

Sociology S151

FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN SOCIAL THEORY

Summer 2025, Session B: June 30-August 1

PROFESSOR JULIA ADAMS

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Summer Office Hours: flexible: before or after class, or by appointment

******Class meets M/W/F, 9-11:15 am, on Zoom******

Hobbes; Locke; Montesquieu; Rousseau; Martineau and Tocqueville; Mill; Hegel; Marx; Weber and Du Bois; Durkheim. In this highly concentrated seminar and survey course, students explore the brilliant writings of classical Western theorists of social and political life in modernity, as they tackle problems and challenges that have informed present-day thinking and continue to preoccupy us today. Modern social life and sociological theory arose in tandem, in the West as across the globe, in a fascinating and fruitful conjunction that this seminar examines.

Foundations of Modern Social Theory also focuses on the ways that these foundational political philosophers and early sociological theorists made sense of capitalism; individualism, consciousness and alienation; equality and difference; family and citizenship; religion; power struggles, and the rise of national states and modern empires. Building on this sturdy sociological foundation, and in critical dialogue with it, students will also develop their own ideas and arguments. The course format combines orienting lectures and seminar-style class discussions and debates. We will also vary the format as needed to transcend 'Zoom fatigue'!

Students will write two critical essays on the readings, the first due July 12, the second no later than August 2 (there is no additional reading or research for those essays). Students will also work with the professor (and any Teaching Fellows) to co-lead one session of class discussion.

Assessment:

Mandatory attendance and in-class participation, 10%
Discussion leadership, 20%
Two Essays, 70% (35% each)
...of the final grade.

******All readings will be available via the Yale Canvas course website***

SCHEDULE

June 30, Monday: The Problem of Social Order: Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Selections (emphasis on chapters 6-8, 11-14, 17, 30)

July 2, Wednesday: Equality, Freedom, Property, and Dissent: Locke

John Locke, *Second Treatise on Civil Government*

Selections

July 4, Friday: The Division of Political Powers: Montesquieu

Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*

Part I, Book 1-3, pp. 3-30

Part II, Book 11, Chapters 1-6, pp. 154-166

Part III, Book 14, Chapter 1, pp. 231-234; Book 19, Chapter 27, pp. 325-333

Part IV, Book 20, Chapters 1-4, pp. 337-341

July 7, Monday: The State of Nature, Education, and Contract: Rousseau

Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emile or on Education*, posted selections

Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

July 9, Wednesday: States and Families: Martineau and Tocqueville

Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, posted selections

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, posted selections

July 11, Friday: Utility, Sex/Gender, and Liberty: Mill

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism, On Liberty*. London: Everyman, 1993.

Utilitarianism, Chapter 2, "What is utilitarianism?" pp. 6-27

Chapter 5, "Of the connection between Justice and Utility," pp. 43-67

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism, On Liberty*,

Liberty: Chapter 1, pp. 69-83, Chapter 4, pp. 143-162

John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, complete.

*****July 12, Essay #1 due*****

July 14, Monday: Alienation and Subject-Object Relations: Hegel & Marx

Georg Hegel. *Phenomenology of Mind*, Part B. IV, A, "Lordship and Bondage,"

pp. 228-240 in J. B. Baillie translation.

Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844,"
In *Collected Works*, vol. 3, pp. 231-282.

July 16, Wednesday: The Material and the Ideal: Marx

Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in *CW*, vol. 5, pp. 6-8.
Karl Marx, "German Ideology," in *CW*, vol. 5. Volume I, Chapter I.
Feuerbach, pp. 27-37; 59-62.

July 18, Friday: Capital: Marx

Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, selections

July 21, Monday: Religion and the Rise of Capitalism: Weber

Max Weber: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

July 23, Wednesday: (Social) Science as a Vocation: Weber and Du Bois

Max Weber. "*Science as a Vocation*"
W. E. B. Du Bois. "*A Program for a Sociological Society*"

July 25, Friday: Race, Religion, and Double Consciousness: Du Bois

W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, Modern Library, selections

July 28, Monday: Class and Power; Authority and Domination: Weber

Max Weber, *Economy & Society* (E&S)
Chapter 1: "Types of Social Action"; "Types of Action Orientation";
"Legitimate Order"; "Types of Legitimate Order"; "Bases of Legitimacy";
"Power and Domination"
Chapter 3, pp. 212-301

Max Weber, *E & S*, Chapter 9, pp. 926-940; Chapter 4, pp. 302-307

Max Weber, *E & S*, Chapter 10, pp. 941-55

July 30, Wednesday: Social Solidarity, Modernity, Anomie: Durkheim

Emile Durkheim. *The Division of Labor*. New York, The Free Press,
selections.

August 1, Friday: The Sacred and the Profane: Durkheim

Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, selections.

*****August 2: Essay #2 Due*****