



SYP3000 Society and the Individual

Spring 2022 (sections 05A3 and 1874, course numbers 24186 and 29078)

Instructor:

Dr. Constance L. Shehan, Professor of Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies

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Phone: (Please email me if you'd like to talk with me by phone)

Office: 102 Ustler Hall (I will not be holding office hours or meeting people in my office this semester.)

Office Hours: Tuesday from 4:00 to 5:00 (via Zoom). Other times by appointment.

Course Description

This is a course in Social Psychology that takes a Sociological -- rather than a Psychological -- perspective. While similar, the two fields focus on different levels of analysis and causal factors. Sociological Social Psychology emphasizes the ways in which people's attitudes, values, emotions, and behavior are influenced by the social or societal context rather than cognitive or biological processes. In this course, we highlight the ways in which the social structure -- particularly social stratification -- leads to inequalities that are based on social class, race, and gender and influences intergroup stereotyping and individual identities.

Course Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to illustrate the utility of the tools of Sociological Social Psychology in identifying and addressing the most pressing social issues in contemporary society. I have chosen the increasing lack of affordable housing in the United States today, with a focus on the "eviction" epidemic, to illustrate the ways in which Sociological Social Psychology addresses contemporary social problems.

The class begins with an overview of key sociological concepts used in Sociological Social Psychology. It then turns to the processes and outcomes of social stratification, with an emphasis on the intersection of social class and race, on social inequalities, intergroup problems, and personal identities. The remainder of the course focuses on the outcomes of poverty on standard of living (particularly on housing, eviction, and homelessness) and on emotions and behaviors. More specific objectives are identified in each module.

General Education Requirements

This course fulfills 3 credits of the Social Sciences [General Education](#) Requirement.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Please do not hesitate to ask for accommodation for a documented disability. If you need accommodations, the University requires you to register with the Dean of Students Office (<https://disability.ufl.edu>) before you approach your instructors. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to you, which you then give to me so that I can respond in the most effective way. Please ask me if you would like any assistance in this process.

Required Book

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, by Matthew Desmond, Broadway Books, 2016. This is available in paper back and may also be available as an e-book through Amazon (i.e., Kindle) or other book sellers.

*** You will find other required readings, video clips, and podcasts (which are available at no cost) for each module listed below and on Canvas.

Assignments and Requirements

1) Weekly Discussion Boards:

A discussion prompt related to the focus of each module will be provided. You will write an original post and respond to at least one classmate's post. Each of you will be assigned to a discussion group during the first week of classes. (More information is provided in each module on Canvas). Each discussion board is worth a maximum of **5 points**. This component contributes a maximum of **75 points to your final grade**.

2) Note Sheets for Modules:

As you read/watch/listen to material assigned for **Modules 1 through 10**, keep a running list of concepts, key scholars, books, research reports, and legislation that you regard as central to the focus of the module and that will be useful to you in writing your applied analytic papers. (More information will be provided on Canvas.) These will be graded on an S-U basis. Each satisfactory note sheet is worth **15 points** This component of your course grade is worth a maximum of **150 points**.

3) Application Papers:

For **Modules 1 through 10**, you will write a short paper responding to a prompt that asks you to apply key concepts from the required reading, video clips and audio clips to a “real world” issue. Each paper is worth a maximum of 25 points, for a total of **250** points toward your final grade. Detailed instructions about the papers are available on Canvas.

4) Reading journal for the book, *Evicted*, by sociologist Matthew Desmond (Modules 11-14)

There is a **Reader’s Guide** at the end of *Evicted* (pp.419-422). Your reading journal will consist of your written responses to the 16 short answer essay questions that are included in the Reader’s Guide. The reading journal is worth a maximum of **100 points added to your final grade**. Detailed instructions for this assignment are available on Canvas.

Assignment Summary

Assignment	Points
Discussion Boards	75
Note Sheets	150
Application Papers	250
Reading Journal for <i>Eviction</i>	100
Total:	575

Grade Scale and Value

Grade Scale
535 and above = A
518 -- 534 = A-
500 – 517 = B+
483 – 499 = B
460 – 482 = B-
443 – 459 = C+
425 – 442 = C
402 – 424 = C-
Below 402 points = E

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment’.”

The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Both Plagiarism and the

Unauthorized Use of Materials or Resources violate the Honor Code.

Students in Distress

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Other Policies, Rules and Resources

2. *Attendance and Make-up Policy*: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
 - In the case of an absence due to participation in an official university activity, observance of a religious holiday, performance of a military duty, or any other university-approved absence (e.g., jury duty) which the student knows about in advance, the student is expected to notify the instructor of the conflict *before the assignment is due*, and if possible at the start of the semester.
3. *Grading Policy*: If you have questions about your grade on an assignment, please email me and we can set up a time to talk.

5. *Counseling Resources:*

- a. University Counseling and Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Rd, 392-1575;
- b. Student Health Care Center, 392-1161; and
- c. Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261, umatter.ufl.edu.

6. *Course Evaluation:* Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Topic Outline and Assignments

Links to all readings, podcasts, and video clips are found on Canvas. Detailed instructions for each assignment are also found on Canvas. If there is a discrepancy between the syllabus and the Canvas page, please follow the material on Canvas. Please check the Announcements Page on Canvas *daily*. I may find it necessary to make substitutions regarding required material.

PART I: Basic Concepts and Theories of Sociological Social Psychology

INTRODUCTION: January 5 through January 9

Watch: "Sociologists on Sociology," American Sociological Association.

Watch: "Intro to Sociology: Social Psychology," David Rohall, February 2, 2018 (26 minutes)

Watch: "Macro vs. Micro Sociology," Sydney Brown, Khan Academy, April 9, 2014. (3+ minutes)

Watch: This series of brief video clips presented by Ken Tao:

- a. "Macro Sociology vs. Micro Sociology and Functionalism"
- b. "Conflict Theory and Feminist Theory"
- c. "Social Constructionism"
- d. "Symbolic Interactionism"
- e. "Individual vs. Institutional Discrimination"

MODULE 1: Sociological Social Psychology as a Tool for Understanding Social Issue: Examining Racism in Housing – Implicit Bias and Structural Racism

Dates: January 10 – January 16

READ: "How Real Estate Agents Keep Cities Segregated," by Max Besbris, Jacobin (on-line magazine), November 9, 2020.

READ: “What Systemic Racism Means and the Way It Harms Communities,” NPR Morning Edition, July 1, 2020.

MODULE 2: Social Structure: Social Stratification

Dates: January 17 – January 23

Watch: “Sociology and Social Stratification,” Dr. Keris Dillon, November 7, 2020. 18 minutes

Watch: *People Like Us* (If this documentary is no longer available through UF’s streaming services offered via the libraries, I will substitute another resource.)

PART 2: INTERSECTIONALITY AND INEQUALITIES

MODULE 3: Intersectionality and Inequalities: Social Class, Race, and Geography

Dates: January 24 – January 30

Watch: “The urgency of intersectionality,” Kimberle Crenshaw, TED Talk, November 14, 2016. 19 minutes.

“The most unequal place in America,”

Read: “How does socioeconomic inequality affect social class, especially for people of color?” Dalton Conley, Boston University Diversity and Inclusion Lecture, October 21, 2020.

“Mapping poverty in America,” *The Economist*, October 16, 2018.

MODULE 4: Intersectionality, Inequalities, and Identity

Dates: January 31 – February 6

Watch: “Mead’s Theory of Self and Cooley’s Looking Glass Self,” Zack Lamb (~6 minutes)

Read: “The Secret History of the Word ‘Cracker,” Gene Denby, July 1, 2013; NPR, Code Switch.

Watch/Read: “The True Story Behind the ‘welfare queen’ stereotype,” by Hari Sreenivasan, Sam Weber, and Connie Kargbo, June 1, 2019. (7 minutes, has transcript).

Read: “How the name ‘Karen’ became a stand-in for white entitlement,” Robin Queen, *The Conversation* (reprinted in Snopes), June 12, 2020.

PART III: POVERTY, EMOTIONS, AND LIFE CHANCES

MODULE 5: Poverty in America

Dates: February 7 -February 13

Read: “How poverty can follow children into adulthood,” Priyanka Boghani, Frontline, PBS, November 22, 2017.

Watch: *Poor Kids*,” PBS *Frontline* (episode 24), November 22, 2017. 55 minutes*

MODULE 6: The Blame and Shame of Poverty

Dates: February 14 – February 20

Watch: “Tackling the shame of poverty,” Robert Walker, Oxford University, January 29, 2015. 5 minutes.

Read: “What are the links between poverty and shame?” Chris Arnot, *The Guardian*, August 24, 2010.

Read: “Being poor is not inevitable or due to personal flaws. I know – I’ve been there.” Mary O’Hara, *The Guardian*, February 26, 2020.

Listen: “Shifting the blame and shame of poverty – Mary O’Hara,” by Keetie Roelen, Episode 4 of *Poverty Unpacked: Discussing the Hidden Sides of Poverty*. (Podcast), June 5, 2020. 24 minutes.

PART IV: HOUSES AND HOMES

MODULE 7: Houses, Homes, and Happiness

Dates: February 21 – February 27

Read: “We shape our homes – and then they shape us,” by Meik Wiking and Onor Hanreck Wilkinson, The Happiness Center, Copenhagen, Denmark. (This is an executive summary of a study called *The Good Home Report, 2019: What Makes a Happy Home?* Please read the larger report, which is 39 pages, after taking a look at the executive summary, above.)*

MODULE 8: America’s History of Housing the Poor

Dates: February 28 - March 4

Read: “Jacob Riis: The Photographer Who Showed ‘How the Other Half Lives’ in 1890s New York,” Kelly Richman-Abdou, *My Modern Met*, July 21, 2020.

Read: “How an Early 20th Century Photographer Helped Changed America as We Knew It,” Jessica Stewart, *My Modern Met*, March 6, 2018.

Watch: “A basic history of public housing in the US, 1930s to the present,” 2018 (~16 minutes)

PART V: EVICTION

MODULE 9: The Eviction Epidemic in America

Dates: March 14 – March 20

Watch: “Eviction: America’s Other Epidemic,” Amanpour & Company, PBS News, June 22, 2020. 18 minutes.

Listen: “Why more renters are being evicted in the middle of an epidemic,” William Brangham, PBS News, July 7, 2020. (7 minutes)

Watch: “Why the US Faces and Eviction Crisis,” CNBC, July 22, 2020. (13 minutes)

MODULE 10: An Ethnography of Eviction: Focusing on Mathew Desmond’s Work

Dates: March 20 – March 27

Watch: “Urban sociologist, Matthew Desmond,” 2015 MacArthur Scholar, September 28, 2015. 3 minutes.

Watch: “Matthew Desmond, 2017 National Book Festival, Washington. 42 minutes.

Read: “About this project,” pp. 315-336 in *Evicted*.

MODULE 11: The Cost of Rent and the Risks of Renting

Dates: March 29 – April 3

Read: “Cold City,” pp. 1-8 in *Evicted*.

Read: Part 1 *Evicted* (pp. 9-107)

MODULE 12: Out on the Street: The Process of Eviction

Dates: April 4 - 10

Read: Part 2 *Evicted* (pp. 111-203)

Module 13: Life after Eviction

Dates: April 11 – April 17

Read: Part 3 *Evicted* (pp.207-292)

MODULE 14: Hope and Home

Dates: April 18 - 20

Read: Epilogue, *Evicted* (pp. 294-313)

Reader’s Guide to the Book, pp. 419-422.

Credit for photo on page 1 of syllabus: Denis Tangney, Getty Images.