

## **SOC483H1S: CULTURE AND COGNITION**

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University of Toronto  
Summer 2021**

*Mode of Delivery:* online only, synchronous, Zoom

*Time:* Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:10-4pm

*Office Hours:* online only, Bb collaborate, Monday 1-2pm

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### ***Brief Overview of the Course***

This course is organized as a discussion seminar. This means that you **MUST** do **ALL** the readings and come prepared to critically discuss them in class. In this seminar, you will have the opportunity to actively participate in discussions, hone your communication and analytical skills, explore and develop your research interests, and improve your writing and research skills.

This is a Theory and Research seminar around the specific topic of Culture and Cognition. Readings and discussions will be heavily theory-oriented. However, the main goal is not simply to read theory and discuss it (as fruitful an endeavor as this is), but to acquire analytical and theoretical tools in order to apply them to the analysis of the social world. Culture and Cognition are central aspects of our everyday life, and you will be bringing your knowledge of the social world to critically evaluate the readings. This seminar will provide an overview of the contemporary literature in Culture and Cognition, exploring a variety of perspectives and research areas within this sub-field.

What is Culture and Cognition? It is a newer but rapidly growing area in sociology. It is not simply the sum of its two parts, that is, some Culture and some Cognition. Rather, the area is defined by relatively specific conceptual interests and empirical approaches to the study of culture and cognition as phenomena that are observable in their association at a social level, and that are thus subject to systematic study. As an area of study, Culture and Cognition is associated to, but nonetheless distinct from, the Sociology of Culture. Scholars in Culture and Cognition are interested in studying how actors actively use culture through shared cognitive schemas that are embedded in larger social structures. They study the actions, practices, discourses or patterns through which actors put cognition at work. And they use methods to empirically identify how actors put their cognition at work rather than assume how they do it. **BUT**, what is culture and cognition is a question that we will explore and debate *as* you learn about it throughout the term.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The prerequisite to take this course is 1.0 SOC FCE at the 300+ level. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time they are discovered.

***Class Format, Requirements, and Grading***

- 1- Take home test, July 22.....30%
- 2- research proposal, due July 29 .....5%
- 3- paper, due August 12 ..... 35%
- 4- presentation and leading class discussion .....15%
- 5- participation in class discussions .....10%
- 6- paper presentation, August 12 ..... 5%

**Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for obtaining information about any announcements that may have been made in class as well as notes on the material covered from their classmates.

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments will not be accepted unless submitted with proper documentation. See below for details.

**Documentation for Missing an Assignment due to Health or Personal Reasons**

If you miss a test or a paper deadline, do not contact the instructor unless you have followed the steps described here.

You will not be required to submit a medical note. Instead, you will need to declare your absence on ACORN on the day you missed the test or due date of the assignment, and email the instructor directly. If you miss these for personal reasons, you need to contact your College Registrar and have them email the instructor directly.

**Readings**

**BOOK SELECTIONS AND JOURNAL ARTICLES**

Book selections and all journal articles will be available on the Quercus course website, under “Course Materials.”

Students are solely responsible for obtaining and reading all required materials before class. Please give yourself enough time to deal with any problems or delays accessing the readings that may arise so you can be sure to come to class prepared to discuss the materials. Problems accessing readings (online readings or the book) will not excuse failure to demonstrate having done the required readings.

**Assignments**

***In-class test***

There will be one take home test. The test will be given on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, and students will have to submit their tests before the following class on July 27<sup>th</sup>. Request for a make-up test will only be granted with proper documentation (see above).

### ***Make-up test***

Students who miss the test for a valid reason and wish to take a make-up test must give the instructor a written request for special consideration -- no later than 5 days after the date of the test -- which explains why the test was missed, accompanied by proper documentation (see above). A student who misses a test and the subsequent make-up test for a valid reason will not have a third chance to take the test, and the mark assigned for the test will be a zero.

### ***Research Proposal***

You must submit a digital copy of a proposal for your research paper on July 29<sup>th</sup> to Quercus. This proposal should specify the kind of paper you will write (empirical paper, theoretical paper, or research proposal), the topic, and research question. It should include information about the data, theories, and perspectives that you will use for the paper.

### ***Paper***

You may choose to write an empirical paper, a theoretical paper, or research proposal. The paper will be based on a topic of your choice that is suited to this course. The paper is due on August 12th, and it should be no more than 20 pages (all double spaced, 12-point type, including references). A digital copy of the paper is to be submitted to both Quercus and Turnitin at the beginning of the class on the due date.

Students agree that, by taking this course, all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to *Turnitin.com* for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the *Turnitin.com* reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of those papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the *Turnitin.com* service are described on the *Turnitin.com* web site.

Assignments not submitted through Turnitin will receive a grade of zero (0%) unless students instead provide, along with their exams, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the exam they submit is truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via Turnitin) is in place because, strictly speaking, using Turnitin is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.

**Plagiarism:** Be careful to avoid plagiarism. It is a serious academic offense with serious penalties (see the "Code of Behavior on Academic Matters"). If you are using somebody else's ideas, do not present them as your own. Give proper references if you are using somebody else's ideas, and use quotation marks if you are quoting. When in doubt, it is always safer to over-reference --you are not going to be punished for that. Please also be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second (or third etc.) course, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred off to the Office of Academic Integrity.

### ***Presentation and Leading Class Discussion***

You will be scheduled to present readings and lead discussion on an assigned day to be arranged with the instructor at the beginning of the term. On the assigned day, you are

expected to give a PowerPoint presentation about the readings which includes a) a summary of the main points of the readings, b) definitions of key concepts used in the readings, and 3) between 2-4 questions related to the readings for class discussion.

### ***Participating in Class Discussions***

You will be evaluated for your contributions to class discussion over the course of the semester. I will consider both the quantity and quality of your contributions. This is a small seminar, organized around class discussions, so student participation is expected. Be sure to allow enough time to read materials closely and critically think about them prior to each class meeting so that you are prepared to participate in class. The quality of your learning experience will hinge upon what each student brings to the classroom. Students must turn their cameras on for the seminar.

### ***Paper Presentation***

You are expected to give a brief presentation about your paper on the last class of the semester, on August 12th, when your paper is due. The presentation should cover the main ideas in your paper, describe your approach, and explain your analysis and conclusions.

### **Accessibility Needs**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [\\_disability.services@utoronto.ca\\_](mailto:_disability.services@utoronto.ca_) or [\\_http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility\\_](http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility_).

### ***Class Schedule***

July 6

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS CULTURE AND COGNITION?  
CLASSICAL FOUNDATIONS

July 8

THE SOCIAL MIND

Eviatar Zerubavel, 1997. "The Sociology of the Mind," "Social Optics," "The Social Gates of Consciousness," and "The Social Division of the World," in *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (pp. 1-22, 23-34, 35-52, 53-67).

Paul DiMaggio, 1997. "Culture and Cognition," *Annual Review of Sociology* 23: 263-287.

Supplemental:

Roy D'Andrade, 1995. *The Development of Cognitive Anthropology*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Claudia Strauss and Naomi Quinn, 1997. *A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

July 13

CULTURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Pierre Bourdieu, 1990. "Structures, habitus, practices," in *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press (pp. 52-65).

Pierre Bourdieu, 1984. "Conclusion: Classes and Classifications," in *Distinction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (pp. 466-484).

Supplemental:

Omar Lizardo, 2004. "The Cognitive Origins of Bourdieu's Habitus." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* 34: 375-401.

Omar Lizardo, 2019. "Pierre Bourdieu as Cognitive Sociologist," in *Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Sociology*, edited by Wayne H. Brekhus and Gabe Ignatow. New York: Oxford University Press

July 15

CULTURAL REPERTOIRES

Ann Swidler, 1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51: 273-286.

Ann Swidler, 2001. "Finding Culture," "Repertoires," "Conclusion: How Culture Matters" in *Talk of Love*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (pp. 11-23, 24-34, 160-180).

Supplemental:

Ann Swidler. 2008. "Comment on Stephen Vaisey's" Socrates, Skinner, and Aristotle: Three Ways of Thinking about Culture in Action". *Sociological Forum*:614-618.

July 20

CULTURAL PROCESSES AND COGNITIVE MECHANISMS

Cerulo, Karen A. 2010. "Mining the Intersections of Cognitive Sociology and Neuroscience." *Poetics* 38 (2): 115-132.

Michael Lee Wood, Dustin S. Stoltz, Justin Van Ness, and Marshall A. Taylor, 2018. "Schemas and Frames." *Sociological Theory* 36: 244-261.

*Take-Home Test Provided*

Supplemental:

Eleanor Rosch, 1978. "Principles of Categorization" in *Cognition and Categorization*, edited by Eleanor Rosch and Barbara Lloyd. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates (pp. 27-48).

Rogers Brubaker, Mara Loveman and Peter Stamatov, 2004. "Ethnicity as Cognition." *Theory and Society* 33: 31-64.

July 22

#### THE DUALITY OF CULTURE AND COGNITION

Stephen Vaisey, 2009. "Motivation and Justification: A Dual-Process Model of Culture in Action." *American Journal of Sociology* 114: 1675-1715.

Omar Lizardo, 2017. "Improving Cultural Analysis: Considering Personal Culture in its Declarative and Nondeclarative Modes." *American Sociological Review* 82: 88-115.

Supplemental:

Omar Lizardo and Michael Strand, 2010. "Skills, Toolkits, Contexts and Institutions: Clarifying the Relationship between Different Approaches to Practical Cognition in Cultural Sociology." *Poetics* 38: 205-228.

John Levi Martin, 2010. "Life's a Beach but You're an Ant, and Other Unwelcome News for the Sociology of Culture." *Poetics* 38: 229-244.

July 27

*Writing Workshop* – No Readings.

*Take Home Test Due*

July 29

#### CULTURE, COGNITION, AND CONTEXT

Aliza Luft, 2020. "Theorizing Moral Cognition: Culture in Action, Situations, and Relationships." *Socius* 6: 2378023120916125

Hana Shepherd, 2011. "The Cultural Context of Cognition: What the Implicit Association Test Tells Us About How Culture Works." *Sociological Forum* 26(1):121-143.

Supplemental:

Vanina Leschziner and Adam Isaiah Green. 2013. "Thinking about Food and Sex: Deliberate Cognition in the Routine Practices of a Field." *Sociological Theory* 31(2):116-144.

McDonnell, Terrence. 2014. Drawing out Culture: Productive Methods to Measure Cognition and Resonance. *Theory and Society* 43(3-4):247-274.

*Research Proposal Due*

August 3

#### EMBEDDED COGNITION

Edwin Hutchins, 1995. "Introduction," "Navigation as Computation," "The Implementation of Contemporary Pilotage," "Cultural Cognition," in *Cognition in the Wild*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press (pp. xi-xiv, 65-67, 92-99, 110-116, 164-174, 353-374).

Supplemental:

Edwin Hutchins, 2010. "Cognitive Ecology." *Topics in Cognitive Science* 2:705–715.

Matthew Norton, 2019. "Meaning on the Move: Synthesizing Cognitive and Systems Concepts of Culture." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 7:1–28.

August 5

#### EMBODIED CULTURE AND COGNITION

Daniel Winchester, 2016. "A Hunger for God: Embodied Metaphor as Cultural Cognition in Action." *Social Forces* 95: 585-606.

Michael Strand and Omar Lizardo, 2015. "Beyond World Images: Belief as Embodied Action in the World." *Sociological Theory* 33: 44-70.

Supplemental:

Loïc J. D. Wacquant, 2015. "For a Sociology of Flesh and Blood." *Qualitative Sociology* 38: 1-11.

Andy Clark and David Chalmers. "The Extended Mind." *Analysis* 58(1):7-19.

August 10

#### BRIDGING THE DUALITY OF CULTURE

Karen Cerulo, 2018. "Scents and Sensibility: Olfaction, Sense-Making, and Meaning Attribution." *American Sociological Review* 83: 361-389.

Supplemental:

Vanina Leschziner and Gordon Brett. 2019. "Beyond Two Minds: Cognitive, Embodied, and Evaluative Processes in Creativity." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 82.4:340-366.

Luis Antonio Vila-Henninger, 2015. "Toward Defining the Causal Role of Consciousness: Using Models of Memory and Moral Judgment from Cognitive Neuroscience to Expand the Sociological Dual-Process Model." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 45: 238-260.

August 12

*Paper Due*

*Paper Presentations*