

**Cultural Motifs:**  
**IDENTITY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE**  
Anthropology/Sociology (ANSO) 300-Section 1  
Spring 2002, TTh 9:40-11:50, Clough 100

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Office Hrs: TTh 3-4

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

From the Middle East to the world wide web, many pressing issues and controversies around the world today hinge on the question of identity. This course is an introduction to the basic sociological concepts of identity and social structure. We examine the nature of individual and group identities, why and how they form, how they both affect and are affected by our actions, and the relationship between identities and the social and political contexts in which they exist. Throughout the course, we focus on the role of identity in shaping social divisions and conflicts, political movements, and contemporary organizations and institutions. We examine the dynamics of different kinds of identities – individual, racial, class, gender, national, religious, and political – as they connect to questions about racial hierarchies, global telecommunications, wars of religion, and immigration.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING:**

**(1) Punctuality, Attendance and Participation** – A good portion of the work we do is in the classroom, during lectures and discussion, so regular punctuality, attendance and participation are required. Make sure to arrive for class on time so as not to disturb others by coming in late. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. It is your responsibility to alert me of your presence (at the end of class) if you do arrive late, otherwise you will be marked absent. Participation takes many forms including asking and answering questions, commenting on readings and lectures, contributing to a discussion. Active participation requires that you come to class prepared. Your attendance, punctuality and engaged presence are **essential** for the course and count for 20% of your final grade.

**(2) Exercises/Assignments** – Frequently, I assign brief writing exercises to be done outside of class. Make sure to complete them by the due date indicated. They correspond to the issues treated that week and help you to digest them. Handing assignments in late defeats the purpose. Quality is indicated by the following system:  $\sqrt{+}$  (approx A range),  $\sqrt{\phantom{+}}$  (approx B range),  $\sqrt{-}$  (approx C range). These assignments count for 30% of your final grade.

**(3) Exams/Essays** – The mid-term assignment is a presentation and written essay. The final exam is a written essay due during exam week. Together these count for the remaining 50% of your grade (@25% for each one).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Purchase these books at the bookstore. I will announce and distribute any additional readings.

Eva Hoffman, Exit into History

Beth Roy, Some Trouble with Cows

Erving Goffman, Presentation of Self in Everyday Life

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

**1 - Introduction to course**

Jan 10 Discuss syllabus

## **2 – Why identity?**

Jan 15 Newspaper articles on current issues of identity

Jan 17 Jane Jenson, “Crisis, Identity and Political Discourse: Turn-of-the-Century France”, Political Power and Social Theory, Vol. 9, 1995, pgs. 3-22.

Assignment due

## **3 – What is identity and identity formation?**

Jan 22 Emile Durkheim, “Individual and Collective Representation” (1898), Sociology and Philosophy, pp. 1-35

Jan 24 Andrew Abbot, “Things of Boundaries”, Social Research, Vol. 62, N. 4, Win 95, pgs. 857-882

Assignment due

Recommended:

G.H. Mead, “The Self”, Mind, Self, and Society, 1934, pgs. 135-226.

Serge Moscovici, “The Phenomenon of Social Representations”, Social Representations, 1984, pgs. 3-69

## **4 – Sources of individual identity and the self**

Jan 29 Erving Goffman, Presentation of Self in Everyday Life

Jan 31 Assignment due

## **5 – Identities, Structures and Institutions**

Feb 5 Karl Marx, “The Communist Manifesto” (1848), The Marx-Engels Reader, pgs. 469-500

Feb 7 Max Weber, “Class, Status, Party”, From Max Weber, pgs. 180-195

Assignment due

## **6 – Identity and Social Movements**

Feb 12 Alberto Melucci, “The Process of Collective Identity”, in Social Movements and Culture, eds. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, pgs. 41-63.

Feb 14 Discuss assignment

Recommended:

Larana, Johnston, Gusfield. New Social Movements.

Jean Cohen, “Strategy or Identity?”, Social Research, 52, Win 85, pgs. 663-716.

Charles Tilly, “Political Identities”, CSSC Working Paper, #212, 1995

## **7 – Social conflict and political identity**

Feb 19 Beth Roy, Some Trouble with Cows, 1994

Feb 21 Assignment due

## **8 – Nations and National Identity**

Feb 26 Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” (1882).

Benedict Anderson, excerpts from Imagined Communities

Feb 28 Anthony Smith, “The Origins of Nations”

Eric Hobsbawn, “Inventing Traditions”, The Invention of Tradition, 1983, pgs. 1-14

Assignment due

## **Spring Break**

## **9 - Multiculturalism and Diversity**

Mar 12,14 In-class exercise.

## **10 – Gender and Sexuality**

Mar 19,21 Simone de Beauvoir, excerpts from The Second Sex, xix-60.

Mar 26 Michel Foucault, "We Other 'Victorians'", The History of Sexuality.

Judith Butler

Assignment due

Mar 28 No class

### **11 - Empires and Decolonization**

Apr 2,4 Eva Hoffman Exit into History

Presentations

### **12 – Racism and ethnic conflict**

Apr 9 Omi and Winant, "Paradigms of Race: Ethnicity, Class, and Nation", Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s.

Apr 11 K. Blee, Women of the Klan, excerpts

Paper due

Recommendations:

M. Waters, Ethnic Options

Richard Alba, Ethnic Identity

Omi and Winant, Racial Formation in the United States

Lone Star (film)

### **13 – Technology, Community and Global Workplaces**

Apr 16,18 Read articles, presentations

"Multiple Subjectivity and the Virtual Community at the End of the Freudian Century", Sherry Turkle

"No Place to Hide", Michael Specter, The New Yorker

"The Productivity Mirage", John Cassidy

"My Fake Job", Rodney Rothman

"The Speed of Light", David Denby

"Monster in the Monitor", Larissa MacFarquhar

"A New Kind of Whistle-Blower", NYT

"The New Business Class", NYT Magazine

"'Hacktivists' of All Persuasions Take Their Struggle to the Web", Amy Harmon, NYT

"Technology and Community", Claude Fischer

Recommended:

Karen Cerulo, "Reframing Sociological Concepts for a Brave New (Virtual?) World", Sociological Inquiry, 67, Feb 97, pgs. 48-58.

Piece on boo.com

### **14 – Reflections and conclusions**

Apr 23 Discussion

Apr 25 Hand out final essay

**Final essays Due: Monday April 29**