

SOCI-4411-FA Power, Oppression, Resistance & Emancipation

Classes (days/times): September 8–December 1, 2014 / Tuesday, 2:30 PM-5:30 PM
(class time will consist of two 75-min. sessions, divided by a 15-min. break)

Location: RB-1047

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Course website: <http://misina.ca/sociology> (file password: sociology)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of SOCI 4411 is to consider three questions: (1) 'what is power?', (2) 'what are the effects of power?', and (3) 'what are the possibilities of resisting power?'. Correspondingly, the course is divided into three parts, with each part exploring one of the three questions.

Part I starts from the notion that the concept of power is 'essentially contested' – i.e. that there are a wide variety of controversial meanings given to the concept and no general consensus with respect to its use. The objective of Part I, therefore, is to provide some sense of order by introducing and comparing a variety of useful notions of power that have influenced the general conceptual understanding of the concept. This will be done by focusing on the distinct forms of classical and contemporary theorizing about power.

Part II considers the effect(s) of power by focusing on the concept of oppression. This will be done by discussing the five forms of oppression – exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence – and examining their particular socio-historical faces.

Part III considers the possibilities of 'escaping power' through resistance and emancipation. The starting point will be conceptual understanding of resistance and emancipation, followed by an examination of different tactics and strategies – i.e. the scales -- of 'escaping power'.

Our exploration of power, oppression, resistance and emancipation will take two forms: theoretical and historical. The purpose of the former is to provide a general conceptual and comparative understanding of the four concepts, while the purpose of the latter is to ground the concepts in specific historical realities and thus give them a practical face. While both forms will be used throughout the course, Part I will be somewhat more theoretical, while Part II and Part III will be slightly more historical.

As much as possible, we will run the course as a seminar. This means that all of you should expect to take an active part in creating your own learning environment through presentations, discussions and class debates. When necessary, we will use lectures to provide a general context and offer conceptual clarifications necessary for an in-depth understanding of particular theoretical positions on power, oppression, resistance and emancipation. The starting point for all of our classes will be weekly presentations and reflective commentaries which you will need to submit at the beginning of every class (please see below for details).

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objective of the course is to provide students with an advanced understanding of the issues of power, oppression, resistance and domination. By the end of the course, the diligent student will possess a robust

conceptual, theoretical and empirical competence in thinking about the issues in question, as well as a great deal of independence in assessing critically their everyday, real-life manifestations.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The following required textbooks are available at Lakehead University bookstore:

- *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, by Paulo Freire. New York & London: Continuum. ISBN-10: 0826412769 | ISBN-13: 978-0826412768.
- *Cultural Resistance Reader*, by Stephen Duncombe. London & New York: Verso. ISBN-10: 1859843794 | ISBN-13: 978-1859843796.

As the course in great measure relies on your active interest and participation, you are expected to have read your weekly assignments *before* coming to class.

All additional readings are available on our course website: <http://misina.ca/sociology>

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Your performance in the course will be evaluated on the basis of a term paper, reflective commentaries, class presentations and class participation:

- Term Paper** (45%)
- Reflective commentaries** (25%)
- Class presentations** (15%)
- Class participation** (15%)

The **term paper** should be thought of as a substantive piece of work that demonstrates all of your academic and intellectual skills as they apply to the topic of our course. The objective of the paper is to demonstrate your understanding of the four key concepts we will be exploring throughout the course by providing a detailed theorization/analysis of a specific historical case (of your choice) in terms of the corresponding forms of power, oppression, resistance, and emancipation. Specifically, your task in exploring in detail your historical case (e.g. family, workplace, professional settings, civil conflict and/or war, social movement, cultural opposition, political resistance etc.) is to address – among others – the following questions: ‘what is the form of power at work here and how can it be best explained conceptually/theoretically?’, ‘what is the end effect of this power in light of the broader social circumstances and what is its practical manifestation?’, ‘what are the strategies of resistance used to engage the power at work and to counter its oppressive effects?’, and ‘what are the end objectives of the resistance strategies employed and what is their emancipatory potential?’.

Your term paper will be completed in three stages. For each stage, you will have to produce and submit a required work which will be assessed and returned to you with feedback and suggestions that will help you improve on what you already have completed and move on to the next stage:

Stage 1 (due October 14) (10%): you are required to submit an initial proposal for the paper that clearly identifies and discusses your topic and your key research questions/objectives, and provides a preliminary annotated bibliography of peer-reviewed resources you will be using for the project.

Stage 2 (due November 11) (15%): you are required to submit the first draft of your paper. The draft has to be as close to the completed project as possible, or – minimally – a detailed exploration of all aspects of your final project with clear indications of the work yet to be completed.

Stage 3 (due December 16) (20%): you are required to submit the final version of your term paper. You should follow the ASA style for all formatting, referencing and citations. The main body of your

paper should not exceed 8,000 words or be shorter than 6,000 words (plus footnotes and a list of references).

In order to successfully complete your term paper you will most likely need to do an advanced reading of our course materials and consult extra resources. Feel free to discuss your work with me as you see necessary.

Please note: late work is subject to a 10%-per-day penalty (weekend counts as one day).

The term paper submitted has to be the new and original work rather than being copied from other texts/resources or written for another course. This, of course, does not mean that you cannot consult other resources in completing your work (you are, in fact, required to do so), but these need to be clearly recognized and referenced within your own writing. Using other people's work without acknowledging it, or claiming someone else's work for your own, constitutes an act of plagiarism and is taken for the most serious academic offence (for details, see your *Lakehead University 2014-2015 Academic Calendar*, section *University Regulations: IX Academic Misconduct*). **Committing plagiarism in this class carries the penalty of automatic course failure.**

Reflective commentary is a written reflection on the weekly readings, **due at the beginning of every Tuesday class** (this is **not negotiable**). The purpose of the commentary is to (1) offer your own thoughts about the claims presented in the readings, and (2) formulate three discussion questions about what you find to be the most constructive, or problematic, aspects of the claims/points made in the readings. In formulating your questions you have to explain their importance in terms of getting at the key issues, problems and/or questions in the weekly readings. Each commentary has to reflect the nature of a specific discussion theme assigned for a given week of the class. Please keep in mind that **reflective commentaries are not about summarizing the articles** but about offering your own sociological take on the main points raised in the theoretical readings.

The length of each commentary should not exceed **four pages** of typed text, using 1.5 line spacing and 12 pt Times New Roman font. Any external sources used for completing your commentaries need to be referenced using ASA style. Please corner-staple your assignments and do not use paper clips, plastic covers or binders. In the interest of environmental responsibility, avoid using a cover page for your assignments and put your name and your student ID number in the top left corner of page 1.

The purpose of the **presentation** is to provide a brief summary of the weekly readings, isolate their most important points/arguments, and offer critical reflections on their principal lines of argument. We will use the presentation as a jumping off point for our class discussions/debates. The presenter should be able to situate the arguments of the articles within a larger body of literature that deals with a general theme under consideration and also be prepared to engage other students' questions and comments during our class discussion. The presentation should not exceed 30 min. in length: the first 10-15 min. should be spent on a summary of the articles' main points and arguments; additional 15-20 min. should be used for the critical assessment of the readings.

Important: The purpose of the presentation is not to regurgitate uncritically the contents of the articles but to initiate a distinctive kind of learning process through dialogue and exchange of ideas with your classmates. Thus, the focus should be not on presenting a summary of absolutely everything mentioned in the articles but on discussing – in your own terms and the level you feel comfortable at – the readings' most pertinent and thought-provoking aspects. A very good presentation may not necessarily be the one that is most pedantic but the one that is most successful in generating constructive discussion and eliciting the reaction from your audience. Also, the presentation that is not read but narrated, as it were, is generally more engaging. Strive to communicate with rather than read to your audience. If you must read, remember that reading a page of text requires about 3 minutes. Finally, keep in mind that presentations are *not* designed to substitute for other students reading the articles. Thus in preparing your exposition you should presume that other students are familiar with the readings and their main arguments.

Participation mark is a reflection of your *active and meaningful* input in our class discussions and debates. *Passive classroom presence does not warrant any participation marks.*

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following grading scale will be applied in evaluating your course work:

90-100% (A+)

Outstanding Performance: superb mastery of the principles and materials treated in the course; exceptional fluency in communicating that mastery and a high degree of originality and independence in applying material and principles.

80-89% (A)

Excellent Performance: comprehensive in-depth knowledge of the principles and materials treated in the course; fluency in communicating that knowledge and originality and independence in applying material and principles.

70-79% (B)

Good Performance: thorough understanding of the breadth of materials and principles treated in the course and ability to apply and communicate that understanding effectively.

60-69% (C)

Satisfactory Performance: basic understanding of the breadth of principles and material treated in the course and an ability to apply and communicate that understanding competently.

50-59% (D)

Marginal Performance: adequate understanding of most principles and material treated in the course, but significant weakness in some areas and in the ability to apply and communicate that understanding.

40-49% (E)

Failure: inadequate or fragmentary knowledge of the principles and material treated in the in the course, or failure to complete the work required in the course.

1-39% (F)

Failure: inadequate or fragmentary knowledge of the principles and material treated in the in the course, or failure to complete the work required in the course.

0% (F)

Academic Dishonesty: demonstrable violation of the academic rules of conduct as defined by Lakehead University academic standards.

Your grade is a reflection of your performance in the course, which is the only criterion for your final mark. *There will be no rescaling of grades at the end of the course* and no adjustments except for legitimate clerical errors. Please take note of that.

According to Lakehead University defined standards, grade 0-49% constitutes unsatisfactory academic performance and means failing the course; 50-59% is a minimally accepted level of performance for passing the course, while 90-100% constitutes outstanding performance. For details on evaluation and grading, see your *Lakehead University 2014-2015 Academic Calendar*, section University Regulations (V Standing).

If you wish to review your course work you can do so within *one week from the day exam marks* have been posted

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Statement: Each student is asked to submit a brief statement about his or her academic background as it relates to the Sociology program in general and this course in particular. The statement should be accompanied by either your recent photograph or a photocopy of your Lakehead University student ID card.

Email: Emailing is to be regarded as an official form of communication. Only emails sent through Lakehead University account will be read and replied to. All other email messages will be ignored.

Cell phones: Cell phones are to be turned off during lectures (except under exceptional circumstances in which approval has been granted by the instructor).

Notebooks/portables: Use of notebook computers and/or portable devices during lectures is **not allowed** (except under exceptional circumstances in which approval has been granted by the instructor).

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance is not mandatory but is highly recommended. If you decide to attend, you are expected to arrive on time and be respectful to other students in class. Disruptive and otherwise inappropriate behaviour in the classroom will not be tolerated. Students engaged in such behaviour will be dealt with accordingly.

Disclaimer: The information in this Course Outline is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change; any changes will be announced in class)

Week 1 (Sept 9)	<p>Course introduction; syllabus walk-through, introductory review</p> <p>Power: Introduction</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Power” (Collins Dictionary)• “Power and Powers: A Dialogue Between Buff and Rebuff”, by Amelie Oksenberg Rorty <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
Week 2 (Sept 16)	<p>Conceptualizing Power I</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Three Faces of Power</i> (selections), by Kenneth E. Boulding• “Power: A Radical View”, by Steven Lukes (Ch. 1 in <i>Power: A Radical View</i>) <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
Week 3 (Sept 23)	<p>Conceptualizing Power II</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “The Forms of Power”, by Bertrand Russell• “Domination by Economic Power and by Authority”, by Max Weber• “Power as the Control of Behavior”, by Robert Dahl• “Communicative Power”, by Hannah Arendt• “Power and the Social System”, by Talcott Parsons• “Hannah Arendt’s Communicative Concept of Power”, by Jürgen Habermas (optional)• “Class Power”, by Nicos Poulantzas <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
Week 4 (Sept 30)	<p>Conceptualizing Power III</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Domination and Freedom”, by Georg Simmel• “Disciplinary Power and Subjection”, by Michel Foucault• “Structures, Habitus, Power: Basis for a Theory of Symbolic Power”, by Pierre Bourdieu <p>Reconceptualizing Power I</p>

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "New Faces of Power", by Terence Ball • "Beyond the Three Faces of Power", by Jeffrey C. Isaac <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
<p>Week 5 (Oct 7)</p>	<p>Reconceptualizing Power II</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Structures of Domination", by Tomas E. Wertenberg • "False Consciousness or Laying It on Thick?", by James C. Scott • "Situated Social Power", by Thomas E. Wartenberg • "Women and Power", by Jean Baker Miller <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
<p>Week 6 (Oct 14)</p>	<p>(The Faces of) Oppression I</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Five Faces of Oppression", by Iris Marion Young • "Personal Identity and Disrespect", by Axel Honneth • "The Political Economy of Contested Exchange", by Samuel Bowels and Herbert Gintis • "Affirmative Action and the Myth of Merit", by Iris Marion Young <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
<p>Week 7 (Oct 21)</p>	<p>(The Faces of) Oppression II</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Orientalism", by Edward Said • "Colonization and Christianization", by Sylvia Federici (optional) • "Regarding Violence", by Frantz Fanon • "Gender and Sexuality: Masculinity, Violence and Domination", by Nancy C. M. Hartsock <p>available at http://misina.ca/sociology</p>
<p>Week 8 (Oct 28)</p>	<p>Resistance & Emancipation</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Emancipation", by Raymond Morrow (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) • <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>, by Paulo Freire

Week 9
(Nov 4)

The Scales of Resistance & Emancipation: Dismantling The Master's House

Readings:

- "Domination, Acting and Fantasy" & "The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups", by James C. Scott (**available at** <http://misina.ca/sociology>)
- "The Ghost Dance War", by Elaine Goodale Eastman (pp. 193-200 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Why Is There No Black Political Movement", by Adolph Reed Jr. (pp. 99-100 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Hind Swaraj", by Gandhi (pp. 200-205 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "From Beyond a Boundary", by C.L.R. James (pp. 205-215 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Slave Songs and Slave Consciousness", by Lawrence Levine (pp. 215-231 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Immigration and Assimilation: Rai, Reggae, and Bhangramuffin", by George Lipsitz (pp. 231-239 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)

Week 10
(Nov 11)

The Scales of Resistance & Emancipation: Subcultures and Primitive Rebels

Readings:

- "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'", by Stuart Hall (pp. 185-192 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Primitive Rebels", by Eric J. Hobsbawm (pp. 135-149 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "OGs in Postindustrial Los Angeles: Evolution of a Style", by Robin D.G. Kelley (pp. 149-157 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "The Meaning of Mod", by Dick Hebdige (pp. 166-174 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "The Skinheads and the Magical Recovery of Community". By John Clarke (pp. 174-178 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Riot Grrrl Is...", by Riot Girl (pp. 178-180 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Kathleen Hanna interview (pp. 180-183 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)

Week 11
(Nov 18)

The Scales of Resistance & Emancipation: Co-optation and Culture Jamming

Readings:

- "On the Fetish-Character of Music and the Regression of Listening", by Theodor W. Adorno (pp. 275-303 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "The Uses of Literacy", by Richard Hoggart (pp. 303-312 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media", by Jean Baudrillard (pp. 100-113 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Why Johnny Can't Dissent", by Thomas Frank (pp. 316-327 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Revolution for the Hell of It", by Abbie Hoffman (pp. 327-330 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Do It!", by Jerry Rubin (pp. 330-332 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Culture Jamming: Hacking, Slashing and Sniping in the Empire of Signs", by Mark Dery (**available at** <http://misina.ca/sociology>)

Week 12
(Nov 25)

The Scales of Resistance & Emancipation: Mixing Pop and Politics

Readings:

- "The Politics of Prefigurative Community", by Barbara Epstein (pp. 333-347 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "The Art of Necessity: The Subversive Imagination of Anti-road Protest and Reclaim the Streets", by John Jordan (pp.347-358 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "TAZ: The Temporary Autonomous Zone", by Hakim Bey (pp. 113-118 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Truth Is a Virus: Meme Warfare and the Billionaires for Bush (or Gore), by Andrew Boyd (pp. 369-379 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)
- "Electronic Disturbance: An Interview" (pp. 379-396 in *Cultural Resistance Reader*)