

**Status and Inequality**  
**Sociology 8200**  
**Spring 2007**  
**Tuesday 3:30 – 6:15**  
**114-A Baldwin Hall**

James W Balkwell  
119-D Baldwin Hall  
542-3233

[balkwell@uga.edu](mailto:balkwell@uga.edu)  
Office Hours: 2:30 – 3:20 M-W.  
and by appointment

Cecilia L. Ridgeway, the Lucie Stern Professor of Sociology at Stanford University, recently wrote: “Everyday life is filled with *social relational contexts*, in which individuals coordinate and shape their behavior in relation to others, whether in person, through the Internet, on paper, or with a cell phone. Throughout my career, I have been concerned with the power of these ubiquitous contexts not only to influence individuals, but also to link those individuals to the larger social structure in which they are embedded. I have been fascinated by the way these contexts bring the larger social structure home to the person’s own experience. Gender and racial inequality, for instance, are dimensions of social stratification, but it is in relational contexts that these macro structural messages of inequality are delivered powerfully to individuals in ways that shape their future behavior” (Ridgeway 2006).

Those words succinctly summarize the goals of this seminar: (1) to understand group processes at the individual level, and (2) to understand the micro-macro linkages involving such processes. My objective is that you become better able to apply such knowledge to your own substantive area of interest.

Group processes always involve some mixture of cooperative and competitive motivations. Status Characteristics Theory, Exchange Theory, Status Construction Theory, and extensions of these will be our main focus, but other relevant work will be considered as well.

**Required Readings:**

DeLamater, John D. (ed.). *Handbook of Social Psychology*. New York: Kluwer.

Additional readings will be available in the Department of Sociology mailroom. For the technologically sophisticated, most of these are available online as well, and of course they can be found in the UGA Main Library.

## Course Requirements

(1) *15-20 page paper — 60%*. While this paper must use social psychological theory pertaining to some aspect of group processes, you do not have to limit yourself to topics covered in class or to the assigned readings. On any of the topics we discuss, there probably are 100 or more journal articles and, in some cases, several books. Also, you may draw upon articles in the DeLamater collection that we do not cover if you wish. Although I am open to a purely theoretical paper, I think it is likely that you would want to include a discussion of primary or secondary evidence of some sort. You might consider integrating some part of social psychological theory with conceptualizations from organizations, occupations, deviance, stratification, or some other area of sociology in which you have a special interest. The possibilities for this paper are almost limitless — I will trust your judgment to choose something that helps you to advance your own scholarly goals. You must have your paper topic approved, however, and I encourage you to meet with me within the next month or so to discuss your proposed topic. I would hope that your paper would ultimately become part of your thesis, dissertation proposal, or even a published paper. Use this paper assignment as a stepping-stone to something beyond this course.

(2) *Class Participation — 20 %*. You are expected to have read the assigned readings before coming to class. Therefore, you should participate actively in class discussions, providing thoughtful comments on the course material. Generally, discussing a research paper requires knowing the problem or issue that the researcher sought to address, the research tradition or context from which that problem arose, the specific hypotheses or ideas tested, the research methods employed, how the data were analyzed, the results, and the researcher's substantive conclusions. Critiques of the readings certainly are permissible, and indeed desirable, as we discuss them — the perfect scholarly paper has yet to be written! Typically, however, criticisms should be constructive. Sometimes they may involve alternative interpretations of a researcher's findings, perhaps with ideas on how further investigation might differentiate between the researcher's interpretations and plausible alternative interpretations. I would prefer that we not get into a pattern of slamming others' efforts. A theoretical formulation increases in scope, rigor, precision, and empirical adequacy as work on it continues. As scholars, our goals should be to find areas in which we are interested, and then to position ourselves through our reading and thinking to contribute towards their improvement. In evaluating your class participation, I will be paying attention to evidence that you are developing the ability to contribute to some area that you think is interesting and important.

(3) *Class Facilitation — 10%*. Each of you will be responsible for two class sessions. This will require you to read the assigned materials carefully and well before the class session in question takes place, and essentially lead the discussion. Typically, for each paper, you would want to give an abbreviated summary of the paper's main features. For a standard research article, there typically would be a statement of the problem (hypothesis or question to be investigated, the larger context in which it arose), the research procedures (basic design, measurement techniques, sample and how it was selected, nature of the statistical or other analysis), the results, and the implications for

knowledge in an area. For papers that depart from this model, there still will be a logical organization that you can sketch. You want to present the big picture, but not so much fine detail and commentary that there is nothing left to discuss or debate! Some people like to formulate discussion questions in advance and distribute these before the class session, so as provide a framework for discussion. Discussion can focus mainly on the paper itself, but sometimes there also might be some interest in discussing the implications of a finding for sociology more generally, or even for contemporary social issues. The objective of a graduate seminar is for students to develop their capacities to contribute to scholarship, but there is no reason that we cannot also discuss questions that go beyond the kind of scholarship that is appropriate for publication in journals. Doing so may help to remind us of why that scholarship is important.

(4) *Summary and Critique of One Reading – 10%*. You will turn in a 3-5 page summary and critique of **one** empirical article from our reading list. You are free to choose any article you want, but it would make best sense for most class members to choose one of the articles assigned for a discussion in which they serve as the facilitator. Obviously, this component overlaps with the third component, but I do not see that as a problem. You probably would write a rough draft of your critique before you facilitate, and then write a more polished version later. I will give a short handout later in the semester with pointers on how to approach this critique.

### **Attendance Policy**

You are expected to attend all class sessions and to have the assigned material completed prior to each class meeting. It is detrimental to any class when individuals do not attend regularly. Therefore, I reserve the right to administratively withdraw students for questionable absences. If an emergency arises that forces you to miss class, you should get notes from a classmate. While I am happy to discuss any questions you may have about a class you missed for unavoidable reasons, please do so only after reading the assigned material and reviewing the notes.

### **Meeting Schedule, Topics, and Readings**

#### **Tuesday, January 9, 2007**

Introduction and Discussion of the Sociological Importance of Groups  
[No reading assignment]

#### **Tuesday, January 16, 2007: Group Structure, Goals, and Roles**

Bales, Robert F. Fred L. Strodbeck, Theodore M. Mills, and Mary E. Roseborough. 1951. "Channels of Communication in Small Groups." *American Sociological Review* 16: 461-468.

Reynolds, P. D. 1984. "Leaders Never Quit: Talking, Silence, and Influence in Interpersonal Groups." *Small Group Behavior* 15: 404-413.

Sorrentino, R. M. and N. Field. 1986. "Emergent Leadership over Time: The Functional Value of Positive Motivation." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50: 1091-1099.

**Tuesday, January 23, 2007:**

**Status Characteristics, Status Generalization, and Expectation States Theory**

Correll, Shelley J. and Cecilia L. Ridgeway. 2003. "Expectation States Theory." Pp. 29-52 in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, edited by John Delamater. New York: Kluwer.

Webster, Murray, Jr., and James E. Driskell, Jr. 1978. "Status Generalization: A Review and Some New Data." *American Sociological Review* 43: 220-236.

Webster, Murray, Jr., and James E. Driskell, Jr. 1983. "Beauty as Status." *American Journal of Sociology* 89: 140-165.

**Tuesday, January 30, 2007:**

**Status Generalization and Cognitive Processes: Efforts at Formalization I**

Howard, Judith A. and Daniel G. Renfrow. 2003. "Social Cognition." Pp. 259-282 in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, edited by John Delamater. New York: Kluwer.

Berger, Joseph, M. Hamit Fisek, Robert Z. Norman, and Morris Zelditch, Jr. 1977. *Status Characteristics and Social Interaction: An Expectation-States Approach*. New York: Elsevier. Please read pages 91-134.

**Tuesday, February 6, 2007:**

**Status Generalization and Cognitive Processes: Efforts at Formalization II**

Balkwell, James W. 1991. "From Expectations to Behavior: An Improved Postulate for Expectation States Theory." *American Sociological Review* 56: 355-369.

Berger, Joseph, Robert Z. Norman, James W. Balkwell, and Roy F. Smith. 1992. "Status Inconsistency in Task Situations: A Test of Four Status Processing Principles." *American Sociological Review* 57: 843-855.

**Tuesday, February 13, 2007:**

**Theories on the Emergence of Social Structures**

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 1991. "The Social Construction of Status Value: Gender and Other Nominal Characteristics." *Social Forces* 70: 367-386.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. and James W. Balkwell. 1997. "Group Processes and the Diffusion of Status-Value Beliefs." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 60: 14-31.

Ridgeway, C. L. , E. H. Boyle, K. J. Kuipers, and D. T. Robinson. 1998. "How Do Status Beliefs Develop? The Role of Resources and Interactional Experience." *American Sociological Review* 63: 331-350.

Webster, Murray, Jr. and Stuart J. Hysom. 1998. "Creating Status Characteristics." *American Sociological Review* 63: 351-378.

**Tuesday, February 20, 2007:**

**Social Psychology and Micro-Macro Linkages**

Lawler, Edward, Cecilia Ridgeway, and Barry Markovsky. 1993. "Structural Social Psychology and the Micro-Macro Problem." *Sociological Theory* 11: 268-290.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2006. "Linking Social Structure and Interpersonal Behavior: A Theoretical Perspective on Cultural Schemas and Social Relations." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 69: 5-16.

**Tuesday, February 27, 2007:**

**Social Control within the Group and Conformity to Group Norms**

Festinger, Leon, Stanley Schachter, and Kurt Back. 1968 [1950]. "Operation of Group Standards." Pp. 152-164 in *Group Dynamics*, edited by Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander. New York: Harper & Row.

Schachter, Stanley. 1968 [1951]. "Deviation, Rejection, and Communication." Pp. 165-181 in *Group Dynamics*, edited by Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander. New York: Harper & Row.

Moscovici, Serge. 1980. "Toward a Theory of Conversion Behavior." Pp. 209-239 in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 13, edited by Leonard Berkowitz. New York: Academic Press.

**Tuesday, March 6, 2007:**

**Social Exchange Theory, Reward Expectations, and Equity**

Homan, George C. 1958. "Social Behavior as Exchange." *American Journal of Sociology* 52: 597-606.

Adams, J. Stacey. 1963. "Toward an Understanding of Inequity." *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67: 422-436.

Cook, Karen S. and Eric Rice. 2003. "Social Exchange Theory." Pp 53-76 in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, edited by John Delamater. New York: Kluwer.

Berger, Joseph, M. Hamit Fisek, Robert Z. Norman, and David G. Wagner. 1998. "Formation of Reward Expectations in Status Situations." Pp. 121-153 in *Status, Power, and Legitimacy*, edited by J. Berger and M. Zelditch, Jr. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

**Tuesday, March 13, 2007:**

[Spring Break: March 12-16, M-F]

**Tuesday, March 20, 2007:**

**Network Exchange Theory**

Cook, Karen S. and Richard M. Emerson. 1978. "Power, Equity, and Commitment in Exchange Networks." *American Sociological Review* 43: 721-739.

Markovsky, Barry, David Willer, and Travis Patton. 1988. "Power Relations in Exchange Networks." *American Sociological Review* 53: 220-36.

Molm, Linda D., Gretchen Peterson, and Nobuyuki Takahashi. 1999. "Power in Negotiated and Reciprocal Exchange." *American Sociological Review* 64: 876-890.

**Tuesday, March 27, 2007:**

**Network Exchange and Emotion**

Balkwell, James W. 2007. "Introduction to Network Exchange and Emotion." Pp. xx-xx in *Social Structure and Emotions*, edited by Dawn T. Robinson and Jody Clay-Warner. New York: Elsevier.

Molm, Linda D. 2007. "The Structure of Reciprocity and Integrative Bonds: The Role of Emotions." Pp. xx-xx in *Social Structure and Emotions*, edited by Dawn T. Robinson and Jody Clay-Warner. New York: Elsevier.

Gerbas, Alexandra, and Karen S. Cook. 2007. "Social Structure and Emotion: The Role of Trustworthiness in Negotiated and Reciprocal Exchange." Pp. xx-xx in *Social Structure and Emotions*, edited by Dawn T. Robinson and Jody Clay-Warner. New York: Elsevier.

**Tuesday, April 3, 2007:**

**Group Decision Making**

McCauley, Clark. 1987. "The Nature of Social Influence in Groupthink: Compliance and Internalization." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57: 250-260.

Dion, K. L., R. Baron, and N. Miller. 1970. "Why Do Groups Make Riskier Decisions than Individuals?" Chapter 10 in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 5, edited by Leonard Berkowitz. New York: Academic Press.

Turner, J. C., M. S. Wetherell, and M. A. Hogg. 1989. "Referent Informational Influence and Group Polarization." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 28: 135-147.

Myers, D. G. and H. Lamm. 1976. "The group polarization phenomenon." *Psychological Bulletin* 83: 602-627.

**Tuesday, April 10, 2007:**

Finish up whatever remains to be done.\*

**Tuesday, April 17, 2007:**

Finish up whatever remains to be done.\*

**Tuesday, April 24, 2007:**

Finish up whatever remains to be done.\*

---

\*Although the number of readings may strike some of us as relatively light, not excessive, the reality is that some of the reading is difficult, and we almost surely will find the schedule above to be optimistic. If we have time at the end of the semester, I will ask volunteers (if time is scarce) or everyone (if time permits) to present an early version of their course paper, and those listening will provide feedback, constructive criticism, and discussion, along the lines of a session at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. It would be fun to have some time to do this, but we will have to play it by ear.