

Abridged Version!!!

SOC 540: Social Problems

Full Title: Private Troubles, Public Issues: Contemporary Social Problems

Location: **Horton 307** Schedule: **MWF 12:10pm-1:00pm**

Instructor Information

Name: **Ezra Temko** E-mail: **ejt2001@unh.edu** Phone: **302-283-9393**

Office Hours: **Mondays 2:30pm-4pm in McConnell 338B, or by appointment**

Course description

Since sociology's inception, sociologists have engaged in scholarship and action to better understand the social world and to improve our society. This work is often anchored by attention to structural inequality. This class will explore the sociological perspective on social problems, with the goal of being able to apply this perspective when you encounter social problems beyond this course. We will ask: What makes certain social phenomena social problems? What are the causes of social problems? What can be done about them?

This course fulfills the Social Science category requirement for UNH's Discovery Program.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will:

- Understand the sociological perspective and its utility for understanding social phenomena
- Develop a sociological imagination, and be able to apply it to social problems, including being able to critique competing conceptions of and explanations for social problems
- Increase your knowledge of a variety of contemporary social problems, including a social problem that is important to you
- Engage in and further develop critical thinking skills through critical conversations, reading, writing, and reflecting to learn, and inquiry into social problems
- Develop informed ideas about concrete ways society (and you as part of society) can effect social change to address social problems

Required Materials

1. Seccombe, Karen. 2015 (4/E). *"So You Think I Drive a Cadillac?" Welfare Recipients' Perspectives on the System and Its Reform.*
2. Johnson, Allan. 2014 (3/E). *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy.*

Course Requirements

Your grade will be determined through the following five areas:

- Attendance (expected, penalty only)
- Research Project (40%)
- Learning Investigations (40%)
- *Contexts* Article Presentation (10%)
- Reflections (10%)

Course Schedule (as of 8/30/15)**Theme A: What is a social problem in sociology?**

<u>Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
#1: M 8/31	Course Overview, Popular Conceptions of Women on Welfare	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
#2: W 9/2	Private Troubles, Public Issues? Taking a Sociological Look at Social Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unabridged course syllabus “Sociological Perspective” 	LI#1: 12am, 9/2

Theme B: What social phenomena are social problems?**How do social phenomena come to be recognized as social problems?**

<u>Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
#3: F 9/4	Subjective and Objective Perspectives on Social Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blumer 1971 Nussbaum 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#2: 12am, 9/4 Project #1 Social Problem Selection: 11:59pm, 9/4
M 9/7	No Class: Labor Day		
#4: W 9/9	Social Movement Theory	Lee 2011	LI#3: 12am, 9/9

Theme C: Understanding Social Problems?

<u>Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
#5: F 9/11	Social Movement Theory (continued), Patriarchy	Johnson Ch. 1	LI#4: 12am, 9/11
#6: M 9/14 Virtual Class	Thinking Structurally(/Systemically)	Johnson Ch. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#5: 12am, 9/14 Article Presentation Sign-up: 11:59pm, 9/14
#7: W 9/16	Thinking Structurally (continued)	Eliasoph 2001	LI#6: 12am, 9/16
#8: F 9/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty Peer Review of Project Part 1 	Rank 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#7: 12am, 9/18 Project Part #1 Draft: 12:10pm, 9/18
#9: M 9/21	Roots of Patriarchy: Control and Power	Johnson Ch. 3	LI#8: 12am, 9/21
#10: W 9/23 Virtual Class	Rethinking Gender, Gender Normativity	Johnson Ch. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#9: 12am, 9/23 Reflection #1: 11:59pm, 9/23
#11: F 9/25	Cultural Mythology and Universe-Maintenance: The Reification of the System of Patriarchy	Johnson Ch. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#10: 12am, 9/25 Project Part #1 Final Version: 11:59pm, 9/25

Class	Topic	Reading	Assignments due
#12: M 9/28	Feminism, StarPower Simulation	Johnson Ch. 5	LI#11: 12am, 9/28
#13: W 9/30	Oppression as Structural Inequality, StarPower Debrief	Alvarado 2010	LI#12: 12am, 9/30
#14: F 10/2	Cultural Mythology and Universe- Maintenance: Common Denials of Patriarchy's Existence	Johnson Ch. 7	LI#13: 12am, 10/2
#15: M 10/5	Cultural Mythology and Universe- Maintenance: Hegemonic Masculinity, (A)Historical Thinking, Worldviews	Johnson Ch. 10	LI#14: 12am, 10/5
#16: W 10/7	Cultural Mythology and Universe- Maintenance: Social Construction, Worldviews	Johnson Ch. 2 (pg 32-53 only), Forest & Trees	LI#15: 12am, 10/7
#17: F 10/9	Poverty and Women on Welfare	Seccombe Ch. 1	LI#16: 12am, 10/9
#18: M 10/12	Welfare Policy in the U.S., Theories of Poverty and Welfare Use	Seccombe Ch. 2	LI#17: 12n, 10/12
#19: W 10/14	Stereotypes, Essentialism, Stigma, and Deservedness	Seccombe Ch. 3	LI#18: 12n, 10/14
#20: F 10/16	Cultural Mythology and Universe- Maintenance: Culture of Poverty?	Gorski 2012	LI#19: 12n, 10/16
#21: M 10/19 <i>Dimond 421</i>	Causes of Needing Welfare, Internalized Oppression	Seccombe Ch. 4	LI#20: 12n, 10/19
#22: W 10/21 <i>MUB DL 14</i>	Culture of Poverty?, The Production of Culture	Wilson 2010	LI#21: 12n, 10/21
#23: F 10/23	Power, Privilege, & Oppression, Intersectionality	Collins 1993	LI#22: 12n, 10/23
#24: M 10/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAP (Mid-Course Assessment Program) Neoliberal capitalism, The Cultural Mythology of Controlling Images, and Black Battered Women on Welfare Deconstructing (Poverty and Welfare) Discourses 	Davis 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#23: 12n, 10/28 Project Part 2 Source List: 11:59pm, 10/26
#25: W 10/28	Living on Welfare	Seccombe Ch. 5	LI#24: 12n, 10/28

<u>Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
#26: F 10/30	Surviving on Welfare: Social Support and Supplementing Welfare	Seccombe Ch. 6	LI#25: 12n, 10/30

Theme D: What to do about social problems?

<u>Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignments due</u>
#27: M 11/2	Cultural Mythology in Practice and the Utility of Framing	Hoffman 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#26: 12n, 11/2 Reflection #2: 11:59pm, 11/11
#28: W 11/4	What does it mean to participate in systems of oppression / patriarchy?	Johnson Ch. 9	LI#27: 12n, 11/4
#29: F 11/6	Challenging Systems of Oppression (continued) / Disrupting Patriarchy	Johnson Ch. 11	LI#28: 12n, 11/6
#30: M 11/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging Systems of Oppression Peer Review: Project Part 2 	Love 1984	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#29: 12n, 11/9 Project Part 2 Draft: 12:10pm, 11/9
#31: T 11/10 UNH: Wed. schedule	Cultural Mythology in Practice and the Promises of Liberation Work	Langille-Hoppe et al. 2011	LI#30: 12n, 11/10
W 11/11	No Class: Veterans Day		
#32: F 11/13	Popular Politics, Challenging Power, Participatory Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaventa 1995 Hays 2003 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#31: 12n, 11/13 Project Part 2 Final version: 11:59pm, 11/16
#33: M 11/16	Welfare Policy and its Implications for Women on Welfare	Seccombe Ch. 7	LI#32: 12n, 11/16
#34: W 11/18	The Welfare System: What Works and What Doesn't?	Seccombe Ch. 8	LI#33: 12n, 11/18
#35: F 11/20	Evaluating Welfare Policy; Ideas for Reform	Seccombe Ch. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI#34: 12n, 11/20 Project Part 3 Inquiry Plan: 11:59pm, 11/20
#36: M 11/23	Exploring Solutions	Wilson 2008	LI#35: 12n, 11/23
W 11/25 F 11/27	No Class: Thanksgiving Break		
#37: M 11/30	Exploring Solutions (continued)	Broughton 2001	LI#36: 12n, 11/30
#38: W 12/2	Exploring Solutions (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Block & Piven 2013 Shahmehri 2001 	LI#37: 12n, 12/2

Class	Topic	Reading	Assignments due
#39: F 12/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling for Change • Peer Review of Project Part Three 	Ganz 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LI#38: 12n, 12/4 • Project Part 3 Draft: 12:10pm, 12/4
#40: M 12/7	Storytelling for Change (continued)	Polletta 1998	LI#39: 12n, 12/7
#41: W 12/9	Things are Better: A Historical Perspective on Social Progress	Best 2001	LI#40: 12n, 12/9
#42: F 12/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Movements Make a Difference • Peer Review of Project Part Four 	Meyer 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LI#41: 12n, 12/11 • Project Part 4 Draft: 12:10pm, 12/11 • Project Part 3 Final version: 11:59pm, 12/11
Final Exam Period Tues. 12/15 3:30pm - 5:30pm	Project Presentations: Advocating for Your Issue: Giving Testimony	<i>n/a</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Part 4 Final version: 3:30pm, 12/15 • Reflection #3: 11:59pm, 12/15

Course Policies

Academic Citizenship

Attendance

- 2.3% penalty per unexceptional absence
- Up to 3 exceptional absences (penalty waived)
 - E-mail me prior to the class you will miss
 - Have a good reason to miss
 - Make up your work

Academic Honesty, Norms, Asking Questions, Monitoring Blackboard

Curtailed Operations

Grading

Late Work

Tardiness	Penalty
Over 10 minutes	10 points
Over one hour	20 points
Over one day (24 hours)	30 points
Over two days (48 hours)	50 points
Over one week (168 hours)	100 points

Disability Services / Accommodations: <http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/>

Connors Writing Center: <http://www.unh.edu/writing/cwc/>

IT Support: <http://www.unh.edu/it/it-service-desk>.