

SOCG 201A Classical Sociological Theory I

Fall 2009
SSB 101
Th 9:30 – 12:20

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SSB 491
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Office Hrs: Tu 10-11am/ Th 12:30-1:30pm

Course Description

In this course, we will focus primarily on the writings of two theorists: Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) and Karl Marx (1818-1883). In many aspects, Tocqueville and Marx are at opposite theoretical ends; the former is often seen as a major exponent of localism and communitarianism, the latter sweeping visions of social and historical changes, let alone the political movements of communism and socialism. But both of them attempted to understand the nature of modern society by setting out systematically the defining characteristics of modern western societies and their problems. In contrasting ways, Marx and Tocqueville both offered critiques that address the tensions inherent in the liberal conception of society and individual. More specifically, their critiques involve the following major themes: the rise of capitalism; the nature of democracy; the source of social conflicts and cohesion; the problem of alienation; and the nature of modern civil society. And it is to these themes that this course will explore in detail.

We will approach each theorist's work thematically and systematically. In addition, we will read selected examples of more recent sociological work inspired by Tocqueville and Marx, in order to understand how their works continue to speak to the contemporary societies.

At the end, the goal of this course is to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of modern societies and their problems through the exposition of these two major social theorists of the nineteenth century.

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at Groundwork Bookstore in the old Student Center:

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*. New York: Harper Collins
_____, *Ancien Regime and the French Revolution*. Penguin Classics.
Robert Tucker, ed., *Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: Norton.
Robert Bellah et al. *Habits of the heart*. New York: Harper & Row.

Other shorter additional readings are available on electronic reserve at Geisel Library (<http://reserves.ucsd.edu/>).

Course Requirements

Class Participation

You are expected to come to class ready to participate actively in discussion of the day's reading. In addition, each participant will present on the readings of the week at least once during the quarter. Please sign up for your specific week at the first meeting of the course.

Writing Assignments

Two essays, the first of which no longer than **8 pages** and the second no longer than **10 pages** (double-spaced). In each case, topics for each writing assignment will be distributed in class about two weeks before the due date, though you may also propose your own topic upon consultation with me. No secondary sources or additional research materials are required for these papers.

- The first paper will be due on Monday, October 26.
- The second paper will be due on Monday, December 7.

Evaluations

Your grade for the quarter will be based on the following formula:

Paper #1:	35%
Paper #2:	45%
Class presentation and participation:	20%

Schedule of Readings

Wk0 September 24: Introduction

Part I – Tocqueville

Wk1 October 1: *Old Regime*

Tocqueville, *Ancien Regime and the French Revolution*

Author's Foreword (7-15)

Book 1: all (17-33)

Book 2: Chapters 2, 5, 8 (45-52, 67-70, 85-88)

Book 3: Chapters 3, 6, 8 (158-167, 185-189, 199-207)

J. S. Mill, 1978 *On Liberty*, "Author's Introduction" (1-14). Indianapolis: Hackett

Wk 2 October 8: *Democracy and Its Consequences*

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

Vol. I, Part I: Author's Introduction (9-20), chapters 3-4 (50-60), chapter 5 (62-63, 68-70, and 87-98 only), chapter 8 (112-14, 155-70)

Vol. I, Part II: Chapters 4 (189-195), 5 (197-99 only), 6 (231-245), 7-9 (246-315), 10 (316-325, 339-343, 355-363 only)

Vol. II, Part I: Author's preface (417-418)

Vol. II, Part II: Chapters 1-2 (503-508), 4-5 (509-517), 13 (535-538), 20 (555-558)

Vol. II, Part III: Chapters 1 (561-565), 9-10 (590-594), 12-13 (600-605), 17 (614-616), 21 (634-645).

Vol. II, Part IV: Chapters 5-7 (679-702)

Wk 3 October 15: *Tocquevillian Legacy*

Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*

Preface (pp. vi-xii), Chapter 1 (3-26), Chapter 2 (27-51), Chapter 6-8 (146-218), Appendix (297-307)

Part II – Marx

Wk 4 October 22: *Culture, Ideology, and Materialism*

G. W. F. Hegel. *Reason in History*, translated by Robert Hartman, 11-67. Prentice Hall.

Marx/Engels Reader

“Theses on Feuerbach” (143-145)

“The German Ideology” (146-200)

Wk 5 October 29: *Critique of Capitalism*

Marx/Engels Reader

“On the Jewish Question” (26-46 only)

“Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction” (53-65)

“Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844” (70-81 only)

Wk 6 November 5 *Dynamics of Capitalism*

“Preface to “Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy” (3-6)

“Preface to the first German edition” (294-298)

“Capital, Volume 1” (302-438)

Wk 7 November 12 *Class Analysis*

Marx/Engels Reader

Marx and Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” (469-500)

Grundrisse, “Contradiction between the Foundation of Bourgeois Production and its Development” (283-287)

“The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte” (please read the new translation in *Marx: Later Political Writings*, edited by Terrell Carver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996); Section I and VII only)

Part III

Wk 8 November 19 World System Theory

Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System” (71-105) in *The Essential Wallerstein* (New York: The New Press, 2000)

David Harvey, 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Ch 1 (5-38) and Ch 7 (183 – 206), New York: Oxford University Press.

Wk 9 November 26 No Class (Thanksgiving)

Wk 10 December 3 Post-Marxist Marx?

Marx, “Introduction.” Pp. 83-111 in *Grundrisse*, translated by Martin Nicolaus. Penguin Classics.

Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness* 83-110.

Moishe Postone, “Rethinking Marx (in a Post-Marxist World)” (45-80) in *Reclaiming the Sociological Classics*, edited by Charles Camic (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997)