

## UT Sociology Department Theory Area Comprehensive (Comps) Exams 2010-2011

There will be two in-class exams, “Day One” and “Day Two”, each lasting four hours. Students will answer two questions on each day, from around 6-8 questions.

Day One will involve students answering one question related to contemporary theory *and* one on classical theory. Day Two will be focused on the student’s area of specialization. To get a “pass with distinction” all four answers across both days will have to be excellent/grade “A” answers.

The Area Leader will prepare a core reading list for Day One that will cover both contemporary and classical sociological theory for all students taking Theory Comps. The Day Two reading list will be generated by the student in consultation with the Chair of the exam committee. The comps committee will consist of 3-4 faculty who will oversee both Day One *and* Day Two exams. Where there is a pressing reason (e.g. highly focused subspeciality) for Day Two that goes beyond the expertise of the committee, two separate committees may be established, one for each day. The Area Leader will normally also be the Chair of the exam committee(s) but again, where there is a good reason for another faculty member to chair the committee, the Area Leader in consultation with the student may ask another faculty member to chair the comps committee and report back at the end of the process to the Area Leader.

Within two weeks of the exam students will receive a written summary of how they did on their exams from the Area Leader – collated from comments from the committee members and/or chair of the committee – and their grade. Students will be able to take Theory Area comps *twice* - in other words students will have one chance to re-take the exam if they fail it the first time around. If the second exam results in a fail grade then students will be deemed to have failed their Theory Area comps and no subsequent attempts will be allowed. Finally, the core reading list for Day One will be available for students the summer before the academic year of comps so that students can begin to read ahead and prepare for Day One.

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For Day One, students should consider the following three points when reading the set texts: (1) How does the text under study fit within the general *oeuvre* of the social theorist? (2) What are the major critiques of the book? (3) What has been the contribution of the text (and by extension the social theorist) to sociological theory? In other words, while students should focus their Day One reading on the texts themselves, students should also be able to locate each text within a broader sociological universe.

### Theory Area Comprehensive Exams Reading List 2010-11: Day One *Classical Theory*

1. Beauvoir, Simone de, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949 [2009].
2. Du Bois, W.E.B., *The Souls of Black Folk*, New York: W.W. Norton Books, 1903 [1999].
3. Durkheim, Emile, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, trans. John A. Spaulding and George Simpson, New York: Routledge, 1897 [2002].
4. Durkheim, Emile, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. George Simpson, New York: The Free Press, 1893 [1964].
5. Elias, Norbert, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenic and Psychogenic Investigations*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1939 [2000].
6. Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox, New York: Grove Press, 1961 [2004].
7. Freud, Sigmund, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey, New York: W.W. Norton Books, 1929 [2005].
8. Goffman, Erving, *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, New York: Anchor Books, 1959.
9. Herbert, Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969 [1986].
10. Marx, Karl, *Capital Vol. 1*, trans. Ben Fowkes, New York: Penguin Books, 1867 [1990].
11. Mills, C. Wright, *The Sociological Imagination*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959.
12. Simmel, Georg, *On Individuality and Social Forms*, edited by Donald Levine, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.
13. Parsons, Talcott, *The Social System*, Routledge: New York, 1951.
14. Weber, Max, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, New York: Routledge, 1905 [2001].
15. Weber, Max, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and edited by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, New York: Routledge, 1948.

## Theory Area Comprehensive Exams Reading List 2010-11: Day One *Contemporary Theory*

1. Bauman, Zygmunt, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Cambridge/Ithaca: Polity Press/Cornell University Press, 1989 [2000].
2. Beck, Ulrich, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, trans. Mark Ritter, London: Sage, 1992.
3. Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge/Stanford: Polity Press/Stanford University Press, 1980 [1990].
4. Butler, Judith, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*, New York: Routledge, 1993.
5. Chodorow, Nancy, *Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978 [1999].
6. Coleman, James, *The Foundations of Social Theory*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990.
7. Collins, Patricia Hill (1990) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, New York: Routledge, 1990 [2008].
8. Collins, Randall, *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
9. Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Vintage Books, 1975 [1995].
10. Giddens, Anthony, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984.
11. Gilroy, Paul, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London: Verso, 1993.
12. Habermas, Jurgen, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1962 [1989].
13. Mann, Michael, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
14. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
15. Tilly, Charles, *Durable Inequality*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999.

*Note:* when working with texts not originally published in English, use the latest translations (indicated above) or the original version where language skills permit. Similarly, for contemporary texts that have been revised, use the more recent version.