

Haffey
Fall
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Social Change
Sociology 3111
Fall 2001
MWF 12:00pm-12:50pm

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Change is an integral part of both nature and human societies. The discipline of sociology has long focused on the dynamics of social change, that is, the significant alteration of social structures including norms, values, and cultural arrangements. Historical changes, revolutionary changes, technological changes, attitudinal changes, and other forces shaping our experience of the modern world stand at the center of contemporary sociological research. Variouslly termed - industrialization, modernization, bureaucratization - these processes are interrelated patterns of broad social change. The specific changes occurring in the family, education, politics, media, the economy, etc. are similarly interrelated and occur somewhat simultaneously. But, to what extent is such change of our own making?

Understanding this complex and ongoing set of causes and consequences of social change is the primary objective for us this semester. I believe that such a focus will be a wonderful way to encourage in you a sociological imagination. That is, the capacity to see the connections between the individual and society, personal biography and social history, self and world. Most importantly, I hope this course will empower you! Social change is something much more meaningful and fulfilling if experienced actively rather than passively. How can we become agents of social change?

To guide our discussion this semester, I have chosen four texts that I think are both intriguing and relevant to our contemporary situation. While the substantive topic and theoretical framing of each text may differ, each presents us with a sociological understanding of how and why social change occurs. Together, they will provide us with a rich and diverse perspective on this key sociological concern.

The required books for this course are available exclusively at Left Hand Books.

- **Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective**
author: Philip McMichael
- **The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls**
author: Joan Jacob Brumberg
- **Grassroots Resistance: Twentieth Century Social Movements**
author: Robert Goldberg
- **Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption**
author: George Ritzer

This class will be organized in seminar fashion, involving informal discussion and student presentation of material. It is important to me and extremely beneficial to you to attend each class meeting. I favor frequent and informed participation. You are expected to take part as a regular member of this class. Your final grade for this course will be determined by your participation (20%), four writing assignments (15% each), and a final exam (20%).