

Carleton University
Department of Sociology & Anthropology
SOCI 2005A
Histories of Sociological Thought
Spring/Summer 2022

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Office Hours: By appointment through Zoom
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Method of Delivery: Hyflex Course
Lecture Times: Monday & Wednesday 11:35 – 2:25 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

This course introduces students to the foundational theoretical perspectives within sociology. The course will focus around key primary texts from a range of classical and contemporary social thinkers. The first semester will overview the origins of modern social thought in the European Enlightenment. We will begin with an exploration of the 19th century concentrating on the rise of industrial capitalism by focusing on Karl Marx & Frederick Engels' critique of social and economic relations, ideas concerning revolution and the theory of commodity fetishism. We will then move on to Émile Durkheim, particularly his rules for sociological method, ideas concerning the division of labour, the forms of religious life and collective effervescence, and his theory of anomie. From there we will move on to Max Weber and his analysis of capitalism and religion, bureaucracy, rationalization and disenchantment in modern social life. We will also touch upon the social theories of Tarde, Simmel, Freud, as well as Adorno & Horkheimer. In the second semester we will explore some of the most influential ideas and debates in political, cultural and social theory of the early 20th century, with a particular focus on the emergence of gender studies and feminist social thought (Gilman, de Beauvoir, & Butler), semiotic theory, the Avant Garde, race & representation (including classic texts by Du Bois, Hall, Said) and we will end with theories of power (Foucault). Throughout the course, we will explore the relationship of social theory to the questions and problems of modern social existence, such as the persistence of social, racial and gender inequality, the role of religion in modernity, the bureaucratic administration of daily life, relations of power, and the nature and possibilities of social change, among others.

PREREQUISITES:

SOCI 1001 and SOCI 1002, or SOCI 1003 [1.0], or ANTH 1001, or ANTH 1002.

REQUIRED READINGS:

There is no required textbook for this class. All required readings will be made available through Brightspace.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Student assessment will have five components:

1. In-class Participation (20%)
2. Online Discussion Forum (20%)
3. Four Quizzes (20% overall/5% each)
4. Group Presentation (15%)
5. Final Essay/Art Project (25%)