COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course we learn sociological theory in the applied way of doing critical autobiographical research while developing our sociological imaginations. More specifically, we will explore the six major elemental theories and perspectives practiced in sociology today—Phenomenology, Symbolic Interactionism, Exchange/Rational Choice Theory, Functionalism, Conflict Theory, and the Postmodern perspective—in order to develop our sociological imaginations about, and find ways of moving beyond, specific problems arising from our habituated everyday lives in a global context. We will study the classical theories through the lens of contemporary perspectives, proceeding from microsociological theories to increasingly macro perspectives. Our inquiries into the link between our personal troubles and broader social issues—the central concern of what C. Wright Mills called “the sociological imagination”—will be pursued in the course through a 15-page autosociobiographical paper developed along a topic essay and two drafts. The key purpose of the paper is to apply the micro and macro sociological concepts and ideas learned in class in the context of our sociological self-research paper. To achieve this end, we will pursue three lines of inquiry throughout the course: 1-class readings, lectures, presentations, and discussions will provide us with collective experiences and conceptual tools and methods necessary for our individual/collective self-studies; 2-an autosociobiographical research paper will focus our attention and explorations on a still unresolved significant question, issue, trouble, or problem dealing with our everyday habitual behaviors (such as undesired attachments to things, ideas, feelings, relations, organizations, processes, etc.) we personally face in our everyday lives today, faced in the past, or may face in the future; and 3-the films incorporated into the course will provide us with a common audiovisual medium in popular culture through which we can experientially share our theoretical reflections on ourselves and the world alongside class and outside readings. In addition to the sociological self-research paper, grading will be based on class attendance, class discussion participation, a written and oral reading report, and self-critical thinking.

COURSE ORGANIZATION:

The course is organized in a “research working group” format where “teacher-student” and “student-teachers” explore with one another common subject matters. While the instructor will introduce and guide class readings and discussions, students are required to raise in-depth and substantive questions about readings in class as discussants, sharing their insights and critical comments with one another. The students’ work will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

1. Attendance (25%): Attendance is a foundational requirement in this class, because literally everything else is derived from the few hours we spend together face-to-face interacting every week. Therefore it constitutes an important part of student grading. Attendance grade points will not be given for absences; however, absences may be made up by writing a reading/review report on the readings/films and subject matter of the missed class session. Although attendance will be taken in class, it is also the student’s responsibility to send an email to the instructor for each session missed, including date of absence, for record keeping purposes and to indicate whether you intend to make-up for the absence. Points will be taken off the student’s total grade for each unmade-up absent session (for once-
per-week classes 3% per session, for twice-per week classes 1.5% per session, and for thrice-per-week classes, 1% per session). Students can make-up for their absences by writing a 4, 3, or 2 page long (depending on times class meets per week respectively, as above) critical commentaries on the readings/films/subject matter of the session they missed, demonstrating they have read the readings for the session and can list, define, and apply some of its most important concepts (format may follow the regular presentation report assignment below). In case of film sessions missed, the same length requirements for makeup essays apply, but in this case the student should demonstrate an ability to link the film to various theories and concepts in the readings.

2. Class Discussion Participation (5%): Participation can range from active listening to raising questions and engaging in discussion. Please note that attendance is not simply physical presence. It means being attentive. This requires having read the material assigned for the session, being prepared with pertinent questions or comments to raise in class, coming on time to class, being engaged during class, and not leaving the room during the class before it is over. Taking excessive personal breaks during the class not only affects your attendance and participation, but can be disruptive to class and other students’ learning; please try to avoid it unless absolutely necessary. For similar reasons, your cell phones must be turned off during class time and as far as possible please avoid eating sound-generating food in class.

3. Self-Critical Thinking (5%): Students are expected to view everything, every text, and every viewpoint, especially their own predispositions, perspectives, and biases with a (self) critical eye. You are in this class to learn beyond what you already know, not simply to prove what you already know. This necessarily means being open to question your own existing views in order to critically enrich and move beyond them with new insights. You will not be graded on whether you agree or disagree with a certain viewpoint. You will be graded on whether you substantively engage with and demonstrate an understanding of the views you agree or disagree with, and self-critically develop your own viewpoints in a well-rounded, researched, and coherent way. I will assess this in various ways throughout the semester—via your papers, comments in class, etc. I keep the grading for self-critical thinking separate from your written assignments, not because it is separate from them, but because I like to see you develop and demonstrate this skill and attitude across various course activities.

4. Written Reading Report and Oral Presentation (15%): At the beginning of the semester, students will be randomly assigned discussant numbers corresponding to the numbers assigned to readings (preceding each reading item on the schedule below; this will be explained in class). For each assigned reading prepare a written report to be handed in the SAME class in which it is to be orally presented and discussed. Students are welcome to choose to revise their already prepared report based on the class discussion, in which case the report will be due a week from the original due date. The report should be 5 pages (Times font, size 12, double-spaced) comprised of the following (note the breakdown of assigned grade points):

a)-Written Summary (3 points). The summary must be in your own words. Rules against plagiarism will apply to reading reports as well. If you have to quote, you must provide proper citation. You must identify at the beginning of the report which part of the textbook you are reporting on. Make sure you provide your name and date/topic of report at the beginning.

b)-Written Concepts (3 points). Identify, list, and define (using direct quotes from the reading, including page citation) on a stand-alone page at least 10 concepts related to the theories or perspectives discussed in readings being presented, concepts which you may find particularly useful to your own and perhaps others’ term paper research. Make copies of this page and distribute it to others in class. This will be a useful/collective effort to “harvest” important and useful concepts from readings and share them with other students.

c)-Written Linkages (3 points). Critically reflecting on the concepts learned from the reading and the value or shortcomings of the author’s viewpoint, try linking the concepts/reading to the other readings of that session, of that week, or previous sessions when applicable (or even to readings you are doing in other classes you are taking). Other useful linkages can be to your own life and self-explorations, and to previous class discussions/films if applicable. If you make no efforts in critically linking your assigned text to other readings of especially that session/week (and previous ones), and/or to other issues as explained above, you will not gain linkage points.

d)-Written Questions (1 point). A set of three clearly formulated and relevant questions (listed separately
at the end of report) arising from the reading in connection to other readings of class, its personal relevance
to you, or in relationship to previous readings/discussions/films in class. Ask creative, mature, and
thoughtful linkage questions that merit discussion in class.

e)-Oral Discussion (5 points). The instructor will introduce the session readings in class, so discussants
need not present a detailed summary of readings as part of their oral presentations (especially given all
students must have read the session readings). The purpose of oral discussion is to help generate discussion
in class following instructor’s introductory remarks by drawing upon concepts, linkages, and questions as
included in the discussant’s report. Suggested format: We assume all students have read the reading, so
go directly to defining and linking/applying (some) of the concepts/ideas learned from the reading and how
they can be useful for your/others’ sociological self-explorations; then end your presentation with sharing
your questions about the readings. Discussants must maintain an active part in the session in generating
and guiding class discussion, helping to make the discussion lively, informed, and interesting. The oral
presentation will be evaluated based on the clarity of communication (2 points) and degree to which it
generates class engagement and discussion (3 points). Each oral presentation SHOULD TAKE NO MORE
THAN 5 MINUTES. [NOTE: depending on enrollment, there may be extra discussant reports assigned to
volunteering students, in which case an extra 3-pg written/oral report may be presented for up to 2% extra
make-up grading value].

5. Sociological Self-Research Paper (total 50%): This is the heart of your work in the course, devoted
to the serious sociological exploration, within a micro/macro framework, of an important issue in your life
in conjunction with class/outside readings and films. A Term Paper Guideline will be emailed to you as a
pdf file soon after the first session of the course. This assignment consists of a 15 page sociological self-
research paper addressing the topic **“Comparing all the six major elemental theories and perspectives
in sociology studied through class/outside readings, discussions, and films, how do they jointly help
me understand in a global context an important, still unresolved issue I face today, have faced in the
past, and/or will face in the future, its nature, root causes, and consequences, and how I can move
towards its effective resolution?”** The sociological self-research paper will be progressively developed
throughout the course along a topic ideas essay/bibliography, a 7-page first draft and a 15-page final draft.
They must be typed, double-spaced, in Times font, size 12; relevant charts/tables are encouraged but will
not be counted towards paper length requirement. The paper length requirement does not include any title
pages or reference/bibliographies. For the due dates of the first and final drafts, see the weekly schedule
further below.

A-Paper Topic Ideas/Bibliography (5%): 2 full-pages, plus a bibliography of potentially useful and
relevant sources for your topic. Early in the semester you will be asked to think about 2-3 topic ideas
about what you would like to explore in-depth in your research paper. Read the Term Paper Guidelines
emailed to you at the beginning of the course to begin working on your topic and paper. You do not
need to read anything to choose your topic, but finding a list of potentially relevant readings (articles,
book chapters, etc.) will give you a great start in choosing good topics and finding out what sort of
scholarly readings are out there to help your research. The topic should be chosen from the fabric of
your own everyday life and how you relate to and experience the world. The sooner you begin thinking
about your topic the better since the class readings and films will become more meaningful when you
have a pertinent personal topic in mind. Try to come up with 2-3 actual possible paper TITLES that
best express the issue to be explored. **Note:** student papers are treated confidentially and not circulated
or discussed in class (unless volunteered for discussion), so you should feel comfortable choosing and
exploring your own personal topics.

B-The First Draft (20%): 7 full-pages. The First Draft involves exploring the problem or issue based
on your present knowledge, views, and attitudes towards the subject. The first draft is mostly self-
reflective and microsociological in nature, but should begin to involve concerns and curiosities about
larger national and global forces at work in your life. You must also, at the end, include a further
refined bibliography of what readings in class or outside may be of relevance to your further self-
exploration in the final draft. Although this paper is basically self-reflective, it must be serious,
analytical, and as engaging as possible regarding all relevant facts or ideas pertaining to your inquiry.
The breakdown of percentage points for the first draft are roughly as follows:

- **4%**: Micro exploration of the research problem/question
- **5%**: Use of 15-20 major concepts from Wallace and Wolf and/or Farganis readings from the first half of class preceding the paper deadline (bold each concept used in text) [use of each concept must be thoughtful and detailed enough to convey your practical understanding of its meaning in context]. Don’t bold generic or common words as concepts; the concepts must be clearly derived from the theories and perspectives learned in class.
- **3%**: 1 quoted linkage each to three articles in Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge (Journal articles available as PDF files on the website http://www.okcir.com and also in Healey Library’s SocINDEX database)
- **2%**: 2 quoted linkages to the required reading by James Pennebaker (Opening Up). First part of the book up to page 103.
- **3%**: Three linkages to three of the films viewed during the first half of class preceding the first draft deadline.
- **1%**: A bibliography of prospective outside scholarly readings (scholarly journal articles, book chapters) specifically related to your topic, readings which you will consult and read in preparation of your final draft in the next stage. Make sure to include the class’s own readings in your bibliography, since you will be citing from them in the first draft.
- **2%**: Overall quality of writing and creativity of paper. Spell checking, proofreading, and proper and accurate citation of sources will be considered in applying this part of the grade. All papers must include a title and bibliography. The quality of your writing and the care you have taken to spell check and proofread it are indicators of the extent to which you have taken your paper seriously and spent time going over it in both content and form. So, make sure you proofread at least 3 times the paper that you hand in to me. Make sure the bibliography is set up accurately using the ASA Styleguide (to be emailed to you early in the course).

**C-The Final Paper (25%)**: 15 full-pages (including reworked and further improved pages of the first draft). The concern with macro dimension of your inquiry, i.e., the relation of your selves and broader social forces must now become the central subject of your investigations. The final draft is to link together in a purposeful and meaningful way your critical self-reflections begun in the first draft, with class/outside readings and films shown in class. The evaluation and grading of the final term paper will be roughly divided in terms of how students bring the three essential required elements of the term paper together (self-explorations, broader social dimension as learned through required class readings, and ALL films shown in class). Other outside sources with specific relevance to each student’s particular topic/issue/problem must also be critically incorporated into the class readings.

The breakdown of percentage points for the final draft (15 pages, including reworked pages of the first draft) are roughly as follows:

- **8%**: Macro exploration of research problem/question (4 points) and its linkage (4%) to the micro exploration
- **5%**: Use of 15-20 ADDITIONAL concepts from readings for the second half of class (bolditalic each of these new concept used in text) (continue the concept usages from the first draft and keep them marked in bold only) [use of each concept must be thoughtful and detailed enough to convey your practical understanding of its meaning in context]. Don’t bolditalic generic words as concepts; the concepts must be clearly derived from the theories and perspectives learned in class.
- **3%**: 3 quoted linkages to at least three OUTSIDE scholarly readings (journal articles, book chapters) that directly pertain to your topic (1 point each linkage). These may include relevant readings you are doing, or have done, in your other classes, but they have to be directly pertaining to the topic of your paper.
- **2%**: 2 quoted linkages to the required reading by James Pennebaker (Opening Up). Second part of the book from page 104 to the end of the book.
• 2%: 2 ADDITIONAL linkages to the other films viewed in second half of class [keep and further develop the linkages to the films linked to in the previous draft]

• 2%: Based on your critical sociological self-explorations in the paper, in the conclusion of the paper list and elaborate on specific and concrete steps you can take to bring about important change in your life towards resolving the issues and problems you explored in the paper.

• 3%: Overall quality of writing and creativity of paper. Spell checking, proofreading, and proper and accurate citation of sources will be considered in applying this part of the grade. All papers must include a title and bibliography. The quality of your writing and the care you have taken to spell check and proofread it are indicators of the extent to which you have taken your paper seriously and spent time going over it in both content and form. So, make sure you proofread at least 3 times the paper that you hand in to me.

Office Hours: Based on past experience, those students who regularly consult during office hours with the instructor regarding their progress in the course and their papers have done better than those who don’t. Each student is encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours to discuss the topic and progress of her/his research paper. The meetings should indicate serious and active engagement by students with their papers, readings, and discussions of the course.

Student Conduct: Students are required to adhere to university policies on academic honesty and student conduct. The current Code of Student Conduct, including information about academic dishonesty and plagiarism is available online at: http://www.umb.edu/academics/undergraduate/office/students/CodeofStudentConduct.html.

Accommodations. Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 offers guidelines for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with documented disabilities. If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from the Ross Center for Disability Services, CC 2-2100, (617-287-7430). If this applies to you, you must present these recommendations to each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Add/Drop period.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you are taking this course to fulfill major requirements, it has to be taken with letter grading option; so no pass/fail grading option is to be chosen for major requirement purposes.

Student Referral Program: If it appears to the instructor that you might not pass this course, and if the instructor cannot figure out how to support your success in the course, the instructor might inform the director of the Student Referral Program (CC-1100; 287-5500). The staff in this program will attempt to help you address the difficulties that are interfering with your success in the class. If you do not want your instructor to let the Student Referral Program know that you are having difficulty, please let your instructor know.

Grading Policy: The grading system used in this course is based on the accumulation of percentage points you receive for each requirement/assignment of the course. In other words, for each graded requirement/assignment, instead of receiving a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) you will receive a percentage point grade up to the total assigned for that part of the course expectations. The only letter grade you will receive will be your final course grade submitted at the end of semester, per grade curve system listed below. To see where your course grade stands at any time, add what percentage points you’ve received so far, and assume you will do perfectly for the rest; then look up the total below. Note that you can miss a few sessions and still receive an A, without doing a makeup for the session (93 out of 100 still brings A); however, by not making up absences, you increase the risks of other grading shortfalls affecting your course grade. So try to makeup for absences as much as you can.

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<td>100-93</td>
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<td>59 or less</td>
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5
Revision Options: Please note that in this course, the grades you receive prior to the final paper can be improved with additional make-up work. You never lose a chance to do the best you can until the course is over. If you miss any points in your written presentation report, your topic ideas essay, or first 7-page draft of the paper, you have an opportunity to revise and resubmit based on the instructor’s feedback and commentaries given. Depending on the quality of the revisions made, the grade will be adjusted to reflect the extra work done to improve the report/paper. At the end of the course, for students who have made additional efforts and progress in their final papers (beyond prior assignments or revisions) throughout the course additional percentage points may be added to their accumulated total before calculating their final grades. When submitting revised texts, you will need to submit the originally graded text (with my notes on it) with your revised version so that I can compare new work you have done on the text in order to give you proper credit for your additional work.

Required Readings: (*in bookstore, †on reserve in hard copy)
††Selected articles in previous issues of Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge. [These are all available online at my website http://www.okcir.com; additionally all journal issues as a whole can be searched electronically and downloaded from the SociINDEX database available on the Healey Library’s homepage link “Indexes and Databases,” to be explained in class].

Recommended Readings (not alphabetically listed):
COURSE SCHEDULE:

Important Note: The reading by James Pennebaker (Opening Up: The Healing Power of Expressing Emotions) is a required reading, but not assigned to a particular session. Students are expected to read on their own half of the book in the first half and the other in the second half of the semester, as they progress in working on their term paper.

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE


Thursday, September 8: FILM: AFFLUENZA. Discussion.

WEEK TWO: THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION AND INTRODUCTION REMARKS

Tuesday, September 13: The Sociological Imagination
Readings:
[Note: Tuesday, September 13 is add/drop deadline]
• Read the short piece by C. Wright Mills, “The Sociological Imagination,” attached to your syllabus.
• Read the sample student paper by Katherine Heller, “My Choice of a Lifetime: ‘Finding True Love’ in a Sociological Imagination” published in the issue of Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge. Try to find and download the paper’s pdf file from my website given below, and read it; see how this previous student in a previous course such as the one you are taking used her “sociological imagination” and various concepts learned in class in exploring her topic. Table of contents and all the articles published in Human Architecture are available online at http://www.okcir.com. To find the article by Heller, go to the website, click on the issue 1&2 of volume III (Spring 2004/Fall 2005), and find Heller’s article and click on it to download/print, and read the pdf file. All the papers in the journal are also available in the SociINDEX with Full-TEXT database accessible through the Healey Library “Indexes and Databases” link on the Healey Library homepage. In our library tour session coming up soon, you will learn how to find all the journal articles in that database as well.

Thursday, September 15: What is “theory” and “social/sociological” theory? Overview of Sociological Theories
Readings:
1. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter One, 1-14

WEEK THREE: MICRO THEORIES: PHENOMENOLOGICAL SOCIOLOGY

Tuesday, September 20:
Readings:
2. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Six, 261-284 / FARGANIS, 257-258, 287-295 (Intro and Garfinkel)
3. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Six, 285-292/FARGANIS, 275-287 (Berger)
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, Chap. 10, pp. 258-274 (Schütz)

Thursday, September 22:
Readings:
4. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Six, 292-301 / FARGANIS, 390-397 (Dorothy Smith)
5. FARGANIS, 139-154 (Intro & Du Bois)

WEEK FOUR: MICRO THEORIES: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Tuesday, September 27:
DUE IN CLASS: Tuesday, September 27----> 2-PAGE PAPER TOPIC IDEAS/Bibliography
6. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Five, 197-213 / FARGANIS, 297-299, 127-138 (Intros & Mead)

Thursday, September 29:
Readings:
7. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Five, 213-235 (Blumer)
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, pp. 300-306 (Blumer)

WEEK FIVE: MICRO THEORIES: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM (CONTINUED)

Tuesday, October 4:
Readings:
8. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Five, 235-247 / FARGANIS, 307-315 (Goffman)

Thursday, October 6:
Readings:
9. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Five, 247-260 (Hochschild & Hill Collins)
Further Recommended Readings: FARGANIS, 316-328 (Hochschild), 398-409 (Hill Collins)
10. FARGANIS, 111-126 (Intro & Simmel)
WEEK SIX: MICRO/MACRO THEORIES: SOCIAL EXCHANGE AND RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY

Tuesday, October 11:
Readings:
11. FARGANIS, 231-232 / WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Seven, 302-338 (Intros & Homans)

Thursday, October 13:
Readings:
12. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Seven, 338-362 (Blau)
13. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Seven, 363-380 (Coleman)
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, 233-241 (Homans) / FARGANIS, 242-256 (Coleman)

WEEK SEVEN: FILM

Tuesday, October 18: FILM, 12 ANGRY MEN
Thursday, October 20: FILM, continued. Discussion.

WEEK EIGHT: MACRO THEORIES: FUNCTIONALISM

Tuesday, October 25:
DUE IN CLASS: Tuesday, October 25—> 7-PAGE PAPER DRAFTS DUE
Readings:
14. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Two, 15-24 / FARGANIS, 157-158, 51-72 (Intros & Durkheim I)

Thursday, October 27:
Readings:
15. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Two, 25-44 (Parsons)
16. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Two, 45-66 (Merton and Neo-Functionalism)
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, 159-166 (Davis/Moore) / 167-175 (Parsons) / 176-192 (Merton)

WEEK NINE: MACRO THEORIES: THE MARXIST TRADITION

Tuesday, November 1:
Readings:
17. FARGANIS 193-194 / WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Three, 67-78 (Overview of Conflict Theories)
18. FARGANIS 29-30 / WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Three, 78-101 (Marxist Tradition I)
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, 31-50 (Marx)

Thursday, November 3:
Readings:
19. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Three, 101-120 (Marxist Tradition II) / FARGANIS, 329-334
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, 203-211 (C. Wright Mills) / FARGANIS, 212-230 (Zweigenhaft & Domhoff) / FARGANIS, 335-347 (Marcuse) / FARGANIS, 348-356 (Habermas)

WEEK TEN:

Tuesday, November 8: MACRO THEORIES: THE WEBERIAN TRADITION
Readings:
20. FARGANIS, 73-76 (Intro) / WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Three, 120-138 (Weberian Tradition I)

Thursday, November 10:
[Note: November 10 is Pass/Fail and Withdraw deadline. Dept. Majors cannot take this course P/F.]
Readings:
21. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Three, 138-157 (Weberian Tradition II)
Further Recommended Reading: FARGANIS, 77-110 (Weber) / FARGANIS, 195-202 (Dahrendorf)

WEEK ELEVEN: FILM AND MACRO THEORIES (cont’d)

Tuesday, November 15: FILM: THE BIG ONE.
Thursday, November 17: FILM, continued. Discussion.
Readings:
22. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Four, 158-174 (Marx/Parsons)
23. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Four, 174-196 (Habermas/Giddens)
WEEK TWELVE: THE POSTMODERN PERSPECTIVE

Tuesday, November 22:
Readings:
24. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Nine, 415-426 / FARGANIS, 357-358 (Intro. postmodern perspective)
25. FARGANIS, 358-367 (Foucault)
26. FARGANIS, 368-382 (Lyotard)

Thursday, November 24: Thanksgiving Holiday.

WEEK THIRTEEN: APPLICATIONS OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES

Tuesday, November 29:
Readings:
27. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Eight, (Sociology of the body), 381-397.
28. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Eight, (Sociobiology), 397-414

Thursday, December 1:
Readings:
29. WALLACE&WOLF, Chapter Nine, 426-437 (overview of sociological theories re. two questions)
30. FARGANIS, 1-26 (historical overview of sociological theories).

WEEK FOURTEEN: FILM

Tuesday, December 6: FILM: TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE.
Thursday, December 8: FILM, continued. Discussion.

WEEK FIFTEEN:

Tuesday, December 13: Last Class. Student evaluations of the course.

DUE IN CLASS: Tuesday, Dec. 13-------> 15-PAGE FINAL DRAFTS DUE

[NOTE: THERE ARE NO FINAL EXAMS DURING THE EXAM PERIOD FOR THIS CLASS].
The Sociological Imagination

C. Wright Mills

The sociological imagination is the capacity to link the particular experience of a single human being to the structures of society. It is the ability to connect the personal and the political, the individual and the structural. Mills believed that this capacity was essential for understanding and analyzing social problems.

The sociological imagination is a tool for understanding the complex interplay between individual actions and social structures. It is a way of thinking that allows us to see how the social world is organized and how individuals interact with these structures.

Mills argued that the sociological imagination involves three key concepts: personal experience, social structure, and historical context. Personal experience refers to the individual's unique life and the specific situations they encounter. Social structure refers to the larger社会 patterns and institutions that shape individual experiences. Historical context refers to the broader historical circumstances that influence both personal experiences and social structures.

Mills believed that the sociological imagination is crucial for understanding the social world. He argued that it is necessary for social researchers to understand the complex interplay between individual actions and social structures. This capacity is essential for understanding social problems and for finding solutions to them.

Mills' work on the sociological imagination has been influential in sociology and other social sciences. It has been used to analyze a wide range of social issues, from poverty and inequality to political power and social change.


Chas Thomas

2020.05.08
fers the promise that all such sensibilities—and in fact, human reason itself—will come to play a greater role in human affairs.