



LONDON SOUTH BANK
UNIVERSITY

Unit Guide

*THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION:
UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY
& SOCIAL ACTION*

Semester 2 2007-2008

PSO_1_TSI

Faculty of Arts & Human
Sciences

Level 1

Unit Title:	The Sociological Imagination: Understanding Society & Social Action
Level:	1
Reference Number:	PSO-1_TSI
Credit Value:	1 Credit
Availability:	Free Elective
Student Study Hours:	Contact hours 40
Student Managed Learning Hours:	80 hours 110
Pre-requisite Learning:	None
Requisites/Excluded Combinations:	None
Parent Faculty:	Arts & Human Sciences
Parent Course:	BSc (Honours) Social Sciences and Combined Honours Sociology Field

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Short Description

This Unit will introduce you to some of the main questions raised by sociologists. In doing so, the Unit invites you to explore significant aspects of the origins and development of social inquiry by engaging directly with specific pieces of writings by a number of key thinkers who have established what has been called the 'sociological tradition'. You are also invited to examine a number of relevant commentators. Together these writings will provide the material for you to enjoy familiarity with, and deepened understanding of, some key concepts as well as be exposed to the diversity of approaches to the study of human society. In general, therefore, the Unit encourages you to develop what C Wright Mills famously described as 'the sociological imagination'.

Aims

The three principal aims of the Unit are to:

- provide an historical and contemporary overview of the main theoretical frameworks or perspectives that have been suggested as ways of analysing human society
- develop a critical synthesis of these ideas
- demonstrate the relevance of a range of debates and concepts for the analysis of contemporary social and political processes.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the Unit you should be able to demonstrate:

- the possession of an introductory body of knowledge about different approaches to sociological inquiry
- an understanding of a number of the seminal theorists and theories in sociology in preparation of more advanced sociology courses offered in the Faculty
- the ability to utilise sociological ideas beyond the specific issues addressed in the unit

Teaching and Learning Pattern

The Unit will be taught by a combination of lectures and seminars over 12 weeks. Some lectures will be delivered with, when appropriate, the use of overheads, lecture notes and relevant additional articles from academic and popular journals and newspapers. You will be expected to:

- attend all lectures and fully participate in seminars through presentations and group discussions
- work on your own with set readings in order to gain the most from the Unit

- read a minimum amount of relevant literature as indicated in your reading list to enable you actively to participate in the seminars and set about writing essays for your assessment

Assessment

This Unit will be assessed by a *seen two-hour examination* at the end of the Unit (100%). You will be asked to answer two questions from a list of six or more questions covering the Unit as a whole.

However, in week 8 you will be asked to write brief notes of about 100 words each on four key concepts from a list of six or more. This list will be given to you in week 7 for the exercise in week 8. This exercise will help you prepare for the examination at the end of the Unit. You will be invited to discuss your performance in this exercise and your preparation for the end of Unit examination. You are required to do this exercise as part of your learning process in the same way as you are expected to attend lectures and seminars.

Other relevant details

You are encouraged to consult the COURSE GUIDE 2007-2008 for relevant details about attendance, examination arrangements, the writing of an essay, and how to get help and guidance.

Newspapers, Journals and additional reading

You are encouraged to read at least one daily newspaper, particularly those which carry items relevant to the topics covered in this Unit, such as *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Independent* or *The Daily Telegraph*. There are, of course, a long list of other relevant daily newspapers and weekly popular publications, such as *The Economist*.

Academic journals that you may want to consult from time to time to familiarise yourself with current debates about several issues discussed in the Unit include the following:

Sociology
Sociological Review
Journal of Classical Sociology
Social Policy
Theory, Culture & Society
Ethnic & Racial Studies

Lecture & Seminar Programme

- Week 1: Introduction: *imagination* - the origins and nature of sociological inquiry
- Week 2: Emile Durkheim: the concepts of 'social facts' and a 'positive' approach to the study of society
- Week 3: Karl Marx: socio-economic structures and social change
- Week 4: Max Weber: people's beliefs and social change
- Week 5: C Wright Mills: the relevance of tradition and imagination in sociological inquiry
- Week 6: Bhekhu Parekh and the notion of multiculturalism
- Week 7: Freud and society
- Week 8: ***Formative exercise***
- Week 9: Anne Oakley: sex and gender
- Week 10: Erving Goffman and the practices of everyday life
- Week 11: Stuart Hall: representation and social control
- Week 12: Review of the Unit and comments on the Mid-Semester formative exercise

General Literature Guidelines

The books listed below under Key General Texts will introduce you to the main themes and concepts examined in this Unit. They will serve as useful source books and it is worth purchasing one which may also prove valuable in a number of the social science units you are taking in Year 1 as well as some of those you are likely to take in Years 2 and 3. Some of the texts listed under the individual lecture topics for each week that the Unit runs may also be worth purchasing when necessary in order to gain a closer understanding of the thought of a particular writer or the perspective of a school of sociological thought in which you have an interest.

Key General Texts

T Bilton, <i>et al</i> (2002)	<u>Introductory Sociology</u> , Palgrave
J Macionis & K Plummer (2002)	<u>Sociology: a Global Introduction</u> , Prentice Hall
A Giddens (1993)	<u>Sociology</u> , Polity Press
J Gubbay et al, (1997)	<u>The Student's Companion to Sociology</u> , Blackwell
S Hall & B Gieben (1992)	<u>Formations of Modernity</u> , Open University Press
T Noble (2000)	<u>Social Theory and Social Change</u> , Macmillan

Note: There are later editions of nearly all these texts but, for this Unit, it does not matter which edition of each you secure.

Weekly Teaching & Learning Programme

Week 1:

Lecture Topic: Introduction: the origins and nature of sociological inquiry

Seminar Question: *What do you understand by the term 'sociological inquiry'?*

Reading:

Peter Hamilton (1992) 'The Enlightenment and the Birth of Social Science', in, S Hall & B Gieben (eds), Formations of Modernity (Open University), ch 1 **(301)**

Anthony Giddens (1993) Sociology (Polity Press), chs 1 & 22 **(301)**

C Wright Mills (1970) The Sociological Imagination (Penguin) **(301)**

D Lee & H Newby (1984) The Problem of Sociology (Routledge) **(301)**

Week 2:

Lecture Topic: Emile Durkheim: the concepts of 'social facts' and a 'positive' approach to the study of society

Seminar Question: *What did Durkheim mean when he spoke about 'social facts'?*

Essential Reading:

Emile Durkheim (1938) The Rules of Sociological Method (The Free Press) **(301.01)**

Emile Durkheim (1964) The Division of Labour in Society (Free Press) **(301.145)**

Contextual Reading:

Steve Fenton (1984) Durkheim and Modern Sociology (Cambridge

- University Press) (301)
- Steven Lukes (1988) Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work (Allen Lane) (301.0924)
- A Giddens (1976) New Rules of Sociological Method (Hutchinson) (301.09)
- T Noble (2000) Social Theory and Social Change, Macmillan, ch 7
- P Kivisto (1998) Key Ideas in Sociology (Sage), chs 1, 4

Week 3:

Lecture Topic: Karl Marx: socio-economic structures and social change
Seminar Question: *How does Marx explain changes in human society?*

Essential Reading:

- Karl Marx & Frederick Engels (1982) The Communist Manifesto in Marx & Engels, Collected Works, vol 38 (Lawrence & Wishart) (335.4)
- Karl Marx (1977) 'Preface', A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Progress Publishers) (handout)
- T Bottomore & M Rubel (eds.) (1956) Marx's Selected Writings in Sociology and Philosophy (Watts) (335.411)

Contextual Reading:

- G A Cohen (1978) Karl Marx's Theory of History (Oxford) (335.4119)
- D McLellan (1973) Marx: His Life and Thought (Macmillan)(335.40924)
- R Dahrendorf (1959) Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (Routledge) (305.5)
- F Parkin (1979) Marx and Class Theory: a Bourgeois Critique (Tavistock) (301.0924)

B Turner (1999) Classical Sociology, ch 3.

Week 4:

Lecture Topic: Max Weber: people's beliefs and social change
Seminar Question: *How does Max Weber explain change in modern societies?*

Essential reading:

Max Weber (1976) The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
(Unwin) (261.85)

Max Weber (1978) Weber: Selections in Translation, ed W G
Runciman (Cambridge University Press), ch 7
(300.1)

H Gerth & C Wright
Mills (eds) (1947) From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (RKP)
(301.01)

Contextual Reading:

A Giddens (1971) Capitalism and Social Theory (Cambridge University
Press), Section 2 (301.9)

R Bendix (1966) Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait
(Methuen) (301.09)

T Noble (2000) Social Theory and Social Change, Macmillan,
pp122-30

B Turner (1999) Classical Sociology (Sage), ch 5

Week 5:

Lecture Topic: C Wright Mills: the relevance of tradition and imagination
in sociological inquiry
Seminar Question: *What does Mills mean when he speaks about possessing a
'sociological imagination'?*

Essential Reading:

C Wright Mills (1970) The Sociological Imagination (Penguin) (301)

Contextual Reading:

Raymond Aron (1970) Main Currents in Sociological Thought (Doubleday)
(301.01)

I Craib (1992) Modern Social Theory: From Parsons to Habermas
(Harvester) (301.01)

Week 6:

Lecture Topic: Bhekhu Parekh and the notion of multiculturalism
Seminar Question: *What does Parekh mean by the notion of a
'multicultural' Britain?*

Essential Reading:

B Parekh (2000) The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (Runnymede
Trust) (305.896041)

H Goulbourne (1991) Ethnicity and Nationalism in Post-Imperial Britain
(Cambridge University Press) (305.800941)

J Rex & D
Mason (eds) (1986) Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations (Cambridge
University Press) (305.8)

Contextual Reading:

C Alexander (2000) The Asian Gang (Berg) (305.235089914)

S Benson (1996) 'Asians have Culture, West Indians have Problems',
in, T. Ranger, O. Stuart & Y. Samad (eds.) Culture,
Identity and Politics, Avebury (305.800941)

CCCS Collective (1982) The Empire Strikes Back (Hutchinson)
(305.800941)

J Donald & A
Rattansi (eds.) (1992) 'Race', Culture & Difference (Sage) (305.8)

P Gilroy (1987) There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack (Hutchinson)

(323.141)

- H Goulbourne (1998) Race Relations in Britain since 1945 (Macmillan)
(305.800)
- K Owusu (ed.) (2000) Black British Culture and Society (Routledge)
(305.800941)
- J Solomos & L
Back (1996) Racism and Society (Macmillan) **(305.800)**

Week 7:

- Lecture topic: Freud and society
Seminar question: *How does Freud's understanding of the
'unconscious' inform his sociology?*

Essential reading:

- Sigmund Freud [1929] (1979) Civilisation and its Discontents (Hogarth Press)
(150.1952)
- R. Bocock (1976) Freud and modern society: an outline and analysis
of Freud's sociology (Van Nostrand Reinhold)
(301.01)

Contextual reading:

- T. Bottomore (1984) The Frankfurt School (Tavistock Publications)
(301.01)
- I. Craib (2001) Psychoanalysis: a critical introduction (Polity)
- A. Elliott (2000) 'Psychoanalysis and social theory' in B.S. Turner
(ed) The Blackwell Companion to social theory 2nd
edition (Blackwell) **(301.01)**
- A. Elliott &
S. Frosh (eds.) (1995) Psychoanalysis in contexts: between theory and
modern culture (Routledge) **(150.195)**

Week 8:	Formative exercise
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Week 9:

Lecture Topic: Anne Oakley: sex and gender
Seminar Question: *How does Oakley's work help us to understand the relationships between sex and gender?*

Essential Reading:

- A Oakley (1972 / 1985) Sex, Gender and Society (Polity), all, but esp. ch 7
(305.3)
- R W Connell (1987) Gender, Power and Society (Polity), esp. chs 1 & 2
(305.3)
- J Weeks (1986) Sexuality (Routledge), especially chapter 2
(306.7)

Contextual Reading:

- P Abbott & C Wallace (1990) An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives
(Routledge) (301)
- S Garrett (1987) Gender (Tavistock) (305.3)
- A Giddens (1993) Sociology (Polity), chapter (301)
- M Humm (1992) Feminism: A Reader (Harvester) (305.42)
- J Katz (1996) The Invention of Heterosexuality (Plume), Chapter 3
(306.7)
- M MacIntosh (1981) 'The Homosexual Role', in, K Plummer (ed.) The Making of the Modern Homosexual (Hutchinson)
(306.766)
- J Weeks (1989) Sexuality and its Discontents: Meanings Myths and Modern Sexualities (Routledge) (306.7)

Week 10:

Lecture Topic: Erving Goffman and the practices of everyday life
Seminar Question: *What light does the work of Goffman shed on our*

*understanding of social interaction?*Essential Reading:

- Erving Goffman (1956) The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Anchor Books) (302.12)
- Erving Goffman (1961) Asylums (Anchor Books) (362.21)
- Erving Goffman (1961) Stigma (Prentice Hall) (302.542)
- S Cohen & L Taylor (1995) Escape Attempts: the Theory and Practice of Resistance to Everyday Life (Routledge) (745.5994)

Contextual Reading:

- T Burns (1992) Erving Goffman (Routledge) (301.0924)
- J Ditton (ed.) (1980) The View from Goffman (Macmillan) (301.0924)
- P Drew & A Wootton (eds.) (1988) Erving Goffman: exploring the interaction order (Polity) (301.0924)
- A Giddens (1987) Social Theory and Modern Sociology (Polity), ch 5 (301.01)

Week 11:

- Lecture Topic: Stuart Hall: representation and social control
- Seminar Question: *What, for Stuart Hall, are the 'consequences of representation'?*

Essential Reading:

- Stuart Hall (2002) Representation: The Work of Representation (Sage), ch. 1
- Stuart Hall (2002) Representation: Representing the Social (Sage), ch. 2

Contextual Reading:

- Stuart Hall (1979) Policing the Crisis: The Social History of a 'Moral Panic' (Macmillan), ch. 1
- N. Dodd (1999) Social theory and modernity (Polity) **(301.09)**
- Stuart Hall (1979) Policing the Crisis: The Social production of News (Macmillan) ch. 3
- A. Giddens (2001) Runaway world: how globalization is shaping our lives (Profile Books) **(306.2)**

Week 12:**Lecture Topic:**

Review of the Unit and general comments on the Mid-Semester formative exercise

*appendices***appendix 1:
Mid-semester formative exercise**

One past mid-semester formative test paper and one past examination paper are reproduced below. These are entered here in order to give you a clear idea of the kind of knowledge you will be expected to have acquired by the end of this Unit. The following are NOT the questions that you will be asked to answer in this Unit in 2007-2008. You will be given new questions for the formative exercise which will take place in week 8; you will also be given new questions for the final examination at the end of the Unit.

Mid-Semester formative exercise**THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION: UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY &
SOCIAL ACTION*****Instructions***

Choose 4 of the following 6 questions set out below. Write brief statements about each of the 4 concepts you have chosen. Use all the time allowed for answering the questions.

Time allowed: 09.30 – 10.30 (1 hour)

1. Emile Durkheim's notion of 'social facts'
or
Durkheim's understanding of 'society'
2. Karl Karx's concept of 'class struggles'
or
Marx's description of 'capitalist' or 'bourgeois' society
3. Max Weber's description of 'the Protestant ethic'
or
Weber's description of 'the spirit of capitalism'
4. C Wright Mills' concept of the 'sociological imagination'
5. Bhekhū Parekh's notion of a 'multicultural' Britain
6. Freud's understanding of what 'constitutes the human psyche'

appendix 2:
End of Unit examination

Examination
**THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION: UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY &
SOCIAL ACTION**

Answer only TWO questions. You should illustrate the points you make with specific references to the works of the writers you have studied.

Time Allowed: 2 hours

1. What were the things in society that Durkheim suggested we call 'social facts'?
2. How did Marx explain social change?
3. In what ways did Weber establish a connection between 'the Protestant ethic' and the 'spirit of capitalism'?
4. In what ways did C Wright Mills say that the study of sociology would help us understand the world?
5. What light does Goffman shed on the 'practices of everyday life'?
6. What, according to Giddens, are the key features of 'modern societies'?
7. Is there a sociology of race and ethnicity in Britain?
8. What does Cohen's notion of 'folk devils and moral panics' tell us about our understanding of youth identities?
9. How have feminist accounts of sex/gender challenged mainstream sociological concepts?

appendix 3: Marking criteria

At all levels, five areas of assessment objective can be recognised:

1. Knowledge of the topic - ideas, concepts and institutions
2. Analysis of issues and an awareness of different viewpoints
3. Evaluation of competing explanations or theories applied to a problem
4. Ability to identify relevant sources of evidence, both empirical and theoretical, and to use these to produce an informative referencing system
5. Skill in the presentation of an answer with accuracy, clarity and coherence.

With these objectives in mind, the following model marking scheme should apply:

Fail	0-30%	Badly misunderstands the question; contains factual errors; none of basic objectives are achieved
	30-35%	Some knowledge of topic and examples, but objectives 2-5 not met
	35-39%	Exhibits some knowledge of topic, but essentially descriptive; cannot identify alternative viewpoints; objective 1 is present but 2-5 poorly met
Third	40-49%	Demonstrates limited basic knowledge of the topic, but essentially descriptive; displays an attempt at evaluation of material, but low on clarity and coherence; limited achievement of objectives 1,2,3,4,; low on objective 5
2:ii	50-59%	Exhibits good knowledge of the topic; can distinguish different approaches or viewpoints, and some ability of evaluation present, but may to some extent lack clarity and coherence; reasonable attempt at referencing; very good on objective 1, weaker on 2-5
2:i	60-69%	Very good knowledge of basic ideas, concepts and institutions with good analysis of issues and evaluation; good uses of sources and references; meets objectives 1,2,4,5, weaker on 3
First	70-79%	Excellent knowledge of the topic, with high level analysis of a balanced nature. Strong on critical evaluation, clarity, coherence. All assessment objectives covered

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words or ideas of others and passing them off as your own. In many cases plagiarism takes the form of copying from books and articles without full and accurate acknowledgement of sources. This can happen unintentionally when you use notes taken from a book/journal article

and put them directly into your essay without properly attributing the source. Whether intentional or not, plagiarism is not acceptable in any circumstances. It is regarded as a form of cheating and there are strict University regulations to deal with it if it is discovered. You will find a summary of the University regulations & procedures governing plagiarism in your Student Handbook. You must read this carefully.

It is vital when taking notes to:

- (1) Note the FULL reference of the book/article at the top of the first page of notes.
- (2) Keep a precise note of the page numbers of any quoted material (for example in the margins of your notes)
- (3) Use precise double quote marks at the beginning & end of any quotes in your notes and check that any quotes/material used in your essay is accurately and carefully attributed.

appendix 4:

Referencing and Bibliography

All essays must be fully and accurately referenced and must include, at the end, a bibliography of material consulted in the preparation of the essay. There are two well known systems of referencing which can be used for academic work. They are the Harvard System and the Notes system.

The Harvard System

This takes the form of giving details of the author and date of publication in square brackets after the relevant place in the text, for example [Pugh:1994]. The full reference to this text is then given in the Bibliography. When citing specific arguments or using quotations the page number must also be given in the bracket: e.g. [Thompson: 1963, p.66]

NOTE: When using sources which themselves quote or paraphrase other pieces of work always cite the source that you have consulted, e.g. Bentham believed.... [Garland:1985, p.77] The source in the bracket should be listed in the Bibliography.

Perry Library has a very detailed Help Sheet on the operation of the Harvard system. You should obtain a copy from the Library and read it carefully.

When constructing the Bibliography works should be listed by authors' surnames in alphabetical order. When you have used two more works by the same author these should be listed by chronological order of publication. Where there are two or more works by one author in the same year they should be distinguished in the text and the bibliography by a letter [a,b,c...] thus [Tilly: 1977a], [Tilly:1977b].

Titles of **books** and **journals** should always be underlined and the date of publication given. For your purposes it is not necessary to give place of publication OR publisher.

Notes