**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY**

**Sociology 3120-001**

**Social Psychology**

**Fall 2018**

**Instructor: Prof. J. Scott Kenney Office:AA-4049C**

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**Phone: 864-8047`**

**Term Paper Information:**

For your term paper, you are asked to critically discuss an issue relating to social psychology. While**I strongly encourage specific requests by students wishing to pursue particular interests, and will provide a 10% bonus on your paper should it both be on an original, innovative topic and be well-executed**, I will also suggest the following as possible paper topics for others **not** seeking to pursue the bonus mark:

1. Compare and contrast how the different schools of pragmatism influenced the works of any *two* of the following theorists: James, Dewey, Cooley, and Mead.

2. Discuss the difference between instincts and impulses with regard to the various theorists we have dealt with thus far. Critically assess symbolic interactionists' views on the "plasticity" of our biological nature.

3. Compare and contrast *two* given theorists we have discussed to date on *one* of the following issues: agency vs. social determinism; the biological vs. the social; *or* preferred methodological orientation. Argue why you prefer one position to the other.

4. Critically discuss the various interpretations of Mead's "I," pointing out the theoretical and methodological implications of each.

5. Compare and contrast attempts to bridge the gap between the Chicago and Iowa schools. Give your critical assessment of each.

6. Discuss, through the use of examples, George Herbert Mead's discussion of time in interaction.

7. Discuss the role of "covert behavior" in any two theorists we have discussed thus far. Which do you prefer? Justify your answer.

8. Explain the relationship between Mead's "stages of the social act" and his "theory of social action" as discussed by Lewis. Are there problems? Explain.

9. Meltzer, Petras, and Reynolds assert that "Blumer's image of humans dictates his methodology; Kuhn's methodology dictates his image of humans." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

10. Critically discuss the role of language among the theorists we have discussed to date. How

does this relate to symbols? To non-verbal gestures?

11. Often forgotten in the debate between the Chicago and Iowa schools is that William James independently developed a differing conception of the "I" and the "me." Critically discuss how, if at all, this broadens, detracts, or is irrelevant to the debate.

12. Given that many early interactionists were profoundly interested in practical social reform, critically discuss, through the use of examples, what you see as the key implications of the theoretical position of any two theorists for a specific social policy.

13. Do you feel, as did James, that an individual's sense of self depends heavily on the opinions that others have of him/her? Why or why not? Is there an alternative? Explain.

14. Compare and critically contrast any two theorists we have examined on the emergence and development of the self.

15. Explain and critically contrast how any two theorists we have discussed would explain "consciousness" in human individuals.

16. Critically evaluate Thomas' concept of the "definition of the situation."

17. Critically evaluate Goffman's position on the "presentation of self."

18. Don Martindale asserts that "Goffman...no longer locates the traditional problem of selfhood in an internal dialectic between the "I," the principle of action, and the "me," the internalized standards of the community or "conscience." The dialectic is between the public and the private self in which the real self is a naked, unsocialized, and unsocializable expediency." Do you agree with this statement? Discuss why or why not.

19. Compare and critically contrast phenomenological sociology and ethnomethodology in their treatment of the interactional "constitution" of reality. Are these complementary approaches?

20. Explain the differences, if any, between Blumerian symbolic interactionism and phenomenological sociology.

21. Critically discuss the charge that symbolic interactionism exhibits an "astructural bias." In your opinion, does the recent interactionist work on social structure successfully counter this criticism?

22. Critically discuss the charge that symbolic interactionism does not deal with human emotion. In your opinion, which recent theoretical work on emotion is most compatible with the symbolic interactionist perspective? Why?

23. Symbolic interactionism has been criticized for ignoring the role of the unconscious in human behavior. Critically outline the implications of this omission, and give your reasoned opinion on whether symbolic interactionism would benefit from incorporating this dimension into its analysis.

24. Critically discuss the differences between the unitary and multiple entity conceptions of the self, with particular emphasis on methodological implications. In your opinion, is a successful synthesis possible?

25. Compare and contrast Strauss' "negotiated order" conception of social structure with Fine and Kleinman's network analysis. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each? Does Hall's later work favor one, the other, or attempt a theoretical synthesis of both?

26. Critically discuss the similarities and differences between interactionist work on social organization and Anthony Giddens' "structuration theory."

27. Kemper discusses a number of dimensions which distinguish various emotion theorists. Critically compare and contrast Hochschild and Denzin on any three of those dimensions.

28. Critically discuss the theoretical relationship between C. Wright Mills' "vocabularies of motive," on the one hand, and "accounts" and "disclaimers" on the other. Consider other subsequent works on motivation in your critiques.

29. Compare and critically contrast Mead's view of individuality with Stryker's identity theory. Does Simmel's conception of individuality suggest that the latter is wanting in any significant aspect?

30. Critically discuss Ralph Turner's thesis on how individuals recognize their real selves. What implications does the suggested shift "from institution to impulse" have for Mead's theory of individuality? Of self? For the Chicago vs. the Iowa school?

31. Symbolic interactionism has been criticized by some as being ethnocentric. Critically discuss, with reference to the literature on self and identity, whether this is true.

32. Mead discusses how meaning emerges through symbol and gesture in the social act. Postmodernism argues that there is no meaning. Is this a flat contradiction, or can these both be reconciled within symbolic interactionism?

Please note that **these listed topics are *ineligible* for the bonus mark above**. If you are seeking the bonus mark, and have a particular issue that you would like to pursue not listed above, I encourage you to discuss it with me either after class, via e-mail, or during my office hours. If contemplating an original topic, it will be important for you to discuss it with me first to make sure it is both relevant and reasonably workable within the space that you have been allotted.

The following are **formatting 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 *all 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.

Your papers should be approximately **10 typed pages in length, double spaced** (i.e. 2000 words). Instead of APA style, **I require you to use endnotes as your form of citation**. Please see my 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, 2018, at p.# ."

Ensure that you include a **full alphabetical bibliography** of sources at the end of your paper.

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 materials that have been provided. I will particularly welcome papers that discuss the issues with reference to original research. 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 stated in the course outline, this essay is worth **40 percent** of your final grade. **It is** **due on Thursday, November 1, 2018.** You may hand your completed paper in to me at any time up to and including **4:45 PM on** **Thursday, November 1.** **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 3120 Social Psychology**

**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, 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.

**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 require you to use *endnotes* as your form of citation**. If you are using Word, 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.

Remember, 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. ***Note: I require at least six sources from books or academic journals. You may also use newspapers, magazines, and internet sources over and above this (i.e. a paper based entirely on popular, non-academic internet sources will not be sufficient). Also, be aware that Wikipedia is not a valid academic source.***