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Spring 2016

Mon 4:10 – 6:50

Cognitive Sociology

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Welcome to “Cognitive Sociology,” where we will venture to explore the fascinating relations between the social and the mental. Using classical and contemporary works in sociology, anthropology, psychology, history, geography, linguistics, philosophy, and cultural studies, we will examine the sociocultural underpinnings of major mental processes (perception, attention, memory, classification, signification) as well as the sociocognitive foundations of identity. In so doing, we will be drawing on major theoretical traditions such as phenomenology, social constructionism, ethnomethodology, symbolic anthropology, structuralism, frame analysis, and semiotics. Throughout the semester, you will use these traditions in a variety of substantive contexts, acquire an intellectually pluralistic perspective that promotes engagement with different theoretical perspectives, and produce original, thematically-inspired pieces of sociological thinking.

There are six books we will be using extensively throughout the course – Eviatar Zerubavel’s *Social Mindscapes* (ISBN 0-674-81390-1), Wayne Brekhus’s *Culture and Cognition* (ISBN 978-0-7456-7177-2), Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s *The Social Construction of Reality* (ISBN 0-385-05898-5), Eviatar Zerubavel’s *The Fine Line* (ISBN 0-226-98159-2), Wayne Brekhus’s *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs* (ISBN 0-226-07292-4), and Eviatar Zerubavel’s *Ancestors and Relatives* (ISBN 978-0-19-933604-3). They have all been ordered through the University’s bookstores (the Douglass one as well as the Barnes & Noble by the train station). All the other required course readings are posted on the course website on sakai.rutgers.edu. You are expected to read all the assigned readings prior to the class for which they are assigned.

There are four written course assignments: a ten-page paper on attention due on February 29, a ten-page paper on classification due on March 28, a ten-page paper on semiotics due on April 25, and a ten-page paper on identity due on May 13. Each of them will count for 25% of your final grade.

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives, seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue, and have zero tolerance for violations of these principles.

January 25 **The Sociology of Thinking I**

The social and the mental; empiricism and rationalism; cognitive individualism; cognitive universalism; cognitive pluralism

Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free Press, 1995 [1912]), pp. 12-18.

Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Harvest, 1936 [1929]), pp. 1-3.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 1-6, 17-22.

Wayne Brekhus, "The Rutgers School: A Zerubavelian Culturalist Cognitive Sociology," *European Journal of Social Theory* 10 (2007): 448-60.

February 1 **The Sociology of Thinking II**

The impersonal, collective, normative, and conventional aspects of cognition; the social construction of reality; intersubjectivity; reification, essentialism, ethnocentricity and contempocentricity; phenomenological sociology; language and typification; thought communities; cognitive subcultures; cognitive traditions; cognitive norms and cognitive deviance; cognitive politics: cognitive disputes, sociomental control; cognitive socialization; the social distribution of knowledge

Emile Durkheim, "The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Conditions," in Robert N. Bellah (ed.), *Emile Durkheim: On Morality and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973 [1914]), pp. 151-53, 161-62.

Ludwik Fleck, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981 [1935]), pp. 38-51.

Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1967 [1966]), pp. 19-28, 34-46, 59-82, 89-92, 129-63.

Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, *The Structures of the Life-World* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 229-35, 247-51, 299-304, 309-18.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Seven-Day Circle: The History and Meaning of the Week* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989 [1985]), pp. 138-41.

Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 6-17, 100-10.

Eviatar Zerubavel, "The Five Pillars of Essentialism: Reification and the Social Construction of an Objective Reality," *Cultural Sociology* 10 (2016): xxxxxxxxxx

February 8 **The Sociology of Perception**

Sociomental lenses; worldviews, standpoints, and perspectives; optical communities; optical norms and

optical deviance; optical traditions; optical socialization; epistemic revolutions

Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, pp. 271-76.

Fleck, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, pp. 89-105.

Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970 [1962]), pp. 111-35.

Murray S. Davis, *Smut: Erotic Reality / Obscene Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 230-34, 238-46.

Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 4-6, 8-11, 81-82, 87-90, 149-50.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Terra Cognita: The Mental Discovery of America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), pp. 70-71, 76-101.

Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 23-34.

Ruth Simpson, *The Germ Culture* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Rutgers University, 2006), pp. 79-95.

February 15 The Sociology of Attention I

Attention and inattention; noticing and ignoring; figure and background; mental and moral focusing; framing: the out-of-frame; sociomental filters; relevance and irrelevance

Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1974), pp. 40-48, 58-74, 227-30, 251-69, 311-15.

Davis, *Smut*, pp. 26-33.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Fine Line: Making Distinctions in Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993 [1991]), pp. 10-13, 72.

Asia Friedman, *Blind to Sameness: Sexpectations and the Social Construction of Male and Female Bodies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 27-51.

Wayne H. Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition: Patterns in the Social Construction of Reality* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2015), pp. 52-57.

February 22 The Sociology of Attention II

The social organization of attention; the social organization of relevance and noteworthiness; attentional traditions; norms of attending (focusing) and disattending; attentional socialization; attentional deviance; joint attention; agenda-setting; co-denial; the double wall of silence

Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings* (New York: Free Press, 1963), pp. 83-88.

Joan P. Emerson, "Behavior in Private Places: Sustaining Definitions of Reality in Gynecological Examinations," in Hans-Peter Dreitzel (ed.), *Recent Sociology No.2: Patterns of Communicative Behavior* (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 74-93.

Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, pp. 202-15.

Davis, *Smut*, pp. 216-24.

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 108-12.

William Ocasio, "Towards an Attention-Based View of the Firm," *Strategic Management Journal* 18 (1997): 187-93.

Takahiko Masuda and Richard E. Nisbett, "Attending Holistically versus Analytically: Comparing the Context Sensitivity of Japanese and Americans," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 81 (2001): 922-34.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Elephant in the Room: Silence and Denial in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 29-32, 47-57.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Social Structure of Irrelevance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 49-71, 79-82, 89-93.

Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 33-52.

February 29 Classification I

Categories; delineation and separateness: boundaries; difference and similarity; lumping and splitting; rites of passage; mental divides and quantum leaps; the social construction of historical discontinuity; mental distance: metric vs. topological; rigid mindedness: compartmentalization, polarization, purity and contamination

Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960 [1909]), pp. 15-25.

Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 3-4, 35-40, 121-28.

Suzanne J. Kessler and Wendy McKenna, *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach* (New York: John Wiley, 1978), pp. 142-67.

Davis, *Smut*, pp. 122-24, 134-41, 144-49, 155-60.

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 1-10, 13-60.

Eviatar Zerubavel, "Lumping and Splitting: Notes on Social Classification," *Sociological Forum* 11 (1996): 421-30.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 82-100.

Friedman, *Blind to Sameness*, pp. 80-86.

Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 59-64, 75-79.

March 7 Classification II

Fuzzy mindedness; culture and classification; the politics of classification; etics and emics; fuzzy sets; prototypes; hybridity and liminality; the flexible mind: essence vs. potential, ambiguity, polysemy

Kenneth L. Pike, *Language in Relation to A Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* (The Hague: Mouton, 1967 [1954]), pp. 37-39, 41-46.

- Charles O. Frake, "The Ethnographic Study of Cognitive Systems," in Stephen A. Tyler (ed.), *Cognitive Anthropology* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969 [1962]), pp. 28-39.
- Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage," in *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970 [1964]), pp. 93-99.
- Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 61-80, 103-22.
- Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 4-12, 33-38, 150-54.
- Friedman, *Blind to Sameness*, pp. 141-49.
- Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 73-74, 79-85.

March 21 Classification and Identity

Identity and alterity; human and non-human; monosexuality, omnisexuality, and polysexuality; private and public time; home and work; integrators and segmentors; intersectionality

- Eviatar Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms: Schedules and Calendars in Social Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985 [1981]), pp. 157-66.
- Eviatar Zerubavel, "The Rigid, the Fuzzy, and the Flexible: Notes on the Mental Sculpting of Academic Identity," *Social Research* 62 (1995): 1093-1102.
- Christena Nippert-Eng, *Home and Work: Negotiating Boundaries through Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 48-60, 67-91.
- Nicole Isaacson, "The 'Fetus-Infant': Changing Classifications of *In Utero* Development in Medical Texts," *Sociological Forum* 11 (1996): 459-77.
- C. L. Carr, "Cognitive Scripting and Sexual Identification: Essentialism, Anarchism, and Constructionism," *Symbolic Interaction* 22 (1999):1-17.
- Raymond Corbey, *The Metaphysics of Apes: Negotiating the Animal-Human Boundary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2005), pp. 105-19.
- Eviatar Zerubavel, "Language and Memory: "Pre-Columbian" America and the Social Logic of Periodization," *Social Research* 65 (1998): 320-24.
- Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 64-70, 113-16, 128-36.

March 28 Symbols and Meaning

Language and meaning; semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics; semiotics; representation and symbolism: signifiers and signifieds; structuralism: semiotic contrast; message and code; the fetishism of commodities; conspicuous consumption; metaphor; analogy

- Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1967 [1867]), Vol. 1, pp. 35-38, 71-83.
- Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (New

- York: Mentor Books, 1953 [1899]), pp. 60-80.
- Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, pp. 221-24, 228-35, 303-13.
- Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959 [1915]), pp. 15-17, 65-69, 114-24.
- Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968 [1964]), pp. 25-30.
- Raymond Firth, "Hair as Private Asset and Public Symbol," in *Symbols: Public and Private* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. 271-74.
- Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 179-97.
- Eviatar Zerubavel, "The Language of Time: Toward A Semiotics of Temporality," *Sociological Quarterly* 28 (1987): 343-47, 353-54.
- Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 68-80.
- Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 90-107.

April 4 **Markedness and Unmarkedness I**

Marking; markedness and unmarkedness: the ordinary and the special, the typical and the unusual; taken-for-grantedness; assumptions and cognitive defaults; lexical absences: the unarticulated; semiotic asymmetry; semiotic subcultures; socio-semiotic conventions and traditions; socio-semiotic norms

- Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (New York: Free Press, 1982 [1895]), pp. 91-93, 97-104.
- Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, pp. 34-38.
- Robert Hertz, "The Pre-eminence of the Right Hand: A Study in Religious Polarity," in Rodney Needham (ed.), *Right and Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978 [1909]), pp. 3-22.
- Linda R. Waugh, "Marked and Unmarked: A Choice between Unequals in Semiotic Structure," *Semiotica* 38 (1982): 299-316.
- Zerubavel, *The Seven-Day Circle*, pp. 113-20, 133-38.
- Lennard J. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body* (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 23-30.
- Wayne H. Brekhus, "Social Marking and the Mental Coloring of Identity: Sexual Identity Construction and Maintenance in the United States," *Sociological Forum* 11 (1996): 497-520.
- Johanna Foster, "Menstrual Time: The Sociocognitive Mapping of 'the Menstrual Cycle,'" *Sociological Forum* 11 (1996): 525-31, 542-44.
- Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 24-28.

April 11 **Markedness and Unmarkedness II**

Language and speech; semiotic engineering; semiotic inversion: unmarking, marking the unmarked; automatic and deliberate cognition: deautomatization; defamiliarization; foregrounding;

ethnomethodology; expectation and surprise

- Horace Miner, "Body Ritual among the Nacirema," *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956): 503-07.
- Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 36-49, 53-55.
- Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms*, pp. 19-30.
- Wayne H. Brekhus, "A Sociology of the Unmarked: Redirecting Our Focus," *Sociological Theory* 16 (1998): 34-49.
- Esther Rothblum, "Poly-Friendships," *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 3 (1999): 71-74.
- Charles Moser and Peggy Kleinplatz, "Does Heterosexuality Belong in the DSM?" *Lesbian & Gay Psychology Review* 6 (2005): 261-67.
- Zerubavel, *The Elephant in the Room*, pp. 62-68.
- Zerubavel, *Hidden in Plain Sight*, pp. 82-89.
- Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 28-33.

April 18 **Markedness, Unmarkedness, and Identity**

Marked and unmarked identities; semiotic weight; nouns and adjectives; naming and namelessness; the normal and the abnormal; the politico-semiotics of identity: semiotic disputes, semiotic exclusion, othering and abnormalization; genericization and neutralization; normalization and naturalization; cognitive hegemony; semiotic invisibility

- Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 194-98.
- Jonathan N. Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007 [1995], pp. 148-66.
- Ashley W. Doane, "Dominant Group Ethnic Identity in the United States: The Role of 'Hidden' Ethnicity in Intergroup Relations," *Sociological Quarterly* 38 (1997): 375-91.
- Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 5-9.
- Sally Robinson, *Marked Men: White Masculinity in Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), pp. 23-32.
- Pamela Perry, "White Means Never Having to Say You're Ethnic: White Youth and the Construction of 'Cultureless' Identities." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 30 (2001): 65-79.
- Celia Kitzinger, "'Speaking as a Heterosexual': (How) Does Sexuality Matter for Talk-in-Interaction?" *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 38 (2005): 221-24, 255-59.
- Harry Brod, "The Case for Superordinate Studies." *Transformations* 8.2 (September 30, 1997): 54.
- Jamie Mullaney, "Making It 'Count': Mental Weighing and Identity Attribution," *Symbolic Interaction* 22 (1999): 269-81.
- Wayne H. Brekhus, *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs: Gay Suburbia and the Grammar of Social Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 12-16, 24-31, 35-58, 74-89, 93-98, 137-64, 179-214.

Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 70-72, 116-20.

April 25 **The Sociology of Memory**

Collective memory; mnemonic communities; impersonal recollections; social sites of memory; norms of remembrance; mnemonic traditions; mnemonic socialization; mnemonic battles; plotlines and narratives; the social construction of historical continuity

Michael Frisch, "American History and the Structures of Collective Memory: A Modest Exercise in Empirical Iconography," *Journal of American History* 75 (1989): 1133-43.

Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 81-99.

Zerubavel, *Time Maps*, pp. 11-36, 52-54.

Tammy Smith, "Narrative Boundaries and the Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict and Conciliation," *Poetics* 35 (2007): 22-44.

Robyn Fivush, "Remembering and Reminiscing: How Individual Lives Are Constructed in Family Narratives," *Memory Studies* 1 (2008): 52-55.

Thomas DeGloma, "The Strategies of Mnemonic Battle: On the Alignment of Autobiographical and Collective Memories in Conflicts over the Past," *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 3 (2015): 156-83.

Brekhus, *Culture and Cognition*, pp. 107-09, 149-60.

May 2 **Memory and Identity**

Periodization and identity; kinship; genealogical capital: pedigree; common ancestry; co-descent; genealogical communities: family, ethnicity, nationhood and citizenship; genealogical narratives: origins, "roots," indigenusness, antiquity, out-pasting; matrilineal and patrilineal descent; the one-drop rule; the social organization of relatedness; the politics of ancestry and descent; genealogical engineering: purity, assimilation, endogamy and exogamy, integration and segregation; symbolic kinship and descent; awakening narratives: sociomental elevators and staircases, the temporally divided self

Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 31-36.

Zerubavel, *Time Maps*, pp. 102-10.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 23-26, 31-41, 46-131.

Thomas DeGloma, *Seeing the Light: The Social Logic of Personal Discovery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), pp. 8-18, 64-95, 102-21, 132-48.