

Fall 2004  
Soc 3001  
Haffey

**Sociology 3001 - 001**  
**Classical Social Theory**  
**Fall 2004**

**Instructor: Dr. Mike Haffey**  
**Class time: T-R, 8-9:15am**  
**Class Location: Hellums 141**

**Office hrs. T-R 1-3:00pm**  
**Office Location: 11A Ketchum Hall**  
**Office phone #: 303.492.8838**

I consider this course one of the most important you will take during your sociology undergraduate career. Sociological theory serves as the ideational foundation for all sociological investigation: past, present, future, and across all areas of substantive interest. As sociologists, it provides us a necessary interpretive schema by which to make sense of the empirical world. What is society? What are its constituent parts and how are they related? How is the individual and society linked? How do societies retain their unity and continuity while undergoing change? What is the cause of social change? Why and how do vast social, political, and economic inequalities endure?

What is so exciting about these types of questions is that they are the very ones we need to grasp and interpret the complex and dynamic features of modern social life. Looking across the social landscape today - globalization, computerization, spectacle, and matters of sustainability - it seems most appropriate to pursue our discipline's most fundamental concerns. Classical social theory - and the broad range of contemporary social thought it has given rise to - sought to explain social events, patterns, conditions and interactions of all types, and in so doing, provided fundamental insights into matters of social order and social change. These are the basic tools of the trade.

To the casual observer, theorizing may appear quite divorced from the business of gathering facts about the social world. For the working sociologist, it is theory that tells us what is relevant and problematic about groups of facts. It tells us why certain facts are seen as significant, why certain questions are asked, and why certain solutions are accepted. While a diversity of sociological approaches can be found in sociology (varying in level of abstraction and scope) there is an agreement among sociologists that the purpose of theory is to explain empirical facts, that theories should be testable, and that theorizing is a process with no final resting place.

Social theory encourages us to look beyond individual psychology and unique events to the predictable, broad patterns and regular occurrences of social life that influence individual destinies. It frames our understanding and conceptualization of human nature, human behavior, and human organization. Social theory enables us to see. It is an unusual form of vision. The perspective we will adopt this semester is a metatheoretical mode of analysis. It stresses the history of ideas, the inexorable role of assumptions and presuppositions, the internal logic shaping the development of their ideas and the role that key social and political events played in the presentation of principal points in their theories.

The two texts I have chosen for this course were written and designed to facilitate your understanding of a broad range of classical social thought. The authors of these texts have worked hard to make a number of complex issues as understandable as possible. You must do a little work as well. You will be expected to have read and assimilated the required chapters each week. The reading assignments should be done before the topic is discussed in class. Also, please make it a practice to bring your books to class with you.

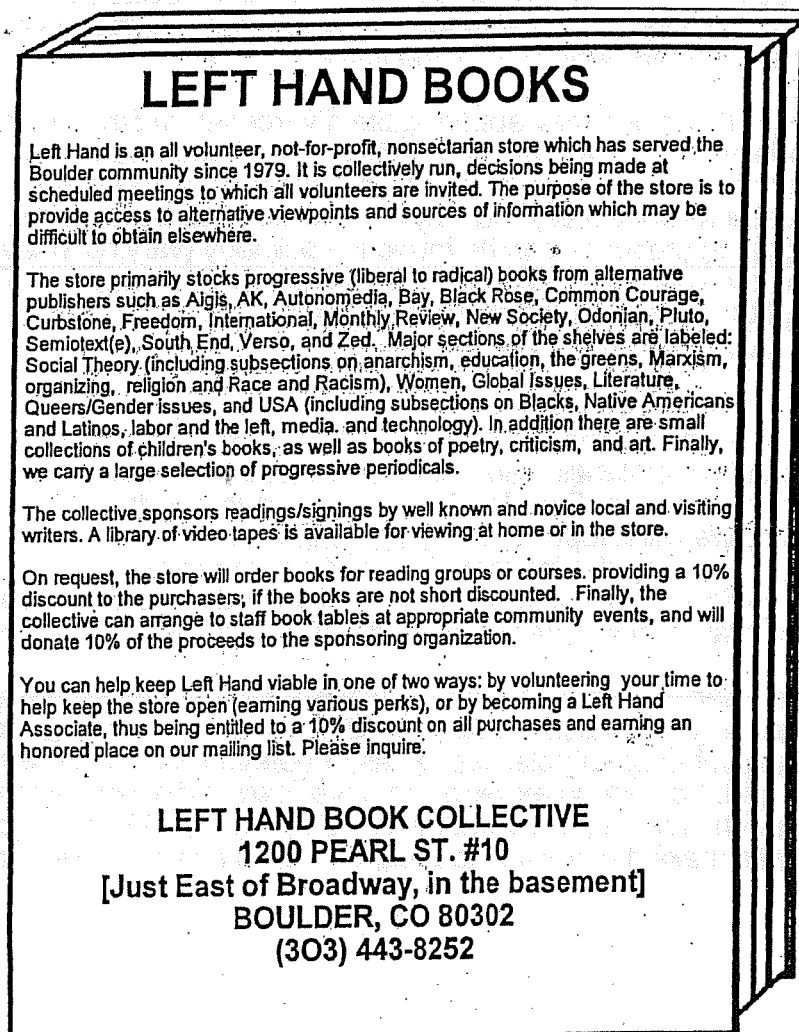
The following two texts are required reading for this course and are available exclusively at **Left Hand Books**.

**Classical Sociological Theory (4th ed.)** by G. Ritzer and D. Goodman  
**Classical Social Theory: Investigation and Application** by Tim Delaney

There will be four in-class exams, each of which will count 20% toward your final grade. Each of these exams will require a familiarity with key concepts and theories, and the capacity to display some of the higher levels of thinking: synthesis, analysis, criticism, and creative application. Each of you will be expected to co-facilitate - with me and another student - one class discussion, which will account for another 10% of your grade. Finally, your attendance / general participation will account for the remaining 10% of your grade. I favor frequent and informed participation.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide me notification from Disability Services and discuss specific needs with me, preferably during the first two weeks of class. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard Hall, room 322.)



**LEFT HAND BOOKS**

Left Hand is an all volunteer, not-for-profit, nonsectarian store which has served the Boulder community since 1979. It is collectively run, decisions being made at scheduled meetings to which all volunteers are invited. The purpose of the store is to provide access to alternative viewpoints and sources of information which may be difficult to obtain elsewhere.

The store primarily stocks progressive (liberal to radical) books from alternative publishers such as Aigis, AK, Autonomedia, Bay, Black Rose, Common Courage, Curstone, Freedom, International, Monthly Review, New Society, Odonian, Pluto, Semiotext(e), South End, Verso, and Zed. Major sections of the shelves are labeled: Social Theory (including subsections on anarchism, education, the greens, Marxism, organizing, religion and Race and Racism), Women, Global Issues, Literature, Queers/Gender issues, and USA (including subsections on Blacks, Native Americans and Latinos, labor and the left, media, and technology). In addition there are small collections of children's books, as well as books of poetry, criticism, and art. Finally, we carry a large selection of progressive periodicals.

The collective sponsors readings/signings by well known and novice local and visiting writers. A library of video tapes is available for viewing at home or in the store.

On request, the store will order books for reading groups or courses, providing a 10% discount to the purchasers; if the books are not short discounted. Finally, the collective can arrange to staff book tables at appropriate community events, and will donate 10% of the proceeds to the sponsoring organization.

You can help keep Left Hand viable in one of two ways: by volunteering your time to help keep the store open (earning various perks), or by becoming a Left Hand Associate, thus being entitled to a 10% discount on all purchases and earning an honored place on our mailing list. Please inquire.

**LEFT HAND BOOK COLLECTIVE**  
**1200 PEARL ST. #10**  
**[Just East of Broadway, in the basement]**  
**BOULDER, CO 80302**  
**(303) 443-8252**