

## SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY II

Spring Semester

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### GOALS

This course surveys the development of social theory after the Classic 19<sup>th</sup> C. statements, including major 20<sup>th</sup> C. developments in American and European theory and social theory today. Its designed to increase student understanding of social theory in the following areas:

- **Empowerment.** ability to think theoretically about social life
- **Enlightenment.** Enlightenment background and ethos
- **Critical thinking.** use of power and domination in theory
- **Content Knowledge.** 20<sup>th</sup> C. American and European theory; postmodernism; identity politics.

If you attend regularly and complete all the assignments, you should have a good introductory knowledge of 20<sup>th</sup> C. social theory and contemporary theoretical debates..

### REQUIRED READING

Michael Blain. 2005. The politics of victimage: Power and subjection in a US anti-gay campaign.

*Critical Discourse Studies* 2, no. 1, April: 31-50.

\_\_\_\_\_. 2007. "On the Genealogy of Terrorism," Chapter in Barbara Staines', *Interrogating the War on Terrorism*, (Cambridge Scholars Press).

Steven Seidman. *Contested Knowledge: Social Theory Today. Third Edition* (Maiden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

### POLICIES

- 1) **Attendance and class-participation count.** Forty percent of grade. Role is taken. Absences automatically drop grade (4 = B; 6 = C; 8 = D, 10 = F).
- 2) **Three midterms and final exam.** Sixty percent of grade.
- 3) **Deadlines.** Students must meet deadlines. No make-up exams without a verifiable medical excuse.

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

<b>DATES (for week of)</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>READINGS</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>		
Jan 17	Defining Social Theory	S. Pref., Ch. 1
Jan 24	Enlightenment Ethos <sup>1</sup>	Foucault '03
Jan 31	Classic Theory Tradition <sup>2</sup>	S. Part 1
<b>Feb 7</b>	<b>Midterm #1</b>	
<b>20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL THEORY</b>		
Feb. 14-21	American <sup>3</sup>	S. Part 2
<b>Feb. 28</b>	<b>Midterm #2</b>	
Mar 7-14	European <sup>4</sup>	S. P. 3
Mar 28	<b>Spring Vacation</b>	.
<b>Apr 4</b>	<b>Midterm #3</b>	
<b>SOCIAL THEORY TODAY</b>		
Apr 11-18	Postmodern Turn <sup>5</sup>	S. Part 4
Apr 25 – May 2	Identity Politics <sup>6</sup>	S. Part 5 Blain '05
May 4	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	S. Epilogue
<b>May. 9</b>	<b>Final Examination</b>	<b>Tuesday, 10:30-12:30</b>

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" Trans. by Catherine Porter, in *The Essential Foucault*, ed. by Paul Rabinow and Nicholas Rose (New York: The New Press, 2003 [1984]), 43-57. Enlightenment social theory needs to be reexamined in the light of Saint-Amand's (1996) *The Laws of Hostility: Politics, Violence, and the Enlightenment*.

<sup>2</sup> Seidman includes Comte, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber in his account of the Classic tradition.

<sup>3</sup> Seidman includes the Parsons' System theory, Berger & Luckmann's constructionist theory, Collins' Conflict theory, Blau's Structural theory, Mills' Power Elite, and Bellah's cultural theory. He leaves out SI and communication theory, which should be considered. To address this exclusion, a lecture on Hugh D. Duncan's social theory (reference: Hugh D. Duncan, *Communication and Social Order* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1962]).

<sup>4</sup> Siedman includes Habermas' Critical Theory, Hall's Theory of culture, and Giddens' and Bourdieu's critical sociologies.

<sup>5</sup> Under revisions and revolts, Siedman includes postmodern and identify politics. The section includes Derrida, Lyotard (self-identified postmodernist), Baudrillard, Foucault, and Bauman.

<sup>6</sup> This section covers the concept of identity and various political movements, including feminist (Smith and Butler), race (Asante, Collins, Appiah), Queer (Rich, Weeks, Fuss, Sedgwick), and colonialism and empire (Wallerstein, Fanon, Said, Hardt and Negri). Blain's (2005) *Critical Discourse Studies* article provides an additional example of identity politics.