CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY

Textbooks:
Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks (International)
Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia (Harvest)
Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish (Vintage)
Michel Foucault, History of Sexuality, v. 1 (Vintage)
Pierre Bourdieu, Distinction (Harvard)
Pierre Bourdieu, The Field of Cultural Production (Columbia)

This course is an introduction to some of the central issues in the contemporary study of society, based on reading some of the most important works of the last fifty years. The topics these works treat are central to a wide range of social thought: intellectual and cultural production; critical theory, language, and the re-evaluation of classical social thought; normalization and social control; the body and power; practices of the self; social reproduction through education; stratification and culture. At the same time, this is, inevitably, a selective course with many gaps in sociological theory, among them functionalism and micro-sociology and interaction, and other theoretical positions – postmodernism and feminism.

The format of the seminar will consist of a background presentation of the context for understanding the readings, followed by discussion of the assigned readings.

Books have been ordered from the University Bookstore. All readings are on reserve in SSH.

Requirements -- Three 6-7 page papers:
1) one on a work or theme from Weeks I-IV, due Week V;
2) one on a work or theme from Weeks V-VII, due Week VIII;
3) one on a work or theme from Weeks VIII-X, due exam week.
I. INTRODUCTION

Alexander and Smith, “The Strong Program in Cultural Sociology,”
AND
Alexander, “Modern, Anti, Post, and Neo: How Intellectuals Explain 'Our Time',''
BOTH in:
Jeffrey Alexander, The Meanings of Social Life


II. THE MEANINGS OF CULTURE

Max Horkheimer, “The Present Situation of Social Philosophy and the Tasks of an Institute for Social Research”, from Between Philosophy and Social Science
http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/horkheimer/1931/presen
t-situation.htm

Max Horkheimer, “Traditional and Critical Theory,”
from Critical Theory

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, “The Concept of Enlightenment” and “The Culture Industry,”
from Dialectic of Enlightenment


III. THE SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING OF KNOWLEDGE

Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, all
IV. CULTURES, STRUCTURES, AND IDEOLOGIES

Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks, 5-23, 52-61, 102-120, 125-90, 210-18, 227-38, 257-68, 275-76, 343-66, 407-10

Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” from Lenin and Philosophy
http://www.marx2mao.com/Other/LPOE70ii.html#s5

Habermas, “Technology and Science as Ideology,” from Toward a Rational Society

V-VI. KNOWLEDGE, POWER, AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Foucault, Discipline and Punish, all

Foucault, “Two Lectures,” from Power/Knowledge

Foucault, “Truth and Power,” from Power/Knowledge

VII. THE MICROPHYSICS OF POWER/KNOWLEDGE

Foucault, History of Sexuality, volume 1, all

Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” from Dreyfus and Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics
VIII-IX. STRATIFICATION AND CULTURAL CAPITAL


Bourdieu, Distinction, pp. 1-256, 466-500

X. CULTURE AND INTELLECTUAL PRODUCTION

Bourdieu, “Intellectual Field and Creative Project,”
In Social Science Information 8 (April, 1969): 89-119
http://ssi.sagepub.com/content/vol8/issue2/

Bourdieu, The Field of Cultural Production,
pp. 29-73, 112-141, 176-91
CULTURE AND INTERPRETATION


GENERAL WORKS IN SOCIAL THEORY, HISTORY, AND PHILOSOPHY

On Marxism after Marx, Perry Anderson’s Considerations on Western Marxism is an interesting overview, with some substantive analysis of the arguments of those thinkers considered as parts of “Western Marxism”. Dick Howard, The Marxian Legacy deals with some of the same figures, like Merleau-Ponty and Habermas, but is rather opaque. David McLellan, Marxism after Marx is extremely light in its overview, but mentions nearly everyone of importance. John Roemer, ed., Analytical Marxism is a collection of essays focusing on structural and analytical issues and on a number of different themes in contemporary Marxism. The most influential of the French thinkers is Louis Althusser. See his For Marx and Althusser et al., Reading Capital. Althusser’s essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in Lenin and Philosophy, is also valuable. On Althusser, see Gregory Elliott, Althusser: A Critical Reader; and E.P. Thompson, The Poverty of Theory. The first two volumes of a multi-volume biography of Althusser have now appeared in French, written by Yann Moulier Boutang.

On critical theory generally, see Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination, Susan Buck-Morss, The Origins of Negative Dialectics; David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory; Helmut Dubiel, Theory and Politics; and Rolf Wiggershaus, The Frankfurt School. For short pieces by members of the Frankfurt School, see Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, eds., The Essential Frankfurt School Reader, and Stephen Bronner and Douglas Kellner, eds., Critical Theory and Society: A Reader. Apart from Horkheimer, the other great philosophical founder of critical theory is Theodor Adorno, who wrote, with Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment, as well as a serious critique of modern philosophy, Negative Dialectics. On Adorno, see Martin Jay, Adorno; Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics, which also deals with the critical theorist and literary critic Walter Benjamin; and Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science. On Adorno as aesthetic theorist, with sections also on Lukacs, Bloch, Benjamin, and Sartre, see Frederic Jameson, Marxism and Form. See also Eugene Lunn, Marxism and Modernism.

Habermas early works are both historical and philosophical. See The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere and Knowledge and Human Interests. The best general work on Habermas is still Thomas McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas. See also the interview with Habermas in New Left

Habermas’ Philosophical Discourse of Modernity is a set of lectures that attacks a whole series of developments in French thought, including the work of Foucault. On this issue, see Foucault contra Habermas: Recasting the Dialogue between Genealogy and Critical Theory, ed. by Samantha Ashenden and David Owen; Michael Allen, ed., Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault-Habermas Debate, and Noelle McAfee, Habermas, Kristeva, and Citizenship.

STRUCTURALISM AND POST-STRUCTURALISM


Vincent Descombes, Modern French Philosophy, is a brief but entertaining overview of recent French thinkers. Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, French Philosophy of the Sixties, is a conservative and rather simple critique of the same thinkers. Jürgen Habermas provides a trenchant critique of the “Nietzschean current” in France in his The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, with chapters on Foucault and Derrida, among others. Martin Jay, Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought, is an unusual and
ingenious investigation of recent French thought from the point of view of its “anti-ocularcentric” attitude toward “seeing”.


MICHEL FOUCAULT

Foucault’s many essays and interviews are collected in a four-volume set, Dits et Écrits, from which a selection has been published in English in three volumes.

There are now three biographies of Foucault: Didier Eribon, Michel Foucault; James Miller, The Passion of Michel Foucault, and most recently, David Macey, The Lives of Michel Foucault. There is even a French roman à clef, in which Foucault appears under another name: Hervé Guibert, A l’ami qui ne m’a pas sauvé la vie.

There are a number of books of interviews with Foucault, which often explain his work better than the works themselves. The most important is Power/Knowledge. See also Foucault, Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and other Writings, 1977-1984; idem, Foucault Live; and James Bernauer and David Rasmussen, eds., The Final Foucault, which also has an excellent bibliography of Foucault’s writings. Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, contains essays by and interviews with Foucault. See also the interview with Foucault and the afterward by him, included in Dreyfus and Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, 2d ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, Patrick H. Hutton, eds., Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault, contains two interesting essays by Foucault and a fascinating interview. Foucault, Power, Truth, Strategy contains some interesting pieces and an interview. See also Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, which includes two lectures by and an interview with Foucault, and essays by others as well.
Foucault began his career with a great interest in psychiatry and mental illness, in Mental Illness and Psychology. His interest became more oriented toward the history of madness in Madness and Civilization. He then turned toward the study of knowledge in Order of Things and The Archaeology of Knowledge. His “third period” begins with Discipline and Punish, his principal work on power. The History of Sexuality, Volume 1, which has as its subtitle in the French original, The Will to Knowledge, is the sequel to Discipline and Punish. For more on power, see “Truth and Power” and “Two Lectures,” in Foucault, Power/Knowledge. The succeeding volumes of the History of Sexuality are in fact great departures, restoring the importance of the self and its shaping: The Uses of Pleasure and The Care of the Self.

Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, 2d ed., is still probably the best general work in English so far on Foucault. There is also the excellent work of Gilles Deleuze, Foucault, which is now in English, though it is difficult. Roy Boyne, Foucault and Derrida: The other side of reason, attempts some comparisons. There are two largely introductory books on Foucault by Barry Smart, Michel Foucault, and Foucault, Marxism, and Critique. Gary Gutting, Michel Foucault’s Archaeology of Scientific Reason is a study of Foucault that explores his roots in French philosophy and history of science. Michèle Barrett, The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault, examines Foucault as a critic of the concept of ideology. James W. Bernauer, Michel Foucault’s Force of Flight: Toward and Ethics for Thought examines thinking as a form of “practice.” Among more specialized works, see Simon During, Foucault and Literature; Stephen J. Ball, ed., Foucault and Education, and John Caputo and Mark Yount, eds., Foucault and the Critique of Institutions.

There are many collections of essays on Foucault. Gary Gutting ed., The Cambridge Companion to Foucault, has a wide range of perspectives. Arnold I. Davidson, ed., Foucault and His Interlocutors collects a number of pieces on Foucault by his colleagues. See also David Couzens Hoy, ed., Foucault: A Critical Reader, which includes comments by a number of interesting thinkers, including Habermas and Edward Said. Mike Gane, ed., Towards a Critique of Foucault proposes critical perspectives. Jonathan Arac, ed., After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges has essays by a diverse group, including Sheldon Wolin.
On Foucault’s relevance for history and historical sociology, see Jan Goldstein, ed., Foucault and the Writing of History, Mitchell Dean, Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault’s Methods and Historical Sociology, and Mike Gane and Terry Johnson, eds., Foucault’s New Domains. There are several works on Foucault from a feminist perspective: Jana Sawicki, Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power, and the Body; and Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby, eds., Feminism and Foucault.

There is an essay on the early Foucault by Derrida, “Cogito and the History of Madness,” in Writing and Difference. For another critique of Foucault’s work on madness, see Andrew Scull, Social Order/Mental Disorder, and idem, “Michel Foucault’s history of madness,” in History of the Human Sciences 3 (1990). On the problem of the self in the late Foucault and in Weber, see Pasquale Pasquino, “Michel Foucault (1926-1984): La volonta’ de sapere,” in Quaderni Piacentini, number 14 (1984), and Harvey Goldman, Politics, Death, and the Devil.

Chapters on Foucault appear in Habermas, The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, Michel de Certeau, Heterologies, Geoffrey Galt Harpham, The Ascetic Imperative in Culture and Criticism, Hayden White, Tropics of Discourse, and idem, The Content of the Form; and Edward Said, Beginnings, and idem, The World, the Text, and the Critic. See also Dominick LaCapra and Steven Kaplan, eds., Modern European Intellectual History. Praxis International, number 6 (1986), has some essays on Foucault and the Frankfurt School by Reiner Schürmann and David Ingram.


There are many works on the body that have been influenced by Foucault. Among them, see Francis Barker, *The Tremulous Body: Essays in Subjection*. On Foucault’s conception of the subject, see Jerrold Seigel, “Avoiding the Subject: A Foucaultian Itinerary,” in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 51 (1990). On Foucault and cruelty, see James Miller, “Carnivals of Atrocity: Nietzsche, Foucault, Cruelty,” *Political Theory* 18 (1990).

PIERRE BOURDIEU

Bourdieu’s general theory was expounded in its first version in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. The *Logic of Practice* is the revised version of this book. Bourdieu’s roots are in structural anthropology, which plays a large part in these works as well. On the origins of Bourdieu’s work, see “‘Fieldwork in Philosophy,’” and “Landmarks,” in Bourdieu, *In Other Words*. Bourdieu has a number of brief essays collected in *In Other Words*. Bourdieu’s work began in studies of Algeria, then moved on to studies of art and culture. See *Photography*, *The Love of Art*, and *Distinction*. For a recent collection of his work on art, see Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*. A good essay on this subject is Hans-Peter Müller, “Kultur, Geschmack und Distinktion: Grundzüge der Kultursoziologie Pierre Bourdieu’s,” in *Kultur und Gesellschaft*, Special Issue 27 (1986). For the influence on Bourdieu of Heidegger and Nietzsche, see Bourdieu, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*. The most recent of his works published in English are *Practical Reason*, a collection of essays on a range of subjects, including the state, and *Pascalian Meditations*, a wide-ranging reflection on themes of culture and society that also criticizes modern social and political thought in Habermas and John Rawls.

On cultural capital, see *The State Nobility*, which is a study of the French ruling classes and their training and reproduction. For his own analysis of the French academic scene, in which he and Foucault were major players, see Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*. Although his first work on education and socialization is *The Inheritors*, his most advanced work on the same subject is Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, now in a second edition. See also Bourdieu, et al., *Academic Discourse*.

Bourdieu reflected a great deal on method, and even wrote a kind of introductory book on it, *The Craft of Sociology*. On his method, see Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, *An Introduction to*
Reflexive Sociology, which has theoretical articles, the record of a workshop, and a good bibliography.