Instructor: Professor William Walters
Office: C673 Loeb
Telephone: 520 2600 ex. 2790
Course Meets: Tues 11.30am – 14.30pm

Prerequisite(s): None

COURSE AIMS AND THEMES

'Listen. Do you want to know a secret? Do you promise not to tell. Closer. Let me whisper in your ear...' You've probably heard these lyrics a hundred times. They come, of course, from The Beatles hit of 1963. Yet for me at least they never registered as being about secrecy. That's interesting. Like secrecy itself the song was always around but I never noticed its content, never stopped to say: Oh, The Beatles sang about secrecy too.' It turns out our public and popular culture is saturated with secrecy; we can't get enough of the topic. But in the social sciences I think it's fair to say that secrecy, despite being such a central feature of politics and society, is rather neglected. When did you last see a chapter devoted to secrecy in a sociology textbook. Citizenship, inequality, crime... but rarely secrecy. This course wants to change that. Let's give secrecy its due, let's give it a whole course to itself!

The song illustrates secrecy in the way it is simultaneously present and absent, all around us but barely noticeable. In this course we will discuss this aspect of secrecy in terms of what authors call 'open secrecy' or 'public secrecy'. But the Beatles song works for me on another level too. This course will test the argument that it is fruitful to analyze secrecy on three dimensions. First, relations. These are words spoken between lovers, or maybe lover-to-be. Secrecy happens in relationships, it makes (and sometimes breaks) relationships. So we can ask of any situation what social relations is secrecy embedded in and also productive of? How does secrecy shape the life of families, communities, or even whole nations? Second, practices. A whisper. An intimacy. There is no generic secrecy. Instead, we should ask: by what practices are things concealed or revealed, what arts have individuals and groups devised in order to withhold, deceive, or manage information? How is secrecy accomplished? From cryptography to the classification of knowledge, there is a whole history to these practices of secrecy that we should consider. Third, mediations. Secrecy belongs to the world. Like the rest of the world it is made out of stuff, a fact that poses significant challenges to those who seek to make parts of the world invisible. It always entails concealing particular kinds of material using other material. The stuff and the secrecy interact. In the song the secret is mediated by sound. In fact it has a double mediation. The sound of the secret and the sound of The Beatles. This second layer of mediation is very significant for social and cultural studies. Frequently we are dealing not just or even primarily with an original secret but with the way it is represented in culture, in films, songs, books, rumours etc. So, relations, practices, mediations. These are some - by no means the only - tools we will bring to the question of the sociology of secrecy.
This course will offer students a critical survey of classical and contemporary social research on secrecy. Secrecy has certainly not been central to sociology as a discipline, but there is nevertheless a wealth of fascinating material out there which we will survey - not just in sociology but geography, politics, communications and law. The course is designed to familiarize students with theories, concepts, methods, and cases so that they can deepen their understanding of secrecy as an element in power relations in western societies. More practically, the course is designed to equip students to carry out research projects on themes, controversies and sites of interest and importance to them.

Full disclosure (how apt!): with Seantel Anaïs I’m writing a book called *The Production of Secrecy*. So I have a research as well as a teaching stake in this seminar and look forward to your thoughts and conversations.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Seminar Attendance and Participation (10%).** Students are expected to attend regularly, do the required readings, and participate in class discussions.

2. **Group presentations (10%).** Students will be arranged into groups of approximately three people at the first meeting of the class. Each group will make one presentation to the class reflecting on ALL the readings for that week. You should avoid as far as possible an author by author summary and concentrate instead on connections, contrasts and themes in the readings. You are strongly encouraged to use the format: "What we learned about secrecy this week". These presentations will be **15 minutes** long and rigorously timed! You are encouraged to use visual material and bring examples, illustrations and cases into your presentations.

3. **Essay 1 (30%)** Write an essay answering the question: ‘What is secrecy today?’ Your paper should be submitted as a Word file to my Carleton email address. Please use the filename format: 4850_Yourfamilyname_Essay1. Put the same name in the subject line of the email. Word length: **1500 words** (including footnotes). Bibliography does not count towards the word length. Deadline: **Friday 21 October at 11.59pm**.

4. **Miniconference Presentation (10%).** Students will give short presentations (**10 mins**) of their work in progress in weeks 13 and 14. You will be organized into panels of three of four presenters linked by a common theme. These presentations will build towards the final research paper. You are encouraged to use visual material in your presentation.

5. **Essay 2: Research Paper (40%)**. Word length: 3000 words (not including bibliography). Essay 2 will develop your miniconference presentation. It is a chance for you to put theories, themes and concepts from the course to work in a particular empirical field or problem. For example, a paper that examines the role of secrecy in a particular scandal. Or a paper that examines the nature of a particular secret society. Word length: 3000 words (not including bibliography). **Deadline: Friday 9th December at 11.59pm**. Please use the filename format: 4850_Yourfamilyname_Essay2. Put the same name in the subject line of the email.

**Late penalties:** you will lose half a grade if your paper is handed in the day following the deadline, another half on the second day, and so on.
COURSE TEXTS

There is no text book. All required readings are either accessible in the journals held in the library or, if indicated as (*), via ARES.

COURSE WEBSITE

CuLearn will be used for the course.

THEMES AND READINGS

1. Introduction (Sept 13)

2. Secrecy and Society (Sept 20)
     http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/jhamlin/4111/Readings/SimmelSecrecy.pdf

3. Logics of Secrecy (Sept 27)
     http://orwell.ru/library/articles/nose/english/e_nose

4. Secrecy, Surveillance, and Security (Oct 4)

5. Culture, Power, and Secrecy (Oct 11)
   - Dean, Jodi. 2001. 'Publicity's Secret', *Political Theory* 29(5): 624-650
6. Cultures of Secrecy (Oct 18)


7. Reading Week (Oct 25)

8. (Nov. 1) Conspiracy and Conspiracy Theory


9. The Stuff of secrecy? (Nov 8)


10. Whistleblowing (Nov 15)


11. The Future of Secrecy (Nov 22)

12. Miniconference I (Nov 29)

13. Miniconference II (Dec 6)

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation:
In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p 39), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

- A+ = 90-100
- B+ = 77-79
- C+ = 67-69
- D+ = 57-59
- A  = 85-89
- B  = 73-76
- C  = 63-66
- D  = 53-56
- A - = 80-84
- B - = 70-72
- C - = 60-62
- D - = 50-52
- F  = Below 50
- WDN = Withdrawn from the course
- ABS = Student absent from final exam
- DEF = Deferred (See above)
- FND = (Failed, no Deferred) = Student could not pass the course even with 100% on final exam

Academic Regulations, Accommodations, Plagiarism, Etc.
University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university’s website, here: http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/

Requests for Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities:
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first class or ITV test. This is to ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary accommodation arrangements.

- The deadlines for contacting the Paul Menton Centre regarding accommodation for final exams for the December 2015 exam period is November 6, 2015 and for the April 2016 exam period is March 6, 2016.

For Religious Obligations:
Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious obligation should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory event.

Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website.
for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:
Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as your own and is a serious academic offence. For the details of what constitutes plagiarism, the potential penalties and the procedures refer to the section on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar.

What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?
A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; and/or a reprimand; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; award of an FNS, Fail, or an ABS.

What are the Procedures?
All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and/or departmental chairs.
The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism.
The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

Plagiarism and cheating at the graduate level are viewed as being particularly serious and the sanctions imposed are accordingly severe.
Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/advisingcentre/academic-integrity/). The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students. Plagiarism and cheating – presenting another’s ideas, arguments, words or images as your own, using unauthorized material, misrepresentation, fabricating or misrepresenting research data, unauthorized co-operation or collaboration or completing work for another student – weaken the quality of the graduate degree. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Students who infringe the Policy may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; or a grade of Failure in the course.
Assistance for Students:
Student Academic and Career Development Services: http://carleton.ca/sacds/
Writing Tutorial Services: www.carleton.ca/wts
Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): https://carleton.ca/csas/group-support/pass/

Important Information:
- Students must always retain a hard copy of all work that is submitted.
- Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).
- All final grades are subject to the Dean’s approval.
- Please note that you will be able to link your CONNECT (MyCarleton) account to other non-CONNECT accounts and receive emails from us. However, for us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid CONNECT address. Therefore, it would be easier to respond to your inquiries if you would send all email from your connect account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you may wish to do so by visiting https://portal.carleton.ca/