

HUMAN SOCIETY
332 OLD MAIN
FALL, 2008
SECTION 8801: MWF 10:30 – 11:40 AM
SECTION 8803: 1:20 – 2:30 PM

Andrew Lindner
Office: 320 Old Main (inside 313), 299-3551
E-mail: lindner@cord.edu
Office hours: MTWTh 2:30-4:00 (or by appointment)

Introduction

From childhood on, we are all fundamentally social beings. Much of who we are, what we believe, and how we act is based on what we've learned from the people and institutions we encounter, including our families, peers, and schools. Because most of us spend our entire lives in society, we naturally know quite a lot about it. We know the basic rules of everyday life in our particular milieu within society. But too often, unthinkingly, we assume that our particular circumstances are the same for everybody. Compared this kind of "common sense," which can be riddled with assumptions, sociology offers a way of thinking about society and human behavior that is more systematic and scientific. By examining all aspects of society – from large institutions (e.g., the mass media, religion, governments) to patterns of intimate interpersonal interaction – and comparing across cultures, we can better understand whether our experiences are universal or unique to us. For example, are men inherently more aggressive than woman or are there societies in which the gender roles are reversed? You might be surprised to learn that in some societies women are thought of as the more aggressive gender.

Using what is called the *sociological imagination*, this semester, we will consider the ways in which the individual is shaped by society at all stages during the life course. Evaluating evidence gathered through several methods of scientific inquiry used by sociologists, students will also critically examine a variety of social problems, particularly race, class, and gender inequalities. In keeping with Concordia's curricular theme of "Becoming Responsibly Engaged in the World," we will think closely about America's role in many global social problems and discuss how individuals can contribute to social change in our highly structured and seemingly unalterable society.

This course will cultivate several skills that will be of use to students in the future. First and most importantly, students will be encouraged to think creatively and approach readings in the spirit of critical inquiry, digging deep into texts and challenging assumptions. Secondly, students will develop literacy with several different social science research methodologies that are frequently used in an increasing number of occupations, including the fields of business, government, law enforcement, and the non-profit sector. Finally, students will be expected to put complex ideas into coherent language through regular writing assignments. Training students to be great writers is one of the fundamental hallmarks of a liberal arts education and well-honed writing skills empower students to articulate their thoughts clearly.

Required Texts

Ferrante, Joan. 2008. *Sociology: A Global Perspective* (Seventh Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Cargan, Leonard and Jeanne H. Ballantine. 2007. *Sociological Footprints: Introductory Readings in Sociology* (Tenth Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

These texts are bundled in the bookstore. Better prices might be available online. Students are encouraged to get the best deal possible, but also to get a copy quickly as it will be needed to complete the readings for the second class session.

Other readings for the course are available on the course's Moodle site (<http://moodle.cord.edu/>). The key code for the site is "humansociety" (no spaces, case sensitive).

Requirements

Developing sophisticated insights about society and good suggestions to help solve social problems requires careful reading, reflection, and writing. To promote learning in these areas, your progress in this course will be measured in several ways. The following are the course assessments:

1. **Participation** (10%) – Active participation is essential to having good class discussions. Therefore, you will be expected to complete the readings and be prepared for each class. Each week will include a mixture of lectures and discussion. Being prepared means arriving promptly, remaining in class for the whole session, and actively contributing and listening.
2. **Reading Quizzes** (10%) – To encourage students to complete the readings for class, there will be eleven brief quizzes over the course of the semester. The quizzes will be given without prior notice and may consist of true/false, multiple choice, and/or short essay questions. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. However, *it will not be possible for you to make-up any reading quizzes for any reason other than formal school functions or other extraordinary circumstances.*
3. **Short Papers** (30%) – Over the course of the semester, students will write three 3-4 page papers. The first paper will require you to violate a common social norm and write a critical response about the experience and the norm itself (Due Oct. 10). The second paper is a demographic country report. For this assignment, you will do a small research about demographic trends in one country and think creatively about how these trends might affect the nation's social structure and what social problems face the country in the future (Due Oct. 27). The final paper calls on students to prepare a monthly budget for a person living below the federal poverty line (approximately \$750 take home a month) and consider some of the major challenges for people living in poverty (Due Nov. 21). I will provide more details on all three assignments in upcoming assignment sheets.
4. **Three Exams** (50%) – There will be three non-cumulative exams on Sept. 29, Nov. 3, and during the official exam period (Dec. 17 at 11 am for sec. 8801 and Dec. 15 at 8:30 am for sec. 8803).

Summary:

10% Participation
 10% Reading Quizzes
 30% Short Papers
 50% Three Exams

100% Final Grade

Grades:

94%-100%	A	90-93%	A-	87-89%	B+
84-86%	B	80-83%	B-	77-79%	C+
74-76%	C	70-73%	C-	67-69%	D+
64-66%	D	60-63	D-	<60	F

Late Policy: On all assignments, your grade will be reduced by one unit for each day late (e.g., 1 day, from A to A-; 2 days, B+; 3 days, B, and so on). After two weeks from the due date, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

Missed Exam: Don't do it. A make-up exam will be given at my discretion and I reserve the right to change the format.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Students are expected to complete their work independently (except in the case of group projects) and violators will be seriously penalized. According to the *Concordia College Handbook*, cheating is "when one uses a resource other than one's own scholarship to answer [exam] questions." Plagiarism is "when one misrepresents another's ideas as one's own on an assignment." If you are unclear on what constitutes plagiarism and/or cheating, please discuss it with me in advance of due dates or exams. In the case of a violation, the offending student will receive a zero ("F") for the assignment and be reported to the Academic Dean's Office, which may result in disciplinary action. Please don't let this happen!

Civility and Respect: This course will include discussions of class, nationality, religion, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. I expect students to show respect toward all the subjects of our study. More importantly, I expect you to treat your classmates and your instructor with respect and dignity at all times – especially when you disagree with them.

Course Outline

All listed readings are required. The readings are listed using the following shorthand: (F) *Sociology: A Global Perspective* (Ferrante), (C) *Sociological Footprints*, and (E) available electronically on Moodle. The course code for Moodle is "humansociety" (case sensitive). Please let me know immediately, if you have difficulty accessing the electronic files.

Week 1: Introductions

Aug. 29 Introduction

Week 2: The Sociological Imagination

- Sept. 1 What is Sociology?
(F) Ch. 1
(C) No. 1 (Babbie)
- Sept. 3 The Sociological Imagination
(C) No. 5 (Mills)
Due: Why Are You The Way You Are?
- Sept. 5 Social Problems and Modernization

Week 3: Theorists and Theories

- Sept. 8 Emile Durkheim and Suicide
(E) *Let's Die Together* (Samuels)
(C) No. 2 (Durkheim)
- Sept. 10 Karl Marx and Capitalism
(E) *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Marx and Engels)
(C) No. 23 (Schor)
- Sept. 12 Max Weber and Forms of Action
Review: (F) Ch. 1

Week 4: Theory and Methods

- Sept. 15 Other Theoretical Perspectives
(F) Ch. 2
(C) No. 4 (Babbie)
- Sept. 17 No Class (Symposium)
- Sept. 19 Sociological Research
(C) No. 3 (Cargan)

Week 5: Culture and Cultural Relativism

- Sept. 22 What is Culture?
(F) Ch. 3
(C) No. 6 (Kluckholm)
- Sept. 24 Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism
(C) No. 7 (Lake)
(C) No. 8 (Miner)
(C) No. 9 (Harris)

Sept. 26 Globalization and Culture
(C) No. 72 (Inglehart and Baker)

Week 6: Exam #1 and Socialization

Sept. 29 Examination #1

Oct. 1 Childhood Socialization
(F) Ch. 4
(C) No. 11 (Davis)

Oct. 3 No Class

Week 7: Norms and Deviance

Oct. 6 The Social Self
(C) No. 13 (Pollack)
(E) *Girls and Boys' Popularity* (Adler and Adler)

Oct. 8 Deviance and Social Control
(F) Ch. 7
(C) No. 35 (Rosenhan)

Oct. 10 Why does Crime exist?
(C) No. 31 (Collins)
(C) No. 34 (Mokhiber)
Due: Norms Violation Paper

Week 8: The Individual and Society

Oct. 13 Fear and Punishment
(C) No. 32 (Glassner)

(C) No. 33 (Reiman)

Oct. 15 Social Solidarity and Abu Ghraib
(F) Ch. 5
(C) No. 19 (Zimbardo)

Oct. 17 The Dramaturgical Perspective
(E) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman

Week 9: Rationalization

Oct. 20 No Class

- Oct. 22 Bureaucracy
(C) No. 20 (Weber)
- Oct. 24 McDonaldization of Society
(E) *The McDonaldization of Society*, Ritzer

Week 10: Demography

- Oct. 27 Shrinking Europe, Booming Asia
(F) Ch. 15
Due: Country Report
- Oct. 29 Immigration
(C) No. 67 (Frey)
(C) No. 69 (Sheehan)
- Oct. 31 Population and the Environment
(C) No. 66 (Brown)
(C) No. 70 (Brown)

Week 11: Exam #2 and Inequality and Power

- Nov. 3 Examination #2
- Nov. 5 Why does Inequality exist?
(C) No. 21 (Hacker)
(C) No. 25 (Gans)
- Nov. 7 The Power Elite
(F) Ch. 8
(C) No. 22 (Kerbo)

Week 12: Global Inequality and Consumer Debt

- Nov. 10 Film: *49 Up*
- Nov. 12 Global Inequality
(F) Ch. 11
- Nov. 14 Consumer Debt
(C) No. 54 (Ritzer)

Week 13: Racial Inequalities

- Nov. 17 Defining Race
(F) Ch. 9
(C) No. 26 (Omi and Winant)

Nov. 19 Racial and Ethnic Discrimination
(C) No. 27 (Moore and Pinderhughes)
(C) No. 28 (Zhou)

Nov. 21 Black Disadvantage
(C) No. 44 (Rothstein)
(E) *Code of the Street* (Anderson)
Due: Poverty Budget Paper

Week 14: Gender Inequality

Nov. 24 Gender Inequality
(F) Ch. 10

Nov. 26 No Class (Thanksgiving)

Nov. 28 No Class

Week 15: Gender (Cont'd) and Religion as a Social Institution

Dec. 1 Gender Ideals
(C) No. 14 (Taub and McLorg)

Dec. 3 Religion in Society
(F) Ch. 14
(C) No. 46 (Durkheim)

Dec. 5 Religious Fervor or Secularism?
(C) No. 47 (Berger)
(C) No. 48 (Aho)
(C) No. 50 (Clanton and Lio)

Week 16: Media and Wrap-up

Dec. 8 Media Torrent
(E) *Media Unlimited*, Gitlin

Dec. 10 What Can You Do With Sociology?

Dec. 12 Review

Exam Week

Dec. 15 Section 2 Final Examination (8:30 am)
Dec. 17 Section 1 Final Examination (11 am)