

Bellevue Community College



SOC 110, Introduction to Sociology, 5 Credits

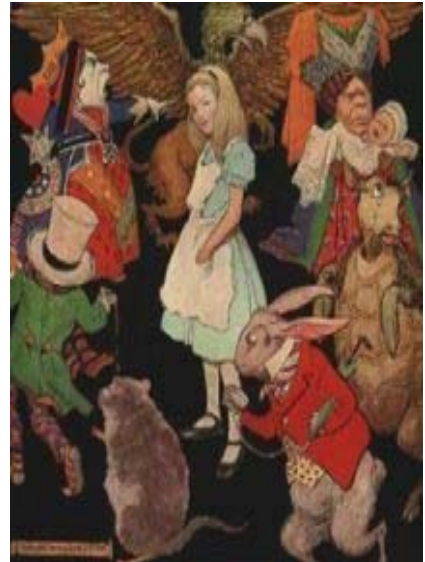
Winter 2008: January 2nd – March 20th

Daily 10:30 – 11:20 pm, C-164

Sara Sutler-Cohen, Ph.D. ssutler@bcc.ctc.edu 425-564-5722

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 – 2:30 & Fridays, 12:30 – 1:30, D110-1

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will acquaint you with basic sociological concepts and perspectives as you become aware of, and explore the importance of social topics such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, and the way in which these subjects intersect with one another. You will also learn about the field of Sociology and become familiar with various “subfields” of the area. Through lecture, film and other media, and assigned readings, this course will take you on an exploration of the many dimensions of contemporary sociology. We will make broad use of popular culture to understand the many complexities of our world. By the end of this course, I hope to have all of you thinking critically about the way things work, why things work the way they do, and who we are within the social fabric of the global entity in which we live. You will be asked, over the course of the term, to confront the things you take for granted. Everyday occurrences will be challenged and thought through critically. Think of yourself as Neo from “The Matrix” when he decides to take the Red Pill, or Alice when she decides to explore the rabbit hole. Both must deal with what’s at the end of their adventures. What will *you* find at the end of *this* adventure?



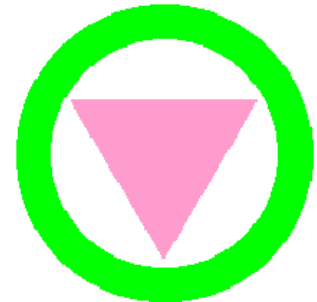
“The reality is it’s up to you guys to figure out how the media works and break through.”

Claudia Dreifus

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we sometimes talk about provocative material. Please be advised that, when we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keeping in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, you may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please know, however, that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, feel free to speak with me about it right away.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email or come to see me during office hours. Emergency preparedness is important! If you need course modifications, adaptations, or accommodations because of a disability, I can refer you to our Disability Resource Center (DRC). If you prefer, you may contact them directly by going to B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their website at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/>

REGARDING SAFE SPACE: This class is a Safe Space for *all* students. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, queer-identified, and transgendered students are welcome in this classroom and encouraged to speak out and be an integral part of this class. A critical understanding and the embracing of alternative genders and sexualities in this classroom is encouraged. Any questions about what this means should be brought to me immediately. All are welcome!



READING REQUIREMENTS:

- *The Spirit of Sociology: A Reader, 2nd Ed.* by Ron Matson
- *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia E. Butler
- Handouts and articles (either delivered to you in class or uploaded to our MyBCC Page)

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Any current Dictionary of the English Language
- Any current Sociology Dictionary
- *A Writer's Reference, 6th Ed.* By Diana Hacker. See the companion website here: <http://www.dianahacker.com/>

LEARNING AND COURSE OUTCOMES: Upon your dedicated participation and subsequent completion of this course, you will demonstrate:

- 1) A general understanding of basic concepts most widely used in sociology today. You will review some of the “classics” in sociology as well as exploring the recent move toward “interdisciplinarity” and cultural studies in sociology.
- 2) A critical idea of society and community, where in your social landscape you live, and how you observe those around you.
- 3) A general knowledge and comprehension of how the experiences of minority groups differ from those in various positions of power, and of how some folks perceive those experiences.
- 4) A general understanding of the dominant representations and identity constructions of minority groups in historical and contemporary analyses of dominant culture in the United States. In addition, we will explore the way in which these dominant representations are culturally subverted and contrasted in popular culture texts.

GENERAL RULES & EXPECTATIONS:

- Attend all class meetings.
- Complete readings and homework assignments *on time*.
- More than **four** unexcused absences or late attendances will lower your grade, and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with me **prior to** the absence or tardy, unless in an emergency.
- **All** electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom at **all** times. This includes cell phones, blackberries, laptops, etc.
- Emailed assignments are not accepted, unless you arrange it with me prior to the assignment deadline.
- Late work is not accepted, and make-up assignments or quizzes are not allowed. Exceptions sometimes happen, but you need to discuss that with me, privately.
- I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Side-talking and whispering is disruptive to the class as a whole as well as to individual students. This is not acceptable in my classroom, so I insist that you refrain from it. Sleeping is also not permitted. Continued disrespectful behavior in class may result in your being asked to leave and may also result in your grade lowering.
- You are responsible for your own learning in the classroom. If you miss class, please connect with your partners in class to find out what you missed.

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra Credit assignments are made available to you, but you must *need* the extra credit. You must have an average grade of “C” or lower in order to do any extra credit. Always consult with me privately about Extra Credit assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: There is one major assignment in this course, and it's split into five parts. The assignment is a research paper based on *Parable of the Sower*, the novel we're reading for class. At the end of the first week, I'll give you all a handout and detailed explanation about the project. The rest of the coursework will be done ***in class***, consisting of individual and group work, as well as occasional pop-quizzes. At times, short homework assignments are given based on handouts I give you in class, usually consisting of visiting a website or reviewing a short article and then coming back to class the next day to discuss it.

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:

<u>Participation:</u>	200
<u>In-Class Work:</u>	400
<u>Pop-Quizzes:</u>	150
<u>Research Paper:</u>	250
<u>Total:</u>	1000

The Fine Print (or, what I really mean by that table above):

Participation: Come to class, be on time, provoke energetic discussion, speak out, listen actively, work diligently and respectfully in your groups, bring your readings to class with copious notes of your scribble in the margins, look up words you don't understand or know, ask lots of questions, etc. Oh yes and lest I forget: Think critically about the world around you. A lot.

Pop-Quizzes, randomly delivered and randomly scored: Your Quizzes will cover everything up through the week you're quizzed and will usually include multiple choice and short-answer questions (either or both). Your responses should be clear and concise. Your short-answer responses must range from no less than one full (four-sentence) paragraph, to three full paragraphs. If you're up on your reading and don't miss class, you should have no problem with these. You will *never* be asked a question out of "left field". Questions will be based on readings, in-class discussion, and lecture material. Information about point distribution for each question will be on each quiz.

Research Paper: Your project is broken up into five parts: Topic, Proposal, First Draft, Draft Revision, Final. The paper will include research and annotated bibliographies. You will be asked to take a subtheme of sociology (religion, education, family, etc.) and apply that to *Parable of the Sower*. You will need to purchase a 1" 3-ring binder for this project; with each assignment, you will hand in the binder, with each assignment addition. For example, for Week 6 when your First Draft is due, I should have your topic/self-evaluation, proposal/self-evaluation and four total annotated bibliographic entries, all of them graded so I can review my comments to you. We'll go over this in detail during class.

For all of your written work:

Please submit proofread work **only**. Sloppy writing will be returned for a rewrite, expected by the following class meeting. Your font should be Times, 12 pts, double-spaced with a 1" margin all around. Your work *must* be cited using either MLA or APA format where necessary, and you must always, *always* give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Even when you don't quote directly, give credit where credit is due. Title pages are not counted as page numbers due. Similarly with bibliographies, these are not counted as page numbers due. If you decide to place your personal and class information on the first page of your paper instead (which is fine), please do not take up more than for single-spaced lines at the top right or left corner of the page. In essence, nothing fancy, no pink plastic covers are needed or desired. Just the paper. Neat.

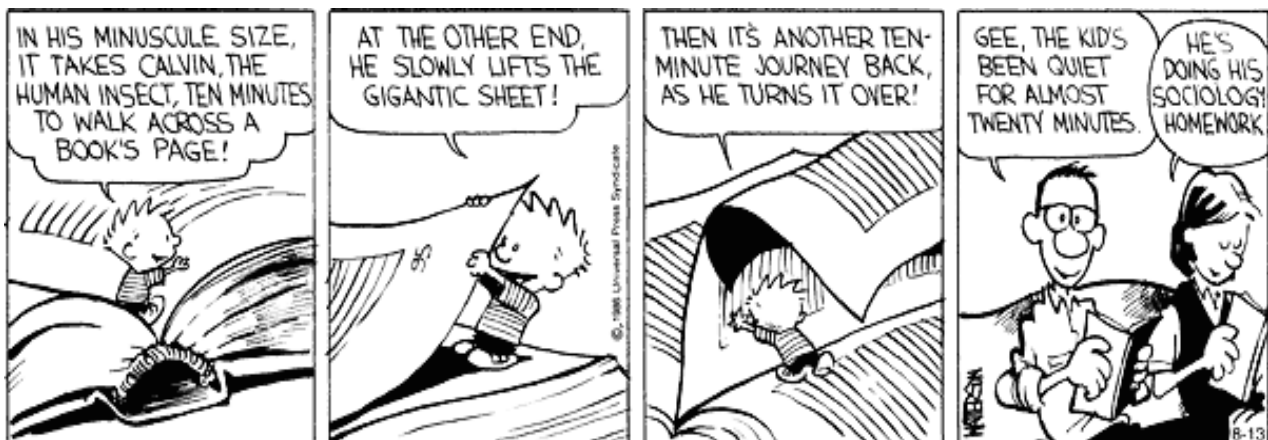
Your written work will be evaluated on:

1) Content

- a. Fulfilling the assignment.
- b. Developing your argument and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument.
- c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.

2) Writing Style

- a. Excellent command of the written English language. In other words, most excellent grammar. **NOTE: If you struggle with grammar and spelling or are an ESL student, please let me know! I'm happy to work with you and point you in the right direction.**
- b. Clarity of thought.
- c. Good organization and attention to detail.
- d. Persuasiveness of your argument/s.
- e. Creativity. Make it an interesting read!
- f. **PROOFREAD** your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in.
- g. Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different set of discussions. ☺



Grading:

90-100 = A. The A paper is coveted. It's a paper that shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that demonstrates your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your "writing voice." That is, I want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another.

80-89 = B. The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and/or media and/or lecture material as you could be. I should see that you're being challenged and that you're struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C. The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class. (NOTE: A C paper can be rewritten ONCE in the term but it's your choice when. I enter the better grade.)

60-69 = D. Ah, the D. D is for "Don't be Discouraged." I don't accept D's and that means you get to rewrite your work. Always. I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. A D paper is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material and there you're not responding to the questions raised in class. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A D and below will be handed back to you for a rewrite. I enter the better grade.)

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY: We will set the rhythm of the class in the first couple of weeks. I envision a learning community, one in which I am a participant as well. I am a firm believer in being a lifelong learner and to that end I often carry away a lot more information from students than I ever expect. I'm most interested, for the purposes of this class, to see how well we can all wrap our minds around the idea of thinking critically about the various issues and themes presented about the social world in which we live and you should expect to be exposed to new and various ways of

thinking and knowing. As a learning community, we'll be helping one another think through all of the ideas that connect back to course themes.

When you don't see your own images through the media or in books, you start thinking you're weird, and your self-esteem gets bruised.

- Francisco Alarcón, poet and director of Spanish for Native Speakers, UC Davis



COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (ALWAYS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

<u>WEEK:</u> DATES AND THEMES	<u>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:</u> READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY
ONE January 2 - 4 <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Introduction to the course The Social Self The Sociological Imagination Social Roles	<u>Readings (please have your reading done by Friday this week only):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matson, TOPIC 1: Introduction to the Discipline <u>Quote of the Week:</u> "Perhaps the world's second worst crime is boredom. The first is being a bore." - Jean Baudrillard
TWO January 7 - 11 <u>Thematic Overview:</u> What do Sociologists Do? What is a sociological question? Research Methods What's in a statistic? Which comes first: Culture or Society? Is Culture a What or a Who? What about those "other" cultures?	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matson, TOPICS 2 & 3: Sociology as a Science / Culture <u>Assignments:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Paper Topic Due on Friday <u>Quote of the Week:</u> "Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible." - Frank Zappa
THREE January 14 - 18 <u>Thematic Overview:</u> I learn, therefore I know...? How do you know what you know...how do you know who you are? Where exactly are you in this social landscape of ours?	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matson, TOPICS 4 & 5: Socialization / Social Structure and Social Interaction <i>Parable of the Sower</i>, 2024 - 2026 (1 - 87) <u>Quote of the Week:</u> "Books are funny little portable pieces of thought." - Susan Sontag

WEEK: DATES AND THEMES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS: READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY
FOUR January 22 – 25 (Holiday, Jan 21 st) <u>Thematic Overview:</u> What's in a group? Peer pressure and organizational influence. What is deviance, why do we have it, who does it benefit, and how is it created and maintained?	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matson, TOPICS 6 & 7: Social Groups / Deviance and Social Control • <i>Parable of the Sower</i>, 2026 – 2027 (89 – 133) <u>Assignments:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Paper Proposal Due on Friday, with 2 Bibliographic Annotations and Self-Evaluation <u>Quote of the Week:</u> “All you touch and all you see is all your life will ever be.” -- Roger Waters
FIVE January 28 – February 1 <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Inequality and Identity If someone benefits, does someone else lose out? What does it mean to critically understand race? Intersectionality: Race, Class, and Gender	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matson, TOPICS 8, 9, and 10: Social Inequalities / Race and Ethnicity / Gender <u>Quote of the Week:</u> “College isn't the place to go for ideas.” - Helen Keller
SIX February 4 – 8 <u>Thematic Overview:</u> What's in a family? What is home? Diasporic identity	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matson, TOPIC 11: Family <u>Assignments:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Paper First Draft Due on Friday, with two new Bibliographic Annotations and Self-Evaluation <u>Quote of the Week:</u> “In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.” - Alex Haley
SEVEN February 11 – 15 *NO CLASS THIS WEEK – see handout*	<u>Assignments:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parable of the Sower</i>, 2027 – end (135 – 295) • Daily journal of your work, due Tuesday, 2/19 – see handout <u>Quote of the Week:</u> “You think you're so clever and classless and free.” -- John Lennon

WEEK: DATES AND THEMES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS: READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY
EIGHT February 19 – 22 (Holiday, Feb 18 th) Thematic Overview: Understanding Sociology and some of its subfields Why are Education and Religion in the same chapter? “The End of Education” “Religion is the opiate of the masses”	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matson, TOPIC 12: Education & Religion Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Paper Draft Revision Due Friday, with two new Bibliographic Annotations and Self-Evaluation Quote of the Week: “The only thing more pathetic than Indians on TV is Indians watching Indians on TV.” Evan Adams (Coast Salish) as Thomas Builds-The-Fire in “Smoke Signals”
NINE February 25 – 28 (No class Feb 29 th) Thematic Overview: Does your vote count? “Rock The Vote” and other methods of relief for apathy Population density and “1% Population” enthusiasts: too many babies, or are we just living longer?	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matson, TOPICS 13 & 14: Politics & The Economy / Population and Ecology Quote of the Week: “I think the future of humanity will be like the past, we’ll do what we’ve always done and there will still be human beings. Granted, there will always be people doing something different and there are a lot of possibilities.” - Octavia Butler
TEN March 3 – 7 Thematic Overview: Global Warming or Bad Science? How ideas about our environment affect our future. What can you do?	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matson, TOPIC 15: Technology and Globalization Quote of the Week: “A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.” - Marcus Garvey
ELEVEN: March 10 – 14	Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class presentations of your Research Papers Quote of the Week: “A friend is someone who gives you total freedom to be yourself.” - Jim Morrison
TWELVE: March 17 – 20 CLASS IN SESSION March 17th Finals March 18 th – 20 th	Assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Research Paper Due Monday, with two new Bibliographic Annotations and Self-Evaluation Quote of the Week: “Getting older is no problem. You just have to live long enough.” - Groucho Marx

EMAILING ME: When you email me, ALWAYS put in the SUBJECT LINE the following, in this order: SOC 110 – YOUR NAME – SUBJECT

For example: **SOC110 – Jane Doe – Question about Pop Quiz #5.**

Your emails will be answered much faster this way. For ease of communication, it is ESSENTIAL that you stick to this mode of emailing me.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR: I am of Tsalagi (Cherokee), Irish, Romany/Gypsy, and Russian Jewish descent. I received my Ph.D. in Sociology (with a parenthetical notation in American Studies) from UC Santa Cruz. I received my first MA in Sociology from Humboldt State University and my second MA in Sociology from UCSC, my BA in Sociology and Journalism from Mills College, and my AA in English and Creative Writing from Vista Community College. This is my second year as Instructor of Sociology here at BCC. I am Editor-In-Chief for *Native Realities*, the journal for Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers and the Native American/Indigenous Studies Area Chair for the Popular Culture and American Culture Association's SW/Texas Regional Conferences. I love to write and am currently working on a memoir. I'm an avid Scrabble player, tattoo enthusiast, and I definitely drink too much coffee. I probably work too much as well, but who's counting? I live in Central Seattle with my thirteen-year-old son.

Thank you for a wonderful term! ☺