

**SOC 526: CULTURAL ANALYSIS**  
Spring 2008, Princeton University  
Friday 10am-1pm

Instructor: King-To Yeung  
e-mail: [kyeung@princeton.edu](mailto:kyeung@princeton.edu)  
Office: Wallace 153 (609-258-8871)

**OBJECTIVES**

In this graduate seminar, we will journey through some key methodological and theoretical issues in the sociological analysis of culture. Through analysis, we mean to break up “culture” into different components and see how they fit together, perhaps in relation to other social processes. The question of how this approach is accomplished—and whether it is justifiable—poses numerous questions that will form the core of our discussions. Accordingly, we will survey several different analytical approaches to studying culture. For each, we will interrogate their epistemological, theoretical, and methodological foundations. Each analytical approach should come with a practical “software” or toolkit, with which you can try out your substantial research questions.

Each class will generally be formed by two parts: 1) a theoretical/ epistemological/ historical discussion on a particular analytical approach to culture; and 2) the practical/methodological part related to that approach.

Assignments:

- (1) About one day prior to each class meetings, students should e-mail the instructor one or more analytical questions (not factual questions) about the readings or anything relevant to the assigned class. In addition to the study guide questions the instructor provides, students’ questions will serve the basis for class discussions.
- (2) Try out at least two analytical approaches introduced in the class and submit an empirical report to King by the end of the semester.

**SCHEDULE OVERVIEW**

- Class 1: Describing Culture
  - Class 2: Meaning
  - Class 3: Syntax & Rules
  - Class 4: Narratives
  - Class 5: Temporality & Sequence (an additional class, optional to attend)
  - Class 6: Pragmatism & Pragmatics
  - Class 7: Phenomenology & Hermeneutics
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## CLASS I DESCRIBING CULTURE

Sociologists often undervalue the power of “description,” while overemphasizing “analysis.” Description often serves a preparatory role that precedes the “real” analysis. The goal of this class is to examine the relationship between description of culture and cultural analysis. We will discuss how sociologists might go about describing culture. Based on Geertz's interpretive theory of culture, the lecturer will argue that, in cultural analysis, description and analysis are indeed inseparable. The epistemological foundation of this proposition will be discussed.

### REQUIRED READING

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 1 “Thick Description”; “Chapter 15 “Deep Play.”

*\* An anthropologist sets an important epistemological foundation for cultural analysis.*

Thompson, E.P. 1963. The Making of the English Working Class. New York: Vintage (1966 edition). Preface (pp. 9-14); Chapter 16 – Class Consciousness (pp. 711-832)

*\* A Marxist historian analyzes the emergence of a “class” without reifying it or reducing the actors to passive dopes. “Cultural analysis”—as Geertz would have it—seems to be the answer. Thompson was also a forerunner of cultural analysis associated to the Birmingham Center.*

### FURTHER READING

Williams, Raymond. 1958. Culture & Society: 1780-1950. New York: Columbia University Press.

*\* One of the most important post-war cultural historians/theorists on the history of the idea of culture. A critical review of literary tradition from the Romantics to Orwell, showing how the tradition evolved around the emergence of terms like “industry,” “democracy,” “class,” “art” and “culture.”*

Abbott, Andrew. 2007. “Against Narrative: A Preface to Lyrical Sociology.” Sociological Theory 25 (1): 67-99.

*\* Why (cultural) sociologists should read E. P. Thompson.*

Jerolmack, Colin. 2007. “Animal Practices, Ethnicity and Community: The Turkish Handlers of Berlin.” American Sociological Review 72(6): 874-894.

*\* How pigeons relate to men in exile. An interesting comparison to Geertz’s treatment of the relationships between Balinese men and cocks.*

Krober, A. L. and Clyde Kluckhohn. 1963[1952]. Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions. New York: Vintage Books.

*\* A classic review of culture as an analytical concept.*

Linton, Ralph. 1936. The Study of Man. New York: D. Appleton-Century.

*\* A classic analysis of the multiple dimensions of variations and contradiction with culture.*

White, L. A. 1949. The Science of Culture. New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy.

*\*An early statement of cultural analysis by an anthropologist.*

Sahlins, Marshall. 1999. “Two or Three Things that I know about Culture.” The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 5(3): 399-421.

*\* A review of major anthropological debates on culture after WWII.*

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. Argonauts of the Western Pacific. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

*\* An early statement and example of how the ethnographic method can be used to study culture scientifically.*

## **CLASS II MEANING**

“Meaning”—whether in the form of language, action, or social structure—cannot be observed directly. For human science researchers, one key analytical problem of meaning is thus to locate the *devices* through which social meanings are produced, conveyed, interpreted, understood, and transformed. In examining meaning production and transformation, the analytical tools the researcher adopts often assume some general theory of meaning (e.g., how utterances are mapped on their referents), or an epistemology of interpretation (e.g., on what basis can observers or actors say, “we understand”), or a philosophy of mind (e.g., what is the essential relation among subjective meaning, intersubjectivity, and social actions). Since we cannot possibly cover these diverse fields of knowledge at once, this class will use “structuralism”—perhaps the most popular theory of meaning among sociologists—as the basis for discussions. After grasping the essential features of structuralism, we then go on to juxtapose this general theory against other analytical approaches to meaning (e.g., Geertz’s adoption of pragmatism in his interpretive anthropology discussed in the last class). By tracing the Saussurean origin of structuralism, the lecturer will show how Saussure’s general linguistics had been made static over time, misleading later researchers to see social meaning as a static system of sign-structures. Together we will seek out possible analytical strategies that can simultaneously preserve the essential characters of structuralism and take into account the social dynamics of meanings.

## REQUIRED READING (Class II—Meaning)

Chandler, Daniel. 2007. "Semiotics For Beginner." [Web text] from Semiotics: The Basics. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Routledge.

*\* It is impossible to summarize the fields of structural linguistics and semiotics in one article. This site presents some basic ideas on which the following articles analyze social meanings in sociological terms.*

Mohr, John W. 1998. "Measuring Meaning Structure." Annual Review of Sociology 24: 345-370.

*\* A comprehensive review of how (contemporary) American sociologists deal with meaning as structure.*

D'Andrade, Roy. 1995. The Development of Cognitive Anthropology. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2, 3, 4.

*\* An introduction how structural models of culture are developed in the field of anthropology.*

Kane, Anne E. 1997. "Theorizing Meaning Construction in Social Movements: Symbolic Structures and Interpretation during the Irish Land War, 1879-1882." Sociological Theory 15(3): 249-276.

*\* A demonstration of how to analyze meaning as structure, while connecting meaning structure to social actions.*

Alexander, Jeffrey C. and Philip Smith. 1993. "The Discourse of American Civil Society: A New Proposal for Cultural Studies." Theory and Society 22(2): 151-207.

*\* How to approach discourse from a structuralist (systemic) approach.*

McLean, Paul D. 1998. "A Frame Analysis of Favor Seeking in the Renaissance: Agency, Networks, and Political Culture." American Journal of Sociology 104: 51-91.

*\* Joining Goffman, network analysis and the MDS technique to understand a political culture in which social relationships are generated through letter writings. In addition to the structural approach to meaning, this piece also demonstrates a relational treatment of culture.*

## SOFTWARE

MDS—can be done in STATA or SPSS.

Web Tools to Draw Galois Lattice

- (1) <http://www.upriss.org.uk/fca/fca.html>
- (2) <http://maarten.janssenweb.net/jalaba/JaLaBA.pl>

GLAD (General Lattice Analysis and Design), a DOS program, available from Vincent Duquette.

ELLA (Every-gal-and-guy's Latent Lattice Analyzer) available from John L. Martin.

### **FURTHER READING** (Class II—Meaning)

Ogden, C. K. and I. A. Richards. 1923. The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language Upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism. New York: Harvest Book.

*\* A classic review of the problem of meaning.*

Saussure, Ferdinand de. Course in General Linguistics. (versions various depending on the edition)

*\*The theoretical statement of language by Saussure's structural linguistics.*

Leach, Edmund. 1976. Culture & Communication: The Logic By Which Symbols Are Connected. Cambridge University Press.

*\* An Introduction to the Use of Structural Analysis in Social Anthropology.*

D'Andrade, Roy. 1995. The Development of Cognitive Anthropology. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2, 3, 4.

*\* An introduction how structural models of culture are developed in the field of anthropology.*

Miller, George A. 1991. The Science of Words. New York: Scientific American Library.

*\* A cognitive psychological analysis of all the associations of words, an approach quite different from that of Saussure.*

Barthes, Roland. 1990. S/Z, translated by Richard Miller. Oxford: Blackwell.

*\*Principles of structural analysis.*

Macherey, Pierre. 1978. A Theory of Literary Production, translated by Geoffrey Wall. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bernstein, Basil. 1971. Class, Codes and Control: Theoretical Studies Towards a Sociology of Language. Schocken Books.

*\* How linguistic codes reproduce social classes.*

Breiger, Ronald. 2000. "A Tool Kit for Practice Theory." Poetics 27: 91-115.

*\* A great comparison to several formal analysis of culture.*

Mohr, John and Vincent Duquenne. 1997. "The Duality of Culture and Practice: Poverty Relief in New York City, 1988-1917." Theory & Society 26: 305-56.

*\* Linking Galois Lattice analysis to changes of institutional logic.*

Yeung, King-To. 2005. "What Does Love Mean? Exploring Network Culture in Two Network Settings." Social Forces 84 (1): 391-420.

\* *Using Galois Lattice to examine meaning structure and social networks.*

### CLASS III SYNTAX & RULES

If meanings are socially constructed, they are probably constrained by societal rules, which are partly established through social structures that people support, reproduce, and legitimize. Saussurean approaches to meaning do not necessarily tell us how systems of signs interact with collective actions or social structures. This week we will connect meaning to rule structures of many forms: syntax, grammar, schemas, cultural models, cultural repertoire, cultural maps, etc.—all suggest not one but some clusters of rules that shape social practices. To begin with an analysis of cultural rules, we must first understand the nature of a rule and the action of rule-following. Cultural rules familiar to us are not written on paper, nor are they strictly enforced by formal organizations. In studying cultural rules, we must therefore solve the apparent paradox between structure and agency: how do social actors attain rule-generated agency? Furthermore, we will determine if consensus should form the foundation of rule extraction (from practices). Finally, we will pay attention to how theoretical assumptions regarding rule-following can shape the various analytical methods of rule or cultural model extractions.

#### REQUIRED READING

Giddens, Anthony. 1979. Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Chapter 1 "Structuralism and the Theory of the Subject" & Chapter 2 "Agency, Structure"

\* *Moving beyond Saussurean structuralism and incorporating Wittgenstein's understanding of rule-following, the author theorizes a duality of structure and agency.*

Sewell, William H., Jr. 1992. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation." American Journal of Sociology 98: 1-29.

\* *A critique of Giddens's structuration theory.*

D'Andrade, Roy. 1995. "The Growth of Schema Theory" Chapter 6 in The Development of Cognitive Anthropology. New York: Cambridge University Press.

\* *How does a study of cognitive schema help us understand cultural rules?*

Garro, Linda. 2000. "Remembering What One Knows and the Construction of the Past: A Comparison of Cultural Consensus Theory and Cultural Schema Theory." Ethos 28(3): 275-319.

\* *Getting cultural schemas by talking to people.*

Schall, Maryan S. 1983. "A Communication-Rules Approach to Organizational Culture." Administrative Science Quarterly 28 (4): 557-581.  
\* *Observing cultural rules in organizational settings using multiple methods.*

Carley, Kathleen and Michael Palmquist. 1992. "Extracting, Representing, and Analyzing Mental Models." Social Forces 70(3): 601-636.  
\* *Introducing a computational approach to cognitive map.*

(optional) Carley, Kathleen. 1993. "Coding Choices for Textual Analysis: A Comparison of Content Analysis and Map Analysis." Sociological Methodology 23: 75-126.

(optional) Beisel, Nicola and Tamara Kay. 2004. "Abortion, Race, and Gender in Nineteenth Century America." American Sociological Review 69 (4): 498-518.

(optional) Bogen, David. 1993. "Order Without Rules: Wittgenstein and the "Communicative Ethics Controversy." Sociological Theory 11(1): 55-71.  
\*\* *A brief introduction on what philosophers mean by "rule-following."*

## **SOFTWARE**

List of Content Analysis Programs

<http://www.princeton.edu/~kyeung/CulturalAnalysis/ContentAnalysisPrograms.pdf>

The TAMS (Text Analysis Markup System) Analyzer is an open source qualitative analysis system for OS X and GNUstep (Linux, BSD, Solaris, etc.). Screenshots, documentation, binaries and sourcecode available

<http://www.content-analysis.de/2007/10/01/tams-analyzer.html>

## **FURTHER READING (Class III—Syntax & Rules)**

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1949. The Elementary Structures of Kinship, translated by James Harle Bell and Rodney Needham. Boston: Beacon Press.

\* *An adoption of Saussurean linguistics and Mauss's theory of social exchange to study the generic kinship structures across non-western societies. We can see many traces of Saussurean analyses here.*

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1963. Structural Anthropology, translated by Claire Jacobson and Brooker Grundfast Schoepf. New York: Basic Books.

D'Andrade, Roy. 1995. "Models and Theories" Chapter 7 in The Development of Cognitive Anthropology. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Quinn, Naomi (ed.). 2005. Finding Culture In Talk: A Collection of Methods. Palgrave.

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

Vygotsky, Lev. 1986. Thought and Language, translated by Alex Kozulin. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

*\* Thought does not necessarily produce language, but language can realize thought.*

Barthes, Roland. 1972. Mythologies, translated by Annette Lavers. New York: AHill and Wang.

*\* An outline of Barthes' theory of structure of myth, showing how the theory can be applied to understanding the French bourgeois culture.*

Culler, Jonathan. 1982. On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism After Structuralism. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

*\*A general and accessible introduction of deconstruction.*

#### **CLASS IV NARRATIVES**

The concept of narrative provides with us a way to examine cultural dynamics, which cultural schemas and the analysis of meaning structures are not always ready to grasp. Narratives move beyond cultural schemas and meaning structures because of their emphasis on meaning productivity: narratives have to be constructed by narrators, who generally are confronted with more than one narrative alternative. Narratives may reflect deeper cultural models of a group, but narratives are not determined by such models. Analysts of narratives must take into account the historical and situational context in which narratives are produced. While the concept of narratives is useful, the term is itself elusive in sociological analysis. On the one hand, we can treat the evidence collected as narratives and examine their constructive patterns. At stake is the question of referents: whether, and how much, constructed narratives correspond to the reality out there (assumed that such a reality is what analysts want to know). Furthermore, narrative data are often in the form of narratives about others' narratives. This means we must interrogate the nature of narrative carefully before we can accept such as evidence. On the other hand, analysts cannot escape from constructing narratives themselves when they present analytical findings in the forms of writing and speech.

#### **REQUIRED READING**

Scholes, Robert, James Phelan, and Robert Kellogg. 2006. The Nature of Narrative. Oxford University Press, pp. 207-17, 240-49, 256-65, 302-09, 314-333.

*\* A classic introductory text on narrative. A great point: "Plot is only the indispensable skeleton which, fleshed out with character and incident, provides the necessary clay into which life may be breathed."*

Wake, Paul. 2006. "Narrative and Narratology." Pp. 14-27 in The Routledge Companion of Critical Theory, edited by Simon Malpas and Paul Wake. London: Routledge.

Ricoeur, Paul. 1981. "The Narrative Function" Pp. 274-196 in Hermeneutics & the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation, edited and translated by John B. Thompson. Cambridge University Press.

*\* Arguing for the similar characters between fictional narratives and historical explanation.*

Jacobs, Ronald N. 1996. "Civil Society and Crisis: Culture, Discourse, and the Rodney King Beating." American Journal of Sociology 101(5): 1238-72.

*\* How different genre (plots) emerge from contingent events.*

Polletta, Francesca. 1998. "'It Was Like a Fever...': Narrative and Identity in Social Protest." Social Problems 45(2): 137-159.

*\* linking narratives to identity and actions.*

(optional) Somers, Margaret R. 1992. "Narrativity, Narrative Identity, and Social Action: Rethinking English Working-Class Formation." Social Science History 16(4): 591-630.

Franzosi, Roberto. 1997. "Mobilization and Counter-Mobilization Processes: From the 'Red Years' (1919-20) to the 'Black Years' (1921-22) in Italy: A New Methodological Approach to the Study of Narrative Data." Theory and Society 26: 275-304.

Also, check out Franzosi's program PC-ACE (Program for Computer-Assisted Coding for Events): <http://www.pc-ace.com/> [It's free.]

(optional) Bearman, Peter S. and Katherine Stovel. 2000. "Becoming a Nazi: A Model for Narrative Networks." Poetics 27: 69-90.

Smith, Tammy. 2007. "Narrative Boundaries and the Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict and Conciliation." Poetics 35(1): 22-46.

*\* how is narrative transformation possible.*

Griffin, Larry J. 1993. "Narrative, Event-Structure Analysis, and Causal Interpretation in Historical Sociology." American Journal of Sociology 98(5): 1094-1133.

Also, check out the ESA Program site: <http://www.indiana.edu/~socpsy/ESA/>

**FURTHER READING** (Class IV—Narratives)

Todorov, Tzvetan. 1969. Grammaire du Gécaméron. The Hague: Mouton.

\* *Todorov coined the term “narratology” here.*

Genette, Gérard. 1980. Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method, translated by Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Greimas, Algirdas. 1997. On Meaning. University of Minnesota Press.

Jameson, Fredric. 1981. The Political Unconscious. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Chatman, Seymour. 1980. Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

De Man, Paul. 1979. Allegories of Reading. New Heaven: Yale University Press.

Doniger, Wendy. Siva: The Erotic Ascetic. Galaxy Books.

\* *the structure of myth as narrative.*

Propp, Vladimir. 1958. Morphology of the Folktale, translated by Laurence Scott. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Ricoeur, Paul. 1984-88. Time and Narrative, 3 volumes, translated by Katherine Blamey and David Pellauer. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Abell, Peter. 1987. The Syntax of Social Life: The Theory and Method of Comparative Narratives. Oxford University Press.

\* *A formalistic approach to narratives.*

Cerulo, Karen. 1998. Deciphering Violence: The Cognitive Structure of Right and Wrong. Routledge.

\* *how sequencing in narratives changes readers’ moral judgment.*

Somers, Margaret. 1994. “The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach.” Theory and Society 23 (5): 605-49.

Steinmetz, George. 1992. “Reflections on the Role of Social Narratives in Working-Class Formation: Narrative Theories in Social Sciences.” Social Science History 16(3): 489-516.

Polletta, Franscesa. 2006. It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics. University of Chicago Press.

\* *How telling stories help actors to act more.*

Franzosi, Roberto. 2004. From Words to Numbers: Narrative, Data, and Social Science. Cambridge University Press.

*\*a social scientist rethinking the epistemological foundation of quantitative research in cultural (and other forms of) analysis*

Franzosi, Roberto. 1998. "Narrative Analysis-Or Why (And How) Sociologists Should be Interested in Narrative." Annual Review of Sociology 24: 517-554.

## **CLASS V TEMPORALITY & SEQUENCE**

Temporality and sequencing are important in cultural analysis because many cultural processes are constructed in the form of social narrative—a form of discourse constituted by the arrangement of plots over linear time. Attention to temporality and sequencing, however, have been scant in sociological analysis. This week we attempt to clarify some basic notions of temporality and sequencing. First we examine the analytical approaches to the social meaning of time as it is experienced by actors. We note that while analysts attend to the cultural meaning of temporal experience, they may or may not deal with the sequential construction of culture. This latter issue will be discussed through the lenses of two independent modes of analysis: 1) ethnomethodology and conversation analysis; and 2) the structuralist approach via optimal matching.

### **REQUIRED READING**

Flaherty, Michael G. 2003. "Time Work: Customizing Temporal Experience." Social Psychology Quarterly 66 (1): 17-33.

*\* How people experience time subjectively and generate agency.*

Zerubavel, Eviatar. 1979. Patterns of Time in Hospital Life. University of Chicago Press. *Selection*.

Abbott, Andrew. 1995. "Sequence Analysis: New Methods for Old Ideas." Annual Review of Sociology 21: 93-113.

Abbott, Andrew and John Forrest. 1986. "Optimal Matching Methods for Historical Data." Journal of Interdisciplinary History 16:473-496.

SEE ASLO Abbott's Optimal Matching Program  
<http://home.uchicago.edu/~aabbott/om.html>

(optional) Abbott, Andrew and Alexandra Hrycak. 1990. "Measuring Resemblance in Social Sequences." American Journal of Sociology. 96:144-185.

Stovel, Katherine. 2001. "Local Sequential Patterns: The Structure of Lynching in the Deep South, 1882-1930." Social Forces 79: 843-880.

Sacks, Harvey, Emanuel A. Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson. 1974. "A Simplest Systematics for the Organizational of Turn-Taking for Conversation." Language 50(4): 696-735.

Gibson, David R. 2005. "Opportunistic Interruptions: Interactional Vulnerabilities Deriving from Linearization." Social Psychology Quarterly 68(4): 316-337.

*\*A great demonstration of methodology that join both temporality and sequence in one analysis.*

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1992. "Repair After Next Turn: The Last Structurally Provided Defense of Intersubjectivity in Conversation." American Journal of Sociology 97 (5) : 1295-345.

#### **FURTHER READING** (Class V—Temporality & Sequence)

Sorokin, Pitirim A. and Robert K. Merton. 1937. "Social Time: A Methodological and Functional Analysis." American Journal of Sociology 42(5): 615-629.

Abbott, Andrew. 2001. Time Matters: On Theory and Method. University of Chicago Press.

*\*A general statement about why sociologists should attend to temporality in the scheme of explanation and analysis.*

Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Ann Mische. 1998. "What is Agency?" American Journal of Sociology 103: 962-1023.

*\*A theoretical statement of agency, one that takes the temporal dimension of agency seriously.*

Sacks, Harvey. 1992. Lectures on Conversation, Volumes I and II, edited by G. Jefferson. Oxford: Blackwell.

*\*Class notes of Harvey Sacks—a very interest source for his general sociological thought.*

Whalen and Zimmerman. 1987. "Sequential and Institutional Context in Calls for Help." Social Psychology Quarterly 50: 172-185.

Goodwin and Heritage. 1990. "Conversation Analysis." Annual Review of Anthropology 19: 283-307.

Gibson, David. 2000. "Seizing the Movement: The Problem of Conversational Agency." Sociological Theory 18(3): 368-82.

*\*Linking conversational analysis to the theory of agency (ala Emirbayer & Mische).*

Stovel, Katherine, Michael Savage, and Peter Bearman. 1996. "Ascription into Achievement: Models of Career Systems at Lloyds Bank, 1890-1970." American Journal of Sociology 102-358-399.

*\*Using optimal matching to understanding the changing logic of an economic institution.*

Blair-Loy, Mary. 1999. "Career Patterns of Executive Women in Finance: An Optimal Matching Analysis." American Journal of Sociology 104: 1346-97.

## **CLASS VI PRAGMATISM & PRAGMATICS**

A daunting task still awaits us: how to understand meaning in the context of social actions. In the past few weeks we bypassed this question and focused more or less on the ways speakers or senders construct meanings. We have ignored how actors translate, interpret, and lose control of meanings once utterance is completed. This week we will see how Pragmatism (ala Dewey, James, and Mead) can help join meaning and social action together. We will also examine how pragmatism and structuralism can be brought together in understanding the relationship between discourse and practice. Furthermore, we will examine briefly the hermeneutic issue of understanding. Through the universal pragmatics of Habermas, we examine the conditions under which valid claims can be examined by cultural analysts.

### **REQUIRED READING**

Wagner-Pacifici, Robin. 2000. Theorizing the Standoff: Contingency in Action. Cambridge University Press.

*\*Perhaps the only theoretical work on culture that explicitly applies American pragmatism and join this branch of philosophy with European structuralism. A great book for many other reasons.*

Dewey, John. 1958. Experience and Nature. Chapter 5 "Nature, Communication, and Meaning." New York: Dover.

*\*A classic pragmatist statement on communication and its meaning to human experiences.*

Habermas, Jürgen. 1998. "Actions, Speech Acts, Linguistically Mediated Interactions, and the Lifeworld." Pp. 215-255 in On the Pragmatics of Communication, edited by Maeve Cooke. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

*\*Integrating speech act theory (Austin), pragmatics from the field of linguistics, and Hermeneutics (Hussrel) to theorize how social actors (speakers) can possibly achieve understanding. A classic Habermas project.*

(optional) James, William. 1907. "What Pragmatism Means" originally included in Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking.

*\*James provides the most popular definition of pragmatism as a method of philosophical inquiry, though this definition is not the only one. For example, Charles Sanders Peirce had disagreed with this definition.*

(optional) Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2006. "Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy." Pp. 29-90 in Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual, edited by Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen and Jason L. Mast. Cambridge University Press.

*\*The most recent attempt to integrate pragmatics, actions, and hermeneutics in cultural analysis.*

(optional) Ricoeur, Paul. 2007. "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text." Pp. 144-167 From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

*\*Another Ricoeur's piece that guarantees stimulation.*

(optional) Luhmann, Niklas. 1976. "The Future Cannot Begin: Temporal Structure in Modern Society." Social Research 43: 130-152.

*\*How to think about the future given the present in a sociological way.*

### **FURTHER READING** (Class VI—Pragmatism and Pragmatics)

Austin, J. L. 1962. How to do things with Words: The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955. Oxford: Clarendon.

*\*The title suggests it all—the linkage between speech and action.*

Rorty, Richard. 1979. Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Princeton University Press.

*\*The forerunner-philosopher of the linguistic turn incorporating American pragmatism in new ways.*

Schuetz, Alfred. 1941. "William James' Concept of the Stream of Thought Phenomenologically Interpreted." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 1(4): 442-452.

Peirce, Charles Sanders. 1931-1935; 1958. Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, vols. 1-6. Harvard University Press.

*\*The philosopher who coins the name "pragmatism," but his conception of pragmatism is different from that of James. Important to note that Peirce's pragmatism is a philosophical method to establish truth (or truth statements).*

Mische, Ann. 2007. Partisan Publics: Communication and Contention Across Brazilian Youth Activist Networks. Princeton University Press.

*\*Integrating Dewey, Mead, Schutz, Harbermas (and more) in a fully dynamic analysis of social actions, communication and political strategies*

Huang, Yan. 2007. Pragmatics. Oxford University Press.

*\*An accessible but technical introduction to pragmatics as linguists understand the term.*

Coser, L. A. and R. Coser. 1963. "Time Perspective and Social Structure." Pp. 167-79 in A Handful of Thistles: Collected Papers in Moral Conviction. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Fine, Gary Alan. 1990. "Organizational Time: Temporal Demands and the Experience of Work in Restaurant Kitchen." Social Forces 69: 95-144.

## **CLASS VII PHENOMONOLOGY & HERMENEUTICS**

The interpretation of social actions perhaps constitutes the greatest challenge for cultural analysts. Drawing from the fields of phenomenology and hermeneutics, we examine the empirical, "descriptive" approach to the interpretive questions. While phenomenological analysis has been adopted by sociologists like Berger and Luckman, Goffman, and Bourdieu, it is through Jack Katz's work that phenomenology is brought closer to and compatible with methodologies familiar to most sociologists (e.g., his emphasis on causal explanation). Katz's theory of social ontology also brings us back to our first class: the necessary coupling between description of culture and cultural analysis.

### **REQUIRED READING**

Schuetz, Alfred. 1953. "Common-Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 14 (1): 1-38.

*\*How is social order possible given that social actors share an intersubjective world. Examining also is the dilemma between stock of knowledge originated from the world of common-sense and the stock of knowledge from the world of science.*

Katz, Jack. 2002. "Start Here: 'Social Ontology and Research Strategy.'" Theoretical Criminology 6(3): 255-78.

*\*Based on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, Katz proposes that sociological analysis should start from description—to describe everything.*

Katz, Jack. 1999. How Emotions Work. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1 “Pissed Off in L.A.” and Chapter 4 “What is Crying?”

*\*A demonstration of how to do interpretation if sociologists have different epistemological assumptions about what social actions and perceptions are.*

Jackson, Michael. 1983. "Thinking Through the Body: An Essay on Understanding Metaphor." Social Analysis 14: 127-149.

*\*how the body and embodied metaphor help produce a sense of the world.*

(optional) Katz, Jack and Thomas J. Csordas. 2003. “Phenomenological Ethnography in Sociology and Anthropology.” Ethnography 4(3): 275-288.

(optional) Katz, Jack. 2001. “From How to Why: On Luminous Description and Causal Inference in Ethnography (Part 1).” Ethnography 2(4): 443-473.

### **FURTHER READING** (Class VII—Phenomenology & Hermeneutics)

Dilthey, Wilhelm. Wilhelm Dilthey: Selected Works. Vol. 1-6, edited by Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjoh Rodi. Princeton University Press.

*\*To understand Weber’s theory on culture, society and history we probably need to first understand the hermeneutics of Dilthey.*

Schuetz, Alfred. 1942. “Scheler’s Theory of Intersubjectivity and the General Thesis of the Alter Ego.” Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 2(3): 323-347.

Schuetz, Alfred. 1953. “Edmund Husserl’s Ideas, Volume II.” Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 13(3): 394-413.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1975. Truth and Method, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Continuum.

*\*How is understanding possible?—explained one of the most influential works on epistemology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Very useful for sociologists.*

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. [1945]1962. Phenomenology of Perception, translated by Colin Smith. Routledge.

*\*The French phenomenologist whose theory of perception significantly influenced the sociological approach of Pierre Bourdieu (and that of Jack Katz in our reading list).*

Fish, Stanley. 1980. Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities. Harvard University Press.

*\*A literary theorist explaining why we should not worry too much about the uncontrolled relativism in interpretation.*

Ricoeur, Paul. 1981. Hermeneutics and the Human Science, edited and translated by John B. Thompson. Cambridge University Press.

*\*Drawing hermeneutics closer to social sciences, with an emphasis of the problem of interpretation in language.*

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1978. Hermeneutics and Social Sciences. NY: Columbia University Press.

*\*Introducing significant figures of sociology (including Marx and Weber) and their relations to the field of hermeneutics..*

Katz, Jack. 2002. "From How to Why: On Luminous Description and Causal Inference in Ethnography (Part 2)." Ethnography 3(1): 63-90.

Schuetz, Alfred. 1945. "On Multiple Realities." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 5(4): 533-576.