

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

Sociology web-page address: <http://sociology.lakeheadu.ca/>

DATE: September 2009
TO: Students in Perspectives in Social Thought
(Sociology 2111 FA)
Fall 2009
FROM: R.W. Nelsen, Professor
Department of Sociology
SUBJECT: SOCIOLOGY 2111 FA

Description

This year's edition of the course will focus on the interconnections between individual character and social structure as developed in work done in the 1950s and 1960s at the University of Chicago and Columbia University. The biographies and intellectual work of two individuals, Reuel Denney and C. Wright Mills, will be given special and detailed attention in connection with the sociology done at these two schools during these two decades. There also will be some material presented regarding the sociological traffic between Chicago and New York, as well as discussion of the influence of sociologists from previous generations (dating back to before 1900) on the development of the Chicago and Columbia "schools" of sociology. My hope is that attention to this material will help you (students) and myself develop our sociological imaginations, as together we think about various social issues and problems.

Topics To Be Covered in Lectures as Part of Our Learning Agenda

Biographical Material on Reuel Denney
Major Themes in the Writings of Reuel Denney
Denney's Connections to sociology at the University of Chicago
Biographical Material on C. Wright Mills
Major Themes in the Writings of C. Wright Mills
Mills' Connections to sociology at Columbia University
Writings of Denney and Mills Compared and Contrasted
Early American and European Influences on the work of Denney and Mills
Review of Fun & Games in relation to the work of Denney and Mills
General Material on Higher Education ("Postsecondary") in Universities
Professionalism as it affects Sociology and Higher Education

Note: There may be related topics covered as these emerge from our discussions and developing interests, and as time permits.

Readings

Textbooks (Available at Lakehead University)

Following are the books to be read in this course:

1. C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 [1959].
2. Randle W. Nelsen, Fun & Games & Higher Education: The Lonely Crowd Revisited. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2007.

Chapters and Articles (All are on Reserve at the Circulation Desk in the Paterson Library.)

A. From Writings by Reuel Denney

1. "The Frontier Host"
2. "The Decline of Lyric Sport"
3. "The Plastic Machines"
4. "A Taste of Abundance"
5. "The Suppliant Skyscrapers"
6. "The Sirens' Song"

B. From Writings by C. Wright Mills

1. "The Structure of Power in American Society"
2. "A Marx for the Managers"
3. "Women: The Darling Little Slaves"
4. "The Unity of Work and Leisure"
5. "Mass Society and Liberal Education"
6. "The Professional Ideology of Social Pathologists"

Note: Most likely there will be some choice, some options for you, with regard to some of these readings. This will be discussed on the first day of class.

Examinations and Final Marks

There will be two exams during this course. One is tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 26, 2009. The exact date of the other will be discussed and decided upon during the first two weeks of class. Each test will be comprised of approximately 30 multiple choice questions and four short answer essay questions (a limit of about 3 written paragraphs for each answer).

On Plagiarism: *Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to the University regulations (see Lakehead University Calendar).*

Final Note: *You will be presented with further information covering course requirements, assignments, evaluation procedures, and any other relevant material we shall need to discuss as a group on the first day of class, Monday, September, 14, 2009.*


.....
R.W. Nelsen.