

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Sociology 3308 - 001

Sociology of Emotions

Winter 2009

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TERM PAPER INFORMATION

For your term paper, you are asked to critically discuss an issue relating to emotions. While I strongly encourage specific requests by students wishing to pursue particular interests in this area, **and will give a 10% bonus to students with a novel and original topic NOT listed below**, I will suggest the following as other possible paper topics:

1. Using the philosophical categories described by Calhoun and Solomon, compare and critically contrast any one of the sociological theorists we have discussed.
2. Using any one of the sociological theories we have discussed, analyze a particular historical incident or social institution. Consider, using materials we have used in this course, whether this is a legitimate endeavour.
3. Using the philosophical categories described by Calhoun and Solomon, compare and critically contrast two examples of contemporary psychological work on emotions.
4. Emotion has been traditionally portrayed as contrary to reason. Others beg to differ. Using philosophical, psychological and sociological materials, give your opinion on this matter.
5. There have been many lists constructed of "basic" or "primary" emotions. Give your view on the utility of this approach.
6. Pick a particular emotion and analyze it from (i) an historical; (ii) psychological; and (iii) sociological perspective. Use concrete examples.

7. Pick an important emotional experience you have had and analyze it in terms of two of the sociological theories we have discussed in this class (discuss this topic with me beforehand if you have any concerns. Confidentiality will be maintained).
8. Compare and contrast any three of the sociological theorists we have discussed with regard to the nature-nurture debate. Which position do you prefer? Explain.
9. It has been noted that specific emotions are often difficult to classify, and some seem to have little to do with each other. In your opinion, what is the best way to deal with this problem? Explain.
10. It has been argued that it is impossible to translate emotion terms cross-culturally, but that other criteria may be utilized to compare them or make them understandable to those in our culture. How do you feel about this?
11. If self is an important concept of emotion, and if self changes cross culturally, then does emotion also do so? Give your opinion.
12. Critique Catherine Lutz's book Unnatural Emotions with regard to its cross-cultural approach to emotions.
13. Kemper discusses a number of dimensions which distinguish various emotion theorists. Critically compare and contrast any two sociological theorists on any three of those dimensions.
14. Critique the structural approach to emotions presented by Theodore Kemper and Randall Collins.
15. Critique the positivist "hard science" approach to emotions generally.
16. Using the phenomenological approach espoused by Denzin, critically analyze how you feel that media representations have impacted your "lived experience" of emotion. Give examples.
17. Using the "emotion management" approach outlined by Hochschild and others, critically analyze employment situations where you felt you had to manage your emotions. Explain how you managed this, and whether the concepts outlined thus far were sufficient to explain your strategies.
18. Compare and critically contrast any two theorists who take a political economy approach to emotions.

19. Compare and critically contrast any two theorists with regard to their utilization of gender as an explanatory factor. Are these sufficient? Explain.
20. Evaluate any two theorists with regard to their success at linking micro and macro contexts of emotion. Relate these to other sociological theory in this regard.
21. Utilizing Thoits' concept of "emotional deviance," critically analyze how this may be implicated in the diagnosis and treatment of mental health. Link this to the critical sociological literature on mental illness. What are the implications?
22. Comparing Goffman, Clark and Zurcher, discuss how the expression of emotions may be utilized in controlled performances for various purposes.
23. Using specific examples, discuss the relationship between emotions and motivation. What is your position in this regard?
24. What, in your opinion, is the relationship between emotions, gender and physical health? Give examples.
25. Critically discuss Kenney's discussion of happiness in relation to Kemper's list of "metatheoretical issues." In these terms, to which other theorist is this work most closely related?

Please note that these are *suggested topics* only. If you have a particular issue that you would like to pursue that is not listed above, please feel free to discuss it with me either after class or during my office hours. If contemplating a topic not listed above, it will be important for you to discuss your topic with me first to make sure it is both relevant and reasonably workable within the space that you have been allotted.

Each paper should be approximately *10 typed pages in length, double spaced*. Instead of APA style, *it is mandatory that you use endnotes as your form of citation*. See attached citation guide for details.

If reference is being made to my lecture notes, simply indicate this by stating: "Prof. Kenney, Lecture notes, Month & Date, 2009, at p.#_." Ensure that you include a full

alphabetical
bibliography of sources at the end of your paper.

The following are guidelines for your paper. *Using sub-headings:*

1. Identify your topic briefly in an intro paragraph, outlining what order your paper will follow throughout.
2. Briefly indicate the literature that you have read to date on this topic, with a brief overview of the most significant theoretical issues and debates.
3. Identify a key issue that emerges, and provide a clear thesis statement indicating the position that you will be taking.
4. Data section: using various sources of data (e.g. theoretical works, empirical studies, statistics, interviews, etc.) consider the evidence for both sides of the issue that you have identified in 3.
5. Provide a reasoned conclusion linking the issue in 3 with the evidence in 4.
6. Provide a complete Bibliography at the end.

I should point out that, for anything higher than an average grade, it goes without saying that you will have to do some library research over and above the course text. In addition to your understanding and *critical analysis* of the topics above, please be aware that *I mark for spelling, grammar, and overall clarity of presentation* as well.

As stated in the course outline, this essay is worth 40 percent of your final grade. It is *due in class on **March 18, 2009*** enabling me to mark these, for the most part, before the final exam. *After that time, I will deduct 10 percent of the grade per day that the paper is late, unless you produce a doctor's note or give other satisfactory evidence for the lateness of your work.*

Finally, I will be happy to discuss any of these matters with you. Please call, e-mail, or leave a message at my office if you have any questions or concerns.

Sociology 3308

Citation Guide

In preparing your assignments, the following are examples for how to cite sources.

1. Books by one or more authors:

Becker, Howard

1963 *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Glaser, Barney, and Strauss, Anselm L.

1967 *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*.

Chicago: Aldine

2. Academic Journals:

Blanchard, GERALD

1987 "Male Victims of Child Sexual Abuse: A Portent of Things to Come." *Journal of Independent Social Work*, 1(1) Fall: 19-27.

Broussard, Sylvia D., and Wagner, William G.

1988 "Child Sexual Abuse: Who Is to Blame?" *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 12: 563-69.

3. Articles in Edited Books:

Clark, Candace

1990 AEmotions and Micropolitics in Everyday Life: Some Patterns and Paradoxes of APlace. @ In *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*, ed. Theodore D. Kemper. New York: SUNY Press.

Wortman, Camille B., and Lehman, Darrin R.

1983 "Reactions to Victims of Life Crises: Support Attempts that Fail" In *Social Support: Theory, Research and Applications*, ed. Irwin G. Sarason and Barbara R. Sarason, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff.

As I noted, **I would like you to use *endnotes* as your form of citation.** If you are using Word or Wordperfect, go to the "insert" bar, pull down the menu and you will find this option under "footnote/endnote." Endnotes are basically like footnotes, but appear consecutively on a separate page at the end of your paper. They should look something like this:

References:

1. Stephen J. Pfohl, Images of Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological History (2nd ed.) (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1994). at

p.350-60.

2. Edwin M. Schur, Labeling Deviant Behavior
(New York: Harper and Row, 1971), at p.10.

3. Ibid, p.11.

4. Pfohl (Supra), at p.370.

The first two citations above represent initial references to a particular book and page. The third reflects a subsequent citation to the book immediately above. The fourth is an example of what you should do when you refer to a book you cited earlier, but not immediately before this citation.

Note: I require at least 7 separate sources for this paper.

Finally, at the very end of your paper, I expect a *separate* bibliography where all of the sources you list in your paper (books, journals, and edited texts) are to be repeated, in alphabetical order by the last name of the author(s). This is to begin on a separate page following your endnotes. The following is an example:

Bibliography:

Becker, Howard

1963 *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Berg, Bruce L.

1995 *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. (2nd ed.)
Needham Heights, Mass: Allyn & Bacon.

Blanchard, Geral

1987 "Male Victims of Child Sexual Abuse: A Portent of Things to Come."

Journal of Independent Social Work, 1(1) Fall: 19-27.

Broussard, Sylvia D., and Wagner, William G.

1988 "Child Sexual Abuse: Who Is to Blame?" *Child Abuse and Neglect*,

12: 563-69.

- and so on -

P.S. Internet sources are to be cited by giving the author (if available), year, title, and www address. Be careful about using too many internet sources. Some (i.e. Wikipedia) are **NOT** valid academic references; others are often suspect. Any paper with more than half of its sources from the internet will receive a less than favourable reception.