

Sociology of Knowledge

Sociology 622
Fall 2010

Power and knowledge directly imply one another... There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.

-- Michel Foucault

Basic Information:

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Course Overview

Historically, Western social theory has developed and advanced a distinctive perspective on the relationships among power, knowledge and culture. The term “modernity” references the power relations of the pre-colonial and colonial era, one characterized by the growth of nation-states in the European context and colonial and imperial relationships in the rest of the world. Western science emerged as the premier knowledge of modernity, producing impressive technological advances that improved the quality of human life for many, but that also legitimated and helped construct multiple social inequalities. The very meaning of the construct “culture” was firmly annexed to these power/knowledge relations of modernity. Perceptions of “high” and “low” cultures within individual Western societies, of the seeming backwardness of non-Western peoples and societies as grounded in their cultures, and of rapid cultural change within Western societies juxtaposed to the timeless, unchanging cultures of less advanced peoples synchronized with the power relations of modernity as well as the legitimating function of science.

The post-World War II period, often described as an era of “postmodernity”, ushered in a significant realignment of these relationships. Certainly the power relations of the globe have changed dramatically over the past 60 years. One significant feature of postmodernity concerns the shifting role of knowledge in contemporary social relations. In particular, scientific knowledge has encountered significant challenges from other ways of knowing that challenge its historical legitimating function within Western societies. In this new context, power relations of postcolonialism have altered social inequalities of modernity; new technologies of transportation and communications have shrunk the globe and put all sorts of people in touch with one another; and new cultural identities reflect increasingly hybrid identities of traditional religions and global popular culture. Collectively, these trends signal significant shifts in the relationships between power, knowledge and culture.

The sociological sub-specialty of the Sociology of Knowledge provides a powerful set of tools for studying domains of knowledge undergoing reorganization within this seeming shift from modernity to postmodernity and accompanying power transformations. All domains of knowledge have their own sets of practitioners, infrastructures, bodies of legitimated information, and arrangements of capital, epistemologies and politics. For example, when it comes to practitioners, members of scientific communities are more likely to be elite, white, Western and/or male (or there would be little need for special programs to attract women and minorities into science). Members of religious communities are more likely to be non-elite, non-white, non-Western and/or female (the themes of spirituality, other ways of knowing, etc.). New technologies associated with globalization mean that producers and consumers of popular culture theoretically may be of all genders, races, ethnicities, sexualities and citizenship categories; yet those

who are young, affluent and/or Western remain at the center. Moreover, science, religion and popular culture are not only grounded in distinctive material practices that construct their own practices; because they are arrayed in hierarchical fashion, these three areas of knowledge influence one another. Many of the intellectual controversies associated with postmodernity involve struggles for legitimation waged by advocates for science, religion and popular culture.

This course uses the tools of the Sociology of Knowledge to enter these debates. Our general objective is to examine the relationships among knowledge, power and culture in the contemporary era. Toward this end, the course is divided into four parts.

Part I, "Mapping the Field: Core Issues in the Sociology of Knowledge," introduces some of the classic works and core constructs in the field of the Sociology of Knowledge.

Part II, "Dominant and Emancipatory Knowledges," introduces the concept of emancipatory knowledges to investigate how the power relationships among groups of social actors shape the knowledges they produce.

Part III, "Paradigm Shifts: New Complexities of Social Science," uses contemporary science, in particular, social science and sociology, to question what accounts for change in both knowledge/power relations. We focus on science, in part, because the study of science has become increasingly central to the sociological sub-specialty of the Sociology of Knowledge and in part because science itself as the signature discourse of modernity faces significant challenges.

Part IV, "Contemporary Knowledge/Power Relations: The Significance of Culture," examines the significance of culture, broadly defined, for contemporary social relations. The term "culture" serves as a metaphor for the times themselves, namely, the move away from viewing science as the dominant and only legitimate way of interpreting the world and the rapid rise of other ways of knowing. Here we engage religion and the embodied practices of contemporary popular culture (the fused physicality and orality of music and dance) as important sites of cultural change that provide other ways of knowing.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

The success of this seminar will depend on the quality of your preparation and participation in class sessions. Because the reading load is challenging, completing readings and being prepared to analyze them in class is the primary course requirement.

I encourage you to approach course readings and interpret class discussions in light of how they advance your questions, concerns and/or research agendas. In class sessions, I expect you to raise questions and share information about your particular areas of expertise and interest. Just as I bring a specific set of questions concerning my own research to the course, I hope that you will identify your interests and do likewise.

- **Weekly Discussion Questions (60%):** Each week, *write one substantive discussion question* on the week's assigned readings. Write 1-2 paragraphs that provide a context for or help us understanding the genesis of your question. Why this question? What about the readings generated it? Please make your question and explanation concise, no more than 500 words (1-2 pages).
 - Please post your question on the discussion board of our ELMS-blackboard site no later than 24 hours before the start of class.
 - Come to class prepared to discuss your question, the interpretive context for your question, as well as your preliminary responses to your own question.
 - Before class each week, review all questions submitted by your classmates. Come to class prepared to engage your classmates concerning their questions.

- **Discussion Group Leaders (20%):** In collaboration with one or more students, lead a discussion on assigned readings at least twice during the semester. As a team you should do the following:
 - Provide a 10-15 minute review of the *main ideas* of that week's readings, engaging relevant student questions as you go along.
 - Develop a framework or interpretive approach to the readings that draws out student questions submitted for that week. Some questions for group leaders to consider: What most surprised you in the pattern of questions asked? What did you find most predictable? What connections, if any, do you see between your own questions and those raised by others? Do you see any patterns of inclusion, omission, and/or distortion for the questions raised? How would you prioritize the questions raised by class members? What criteria did you use to craft the frameworks that you suggest for organizing student questions? Your goal is not to evaluate questions but rather to identify themes that run through the questions and/or that are missing.

- **Presentation on Individual Research Project (20%):** *Either* individually prior to the last two weeks of class *or* as part of a panel of 3-4 students, present a summary of the main ideas of a work-in-progress (research paper) that you plan on revising in light of the main ideas of the course. Your individual presentation should place the main ideas/questions/concerns of your work-in-progress in dialogue with relevant main ideas of the course. Your goal is for you to catalyze ideas and suggestions from the class that might help you in your revisions. Each person will be allotted 5-7 minutes to summarize his/her work-in-progress. If you think that your work can be effectively presented in conjunction with a particular course session, please see me by session #3 so that we can get you on the syllabus. If not, plan on being on one of the panels. Each panel should plan on approximately 30-40 minutes for individual presentations and approximately 30-45 minutes for Q&A. A class member who is not on a panel will preside over it. Presentations are scheduled for **Nov. 30 and Dec. 7.**

Follow-up Activity for Research Paper (Optional):

Your panel presentation presents you with an opportunity to place class material in dialogue with your existing and/or potential research interests. If you wish to incorporate ideas from course readings, discussions and/or panel presentations into the work-in-progress that you shared with the class, please contact me early spring semester about possible options. One might be to register for one-credit during the spring semester where your goal is to revise your paper.

Other Things That You Should Know

This seminar requires a high level of student organization and preparedness. Over-scheduling on your part, work conflicts, childcare responsibilities, and/or other personal matters that could be foreseen are typically not grounds for extensions. If you do have an unexpected major problem of some sort that compromises your performance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Generally, I do not give incompletes but assign grades based on work accomplished by the end of the semester. Please keep in mind that I grade work that has been submitted to fulfill incompletes when I can. It might be some time before you receive a grade.

This course will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the University of Maryland Student Code of Academic Integrity. Please read it thoroughly, especially regarding academic misconduct and plagiarism. The policy is available on the University of Maryland web page at <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html>.

FIELD TRIP?

We limit ourselves if we focus solely on written texts as privileged sources of knowledge. The Washington, DC metropolitan area provides many opportunities for field trips to study other types of knowledge as well as alternative processes for knowledge-production. Based on student interest, we might schedule a field trip of some sort. For example, we might visit one of the many free DC museums to analyze how knowledge is constructed for public consumption, view a movie, see a play, and/or attend a spoken word event. The main criteria is that the field trip lend itself to analysis of knowledge/power relations. Suggestions welcome!

Readings:

- Abbott, Andrew. 2001. *Chaos of Disciplines*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226001016
- Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. 1971. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor. ISBN 0385058985
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2002 [1984] *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. ISBN 0674212770
- El Saadawi, Nawal. 2005 [1975]. *Woman at Point Zero*. London: Zed Books.
- Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings by Michel Foucault*, ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon.
- Kelley, Robin. D. G. 2002. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon Press. ISBN 0807009768.
- King, Martin Luther Jr. 2001. *A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Warner Books. ISBN 9780446678094.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. 1962 [1996]. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 3rd edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago. ISBN 0226458083
- Lyotard, Jean-François. 1984 [1979]. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. ISBN 0816611734
- Mannheim, Karl. 1936 [1929]. *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*. San Diego: Harcourt. ISBN 0156439557
- Moon, Dawne. 2004. *God, Sex and Politics: Homosexuality and Everyday Theologies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226535126
- Said, Edward. 1994. *Representations of the Intellectual*. New York: Vintage. ISBN 0679761276
- Scott, James. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press. ISBN 0300056699
- Wiesel, Elie. 2006. *Night*. New York: Hill and Wang. ISBN 9780374500016.

(*) Starred readings are PDF files that will be posted on our ELMS site. All other articles are available through Research Portal. If you locate a Research Portal reading, please feel free to post it to our site.

Course Outline

Part I. Mapping the Field: Core Ideas in the Sociology of Knowledge

Standard approaches within the field of the sociology of knowledge have focused on the internal dynamics of how knowledge is constructed, with special attention to philosophy and/or science as signature bodies of knowledges of Western understandings of modernity. This focus has fostered at least two patterns: (1) an overemphasis on both as privileged forms of knowing and bodies of knowledge, and an underemphasis on other ways of knowing and/or bodies of knowledge; (2) an underemphasis on power relations as a core feature in structuring knowledges, including power relations that shape the field of the sociology of knowledge itself. Stated differently, there has been much talk about knowledge/power relations, but much of it has not been incorporated into the sociology of knowledge concerning its own practices as a field of study. Through a selective reading of key works in the field, Part I of the course investigates these patterns of inclusion, emphasis and omission within the sociology of knowledge.

Session 1. Mapping the Field: What Is the Sociology of Knowledge? (Aug. 31)

Note: No question is due for this class.

Required Readings:

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. (p. 1-18).

Swidler, Ann and Jorge Ardití. 1994. "The New Sociology of Knowledge." *Annual Review of Sociology* 20: 305-329.

Suggested Readings:

McCarthy, E. Doyle. 1996. *Knowledge as Culture: The New Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Routledge.

Session 2. Ideas and Social Reality: Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge (Sept. 7)

Within English-speaking social theory, Karl Mannheim is generally recognized as the key figure who developed and popularized the field of the sociology of knowledge. We read his classic work *Ideology and Utopia* to examine: (1) some of the core ideas that have shaped the field itself; and (2) how Mannheim's omission of core ideas also shaped the field.

Required Readings:

Karl Mannheim. 1936 [1929]. *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*. San Diego: Harcourt.

Suggested Readings:

Karl Marx.

Friedrich Nietzsche.

William E. B. DuBois.

Anna Julia Cooper.

Merton, Robert K. 1973. *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (See "Paradigm for the Sociology of Knowledge," 1945)

Merton, Robert K. 1937. "The Sociology of Knowledge." *Isis* 27 (3): 493-503.

Session 3. Knowledge and Power: Structure and Discourse (Sept. 14)

Does social reality shape knowledge or does knowledge construct social reality? Are these mutually exclusive, or have we been arguing over the chicken or the egg? This week map two different positions that traditionally have framed the Sociology of Knowledge, often discussed as debates about the relationship between structure/agency or structure/discourse. The first is offered by Marxist theorist Louis Althusser whose discussion of ideology provides a window into Marxist debates about the connections of knowledge and power. In contrast, Berger and Luckmann's social constructionist perspective both anticipates poststructuralist analyses and provides a social science analysis.

Required Readings:

*Althusser, Louis. 1969. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus." Pp. 85-124 in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. (p. 19-128; 185-189)

Session 4. Knowledge and Power: French Social Theory (Sept. 21)

French social theorists did not set out to affect the field of the sociology of knowledge, yet their work has had a major impact on contemporary understandings of knowledge, power and postmodernity. Foucault's studies of prisons, mental hospitals and science analyzed knowledge as a major force that structures power itself. Jean-Francois Lyotard's volume argues for the end of grand narratives.

Required Readings:

Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings by Michel Foucault*, ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon. "Two Lectures" pp. 78-108 and "Truth and Power" pp. 109-133.
Lyotard, Jean-François. 1979 [1984] *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*.

Suggested Readings:

Foucault, Michel. 1965 [1988] *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage.
Foucault, Michel. 1970. [1994] *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage.
Foucault, Michel. 1971 [1972]. *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on Language*. New York: Pantheon.

Part II. Dominant and Emancipatory Knowledges

This section of the course examines issues associated with knowledge construction from the other side of power. Typically, elite groups assume that subordinated groups have no independent political traditions of knowledge construction, and view subordinated groups through the lenses of "folk knowledge" or a derogated "everyday experiential knowledge. Yet recent scholarship from a variety of fields of study suggests that subordinated groups and everyday people construct oppositional knowledges that help them cope with their subordinate statuses. While this knowledge be universal, the epistemological approaches, content and visibility reflects historical specificity.

Session 5. Intellectuals, Situated Standpoints and the Production of Knowledge (Sept. 28)

Incorporating analyses of power shifts understanding of core concepts in the sociology of knowledge. Armed with the insights of Foucault's analyses of knowledge/power relations as well as the power relations suggested by Marxist social theory, this session expands Mannheim's preliminary discussion of the intelligentsia by questioning the links between the social location of the intellectuals and the content and contours of their intellectual production. Who is legitimated to create knowledge? How is knowledge shaped by the placement of intellectuals as insiders, outsiders and/or as outsiders-within power relations? How might major systems of power such as class, race, and gender, shape knowledge production and knowledge legitimation processes?

Required Readings:

*Simmel, Georg. 1971 [1908]. "The Stranger." Pp. 143-149 in *Georg Simmel: On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed./trans. Donald N. Levine. Chicago: University of Chicago.
*Gramsci, Antonio. 2000 [19??]. "Intellectuals." Pp. 300-311 in *The Antonio Gramsci Reader*, edited by David Forgacs. New York: New York University Press.
Edward Said. 1994. *Representations of the Intellectual*. New York: Vintage.
*Collins, Patricia Hill. "Black Public Intellectuals: From Du Bois to the Present." *Contexts* 4 (4) 2005: 22-27.

Suggested Readings:

Merton, Robert. 1972. "Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge." *American Journal of Sociology* 77 (July): 9-47.

- Krohn, Claus-Dieter. 1993 [1987]. *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research*. Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts.
- Dylan Rodriguez. 2005. *Forced Passages: Imprisoned Radical Intellectuals and the U.S. Prison Regime*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Session 6. Subjugated, Oppositional and Emancipatory Knowledges (Oct. 5)

Last week's discussion of intellectuals illustrates how the field of the sociology of knowledge valorizes the perspectives of elites. This week we investigate questions of subjugated, oppositional and emancipatory knowledges by reading two essays and selections from a semi-classic on this idea. Scott's ethnography examines how everyday people negotiate and/or resist dominant ideologies imposed upon them by elite groups. In Scott's study, compliance and conformity need not mean acceptance or endorsement.

Required Readings:

- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1986. "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought." *Social Problems* 33 (6): 14-32
- *Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (original citation?)
- James Scott. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (selections to be assigned).

Suggested Readings:

- Van Dijk, Teun. 1993. *Elite Discourse and Racism*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage.
- Smith, Dorothy E. 1990. *The Conceptual Practices of Power: A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge*. Boston, Mass.: Northeastern University Press.
- Patricia Hill Collins. 1990, 2000. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Session 7. Alternative Epistemologies and Emancipatory Knowledge-Production (Oct. 12)

One dimension of postmodernity is an increasing acceptance of alternative forms of knowing and of knowledge production. This session investigates how alternative processes of knowledge-validation shape the knowledge produced. Much written, literate culture writes to an assumed audience where the author must imagine both the audience themselves and what they want/need to hear. In contrast, emancipatory processes of knowledge creation tend to be more recursive and/or collaborative. Here we explore two alternative sites of knowledge construction, the testimonial and fiction. Both involve authorial voice and both construct knowledge. Both also eschew norms of legitimation via external "experts" in order to speak directly to audiences, e.g., they offer "testimonials" in the form of the literary essay and/or novel where the author bears witness to some important social event.

Required Readings:

- Elie Wiesel. 2006. *Night*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Nawal El Saadawi. 2005. 1975. *Woman at Point Zero*. London: Zed Books.

Suggested Readings:

- Frantz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. 2001. *A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Warner Books.

Part III. Paradigm Shifts: Accounting for Change

Science has been the discourse of truth for modernity, and has operated as a primary source of legitimated knowledge for the global political economy associated with postmodernity. With the growing attention to knowledge/power relationships catalyzed by the work of Michel Foucault, philosophers and other social theorists increasingly argue that science itself is a social construction that masks the power relations that it helps construct and defend. The authority of science within actual social relations has also been challenged from outside academic communities, most notably religion and popular culture. By focusing on the issue of paradigm shifts within scientific knowledges, this section examines changes in the signature knowledge of Western societies.

Session 8. Paradigm Shifts: Thomas Kuhn (Oct. 19)

Western science has produced many of the technological changes in communications and transportation that catalyzed new relations of globalization and transnationalism. Science has also been greatly affected by these same changes, both in the conditions under which scientists work, the relationships among various scientific disciplines, and the legitimation of scientific knowledge within societies. This week we read Thomas Kuhn's now classic work on how social change occurs within science.

Required Readings:

Thomas S. Kuhn. 1962 [1996]. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Suggested Readings:

Karin Knorr Cetina. 1999. *Epistemic Cultures: How the Sciences Make Knowledge*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Session 9. Porous Boundaries: Interdisciplinarity and Western Knowledge (Oct. 26)

Kuhn argues that paradigm shifts occur from within a given field when it can no longer explain its objects of study. Yet because fields do not exist as self-contained entities, developments in their proximate fields also affect paradigm shifts. Under conditions of modernity, knowledge itself was compartmentalized, for example, the classification of scholarly knowledge (academic disciplines) from folk wisdom, distinctions between natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities that continue to structure undergraduate and graduate education. In contrast, conditions of postmodernity stress the blurring and crossing of boundaries, a knowledge structure that parallels new space/time relationships. This week we read Abbott's analysis of how the social sciences are situated within these broad changes. His use of the term "chaos" in his title reflects the emergence of chaos theory in the early 1990s as the recognition of the interconnected, relational aspects of phenomena, in this case, academic disciplines.

Required Readings:

Andrew Abbott. 2001. *Chaos of Disciplines*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Helga Novatny et al. 2003. "Mode 2 Revisited: The New Production of Knowledge." *Minerva* 41: 179-194.

Suggested Readings:

Haraway, Donna. 1989. *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*. New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall.

Harding, Sandra, ed. 1993. *The "Racial" Economy of Science: Toward a Democratic Future*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Mulkay, Michael. 1991. *Sociology of Science: A Sociological Pilgrimage*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bruno Latour. 2004. *Politics of Nature: How To Bring the Sciences into Democracy*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass.

Session 10. Western Knowledges and Challenges of Legitimation (Nov. 2)

Kuhn and Abbott both explain changes *within* science broadly defined as consistent with norms of scientific practice. This week we broaden our lens to consider how other factors might shape scientific change. We focus specifically on how changes within science as the signature discourse of modernity have been catalyzed by a series of factors. Here we return to some of the earlier readings in the course and apply them to the “legitimation crisis” of Western knowledge.

Required Readings:

- *Audre Lorde. 1984. “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action,” “The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,” and “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House.” Pp. 40-44, 53-59 and 110-113 in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde*. Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press.
- * Sandra Harding. 1986. *The Science Question in Feminism*. Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press. (selection to be assigned)
- Nicholas Gane. 2006. “When We Have Never Been Human, What Is To Be Done?: Interview with Donna Haraway.” *Theory, Culture and Society*, 23 (7-8) : 135-158.
- *Boaventura de Sousa Santos et. al. “Introduction: Opening Up the Canon of Knowledge and Recognition of Difference.” Pp. ix-xix in *Another Knowledge Is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*.
- *Desiree Lewis. 2010. “Discursive Challenges for African Feminisms.” Pp. 205-221 in *African Feminist Politics of Knowledge: Tensions, Challenges, Possibilities*,” edited by Akosua Adomake Ampofo and Signe Arnfred: Uppsala Sweden, The Nordic Africa Institute.

Suggested Readings:

- Jugen Habermas. *The Legitimation Crisis*.
- Karin Knorr Cetina. “Science, Technology and their Implications.” Pp. 546-560 in *The Sage Handbook of Sociology*, edited by Craig Calhoun, Chris Rojek, and Bryan Turner.
- Jan Golinski. 2005. *Making Natural Knowledge: Constructivism and the History of Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- MacRaill, Donald M. and Avram Taylor. 2004. *Social Theory and Social History*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- John H. Zammito. 2004. *A Nice Derangement of Epistemes: Post-Positivism in the Study of Science from Quine to Latour*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Part IV. Contemporary Knowledge/Power Relations: The Significance of Culture

Currently, the close association of the sociology of knowledge as a field of study with science studies neglects other important ways of knowing. Having seemingly triumphed over religion (which was relegated to the non-Western world and/or working classes) and garnering no real competition from aesthetic and cultural institutions, science until recently occupied a privileged knowledge position. The changing knowledge/power relations of postmodernity have challenged scientific hegemony as the sole and preferred way of viewing social phenomena. Part IV investigates the field of cultural studies broadly defined, both as a burgeoning site for new approaches to knowledge/power relations and as potentially central to the revitalization of the field of the sociology of knowledge. Here we use issues of class, religion and popular culture to revisit traditional concerns of the sociology of knowledge, in particular, multiple knowledges and ways of knowing of social groups that are differentially positioned within hierarchical power relations.

Session 11. Class and Culture: Pierre Bourdieu (Nov. 9)

Many sociologists have called for greater attention to the sociology of culture, yet the corpus of Pierre Bourdieu’s work consistently addresses questions of the social context in which knowledges are produced and circulated.

Required Readings:

Bourdieu, Pierre. 2002 [1984] *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. [Selections to be assigned: We will divide up the book, read different sections and give reports on chapters.]

Suggested Readings:

Swartz, David. 1997. *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Bourdieu, Pierre. 1993. *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2003. *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Session 12. Specialized Knowledge and Institutional Change: Ethics and Religion (Nov. 16)

Scott's analysis of weapons of the weak examined power relations within a traditional society whose time/space relations enabled subordinate social groups to develop oppositional consciousness and practices. In contrast, one signature feature of postmodern societies is how rapid change and time/space contractions foster cross-cultural contact and the mixing of ideas. Domination and subordination persist, but can take very different forms, especially within multi-class, multiracial, and/or multiethnic Western societies. Here we explore religion as one specific site that is being reconfigured in multiple and often contradictory ways to negotiate the contradictory knowledge/power relations of postmodernity.

Required Readings:

Dawne Moon. 2004. *God, Sex and Politics: Homosexuality and Everyday Theologies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Suggested Readings:

To be determined.

Session 13. Knowledge, Art and Resistance: Emancipatory Knowledge Revisited (Nov. 23)

Bourdieu's study of taste examined how cultures articulated with social classes within French society. Here we shift focus to ask similar questions concerning culture, class and race within Black intellectual production. Here we return to the theme of emancipatory knowledge as a distinctive intellectual project. Using African American culture and politics, Kelley's volume asks us to attend to knowledges produced by subordinated groups within Western cultures that draw from elite discourse, but that also raise very different questions and rest on different assumptions than elite knowledges.

Required Readings:

Robin D. G. Kelley. 2002. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Suggested Readings:

Chow, Rey. 1993. *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Gilroy, Paul. 1987. *"There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack": The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Mercer, Kobena. 1994. *Welcome to the Jungle: New Positions in Black Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge.
Perry, Imani. 2004. *Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Pough, Gwendolyn D. 2004. *Check It While I Wreck It: Black Womanhood, Hip-Hop Culture, and the Public Sphere*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Rose, Tricia. 1994. *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. Hanover, N.H.: Wesleyan University Press.

Watkins, S. C. 1998. *Representing: Hip Hop Culture and the Production of Black Cinema*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Session 14. New Directions for the Sociology of Knowledge? (Nov. 30)

Work-in-progress panel #1:

Work-in-progress panel #2:

Session 15. New Directions for the Sociology of Knowledge? (Dec. 7)

Work-in-progress panel #3:

Work-in-progress panel #4: