

Department of Sociology
University of Colorado

The Self in Modern Society

Fall 2009

SOCY 3151-01

EKLCE 1B20 TR 2:00 - 3:15

Dr. Leslie Irvine

Ketchum 223

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Office hours: MW 12:30-2

Course description

Few ideas in modern societies are as taken for granted as the idea that people possess selves. This course explores the social origins and consequences of the idea of the self. We will trace the rise of individual identity in the early modern era and follow it through contemporary times. We will consider how sociology approaches the self as a topic of study. We will investigate how culture and individual experiences shape the personal self, focusing on race, ethnicity, and religion. We will also examine several challenges to mainstream thinking about the self, including the idea of selfhood among animals.

Course Outline

The course focuses on topics within four general themes:

- Aug 27-Sept 22: Classic Perspectives
- Sep 24- Oct 15: Who am I? Self and Identity as a Problem
- Oct 22-Nov 12: Emotions and Authenticity
- Nov 17-Dec 10: Expanding the Field

Course goals

- To introduce you to the sociological perspective on the self, which differs from the perspective of popular culture
- To enable you to apply the sociological perspective to everyday interaction
- To improve your abilities in writing, critical thinking, and analysis

Course Materials

Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2003. *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Feeling* (20th Anniversary edition). Berkeley: University of California Press. (Note: you may also use the original 1983 edition.)

Irvine, Leslie. 2004. *If You Tame Me: Understanding our Connection with Animals*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. (Note: I donate any royalties from the use of this book to animal protection groups. I receive royalties only on *new* books.)

There are additional required readings posted on CULearn. These are marked with an asterisk on the reading schedule.

Course policies

Attend class regularly. I will not post the notes online. If you miss a class, first contact a classmate for notes. After you have copied and reviewed the notes, see Jesse or me for additional clarification of the material if needed.

Keep current with the reading. The readings come from scholarly journals and books, and you will find them more difficult than the textbooks you might be accustomed to reading. They will require more time and attention. Please note that we will not go over each reading in class, but you are responsible for all content assigned. In some cases, we will discuss the material in considerable detail; in others, the reading will provide a platform for considering related issues.

Check CU Learn and your CU email account regularly for announcements relevant to the class. To send Jesse or me an email, you *must* put SOCY3151 in the subject line of your message. You can follow this with other information (e.g., SOCY3151 paper question) but your message must start with SOCY3151. Messages with blank subject lines go directly into a spam folder. Jesse and I will read and respond to email sent to me from this class Monday through Thursday, 9-5, and Friday, 9-12. Please note that by law, neither Jesse nor I can discuss your grades by email.

Be courteous in class. Arrive on time. Turn cell phones off and put them away before the start of class. Do not keep phones in your lap or on your desk. Refrain from sleeping, holding conversations, reading newspapers, or doing work for other classes. Respect everyone in the learning environment.

Inform me immediately if you have a health problem or a disability that necessitates leaving the classroom during lectures/discussion.

I do not allow laptops in class. If you are required to use a laptop because of a disability, please provide documentation within the first two weeks of class.

Keep copies of all graded course work until you receive your final, official grade. In the case of an incorrect or missing grade, it is your responsibility to provide graded work to request a change.

Grading

You will demonstrate mastery of course concepts through assignments and exams. Your final grade will be based on 200 possible points, earned through the following:

1. Read and Analyze Assignment (3 x 30 = 90 points)
2. Exams: Midterm & Final (50 + 60 = 110 points)

Read and Analyze Assignment

This assignment involves close, careful reading of three articles and responding to critical thinking questions about each reading. The articles, corresponding questions, details about formatting your papers, and grading criteria are posted on CU Learn. Submit the corresponding assignments on Sep 17, Oct 8, and Nov 10. You must submit your assignments through CU Learn. Follow the instructions on the site.

If you turn a paper in late, you will have one letter grade deducted for each day after the due date, and we will accept no papers after the third day. We will make exceptions to this policy for

religious holidays or documented, extenuating circumstances, such as a death in the family or hospitalization. In such cases, please inform Jesse or me of your situation as early as possible.

Exams

The exams will draw on lecture and reading (50/50). Both exams will consist of an in-class portion, incorporating multiple choice and T/F questions, and an essay question that you will answer at home, prior to the exam, and turn in with the in-class section. The essay will require you to synthesize and analyze information from different topics in the course. The final exam will not be cumulative, but it will assume knowledge of concepts used throughout the course.

Because students often take awhile to develop a successful study strategy for the exams, the midterm will count less than the final exam. Specifically, the midterm will count for 50 course points and the final will count for 60 points. Make-up exams are possible only for religious holidays or documented, extenuating circumstances, such as a death in the family or hospitalization. In such cases, please inform Jesse or me of your situation as early as possible.

Final Grade Scale

A: 94-100%	B: 84-86%	C: 73-76%	D: 64-66%
A-: 90-93%	B-: 80-83%	C-: 70-72	D-: 60-63%
B+: 87-89%	C+: 77-79%	D+: 67-69	F: 59% or less

Course Schedule

Subject to change. I will announce any changes in class and post them on CU Learn. Required readings posted on CU Learn are designated with *.

- Aug 25 Introduction to the course
- Aug 27 *Holstein & Gubrium: pp. 1-27 (up to Mead)
- Sep 1 *Holstein & Gubrium pp. 27 to end; *Mead’s “The Social Self”
- Sep 3 *Hewitt: pp. 79-101
- Sep 8 *Hewitt: pp. 101-111
- Sep 10 *Hewitt: pp. 111-end
- Sep 15 Goffman: intro and chaps. I and II
- Sep 17 Goffman: chaps III, IV, and V
- Sep 22 Goffman: chaps VI and VII
- Sep 24 *Baumeister: pp. 29-46 (“Puritanism” heading)
- Sep 29 *Baumeister: pp. 46-56 (end of chapter)
- Oct 1 *Baumeister: pp. 59-76 (“The Twentieth Century” heading)
- Oct 6 *Baumeister: pp. 76-94 (end of chapter)
- Oct 8 *Irvine (entire article)
- Oct 13 *Wilkins: entire article
- Oct 15 *Nagel: entire article
- Oct 20 Midterm
- Oct 22 *Turner: entire article
- Oct 27 *Gergen: pp. 48-68 (“Populating the Self” heading)
- Oct 29 *Gergen: pp. 68-end of chapter
- Nov 3 *Hochschild: entire article
- Nov 5 Hochschild (*The Managed Heart*): preface and chaps 1-3

Nov 10	Hochschild (<i>The Managed Heart</i>): chaps 4-6
Nov 12	Hochschild (<i>The Managed Heart</i>): chaps 7-9 and afterword
Nov 17	*Peek: entire article
Nov 19	*O'Brien: entire article
Nov 24 -26	TG Holiday
Dec 1	Irvine (<i>If You Tame Me</i>): chaps 1-4
Dec 3	Irvine (<i>If You Tame Me</i>): chaps 5-6
Dec 8	Irvine (<i>If You Tame Me</i>): chaps 7, 8, and conclusion
Dec 10	*Snow & Anderson: entire article
Dec 12	Final Exam 1:30–4:00 p.m.

Academic Integrity and Honor Code

Plagiarism and cheating will be grounds for receiving a failing grade on the relevant exam or assignment and possibly failing the course. To ensure academic integrity, students in this course *must* observe the Honor Code in all work.

Disability Policy

Students with *documented* disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, or psychiatric disabilities should see me after class or during my office hours (preferably during the first two weeks of class) to discuss possible reasonable accommodations. For more information, consult the Office of Disability Services, Willard 322 (303-492-8671).

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policies on Discrimination and Harassment (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html>) Sexual Harassment, and Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. For information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment, see <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or attendance. Please notify me early in the semester if you will need accommodations for religious observance. For more information, see http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html