

SOCIOLOGY 317, Emotions and Adult Life

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Prerequisites: No

GE: upper-division GE E (Integrated Person)

Catalog Description

Sociology 317 will examine the sociology of emotions from a constructionist, interactionist, and dramaturgical perspective. In it, we will address such issues as (1) what emotions are and where they come from, (2) the dramaturgy of emotion, or the relationship and difference between feeling an emotion and displaying an emotion, as well as the tactical and polemical use of emotions, (3) how we often “work” to ensure that we are feeling what we think we should be feeling, and what this teaches us about the nature of human consciousness, (4) how we learn which emotions are viewed as appropriate to feel or display at different times and places and in front of different audiences, and (5) emotional contagion, or how esprit-de-corps and zeitgeist (shared emotions) can lead to social change.

By the end of the semester students will have gained:

1. A deeper knowledge of what society is, and how we cannot know our selves without knowing our society.
2. The sociological imagination: An ability to draw the connection between your personal troubles and public issues.
3. An awareness of the dialectical relationship between individual emotions and social structures.
4. An awareness of the human species’ profound lack of understanding of itself, and how this ignorance permits our own manipulation and alienation by the very structures we have ourselves created.

This course will be conducted as a lecture seminar. In other words, you are expected to be scholars in this course, coming to class prepared to engage in open discussion with your classmates. Attendance is absolutely required.

Required Texts

3 books will be assigned (tba)

Grading

Two exams, along with quizzes and assignments throughout the semester.

All information included is subject to change.