Introduction to Sociology (Soc 001, Sections 201-206)

University of Pennsylvania

Fall 2016

Prof. Lareau

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Office hours: Mondays 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and by appointment

This course does not presume any prior knowledge of the field of sociology.

We live in a country which places a premium on individual accomplishments. Hence, all of you worked extremely hard to get into Penn. Yet, social factors also have an impact on life chance. This class provides an overview of how membership in social groups shapes the outcomes of individuals. We will look at a range of topics from the organizational factors which promoted racial inequality in Ferguson, MO to the refusal of (mostly elite) parents to vaccinate their children. The experience of women and men in the labor market -- and the social factors that lead women to earn less than men -- is another interesting topic taken up in the course. Who gets ahead in America? Students are not expected to have any previous knowledge of the topic.

Teaching Assistants:

Andrea Alvarado-Urbina, email: andaly@sas.upenn.edu, noon to 1, Tuesday, McNeil 455

Peter Harvey, email: phar@sas.upenn.edu Tuesdays 12:15 to 1:15 and by appointment, McNeil 455

Angie Ocampo, email: aocampo@sas.upenn.edu, Thursdays from 2-3 pm and by appointment, McNeil 460.

Required readings:


(Prof. Lareau will make an estimate of the royalties from the sale of the book to this class and donate the proceeds to charity. In addition, you are more than welcome to read Marianne Cooper’s book, *Cut Adrift: Families in Insecure Times*, instead of *Unequal Childhoods*. If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, please speak to your TA.)

All of the books are at the Penn Book Center on 34th near Sansom. There are also additional readings posted on Canvas: [http://canvas.upenn.edu](http://canvas.upenn.edu)

In addition, you are required to read Piper Kerman’s memoir, *Orange is the New Black: My Year in a Woman’s Prison*. If you prefer, you have the option of watching the first 9 episodes of *Season 1* for the TV series *Orange is the New Black*. It will not make *any* difference in your course performance if you watch the videos rather than read the book. It is up to you.

Goals for the semester

- You will learn about the power of social context to shape the behavior of individuals.
- You will learn about sociological research on the following question: how much opportunity is there in American society for children whose parents are not middle class?
- You will help to develop your analytic skills so that you can critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of an intellectual position. You will work to synthesize a variety of research evidence to support a coherent intellectual position.

Free Advice

There are many things that most of you will do during this semester. You will get settled on campus. This will mean that you will adjust to your living situation, go out with your friends, visit your family, and work. These are important. Still, your academic life should also be a foundational element of your semester and a core part of why you are here. Set high standards for yourself! Read books on your own! It is wonderful to arrange your schedule so that you come to class, do the readings, study, and absorb the material.

- The class is designed to challenge you to think about the world in new ways as well as to build your intellectual skills. We work for each class to have a point and to highlight key ideas. Each class is an important part of the goals of the semester. We are always happy to meet with you in office hours to discuss what you are learning and how you can further improve.

Course requirements:

- In-class Midterm (15% multiple-choice, short answer, and 85% essay)
- In-class Final (comprehensive with more emphasis on the period since the midterm but same format at the midterm)
Six recitation exercises where you reflect on the readings and to apply the concepts to daily life. (You may drop one). In addition to uploading it to Canvas, you must turn in a hard copy of the exercise to recitation. If you are going to be out-of-town, please just put a hard copy in advance in your TA’s mailbox in the Sociology Department in the first floor of the McNeil Building.

Three-page typed paper where you formulate and test a social science hypothesis derived from *Orange is the New Black*; you will each collect and read two sociological articles for this small paper.

To help you learn the skills which will help you do well in this course, we are having “practice midterm” which is worth only 7.5% of your final grade. Unlike the actual midterm, you will not receive extensive comments, but you will receive a grade. It is intended to provide “scaffolding” to help you develop the skills you need to flourish in this course.

These course requirements will contribute to your final grade in the following fashion:

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<td>Midterm</td>
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Recitation has 2 components:

* 50 points for class engagement
* 150 points for the class exercises. There are 6 exercises worth 30 points each, but you may drop one.

Additional Writing has 2 components:

* Practice midterm: (7.5%) (75 points)
* 3 page paper illuminating your hypothesis testing of an idea which grew out of Watching *Orange is the New Black* (7.5%) (75 points)

It is expected that you will complete all of the reading before recitation and attend every recitation. (We do not expect you to complete the reading before section in the first week of class.) If you are an athlete, simply share your travel schedule with your TA.
Exercises: 30 points each

The exercises are intended to help bring the concepts of the course to life. Each exercise has 2 parts. First, there will be three or four questions where you will reflect on the key themes in the readings. This portion of the exercise will take longer since you will need to reflect on the readings and synthesize your thoughts. Second, there is a practical exercise to help bring the concepts of the course to life. You should not spend a lot of time on the practical exercises.

Since the exercises are turned into your TA in recitation, the TA will give you the dates when the exercises are due.

1) Norms around drinking alcohol at Penn
2) Portrayal of social groups in the media
3) Interview someone who is in a “bad job” or is homeless. (If this exercise makes you uncomfortable, you may request an alternative one, but we will provide a great deal of guidance and support to help you complete it. Most people find it to be interesting and valuable.) Each recitation will create an interview guide to follow.
4) Gender Division of Labor exercise
5) Social origins and the ability to buy a home
6) Visit a school and write up what you observe or interview someone who has worked in a school about the conditions in the school. Show how what you learned illustrates some of the key points in Duncan and Murane’s book. You might look at the videos on their website: http://restoringopportunity.com/

Three page paper/Formulating a Hypothesis and Assessing Evidence

You are required to read the memoir *Orange is the New Black* by Piper Kerman. However, if you wish, you may watch the first 9 episodes of Season 1 instead of reading the memoir. It will not impact your grade if you chose to watch the videos or read the book. It is up to you. You should complete this piece by mid-October or so. (This book also contains valuable insights into social processes of socialization, norm violation, and social labeling. Hence, it should illuminate core concepts of the course.)

Then, you should formulate a research question based on what you have learned from the portrayal of women in prison. For example, you might hypothesize that workers in position of
power often treat subordinates in a demeaning fashion. You might hypothesize that women’s self-image is connected to their body type. Put differently, you are formulating a hypothesis, then you will research data on this research question. Your research question can be completely disconnected from prison. Please have your TA approve your research question.

Then, you are required to find two articles from *Sociological Abstracts* (that you can understand) that allow you to find evidence for your hypothesis. You will write a very brief essay where you state the research hypothesis, state the competing answers to the hypothesis, and present the evidence from the articles on this research question. You will summarize, in detail, the evidence from the two articles you read. Although your data sources are modest in scope, you will still draw a conclusion. Is your hypothesis supported or not from the evidence available to you? The paper is due on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. A hard copy should be turned in to your TA. Please also upload the paper as well as your two articles to Canvas. We will provide additional guidance on this assignment during the semester. We encourage you to meet in groups to discuss the *Orange is the New Black* material and the connection to the course.

**Academic integrity:**

Please familiarize yourself with Penn’s Code of Academic Integrity, http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html, which applies to this course. Of course, we do not anticipate any problems with academic integrity. In the unlikely event that any concerns do arise on this score, we will forward all related materials to Penn’s Office of Student Conduct, http://www.upenn.edu/osc/index.html, for an impartial adjudication.

**Penn Resources:**

We are blessed to have many resources at Penn. The Weingarten Learning Resource Center has a number of valuable handouts on-line about how to improve your studying and test preparation. There are instructors with whom you may schedule a (free) appointment. Their email is http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/lr/

The library also has many valuable on-line guidelines to help you in doing the research and writing for your paper. You may also schedule an appointment with a reference librarian. The student disability center is also housed in Weingarten: http://www.college.upenn.edu/support/sds.php

Penn also has a writing center. Here is the link: http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/help/ Students may schedule (free) appointments to get help from a trained tutor with the writing process.

Penn also has a Counseling and Psychological Services program which offers free confidential help to students. College can be challenging. Here is the link: http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/ In addition, there are resident advisers, faculty members living on campus, academic advisers, and undergraduate advisers in each program of study. The Office of the Chaplain is also helpful.

Penn seeks to be a caring community.

**Policy on laptops and electronic devices:**
Recent research, including from Stanford University, demonstrates that multi-tasking reduces cognitive functioning. (See the article from Stanford University posted in Week 1 readings. It is not required reading.) In addition, learning is not simply about memorization, but it is about actively analyzing, questioning, and assessing the ideas and evidence presented in lecture. Most importantly, when students use electronic devices in a classroom (i.e., to do email or browse Facebook) it is distracting to other students. Due to these factors, as well as additional factors, this class joins other university courses in having a policy of no electronic devices being permitted in lecture or recitation.

**The Society Sector at Penn:**

This class fulfills a general education requirement at Penn. The “Society” Sector is aimed at building students’ capacity to analyze social life. Here are the goals set out by Penn:

1. *Does this course allow students to formulate and test social science hypotheses?*
2. *Does the course provide students with an understanding of social theories?*
3. *Will students understand the basis of empirical social science?*
4. *Will students gather and interpret data about social phenomena?*
5. *Does the course encourage students’ understanding of culture, religion, class, gender, race, or other fundamental social constructs?*
6. *Does the course enable students to understand the role of institutions in society, the relationship between individuals and those institutions, or the relationship among ideologies, values, and individual behavior?*

**MCAT Preparation**

The MCAT has added a social and behavioral component. Should you be taking the MCAT, this class will help you prepare for this test. In some cases, a power point slide will have a special logo for a doctor. This symbol will signal to you that the information is on the list of concepts stressed in MCAT test preparation materials. Finally, with an undergraduate assistant, Timothy Delaney, Prof. Lareau has collected and, in some cases, written a series of definitions for the over 175 concepts or terms contained in the MCAT materials. In addition to including these concepts during the semester in lecture, as a courtesy, Prof. Lareau will share a document which contains all of the terms and the definitions. You may keep it and share it with others.

**Welcome to the course!**

**Course Calendar and Readings:**

Please complete the reading before class and certainly before recitation. For the reading for the first week, please complete it by the second time your recitation meets.

**Week 1:**
Wednesday: August 30th

*The Sociological Perspective*

Ferguson, Mapping the Social Landscape (hereafter Ferguson), Chapter 1, C. Wright Mills, “The Promise” 1-6


Ferguson, Chapter 10, “Culture: A Sociological View,” Pp. 95-105

Ferguson, Chapter 6, “On Being Sane in Insane Places” Pp. 48-57

Canvas: Six Lessons of Suicide Bombers

**Week 2:**

Monday: (no class): Labor Day

*Applying the sociological perspective to the case of campus drinking: the readings below provide empirical examples for you to read and reflect upon*

Canvas: College Drinking Fact Sheet, “Monitoring the Future” pp 36-40 and tables only,

“Why Colleges are not Stopping College drinking”

Ferguson, chapter 21, “Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture” 216-228

Ferguson, Chapter 23 “Some Principles of Stratification”

**Wednesday: September 7th**

*Sociological theories/ empirical studies of health*

Ferguson, Chapter 4; “Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology”


Canvas: Two heart attacks

Canvas, “Wealth Blacks Fare Worse,” (news brief)

**Week 3:**

Monday: September 12th

*Health Disparities, Health Policy*

Canvas: “The End Game”

Canvas: Health Divide, Pp. 390-397

**Wednesday, September 14th**

*Race and Public Space*
Ferguson, Chapter 31, “What is racial domination?” Pp 338-351
Ferguson, Chapter 12 “Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts” Pp. 134-144
Canvas: Steinbugler

**Week 4:**

**Monday: September 19**th

*Race and Housing Segregation*

Canvas: Racial Profiling, Pp. 263-270
Canvas: Steinbugler
Ferguson, Chapter 25, Race, Homeownership, and Wealth, Pp. 266-277

**Wednesday, September 21**st

*Prisons*

Readings on Canvas only:
Ferguson, Chapter 8, “Interpersonal Dynamics in a Simulated Prison” Pp 69-78

**Week 5:**

*Immigration*

**Monday, September 26**nd:

Canvas: Immigrant America: Who They Are and Why They Come
Canvas: How Barriers to Citizenship Increase Inequality in the U.S.
OPTIONAL: Canvas: Zimbardo, Philip on Torture and humiliation in Abu Ghraib: Pp. 324-379

**Wednesday, September 28**th

**PRACTICE MIDTERM IN CLASS**
The purpose of the practice midterm is to help you gain the skills you need to write a strong analysis of the readings and lecture material. Writing a coherent essay is a challenging task. It takes practice. This midterm is worth a fraction of the actual midterm. It will be graded by the TAs. Due to the labor-intensive nature of grading, the comments will be less extensive than for the actual midterm, but we would be happy to provide feedback in office hours. In addition, there is a sample outstanding exam essay from an earlier class on Canvas as well as handouts on how to write an essay.

Please do complete the reading for today before the practice midterm

Week 6

*Social Welfare Capitalism and the Rise of Neo-liberalism: Changes in Work*

**Monday, October 3rd**

Canvas: working at Amazon

Viscelli, start introduction

Ferguson: Chapter 9, “Working at Bazooms”

**Wednesday, October 5th**

Viscelli, *The Big Rig*, complete the introduction and Chapter 1

Week 7:

*The Labor Market*

**Monday, October 10th**

Canvas: Kalleberg, read 1-18

Viscelli: Chapter 2

**Wednesday, October 12th**

Viscelli: Chapter 3

Ferguson, Chapter 41, “Over the Counter: McDonalds”Pp 464-478

Week 8:

**Monday, October 17th**

Viscelli, Chapter 4: Working for the Truck: The Harsh Reality of Contracting start Chapter 5,

**Wednesday, October 19th**

Viscelli: finish Chapter 5, complete Chapter 6

Week 9:
Monday, October 24th

**MIDTERM**

*Socialization by Gender*

Ferguson, Chapter 13, “No Way My Boys are Going to Be Like That” Pp. 121-133.

Ferguson, Chapter 27, “Gender as a Structure,” Pp. 291-300

Ferguson, Chapter 28, “What It Means to be Gendered Me” Pp. 301-315

Ferguson, Chapter 29, “Dude, You’re a Fag.” Pp. 315-323

These readings do not need to be completed by the midterm.

Wednesday, October 26th

*Gender and Housework*

Canvas: Hochschild, *The Second Shift* (Read chapter 5, start reading chapter 6)

Ferguson, Chapter, “The Time-Bind” Pp. 491-501

**Week 10:**

*Gender and Work-Family Conflict*

Monday, October 31st

Canvas: Hochschild, *The Second Shift* (Finish chapter 6, and start chapter 8)

*The Family and Sexual Behavior*

Canvas: Median Wages by gender and education

Canvas: Hochschild, *The Second Shift*

Ferguson, Chapter 53, “Deinstitutionalization of marriage” pp. 586-593

Ferguson, Chapter 54, “Unmarried with Children,” 598-606

Wednesday, November 1st

Lareau, Unequal Childhoods, 1-37, start appendix material (345-364)

OPTIONAL: Bogle, “Hooking Up”

**Week 11:**

*The Rich and the Poor*

Monday, November 7th

Lareau, finish methodological appendix, Garrett Tallinger and Tyrec Taylor

**Wednesday, November 9th**

Lareau, *Unequal Childhod*ds, Katie Brindle, Alexander Williams  
Canvas: “As American As Apple Pie: Poverty…” Pp. 173-178  
Ferguson, “Nickeled and Dimed,” Pp. 278-290

**Week 12:**  
*Social Class and Unequal Life Chances*

**Monday, November 14th**

Canvas: Erickson, Pp, 3-8  

**Wednesday, November 16th**

Lareau, *Unequal Childhod*ds, Wendy Driver, Billy Yanelli, and Conclusion to 1st Edition  
Canvas: Lauren Rivera, “Privilege”

**Week 13:**  
*Unequal Childhod*ds, *Unequal Adulthood*ds

**Monday, November 21st**

Lareau *Unequal Childhod*ds, “Class Differences in Parents’ Knowledge… (Chapter 13) and “Unequal Childhod*ds in Context” (Chapter 15)  
Ferguson, Chapter15, “Making It by Faking It.” Pp. 145-156  
Canvas: Tables, The Long Shadow

**Wednesday, November 23rd**: Note, in class this day, we will watch the movie “*People Like Us: Social Class in America.*” There is a handout to guide your notetaking. If you are traveling for the holiday, you may, without penalty, watch the movie at another point. It is on reserve in the library.

**Week 14:**  
*Educational Institutions*

**Monday, November 28th**

Canvas: “I Need Help!”
Canvas: “Schools Really Matter,” Pp. 80-86
Duncan and Murane, *Restoring Opportunities*, 10

**Wednesday, November 30th**
Duncan and Murane, *Restoring Opportunities*, table on page 13, 14—52

**Week 15:**

*Educational Policy Interventions*

**Monday, December 5th**
Duncan and Murane, *Restoring Opportunities*, 35-84
Ferguson, Chapter

**Wednesday, December 7th**
Duncan and Murane, *Restoring Opportunities*, 85-108, 123-144
Ferguson, Chapter 52, “Bad boys.” 578-585

**Last class:**

*Historical Changes in Social Life*

**Monday, December 12th**
Ferguson, Chapter 56 “Atrophy of Social Life” Pp 623-630
Ferguson, Chapter 57, “Cosmopolitan Canopy” Pp 631-643
Ferguson, Chapter 58, “Generations X, Y, and Z” Pp. 644-653

**Final examination:**

Friday, December 16th, noon to 2:00 p.m., Classroom to be announced at a later date