

CULTURE
Comprehensive Examination Reading List
School of Sociology, University of Arizona
Revised May 2025

Part I. Lineages of Classical Theory

Durkheim

Durkheim, Emile. 1995 [1915]. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. New York: Free Press. [Read “Introduction”; “Origins of These Beliefs—Conclusion”; “The Negative Cult and Its Functions--the Ascetic Rites”; and “Conclusion”].

Durkheim, Émile. 1984 [1896]. *The Division of Labour in Society*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan.

Douglas, Mary. 1975. “Jokes.” *Implicit Meanings*. London: Routledge, 90-114. Reprinted in Mukerji and Schudson, 291-310.

Sewell, William H. Jr. 1996. “Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille.” *Theory and Society* 25:841–81.

Wagner-Pacifici, Robin and Barry Schwartz. 1991. “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial : Commemorating a Difficult Past1.” *American Journal of Sociology* 97(2):376–420.

Marx and Engels

Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. 1947 [1846]. *The German Ideology*. New York: International Publishers. [Esp. Marx’s preface (1-2), “Feuerbach” (3-78), and “Theses on Feuerbach” (195-99).]

Gramsci, Antonio. 1971 [1929-35]. *The Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 323-35. Excerpted as “Culture and Ideological Hegemony” in Seidman, Steven, and Jeffrey C. Alexander (eds.) 2001. *The New Social Theory Reader: Contemporary Debates*. London: Routledge.

Willis, Paul 1981 [1977]. *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Weber

Weber, Max. 1958 [1904-5]. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner), esp. “The Spirit of Capitalism” (47-78) and “Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism” (155-83).

Weber, Max. 1958 [1913]. “The Social Psychology of the World Religions.” In H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford), 267-301.

Weber, Max. 1978. "Types of Social Action." In G. Roth and C. Wittich (eds.), *Economy and Society*. Vol. 1, p. 24-26.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic), 3-30.

Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51: 273-86.

Expanding the Cannon of Classical Cultural Analysis

Du Bois, W. E. B. 1904. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Toronto, Canada: Blue Heron Press. [Read "Chapter 1: Our Spiritual Strivings."].

Patricia, Hill Collins. 2000. "Black Feminist Epistemology." Pp. 251–72 in *Black Feminist Thought*. Routledge.

Lengermann, Patricia, and Gillian Niebrugge. 2007. *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory, 1830-1930: A Text/Reader*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press. [Read Chapter 1: Present at Creation – Women in the History of Sociology and Social Theory].

Part II. Contemporary Cultural Analysis: Theories & Methods

Symbols, Language, Codes

Bernstein, Basil. 1964. "Elaborated and Restricted Codes: Their Social Origins and Some Consequences." *American Anthropologist* 6: 55-69.

Cerulo, Karen. 1998. *Deciphering Violence: The Cognitive Structure of Right and Wrong*. New York: Routledge: Chapter 3.

Santa Ana, Otto. 2002. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: University of Texas Press. [Read Pp. 17-21, 26-33, 39-43, 65-94, 99-103].

Practice

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. [Read "Structures, Habitus, Practices" and "The Kabyle Household or the World Revisited"].

Collins, Randall. 2004. *The Program of Interaction Ritual Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Read Chapter 1].

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973. [Read "Religion as a Cultural System," "Ethos, Worldview, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," and "Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight"].

Mohr, John. W., and Vincent Duquenne. 1997. "The Duality of Culture and Practice: Poverty Relief in New York City, 1888-1917." *Theory and Society* 26: 305-356.

Body and Embodiment

Martin, Karin. 1998. "Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools." *American Sociological Review* 63: 494-511.

Wacquant, Loïc J. D. 2004. *Body & Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. [Read preface through p. 127].

Mason, Katherine. 2013. "Social Stratification and the Body: Gender, Race, and Class." *Sociology Compass* 7(8):686–98. doi: [10.1111/soc4.12058](https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12058).

Talley, Heather Laine. 2014. *Saving Face: Disfigurement and the Politics of Appearance*. New York, NY: New York University Press. [Read Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Chapter 6]

Strings, Sabrina. 2019. *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia*. 1st ed. New York: NYU Press. [Read Introduction and Chapter 6].

Repertoires and Resources

Swidler, Ann. 2001. *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters* (U Chicago Press), Introduction, Chapters 1-2, 6-8, Conclusion (pp. 1-40, 111-214).

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241–58 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. Richardson. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Mears, Ashley. 2015. "Girls as Elite Distinction: The Appropriation of Bodily Capital." *Poetics (Amsterdam)* 53:22–37. doi: [10.1016/j.poetic.2015.08.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2015.08.004).

Sallaz, Jeffrey J., and Jane Zavisca. 2007. "Bourdieu in American Sociology, 1980-2004." *Annual Review of Sociology* 33(1):21–41. doi: [10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131627](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131627).

Boundaries

Alba, Richard. 2005. "Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries: Second-Generation Assimilation and Exclusion in France, Germany, and the United States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(1): 20-49

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1978. *Distinction*. [Read preface, Introduction, Chapters 1-5, 7, Conclusion].

Lamont, Michèle. 1992. *Money, Morals, & Manners: The Culture of the French and the American Upper-Middle Class*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Ch 1-5, 7 (pp. 1149, 174-192).

Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár. 2002. "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences" *Annual Review of Sociology* 28(1): 167-195

Peterson, Richard A. And Roger M. Kern. 1996. "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore." *American Sociological Review* 61: 900-907.

Group Meaning Systems

Eliasoph, Nina, and Paul Lichterman. 2003. "Culture in Interaction." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(4):735–94. doi: [10.1086/367920](https://doi.org/10.1086/367920).

Grindstaff, Laura, and Ming-Cheng M. Lo. 2019. "Culturalizing Sociology." Pp. 104–23 in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Sociology*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Leschziner, Vanina, and Gordon Brett. 2021. "Have Schemas Been Good To Think With?" *Sociological Forum (Randolph, N.J.)* 36(1):1207–28. doi: [10.1111/socf.12767](https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12767).

Basov, Nikita, Wouter De Nooy, and Aleksandra Nenko. 2018. "Local Meaning Structures: A Mixed-Method Socio-Semantic Network Analysis." doi: [10.48550/arxiv.1807.06623](https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.1807.06623).

Vaisey, Stephen, and Omar Lizardo. 2010. "Can Cultural Worldviews Influence Network Composition?" *Social Forces* 88(4):1595–1618. doi: [10.1353/sof.2010.0009](https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2010.0009).

Fine, Gary Alan. 2021. *The Hinge: Civil Society, Group Cultures, and the Power of Local Commitments*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press. [Read Introduction and Conclusion].

Methods

Measurement and Analysis

DiMaggio, Paul, Manish Nag, and David Blei. 2013. "Exploiting Affinities between Topic Modeling and the Sociological Perspective on Culture: Application to Newspaper Coverage of U.S. Government Arts Funding." *Poetics* 41 (6):570-606.

Jepperson, Ronald L. and Ann Swidler. 1994. "What properties of culture should we measure?" *Poetics* 22, pp. 359-71.

Lizardo, Omar. 2014. "Omnivorousness as the Bridging of Cultural Holes: A Measurement Strategy." *Theory and Society* 43(3/4): 395-419.

Mohr, John W. 1998. "Measuring Meaning Structures." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 345-370.

Axelrod, Robert. 1997. "The Dissemination of Culture." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(2): 203-26

Causal Reasoning

Kaufman, Jason. 2004. "Endogenous Explanation in the Sociology of Culture." *Annual Review of Sociology*.

Sewell Jr., William. 1992. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency and Transformation." *American Journal of Sociology* 98:1-29

Tavory, Iddo, and Ann Swidler. 2009. "Condom Semiotics: Meaning and Condom use in Rural Malawi." *American Sociological Review* 74 171-189.

Lewis, Kevin and Jason Kaufman. 2011. "The Conversion of Cultural Tastes into Social Network Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 123(6): 1684-1742

Cultural Production and Reception

Becker, Howard. 1984. *Art Worlds*. Berkeley: University of California Press. [L]
[SEP]

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Field of Cultural Production, or: The Economic World Reversed" and "The Market of Symbolic Goods," pp. 29-73 and 112-141 in *The Field of Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Griswold, Wendy. 1987. "Fabrication of Meaning: Literary interpretation in the United States, Great Britain and the West Indies," *American Journal of Sociology* 92 (5): 1077-1117.

Organizations and Networks

Bearman, Peter S., and Katherine Stovel. 2000. "Becoming a Nazi: A Model for Narrative Networks." *Poetics* 27: 69-90.

Brashears, Matthew E., Michael Genkin, and Chan S. Suh. 2017. "In the Organization's Shadow: How Individual Behavior Is Shaped by Organizational Leakage." *American Journal of Sociology* 123(3): 787-849.

DellaPosta, Daniel, Yongren Shi, and Michael Macy. 2015. "Why Do Liberals Drink Lattes?" *American Journal of Sociology* 120(5): 1473-511

Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Jeff Goodwin. 1994. "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency." *American Journal of Sociology* 99: 1411-54.

Pachucki, Mark A. and Ronald L. Breiger. 2010. "Cultural Holes: Beyond Relationality in Social Networks and Culture." *Annual Review of Sociology* 36(1):205–24.

Leal, Diego F. 2025. "Locating Cultural Holes Brokers in Diffusion Dynamics Across Bright Symbolic Boundaries," *Sociological Methods & Research* online first

Culture and Cognition

Goldberg, Amir and Sarah K. Stein. 2018. "Beyond Social Contagion: Associative Diffusion and the Emergence of Cultural Variation." *American Sociological Review* 83(5): 897-932

Lizardo, Omar, 2017. "Improving Cultural Analysis: Considering Personal Culture in its Declarative and Nondeclarative modes." *American Sociological Review* 82(1): 88-115.

Brubaker, Rogers Mara Loveman and Peter Stamatov. 2004. "Ethnicity as Cognition." *Theory and Society* 33: 31-64.

DiMaggio, Paul “Why Cognitive (and Cultural) Sociology Needs Cognitive Psychology,” 274-81. In Cerulo, Karen (ed.). 2002. *Culture in Mind: Toward a Sociology of Culture and Cognition* (New York: Routledge).

Lizardo, Omar, and Michael Strand. 2010. “Skills, Toolkits, Contexts and Institutions: Clarifying the Relationship between Different Approaches to Cognition in Cultural Sociology.” *Poetics* 38(2):205–28. doi: [10.1016/j.poetic.2009.11.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2009.11.003).

Patterson, Orlando. Introduction, Part I, and II. “Making Sense of Culture.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 40 (2014), 1-15.

Luft, Aliza. 2020. “Theorizing Moral Cognition: Culture in Action, Situations, and Relationships.” *Socius*.

Values, Meaning, and Time

Vaisey, Stephen. 2009. “Motivation and Justification: A Dual Process Model of Culture in Action.” *American Journal of Sociology* 114: 1675-1715.

Miles, Andrew. 2015. “The (Re)Genesis of Values: Examining the Importance of Values for Action.” *American Sociological Review* 80(4):680–704. doi: [10.1177/0003122415591800](https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122415591800).

Frye, Margaret. “Bright Futures in Malawi’s New Dawn: Educational Aspirations as Assertions of Identity.” 2012 *American Journal of Sociology*, 117(6), pp. 1565-1624

Tavory, Iddo. 2018. “Between Situations: Anticipation, Rhythms, and the Theory of Interaction.” *Sociological Theory* 36(2):117–33. doi: [10.1177/0735275118777007](https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275118777007).

Identity

Brubaker, Rogers and Fred Cooper. 2000. “Beyond Identity.” *Theory and Society* 29:1-47.

Butler, Judith. 1991. “Imitation and Gender Subordination” In Diana Fuss (ed.), *Inside/Out* (New York: Routledge), 13-29. Excerpt in Seidman and Alexander (2001), Cornell, Stephen, and Douglas Hartman. 1998. *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities In a Changing World* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press), esp. chs. 4-6 (72-194) and 8 (233-52).

Goffman, Erving. 1961. *Asylums; Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Hunt, Darnell. 1997. “Raced Ways of Seeing,” *Screening the Los Angeles ‘Riots’: Race, Seeing, and Resistance* (Cambridge U Press), chs. 2, 7.333-45.

Miles, Andrew. 2014. “Addressing the Problem of Cultural Anchoring: An IdentityBased Model of Culture in Action.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 77(2):210–27.

Seidman, Steven. 2001. “From Identity to Queer Politics: Shifts in Normative Heterosexuality.” *Citizenship Studies* 5(3): 321-8.

Culture and Politics

Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Routledge, Chapman Hall). à Brief excerpt is in Seidman and Alexander (2001), 224-30.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1991. "On Symbolic Power." In *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 163-170.

Eliasoph, N. 1996. "Making A Fragile Public: A Talk-Centered Study of Citizenship and Power." *Sociological Theory* 14: 3: 262-289.

Culture, Poverty, and Inequality

Small, Mario Luis, David J. Harding, and Michèle Lamont. 2010. "Reconsidering Culture and Poverty." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 629(1):6– 27.

Vaisey, Steve. 2010. "What People Want: Rethinking Poverty, Culture, and Educational Attainment." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 629:75– 101.

Rivera, Lauren A. 2012. "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." *American Sociological Review* 77(6):999–1022. doi: [10.1177/0003122412463213](https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122412463213).

Lamont, Michele. 2009. *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration*. Harvard University Press. [Read Introduction, Conclusion, and Appendix A].

Valentino, Lauren, and Stephen Vaisey. 2022. "Culture and Durable Inequality." *Annual Review of Sociology* 48(1):109–29. doi: [10.1146/annurev-soc-030320-102739](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-030320-102739).

Race

Saperstein, Aliya and Andrew M. Penner. 2012. "Racial Fluidity and Inequality in the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 118(3): 676-727.

Clerge, Orly. 2019. *The New Noir: Race, Identity, and Diaspora in Black Suburbia*. 1st ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. [Read Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 6, and Conclusion].

Rawls, Anne Warfield. 2020. *Tacit Racism*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press. [Read Chapter 1, Chapter 6, and Conclusion].

Strings, Sabrina and Long T. Bui. 2014. "'She is Not Acting, She IS': The Conflict between Gender and Racial Realness on RuPaul's Drag Race." *Feminist Media Studies* 14(5): 1-15.

Gender, Medicine, and Culture

Brewer, Alexandra, Melissa Osborne, Anna S. Mueller, Daniel M. O'Connor, Arjun Dayal, and Vineet M. Arora. 2020. "Who Gets the Benefit of the Doubt? Performance Evaluations, Medical

Errors, and the Production of Gender Inequality in Emergency Medical Education.” *American Sociological Review* 85(2):247–70. doi: [10.1177/0003122420907066](https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122420907066).

Cottingham, Marci D., and Jill A. Fisher. 2022. “Gendered Logics of Biomedical Research: Women in U.S. Phase I Clinical Trials.” *Social Problems (Berkeley, Calif.)* 69(2):492–509. doi: [10.1093/socpro/spaa035](https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spaa035).

Wingfield, Adia Harvey. 2019. *Flatlining: Race, Work, and Health Care in the New Economy*. 1st ed. Berkeley, California: University of California Press. [Read Chapter 1, Chapter 5, and Conclusion].

Menchik, Daniel A., and Maya Giaquinta. 2024. “The Words We Die By.” *Social Science & Medicine (1982)* 340:116470–116470. doi: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2023.116470](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2023.116470).

Culture and Markets

Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2011. "Market as Narrative and Character." *Journal of Cultural Economy* 4 (4):477-488.

Collier, Jane Fishburne. 1997. *From Duty to Desire: Remaking Families in a Spanish Village*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 1, 2, 5, & 6.

Quinn, Sarah. 2008. “The Transformation of Morals in Markets: Death, Benefits, and the Exchange of Life Insurance Policies.” *The American Journal of Sociology* 114(3):738–80. doi: [10.1086/592861](https://doi.org/10.1086/592861).

Rivera, Lauren. 2012. “Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms.” *American Sociological Review* 77(6):999–1022.

Salganik, Matthew, Peter Dodds, Duncan Watts. “Experimental study of inequality and unpredictability in an artificial cultural market” *Science* 311 (5762), 854-856