

Materials and questions for homework assignments

Below you will find the materials for the “non-Wekker” sessions as well as the questions that you are asked to address in preparation in advance (see Course Outline Section VI.f).

Note that each question can be addressed in one substantive paragraph, meaning that the entire homework assignment should be no more than *one page in length* (single-spaced). To fully complete the assignment, add at least *three* relevant direct quotes from the assigned reading to your answer. Please bring your homework to class in *printed* form.

Last updated: 29 April 2024

Week 3

CAPITALISM AND CLASS

- Marx, K. "Alienation and Social Classes." Chapter 14 in Grusky and Weisshaar [5pp.]
- Marx, K. "Classes in Capitalism and Pre-Capitalism." Chapter 15 in Grusky and Weisshaar [11pp.]

Reading questions:

- *In your own words, what does Karl Marx mean when he talks about ‘alienation’?*
- *According to Marx, how is ‘species-life’ transformed by alienated labour?*
- *In what way is the rise of the proletariat comparable or distinct from the rise of the bourgeois class?*

Week 4

CLASS, STATUS, PARTY

- Weber, M. "Class, Status, Party." Chapter 18 in Grusky and Weisshaar [10pp.]
- Weber, M. "Status Groups and Classes." Chapter 19 in Grusky and Weisshaar [4pp.]

Reading questions:

- *What does Max Weber mean by ‘status’ groups and how is it different from his conception of class?*
- *What is the role of the economy and markets in Weber’s conception of class?*
- *How does Weber’s idea of class compare to the one proposed by Marx?*

Week 5

THE SOCIOLOGY OF RACE

- Du Bois, W. E. B. (2000) [1898] "The study of the Negro problems." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 11(1): 1-23. [24pp.]

Reading questions:

- According to Du Bois, what are the two distinct but interrelated dimensions of what he refers to as the “Negro problems”? How would you evaluate his conceptions from today’s perspective?
- How does Du Bois perceive the role (including the shortcomings) of sociological inquiry in this area?

Week 6

INTERSECTIONALITY

- Crenshaw, K. (1989) "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1(8): 139-167 [29pp.]

Reading questions:

- In a nutshell, what are the shortcomings of feminist theory according to Kimberlé Crenshaw?
- What does Crenshaw mean when she talks about the “intersectional experience”?
- How can intersectionality enrich the struggle of the Black liberation movement?

Week 9

AGEISM

- Calasanti, T. (2020) "Brown Slime, the Silver Tsunami, and Apocalyptic Demography: The Importance of Ageism and Age relations." *Social Currents* 7(3): 195-211 [14pp.]

Reading questions:

- What does Calasanti mean when she speaks of “age relations”? Define the concept both in your own words and on the basis of an illustrative quote.
- What are the distinctive characteristics of ageism when compared to other types of oppression?
- To what extent is ageism internalized? Answer the question in relation to the article and on the basis of an example not given therein.

Week 10

CULTURE AND CLASS

- Bourdieu, P. (1984) "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste." Chapter 114 in Grusky and Weisshaar (eds.), *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective* (reader) [22p.]

Reading questions:

- What does Pierre Bourdieu mean when he speaks of “habitus”? Find an illustrative quote in the text as well as an example not given therein.
- How does Bourdieu define taste and what function does it play in his conception of class?
- How does Bourdieu’s understanding of class compare to Marx’s and Weber’s?

Week 12**“THE MASTER’S HOUSE”**

- Lorde, A. (1980) "Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference." Paper delivered at Amherst College, April 1980 [7pp.], available at https://www.colorado.edu/odece/sites/default/files/attached-files/rba09-sb4converted_8.pdf
- Lorde, A. [1981] (1997) "The uses of anger." *Women's Studies Quarterly* 25(1/2): 278-285 [7pp.]

Reading questions:

- How does Lorde’s perspective on intersectionality compare to Crenshaw’s and Wekker’s?
- Lorde describes anger as “an important source of empowerment” (1981, p. 282). Explain in your own words (using quotes where relevant) what she means by this.
- What is Audre Lorde’s conception of social change? What does it entail – and what not?

Week 13**MONDAY: “WHO IS AFRAID OF GENDER?”**

- Butler, J. (2024) "Introduction: Gender Ideology and the Fear of Destruction." In *Who’s Afraid of Gender?* [33pp.], available on Moodle

Please prepare a reverse outline for this text.

THURSDAY: COLONIALITY OF POWER

- Quijano, A. (2007) "Coloniality and modernity/rationality." *Cultural Studies* 21(2-3):168-178 [10pp.]

Reading questions:

- According to Aníbal Quijano, what is coloniality and how is it different from colonialism?
- How is the production of knowledge significant for processes both of domination and liberation?
- How do the inequalities described by Quijano compare to Wekker’s analysis in *White Innocence*?

Week 14**DECOLONIZING THE CURRICULUM**

- Moosavi, L. (2023). "Turning the Decolonial Gaze towards Ourselves: Decolonising the Curriculum and ‘Decolonial Reflexivity’ in Sociology and Social Theory." *Sociology* 57(1): 137-156 [14pp.].

Reading questions:

- What does Moosavi mean when he speaks of “decolonial reflexivity”?

- *To what extent is the decolonization of curriculums connected to the diversification of authors and perspectives?*
- *Do you agree with Moosavi's claim that in designing a decolonial curriculum, instructors can sustain exclusion even as they claim to be inclusive? If so, could you think of an example?*
- *In your view, to what extent are "efforts to decolonise the curriculum... a kind of selfish academic therapy that preserves coloniality" (p. 150)?*