in Tucker, pp 441-442

*Week 4: September 26*
Marx and Engels: Class conflict (88)
Royce, pp 48-53, 204-213 and 241-251 (21)
Marx, “Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation” (part of “Capital”) in Tucker, 436-438 (3)
Engels, “Versus the Anarchists” in Tucker, pp 728-729 (2)

Week 5: October 3
Weber: Traditional, bureaucratic, and charismatic authority (94)
[Include discussion of ideal types in lesson plan]
Royce, pp 91-96, 108-125 and 148-158 (29)
Weber, “Politics as a Vocation” in Gerth and Mills, pp 77-82 (12)
Weber on three types of authority in Gerth and Mills, bottom of p 295 to top of p 300 (6)

Recommended:
Weber, “Politics as a Vocation” in Gerth and Mills, pp 82-128

Week 6: October 10
Weber: Markets and social closure (65)
Weber on status and class situations in Gerth and Mills, bottom of p. 300-301 (2)
Weber, “India: The Brahman and the Castes” in Gerth and Mills, pp 396-415 (20)

Week 7: October 17
Weber: Capitalism (96)
Royce, pp 96-108, 260-270 (22)
*Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Norton 2009), Introduction (pp 3-13), Chapter 2 (pp 21-39), and Chapter 5 (pp 81-97) (47)
Weber, “Capitalism and Rural Society in Germany” in Gerth and Mills, pp 363-385

Recommended:

**Week 8: October 24**
Weber: Ideas, interests, religion, and war (71)  
Royce, pp 185-194 and 223-234 (21)  

**Week 9: October 31**
Durkheim: Modernity and social solidarity (74)  
Durkheim, “Two Laws of Penal Evolution” in Thompson, pp 48-52 (5)  
Durkheim, “The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life” in Thompson, pp 107-125 (19)

**Week 10: November 7**
Durkheim: The State, capital, labor, and secondary groups (76)  
Royce, pp 139-148, 214-223, and 251-260 (30)  
Durkheim, “The Evolution of Educational Thought” and “Moral Education” in Thompson, pp 157-170 (14)  
Durkheim, “Professional Ethics and Civic Morals” and “Socialism” in Thompson, pp 129-156 (28)  
Durkheim, “Review of Antonio Labriola, Essay on the Materialist Conception of History” in Thompson, pp. 18-21 (4)

**Turn in your final essay ideas on Thursday November 7 in class**
Individual meetings to discuss final essay ideas on Tuesday November 12

**Week 11: November 14**
Durkheim: Socialization and sociology (79)  
Royce, pp 57-69 and 78-84 (20)  
Durkheim, “Sociology and the Social Sciences” in Thompson, pp 11-17 (7)  
Durkheim, “Suicide” in Thompson, pp 81-105 (25)

**Week 12: November 21**
No class meeting
**Turn in your final essay outline and bibliography on Thursday November 21 by email attachment**
Individual meetings to discuss your final essay outlines on Tuesday November 26

**Week 13: November 28**
Comparing three theorists  
158-165, 194-201, 234-240, and 270-283 (37)

**FINAL ESSAY DUE ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 6**