

Sociology 371
Sociology of Conspiracies—Spring 2017

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Course Description: A critical analysis of conspiracies in society using Power Elite and State Crimes Against Society theories applied to modern historical events with cultural, social psychological, public propaganda, and power perspectives: topics includes political assassinations, election fraud, threats of terrorism, 9/11, and permanent war.

Required Textbooks: Available at North Light Books

Conspiracy Theory in America, Lance DeHaven-Smith, University of Texas Press, 2013,

Real Enemies: Conspiracy theories and American Democracy World War I to 9/11,
Kathryn Olmstead, Oxford University Press, 2009

Brothers, The Hidden History of the Kennedy Years, David Talbot, Simon Schuster Inc.
2007

TBA—David Ray Griffin, Olive Branch Press

An Act of State: The Execution of Martin Luther King, William Pepper, Verso, 2008,

The 2001 Anthrax Deception, Graeme Macqueen, Clarity Press, 2014

Learning Objectives;

1. The class participants will develop an understanding of State Crimes Against Democracy (SCAD) theory from Public Administration and Policy perspective and the importance of agency inside these events.
2. Students will know the history of the use of the term Conspiracy Theory and the development of the use of the idea as a negation of investigative research into State Crimes Against Democracy.
3. Exploration of the ideas of Deep Politics and Deep Events will be addressed in the course and students will recognize the sociology of such events.
4. Students will be able to explain how propaganda, misinformation and false flag events are used by national security states to achieve policy goals.

5. Students will see how a comparative sociological analysis of seemingly isolated events can help achieve an understanding of hidden agency and conspiracies.

6. The importance of how a strategy of tension and permanent war is important to national security states will be addressed in the context of Power Elite theory.

<u>Course Evaluation:</u>	Three short (3-4-page) working papers	45%
	Weekly Reading Quiz (Intermittent)	25%
	Final Exam	10%
	Class Participation	20%

The final exam will be open book analytical essay style. Students will have a choice of questions on which to write essays using notes, textbooks, and class handouts. A careful organization of your notes and outlines on the readings are strongly recommended.

This class is designed as highly participatory to familiarize students with seminar type classes held in graduate school. Students will be presenting response papers (working papers) in class every four weeks. Students are expected to attend all the classes for the entire time period each week. Leaving early or unexcused missed classes will result in a lowering of your final grade.

Written and Oral Assignments:

The class will be divided into four sections. Students in each section will be responsible for writing a 3-4 page working paper every fourth week during the course. Working papers will be theory pieces (abstract understandings of how power/conspiracies work in society) responding to the readings for the week and addressing the question who wins, who loses and who decides. Students will give a brief summary of the working paper during the class session in which it is due. All students are expected to have read the weekly assignments before coming to class and be ready to discuss the topics covered.

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During the course extra credit events, films and speakers will be available to all students.

All work in the course must be completed in order to receive a grade.