**SOC 341: CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY**

**Tentative Course Syllabus**

**Fall 2016-2017**

**Instructor: Erdoğan Yıldırım**

This course is intended to help the Sociology 3rd grade students who are expected to have an adequate knowledge on the early, classical and mainstream sociological theory to develop a thorough familiarity with the contemporary postmodern thinking. Therefore, the students should be clear about the fact that it is not intended either to offer a full coverage of the recent sociological theory or to follow a chronological approach. Rather, the aim is to discuss some of the cons and pros of postmodern thinking around a certain thematic. For this purpose, the course starts with an examination of earlier theoretico-philosophical approaches that were seen to be cornerstones in the Western thinking and paved the way for the later development toward postmodernism. Then, the attention shifts to the rise of structuralism and its development towards post-structuralism. Finally, following a discussion of postmodern thinking we will make a detour via Heidegger’s contributions, connecting the whole bunch with thinking of Derrida and Laclau.

Needless to say attendance to the lecture and additional recitation hours (1 ½ hour on Thursdays following the usual lecture) is compulsory, and 1/3 of nonattendance to the regular lecture hours resulting with a failure (an NA grade). As for grading, as usual there will be 2 midterms (each 30 % of the final grade), a final exam (40 %), and attendance to the recitation hours together with the annotation papers for each lecture (10 % together as bonus) will make the students final grade.

**1ST WEEK:**

**3 Oct. Mon.: First Meeting**

**7 Oct. Fri.: General Introduction**

Reiman, Jeffrey, 1990, *Justice and Modern Moral Philosophy*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, pp. 25-27

(2).

Zeitlin, Irving M., 1981, *Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, pp. 3-

10 (7) and pp. 75-84.

**2ND WEEK:**

**10 Oct. Mon.: The Roots: Descartes, Kant**

Bonevac, Daniel, 1993, “Kant’s Copernican Revolution” in Solomon, Robert C. and Kathleen M. Higgins (eds), *The Age of* *German Idealism*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 40-67 (27).

**14 Oct. Fri.: Kant (Continued)**

**3RD WEEK:**

**17 Oct. Mon.: Second de-personification of the Subject: History, The Hegelian Turn: Hegel, Marx, Lukacs**

Solomon, Robert C., 1993, “Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit” in Solomon, Robert C. and Kathleen M. Higgins (eds), *The*

*Age of German Idealism*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 181-215 (34).

Connerton, Paul, 1974, “The Collective Historical Subject: Reflections of Lukacs’ *History and Class Consciousness*”, *The*

*British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 162-178 (16).

**21 Oct. Fri.: Nietzsche**

Deleuze, Gilles, 1983 (1962), *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, The Athlone Press, London, pp. 39-72 (33).

**4TH WEEK:**

**24 Oct. Mon.: Freud**

Isbister, J. N. 1985, *Freud: An Introduction to His Life and Work*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 164-174 (10).

Henry, Michel, 1993 (1985), *The Genealogy of Psychoanalysis*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, pp. 281-316 (35).

**28. Oct. Fri.: Husserl and Phenomenology**

Jones, W. T., 1975, *The Twentieth Century to Wittgenstein and Sartre*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, NY, pp. 250-284 (34).

**5TH WEEK:**

**31 Oct. Mon.: The Structuralist Turn**

Sturrock, John, 2003, *Structuralism*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, pp. 25-73 (47).

Joseph, John E., “The Linguistic Sign”, in Sanders, Carol (ed), 2004, *The Cambridge Companion to Saussure*, CambridgeUniversity Press, Cambridge, pp. 59-75 (16).

**4 Nov. Fri.: Structuralism in Social Sciences: Levi-Strauss and Roland Barthes**

Levi-Strauss, Claude (1949), *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Beacon Press, Boston, pp. 29-68

Barthes, Roland (1967), “The Death of the Author” in Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text*, Fontana Press, London, 1977, pp. 142-154.

**6TH WEEK:**

**7 Nov. Mon.: Althusser: Marxism is not a Historicism**

Althusser, Louis (1964), “Freud and Lacan” in Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, NLB, 1971, pp. 189-219.

**11 Nov. Fri.: Lacan, Psychoanalysis**

Sarup, Madan, 1993 (1988), *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism*, Harvester, New York, pp.

5-31 (27).

Lacan, Jacques, 1975 (1966), “Of Structure as an Inmixing of an Otherness Prerequisite to any Subject Whatever” in Macksey, Richard and Eugenio Donato (eds), 1975, *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, pp. 186-200 (14).

Olivier, Bert, 2004, “Lacan’s Subject: The Imaginary, Language, the Real and Philosophy” in *South African Journal of* *Philosophy*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 1-19 (19).

**7TH WEEK:**

**14 Nov. Mon.: Lacan, Post-Structuralism**

Lacan, Jacques (1957), “The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason since Freud”, in Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits, The First Complete Edition in English*, W. W. Norton & Co., New York and London, pp. 412-441.

Nancy, Jean-Luc and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe (1973), *The Title of the Letter: A Reading of Lacan*, State University of New York Press, New York, 1992, pp. 27-78 (Part I: The Logic of the Signifier).

**18 Nov. Fri.: Laclau and Mouffe,**

**8TH WEEK:**

**21 Nov. Mon.: Foucault and Genealogy**

Best, Steven and Douglas Kellner, 1991, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*, The MacMillan Press, London, pp.

34-75 (41).

Foucault, Michel, 1982, “The Subject and Power”, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Summer 1982, pp. 777-795 (18).

**25 Nov. Fri.: Foucault and History of Sexuality**

**9TH WEEK:**

**28 Nov. Mon.: Deleuze and Guattari**

Best, Steven and Douglas Kellner, 1991, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*, The MacMillan Press, London, pp. 76-110 (34).

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, 1983 (1972), *Capitalism and Schizophrenia I: Anti-Oedipus*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, pp. 1-50 (50).

**2 Dec. Fri.: The Postmodern Condition**

Lyotard, Jean-François, 1984 (1979), *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, University of Minnesota

Press, Minneapolis, (Introduction and Sections 9 to 11, and 14), pp. xxiii-xxv, 31-47, 64-67, extract in Cahoone, Lawrence (ed), 1996, *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology*, Blackwell, Oxford and Cambridge,

pp. 481-513 (32).

Jameson, Fredric, 2001 (1985), “Postmodernism and Consumer Society” in Malpas, Simon (ed), *Postmodern Debates*, Palgrave, New York, pp. 22-36 (14).

**10TH WEEK:**

**5 Dec. Mon.: Baudrillard**

Best, Steven and Douglas Kellner, 1991, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*, The MacMillan Press, London, pp. 111-145 (34).

**9 Dec. Fri.: Habermas: A Reaction based on the idea of Rational Subject and Communicative Action**

Habermas, Jürgen, 2001, “Modernity: An Unfinished Project” in Malpas, S., *Postmodern Debates*, Palgrave, NY, pp. 37-

52 (15).

Habermas, Jürgen 1987 (1985), *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Polity Press, London, pp. 294-326 (32).

**11TH WEEK:**

**12 Dec. Mon.: Heidegger, from Phenomenology to Ontology**

Jones, W. T., 1975, *The Twentieth Century to Wittgenstein and Sartre*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, NY, pp. 285-331 (46).

Hofstadter, Albert, 1982, “Translator’s Appendix: A Note on the *Da* and the *Dasein*” in Heidegger, Martin (1975), *The*

*Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, pp. 333-337 (4). Heidegger, Martin, 1961 (1926), *Being and Time*, Harper, NY, pp. 78-90.

**16 Dec. Fri.: Heidegger**

Heidegger, Martin, 1977 (1938), “The Age of the World Picture” in Heidegger, Martin, *The Question Concerning* *Technology and Other Essays*, Harper and Row, NY, pp. 115-154 (41).

Heidegger, Martin, 2005 (1949), “Letter on ‘Humanism’” in Heidegger, Martin, *Pathmarks*, ed. by William McNeill, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 239-276 (37).

**12TH WEEK:**

**19 Dec. Mon.: Levinas**

Critchley, Simon, 2002, “Introduction” in Critchley, Simon and Robert Bernasconi (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to*

*Levinas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1-32 (32).

Levinas, Emmanuel, 1998 (1991), *Thinking of the Other: Entre Nous*, Columbia University Press, NY, pp. 1-38, 133-153 (58).

**23 Dec. Fri.: Derrida and Post-Structuralism: the Text**

Stocker, Barry, *Derrida on Deconstruction*, Routledge, London and New York, pp. 53-78.

**13TH WEEK:**

**26 Dec. Mon.: Difference and Deconstruction**

Derrida, Jacques (1968), “Différance” in Derrida, Jacques, 1982 (1972), *Margins of Philosophy*, Harvester, London, pp.

1-27 (27).

Derrida, Jacques (1966), “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences” in Derrida, Jacques, 1978, *Writing and Difference*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 278-293 (15).

**30 Dec. Fri.: Religion and the Future, Democracy**

Derrida, Jacques (1996), “Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of ‘Religion’ at the Limits of Reason Alone” in Derrida,

Jacques, 2002, *Acts of Religion*, ed. by Gil Anidjar, Routledge, NY and London, pp. 42-101 (59).

Derrida, Jacques, 1992 (1991), *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today’s Europe*, Indiana University Press,

Bloomington and Indianapolis, pp. 1-83 (83).

Derrida, Jacques (1995), “Taking Sides with Algeria” in Derrida, Jacques, 2002, *Negotiations: Interventions and*

*Interviews, 1971-2001*, ed. by Elizabeth Rottenberg, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, pp. 117-124 (7).

**14TH WEEK:**

**2 Jan. Tues.: Judith Butler and the Senses of the Subject**

Patricia T. Clough, “Judith Butler”, in Ritzer, G. (ed), *The Blackwell Companion to Major Contemporary Social Theorists*, Blackwell, Malden MA, 2000, pp. 333-352.

Butler, Judith, *Senses of the Subject*, Fordham University Press, New York 2015, pp. 1-35.

**6 Jan. Fri.: General discussion on a general topic**