Selected Topics in Social Institutions: 
Current Debates in Cultural Sociology

Soc 520M

Spring 2002

Michèle Lamont
Department of Sociology
Princeton University

Practical information:

We will be meeting on Tuesdays between 2:30 and 5:30 in Wallace 190. If you wish to meet with me outside seminar hours, please contact me at mlamont@princeton.edu.

Objectives:

This seminar will focus on a few selected research areas in cultural sociology that have seen important theoretical developments in recent years. This course can be taken together with SOC 510 B, which will focus on ethnographic studies of racial and class inequality and be offered in the second half of the spring semester. SOC 530M builds on SOC 530W: Sociology of Culture: an Introduction, offered by Paul DiMaggio in the fall of 2001. However, 530 W is not a formal prerequisite to 530 M.

The course is primarily oriented toward students who are planning to do research in cultural sociology. As such, it will discuss specifically the challenges encountered by social scientists working in the field. To accentuate this hands-on dimension, I have invited a few guests who will make short presentations on their ongoing research, share their experience, and contribute to our discussions.

Course requirements:

1) Two memos on weekly readings (to be selected at the end of the first session). These memos, of a maximum length of five pages (double-space), should be emailed to all seminar participants at least 24 hours prior to our meetings. They should raise substantive and critical issues to be discussed in class.

2) One class presentation.

3) A five-page final paper outlining your research agenda in cultural sociology (due March 26).
4) Participation and preparedness: You are expected to be an active seminar participant and to come to meetings fully prepared according to graduate school standards.

Readings:

Weekly readings will be made available in a box located in the mailroom of the sociology department. Please return immediately after making a copy for your own use.

In addition, the following books are available at the bookstore:


Meeting #1 (February 5): Introduction: New Developments in Cultural Sociology


Suggested:


Meeting #2 (February 12): Culture and Inequality New Developments in the Study of Status and Taste
Guest: Michelle Ollivier


Suggested:


Meeting #3 (February 19): The Study of Evaluations, Bridgings, and Boundaries


Suggested:


### Meeting #4 (February 26): Cultural Structures and Repertoires


Suggested:


### Meeting # 5 (March 5): Self, Identity, and Emotions
**Guest: Riva Kastoryano**


**Suggested:**


**Meeting # 5: (March 5): Cultural Structures and Repertoires**


**Suggested:**


Meeting #6 (March 12): Knowledge and Science  
Guest: Marcel Fournier


Suggested:

