Sociology 4517 WA: Society, Culture, and Nature

Pre-requisites: permission of instructor
Class Location: Ryan Building 3049
Class Time: Monday, 8:30-11:30am
3-0; or 3-0
Sociology web-page address: http://sociology.lakeheadu.ca

Instructor: Dr. T. Puddephatt
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Office Phone: 343-8091
Office Hours: Monday 2:30-4:30 PM

Logic of the Course

This course should be quite fun and engaging, but it is challenging and theory heavy at times. The idea is to get you acquainted with some of the ways that social theorists have tried to incorporate the nonhuman (e.g., nature, environment, technology) into their concepts and theories of the social. We will place special emphasis on microsociological theories, which have been comparatively neglected to macro theories, particularly in environmental sociology. There is an emphasis on reading, synthesizing, and writing/presenting the material you encounter and work with throughout the term. While the weekly readings are there to provide inspiration and conceptual resources, the goal is for you to develop your own independent paper that grapples with the relationship of the nonhuman to the social world, according to a topic of your choice. Hopefully you can develop your own independent interests, while informing them with the various theoretical lenses we consider.

Evaluation Scheme:

(1) First Mini-Paper	(20%)
(2) Weekly Participation	(20%)
(3) Presentation / Proposal	(20%)
(4) Final Essay	(40%)
	Final = (100%)

Required readings:

- Brewster, Bradley and Antony Puddephatt (eds.) 2017. *Microsociological Perspectives for Environmental Sociology*. UK: Routledge. [I will provide pre-print copies of select chapters, listed in the outline as MPES]
- Other articles as necessary (if not marked as provided on D2L, you can get them through the LU electronic library).

Explanation of Evaluation:

1. <u>First Mini-Paper (20%)</u>: In an effort to get you warmed up for the final paper, the first mini-essay asks you to provide an essay-style discussion of what you see as the most important themes in the first three weeks of class. This should be well structured/organized into themes, and very well written, using proper ASA citation practices. This paper is not to exceed 8 pages double spaced, using times new roman 12pt font, not including references.

2. <u>Participation (20%)</u>: This grade is intended to reflect the quality, more than the quantity, of student's participation in class. "Negative participation" (e.g., distracting, rude, or counter-productive behaviour, absences) is reflected in penalties to this grade. Come prepared, and try to demonstrate your knowledge of the readings, and do your part to help with a vibrant seminar discussion, fostered in a friendly, mutually supportive atmosphere.

3. <u>Presentation/Proposal (20%):</u> The main project for the course is to develop an essay on some topic to do with sociology as it relates to the connections between the nonhuman world and culture/society. Since this may be new terrain for you, and the term is a short one, I encourage you to get started reading and sketching ideas on your topic as soon as possible. To get you started, you are to hand in an 8 page proposal (maximum, double spaced, times new roman 12 pt font, not including references), which discusses your topic of choice, presents a thesis of some sort in relation to this topic, and provides a road-map of how you plan to research and explore/support your interests/claims (due Feb 27). After obtaining some feedback from me, I hope you can revise your proposal and provide a 10 minute presentation of your ideas for the paper to the class on March 20. The proposal is worth 10%, as is the presentation.

4. <u>Final Essay (40%):</u> The final essay must be written using ASA format. No paper shall be longer than 20 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font, times new roman, not including references. You are to choose a sociological topic of your choice that deals with the relationship of culture / society to the nonhuman world or natural environment. For example, your essay might examine a theoretical debate, consider the contributions of a theorist, researcher, or school of thought, comment on a specific environmental social issue as it is portrayed in the media or popular culture, consider the role of social institutions, politics, and social movements in dealing with the natural environment, consider new forms of science and technology (e.g. medicine, communications, health, food, entertainment, etc) and their intersection with ethics and politics, explore a topic in human-animal relations and animal rights, and so on. The possibilities are endless and I hope you will find a topic that interests you. Of course, I am always here to help – if you find you are unsure what to do, please come and see me soon, and we can get you on the right track. Even if you do think you are on the right track, it still pays to run your topic by me, as I might be able to guide/redirect you, or narrow/expand the scope of the project as necessary. A full 60% of your grade rests on this larger project, thus, a little early checking in about your topic is well worth it.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

January 9 – **Welcome! Introduction to the Course**

January 16 – **Nature and Environment in the History of Sociological Theory**
1. Catton, William and Riley Dunlap. 1980. "A New 'Ecological Paradigm' for a Post-Exuberant Sociology," *American Behavioural Scientist*, 24(1): 15-47.
2. Murphy, Raymond. 1995. "Sociology as if Nature does not Matter: An Ecological Critique," *British Journal of Sociology*, 46(4): 688-707.
3. Alexandrescu, Filip. 2009. "Not as Natural as it Seems: The Social History of the Environment in American Sociology," *History of the Human Sciences*, 22(5): 47-80.

January 23 – **Classical Sociology and the Environment**
1. Foster, John Bellamy. 1999. "Marx's Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundations for Environmental Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, 105(2): 366-405.

2. Gross, Matthias. 2000. "Classical Sociology and the Restoration of Nature: The Relevance of Emile Durkheim and Georg Simmel," *Organization and Environment*, 13(3): 277-291.
3. Murphy, Raymond. 2002. "Ecological Materialism and the Sociology of Max Weber," pp 73-89 in R. Dunlap, F. Buttel, P. Dickens, and A. Gijswijt (eds.) *Sociological Theory and the Environment*. Rowman and Littlefield. D2L

January 30 – The Neglect of Microsociological Theory in Environmental Sociology
1. Brewster, Bradley and Antony Puddephatt. 2017. "G.H. Mead as a Socio-Environmental Thinker," in D. Hubner and H. Joas (eds.) *The Timeliness of George Herbert Mead*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago press. D2L
2. Brewster, Bradley H. and Michael M. Bell. 2010. "The Environmental Goffman: Toward an Environmental Sociology of Everyday Life," *Society and Natural Resources*, 23(1): 45-57.
3. Brewster, Bradley and Antony Puddephatt. 2017. "Introduction: Awakening Micro-theoretical Perspectives in Environmental Sociology," MPES.

February 6 – Experiencing and Presenting "Nature"
1. Albaugh-Bonham, Megan. "Micro-interactions of Cosmic Proportions: Mediating Human-Cosmos Relationships in the Planetarium," MPES
2. Grahame, Peter. "This is Not Sea World: Spectacle and Insight in Nature-Tourism," MPES
3. Vannini, Philip. "How to Climb Mount Fuji (at your Earliest Convenience): A Non-Representational Approach," MPES
   *** *FIRST MINI-ESSAY DUE*

February 13 – Environmental Identities and Social Change
1. Capek, Stella. "Negotiating Identity, Valuing Place: Enacting Earthcare and Social Justice at Finca La Bella, Costa Rica," MPES
2. Lorenzen, Janet. "Green Lifestyles and Micro Politics: Pragmatist Action Theory and the Connection between Lifestyle Change and Collective Action," MPES
3. Zavetoski, Stephen and Andrew Weigert. "Mead, Interactionism, and the Improbability of Ecological Selves: Toward a Meta-Environmental Sociological Theory," MPES

February 20 – Family Day (Reading Week)

February 27 – Human and Animal Relations
1. Sanders, Clinton. 2007. "Mind, Self, and Animal-Human Joint Action," *Sociological Focus*, 40(3): 320-336.
2. Irvine, Leslie. "Wild Selves: A Symbolic Interactionist Perspective on Species, Minds, and Nature," MPES
3. Gross, Matthias, and Ana Horta. "Dog Shit Happens: Human-Canine Interactions and the Immediacy of Excremental Presence," MPES
   *** *PAPER PROPOSAL DUE*

March 6 – The Social Construction of Environmental Issues
1. Burningham, Kate, and Geoff Cooper. 1999. "Being Constructive: Social Constructivism and the Environment," *Sociology,* 33(2): 297-316.

2. Williams, Jerry. "The Utility of Phenomenology in Addressing Human Caused Environmental Problems," MPES
3. Machum, Susan. "Sorting the Trash: Competing Constructions and Instructions for Handling Household Waste," MPES

March 13 – **Technology and Materiality in Everyday Life**
1. Pinch, Trevor. 2010. "The Invisible Technologies of Goffman's Sociology from the Merry-Go-Round to the Internet," *Technology and Culture*, 51(2): 409-424.
2. Jerolmack, Colin and Iddo Tavery. 2014. "Molds and Totems: Nonhumans and the Constitution of the Social Self," *Sociological Theory*, 32(1): 64-77.
3. Bell, Michael M. "Present Tense: Everyday Animism and the Politics of Possession," MPES

March 20 – **Student Paper Presentations**

March 27 – **The Politics of Technologies**
1. Winner, Langdon. 1985. "Do Artifacts have Politics?" pp 26-38 in D. McKenzie and J. Wajcman (eds.) *The Social Shaping of Technology*. Open University Press. (D2L)
2. Joerges, Bernward. 1999. "Do Politics have Artefacts?" *Social Studies of Science*, 29(3): 411-431. (D2L)
3. Van den Scott, Lisa-Jo. "Mundane Technology in Non-Western Contexts: Wall-as-Tool" (D2L)

April 3 – **Organizations and Boundary Objects**
1. Star, Susan Leigh, and James Griesemer. 1989. "Institutional Ecology, Translations, and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907-39," *Social Studies of Science*, 19: 387-420.
2. Star, Susan Leigh. 2010. "This is Not a Boundary Object: Reflections on the Origin of a Concept," *Science, Technology, and Human Values*, 35(5): 601-617.
3. Kelly, Benjamin. "The Social Psychology of Compromised Negotiations: Constructing Asymmetrical Boundary Objects between Science and Industry," MPES

April 17 – *** *FINAL PAPER DUE!*

Have a nice summer break!

Lakehead University Regulations:

IX Academic Dishonesty

The University takes a most serious view of offences against academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating and impersonation. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced.

A copy of the "Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures" including sections on plagiarism and other forms of misconduct may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.
(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.
(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.

Note: "Plagiarism" shall be deemed to include:
1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.
3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.