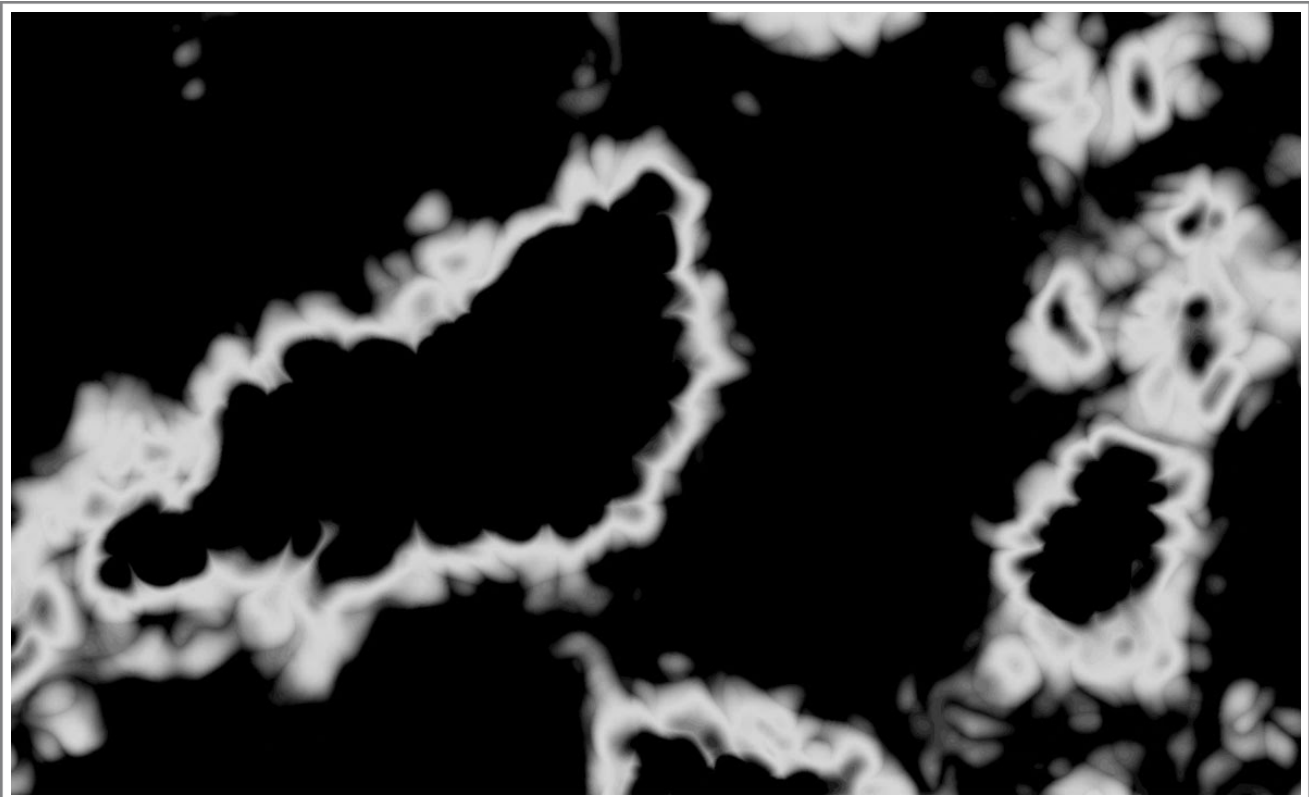

CULTURAL SOCIOLOGY

Professor Todd Madigan



Course Description

Cultural sociology embraces *meaning* as a fundamental cause of human behavior and views *interpretation* as a primary means to understanding the social world. In this class, we'll explore the development of this peculiar field of social science as it has played out over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries and examine the cultural structures that lead us voluntarily to think, feel, and act in certain ways but not others, often without ever knowing why.

Class Meetings

Tuesdays & Thursdays

3:30PM-4:45PM

Graham 423

Office Hours

By appointment

Office: Graham 324

tmmadiga@uncg.edu

Course Format

Our class will be conducted face-to-face and will begin promptly at 3:30PM each scheduled Tuesday and Thursday.

Each class meeting will include a combination of lectures and small group discussions. During both the lectures and the discussions, you should actively take notes *on paper*. Anything covered in our discussions (in addition to the readings and lectures) will be potential material for an exam. Daily small group discussions will involve questions to answer about that day's reading. You will want to make sure you have either a printed copy of the text or access to the electronic version in class.

All the readings for the course will be pdfs posted on Canvas (i.e., you will not need to purchase any books for this course).

Readings

This course is *reading intensive*; you should be prepared to complete approximately 50 pages of reading for each class. If you don't think you'll be able to keep up with this schedule, you should reconsider enrollment in the course.



Electronics Policy

You may not have electronics out during class. Phones, tablets, laptops, earbuds, etc. must be stowed and silenced. (Exceptions: during our small group discussions you may access the reading electronically. However, at the start of class and in between these discussions, electronics must be stowed. And needless to say, if you have written permission from OARS, it is permissible to use assistive technology.)

COURSEWORK

Attendance

Much of the learning during this course will come through lectures and discussions with your classmates. For this reason, attendance and participation during all class meetings is critical. Graded attendance will be taken during each meeting (if you are present for the full class, you will receive full credit; if you are present for less than the full class—but for at least 45 minutes—you will receive half credit; otherwise, no credit). You may miss one class without losing any points (i.e., you will receive full attendance credit for the first class you miss).

GRADING

Attendance Points

26 classes @ 5 points each = 130

Examination Points

3 exams @ 100 points each = 300

Discussion Post Points

4 discussion posts @ 25 points = 100

Group Project Points

1 project @ 100 points = 100

Absences & Late Work

I will not post my slides or lectures online, so it's critical that you take thorough notes throughout each and every class meeting. In the case that you are absent from class, it's your responsibility to reach out to a classmate to request a copy of their class notes. I will accept discussion posts, exams, and projects up to 48 hours after their due date, but 10% will be deducted from the assignment's grade. I will not accept work more than 48 hours late.

Examinations

You will take three examinations throughout the semester, each falling on a regularly scheduled day of class. The subject of these exams will be the material that has been covered during their respective sections (i.e., the exams will not be cumulative). The material will be drawn from the course readings, lectures, and discussions. Each exam will be administered through Canvas and may be taken at anytime on its assigned day. However, once you begin, you will have a limited time to complete it. Because the exams are online, we will not meet as a class on those days, and no attendance will be taken.

Discussion Posts

At four points throughout the term, you'll watch a video clip from popular culture that I've posted on our discussion board. You'll then write a two page response and post it on the discussion board. Your post will be graded based on its intellectual engagement with the material. Strong responses will interpret the the video and draw in some of the theoretical perspectives we've read or discussed in class (you must include citations in your post). In addition to your own post, I'll ask you to comment thoughtfully on at least two other classmates' posts.

Group Project

You will join with two or three other classmates in preparing and giving a fifteen-minute multimedia presentation to the class, and each group member should speak for roughly the same length of time. The presentation will require you to do the following: 1) demarcate a social sphere, 2) identify its binary code of values, 3) describe fissures within the sphere, and 4) explain how those fissures can be understood based on how specific people, events, or structures are differentially interpreted vis-a-vis the sphere's binary values.

University Public Health

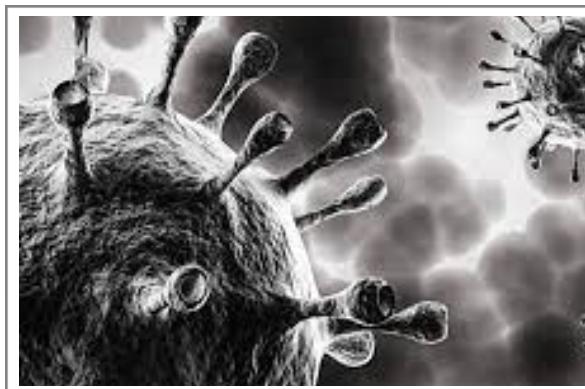
As we return for spring 2022, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. These actions include, but are not limited to:

COVID-19 GUIDELINES

- [Following face-covering guidelines](#)
- [Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene](#)
- [Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- [Staying home when ill](#)
- [Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill](#)
- [Completing a self-report when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, testing positive for COVID-19, or being identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive](#)
- [Staying informed about the University's policies and announcements via the COVID-19 website](#)

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seats at every class meeting. Students may move their chairs in class to facilitate group work, as long as instructors keep seating chart records. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings are also available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow the basic standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and other requirements.



OARS Accommodations

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact OARS (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health services, will review requests for accommodations.

PLEASE NOTE: The readings for each class are to be completed <i>before</i> the start of the class for which they are listed.		
WEEK 1	TUES. 1/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yuval Noah Harari, "Building Pyramids" in <i>Sapiens</i> (2011)
	THURS. 1/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yuval Noah Harari, "The Human Spark" in <i>Homo Deus</i> (2017) (Begin reading at the final paragraph on page 131.)
WEEK 2	TUES. 1/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in <i>The Interpretation of Culture</i> (1973)
	TUES. 1/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Douglas selections from <i>Purity and Danger</i> (1966)
WEEK 3	THURS. 1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eviatar Zerubavel selections from <i>The Fine Line</i> (1991)
	THURS. 1/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christena E. Nippert-Eng, "Boundary Work: Sculpting Home and Work" in <i>Cultural Sociology</i> (2002) Michèle Lamont, "Symbolic Boundaries and Status" in <i>Cultural Sociology</i> (2002)
WEEK 4	TUES. 2/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edward Shils and Michael Young, "The Meaning of the Coronation" in <i>Sociological Review</i> (1953) Norman Birnbaum, "Monarchies and Sociologists: A Reply to Professor Shils and Mr. Young" in <i>Sociological Review</i> (1955)
	THURS. 2/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeffrey Alexander and Philip Smith, "The Discourse of American Civil Society" in <i>The Meanings of Social Life</i> (1993)
	FRI. 2/4	DUE: DISCUSSION POST 1 (by 11:59PM)
WEEK 5	TUES. 2/8	EXAM 1 – NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING
	THURS. 2/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" in <i>Mythologies</i> (1957) (pp.109-115) Roland Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image" in <i>Image/Music/Text</i> (1977)
WEEK 6	TUES. 2/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roland Barthes, "The World of Wrestling" in <i>Mythologies</i> (1957) Marshall Sahlins, "Food as Symbolic Code" in <i>Culture and Society</i> (1976)

	THURS. 2/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America" in <i>Daedalus</i> (1967)
WEEK 7	TUES. 2/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> James Gibson, "Old Warriors, New Warriors" and "Birth of the Warrior" in <i>Warrior Dreams: Violence and Manhood in Post-Vietnam America</i> (1994)
	THURS. 2/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Todd Madigan, "Epimilitary Culture: Vietnamese-American Literature and the Alternative to Paramilitary Culture" in <i>Militarization and the Global Rise of Paramilitary Culture</i> (2021)
WEEK 8	TUES. 3/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeffrey Alexander, "Civil Sphere and Public Drama" in <i>The Performance of Politics</i> (2010) Jeffrey Alexander, "Becoming a Collective Representation" in <i>The Performance of Politics</i> (2010)
	THURS. 3/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeffrey Alexander, "Imagining Heroes" in <i>The Performance of Politics</i> (2010) Jeffrey Alexander, "Working the Binaries" in <i>The Performance of Politics</i> (2010)
	FRI. 3/4	DUE: DISCUSSION POST 2 (by 11:59PM)
WEEK 9	TUES. 3/8	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS
	THURS. 3/10	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS
WEEK 10	TUES. 3/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Peterson, "Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music" in <i>Popular Music</i> (1990) Idda Tavory and Ann Swidler, "Condom Semiotics: Meaning and Condom Use in Rural Malawi" in the <i>American Sociological Review</i> (2009)
	THURS. 3/17	EXAM 2—NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING
WEEK 11	TUES. 3/22	GROUP PRESENTATIONS—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
	THURS. 3/24	GROUP PRESENTATIONS—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
	FRI. 3/25	DUE: DISCUSSION POST 3 (by 11:59PM)

WEEK 12	TUES. 3/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barry Schwartz, "The Reconstruction of Abraham Lincoln" in <i>Collective Remembering</i> (1990)
	THURS. 3/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity" in <i>New German Critique</i> (1995) Paul Connerton, "Commemorative Ceremonies" in <i>How Societies Remember</i> (1989)
WEEK 13	TUES. 4/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality" in <i>On Narrative</i> (1980) W. B. Gallie, "Narrative and Historical Understanding" in <i>The History and Narrative Reader</i> (1964)
	THURS. 4/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philip Smith, "Why War?: Theorizing the Role of Culture and Civil Discourse" in <i>Why War?</i> (2005)
WEEK 14	TUES. 4/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philip Smith, "Investigating Culture in War: Methodology, Causality, Case Studies, and Data" in <i>Why War?</i> (2005)
	THURS. 4/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Todd Madigan, "Farewell to Genre: Plot, Meaning, and Eudaemonic Paths in Social Narratives" (forthcoming)
	FRI. 4/15	DUE: DISCUSSION POST 4 (by 11:59PM)
WEEK 15	TUES. 4/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeffrey Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma" in <i>Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity</i> (2004)
	THURS. 4/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Todd Madigan, "Theories of Cultural Trauma" in <i>The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma</i> (2020) Ron Eyerman, "Remembering the 1960s: The Assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy" in <i>The Cultural Sociology of Political Assassination</i> (2011)
WEEK 16	TUES. 4/26	EXAM 3—NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING

PLEASE NOTE: The readings for each class are to be completed *before* the start of the class for which they are listed.

WEEK 1	TUES. 8/16	<p>Thomas Hobbes <i>Leviathan</i> (1651)</p> <p>Chapter XI: "Of the Difference of Manners"</p> <p>Chapter XIII: "On the Natural Condition of Mankind"</p> <p>Chapter XIV: "Of the First and Second Natural Laws, and of Contracts"</p> <p>Chapter XV: "Of Other Laws of Nature" (paragraphs 1-3)</p> <p>Chapter XVII: "On the Causes, Generation, and Definition of a Commonwealth"</p>
	THURS. 8/18	<p>John Locke <i>The Second Treatise of Government</i> (1690)</p> <p>Chapter I: "Introduction" (final paragraph)</p> <p>Chapter II: "The State of Nature"</p> <p>Chapter III: "Of the State of War"</p> <p>Chapter IV: "Of Slavery"</p> <p>Chapter V: "Of Property"</p> <p>Chapter VII: "Of Political or Civil Society"</p> <p>Chapter VIII: "Of the Beginning of Political Societies"</p> <p>Chapter IX: "Of the Ends of Political Society"</p>
WEEK 2	TUES. 8/23	<p>John Locke <i>The Second Treatise of Government</i> (1690) (cont.)</p> <p>Chapter I: "Introduction" (final paragraph)</p> <p>Chapter II: "The State of Nature"</p> <p>Chapter III: "Of the State of War"</p> <p>Chapter IV: "Of Slavery"</p> <p>Chapter V: "Of Property"</p> <p>Chapter VII: "Of Political or Civil Society"</p> <p>Chapter VIII: "Of the Beginning of Political Societies"</p> <p>Chapter IX: "Of the Ends of Political Society"</p>
	THURS. 8/25	<p>Jean-Jacques Rousseau <i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> (1754)</p>
WEEK 3	TUES. 8/30	<p>Jean-Jacques Rousseau <i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> (1754) (cont.)</p> <p>Auguste Comte <i>Introduction to Positive Philosophy</i> (1830)</p> <p>"The Nature and Importance of the Positive Philosophy"</p>

	THURS. 9/1	Herbert Spencer (Selections) "Evolution Defined" (1862) "The Factors of Social Evolution" (1876) "Population and Progress" (1852) "The Organic Analogy Reconsidered" (1876) "The Need for Sociology" (1873)
WEEK 4	TUES. 9/6	EXAM 1 – NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING
	THURS. 9/8	Karl Marx <i>Capital</i> (1867) (Selections)
WEEK 5	TUES. 9/13	Karl Marx <i>Capital</i> (1867) (Selections)
	THURS. 9/15	Karl Marx <i>Capital</i> (1867) (Selections)
WEEK 6	TUES. 9/20	Karl Marx (1867) (Selections)
	THURS. 9/22	Karl Marx (1867) (Selections)
WEEK 7	TUES. 9/27	Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> (1848) (Selections)
	THURS. 9/29	Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> (1848) (Selections)
WEEK 8	TUES. 10/4	Excursus: A Look Forward to Capitalism After the Factory Arlie Russell Hochschild <i>The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling</i> (1983) Chapter 1: "Exploring the Managed Heart" Chapter 2: "Feeling as Clue"
	THURS. 10/6	Excursus: A Look Forward to After Capitalism Neal Meyer "What Is Socialism?" (2018) Aaron Bastani <i>Fully Automated Luxury Communism: A Manifesto</i> (2020) (Selections)

WEEK 9	TUES. 10/11	FALL BREAK—NO CLASS
	THURS. 10/13	EXAM 2—NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING
WEEK 10	TUES. 10/18	Max Weber <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i> (1904-1905) “Author’s Introduction” Chapter I: “Religious Affiliation and Social Stratification”
	THURS. 10/20	Max Weber <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i> (1904-1905) Chapter II: “The Spirit of Capitalism” Chapter III: “Luther’s Conception of the Calling: Task of the Investigation”
WEEK 11	TUES. 10/25	Max Weber <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i> (1904-1905) Chapter V: “Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism”
	THURS. 10/27	Max Weber “Science as a Vocation” (1919)
WEEK 12	TUES. 11/1	EXAM 3—NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING
	TUES. 11/3	GROUP PRESENTATIONS—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 13	TUES. 11/8	GROUP PRESENTATIONS—NO READING ASSIGNMENT
	THURS. 11/10	Emile Durkheim <i>The Division of Labor In Society</i> (1893) (Selections)
WEEK 14	TUES. 11/15	Emile Durkheim <i>The Rules of Sociological Method</i> (1895) (Selections)
	THURS. 11/17	Emile Durkheim <i>The Elementary Forms of Religious Life</i> (1911) “Introduction”

WEEK 15	TUES. 11/22	Emile Durkheim <i>The Elementary Forms of Religious Life</i> (1911) Book II: Chapter VI: “The Origins of These Beliefs (Continued)” Book II: Chapter VII: “The Origins of These Beliefs (Conclusion)”
	THURS. 11/24	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
WEEK 16	TUES. 11/29	EXAM 4 – NO READING ASSIGNMENT, NO CLASS MEETING