

Sociology of Youth Subcultures
SOCI 3080, Spring 2009
322 Baldwin Hall, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00 – 9:15am

Instructor and Contact Information:

Dr. Elizabeth Cherry

Email: lcherry@uga.edu

Office and Phone: 315 Baldwin Hall, 706-583-8071

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30 – 4:30pm, or by appointment

Mailbox: Under Cherry, E. in 114 Baldwin Hall (Sociology Department Mailroom)

Course Website and Listserv: <http://webct.uga.edu>

Course Overview and Objectives:

In the twentieth century, youth became an object of sociological, cultural, and psychological analyses. The concept of “subculture” has been used with various degrees of success to analyze youths’ individual and collective behaviors. In this course we will survey some of the many strands of subcultural theory about youth during the 20th century. We will begin with early empirical work from the Chicago School, followed by an overview of the Cultural Studies approach from the CCCS, or Birmingham School. We will then move on to examples of contemporary subculture theory and research. A number of subcultures will be discussed during the course. Our goal is to try and arrive at some consensus as to the worth of “subculture” as an analytic concept. The purpose of this course is to provide you with an overview of the subculture concept from a variety of academic perspectives.

The objectives of the course are: to familiarize yourself with both the American and British versions of subcultural theory, as well as criticisms of each; to review a variety of historical and contemporary youth subcultures and the perspectives and methods employed to study them; and to gain a better understanding of how the social order is constructed and reproduced through (sub)cultural practice. In working toward these objectives, you will also have the opportunity to improve upon your sociological reading, writing, and research skills. Writing and researching as a sociologist is different from writing and researching as an English major, for example, thus in this course we will not only work toward gaining an understanding of the topic at hand, but we will also strive to improve your skills as sociology majors. These skills should also be of use in your other classes as well as in your future careers.

This is an upper-level sociology course and will be conducted as such. During the course of the semester, we will have the opportunity to learn about many interesting youth subcultures. However, simply learning about the subcultures themselves is not the primary objective of the course. We will learn about subcultures *and* use them to understand broader sociological theories and concepts. If you are interested in simply learning about punks, skinheads, and other subcultures without placing them in a sociological context, I suggest you stay home and watch MTV and VH1 rather than enrolling in this course.

Prerequisites: SOCI 1101 or POD

Required Texts:

Gelder, Ken, and Sarah Thornton (Eds.). 2005. *The Subcultures Reader*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge. Available at the UGA bookstore and at other local bookstores.

Other required readings are available to download on WebCT, under “required readings.”

Grades and Evaluation:

Your grade in this course will be based on two in-class exams, one film review, one subculture portfolio, and various measures of class preparation and participation. All grades factor in to a 500-point system, described below:

Assignment	Points
Exam One	100 points
Exam Two	110 points
Subculture Portfolio	140 points
Film Review	75 points
Preparation and Participation	75 points
Total	500 points

Final grades for the course are based on the following scale:

Letter Grade	Points
A	468-500
A-	450-467
B+	433-449
B	418-432
B-	400-417
C+	383-399
C	368-382
C-	350-367
D+	333-349
D	318-332
D-	300-317
F	0-299

Note: Sociology majors need a C or better in this course to graduate. A grade of C- is not high enough.

I will distribute more detailed rubrics for the major assignments of this course. Please note these general differences between A-level, B-level, C-level, D-level, and F-level work:

A-level work is exemplary, going above and beyond the basic requirements for the assignment as well as my expectations. It demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the theories and concepts at use.

B-level work is advanced beyond the basic requirements for the assignment. It demonstrates a thorough and thoughtful understanding of the theories and concepts at use.

C-level work is competent; it fulfills the basic requirements of the assignment. It demonstrates a moderate or basic understanding of the theories and concepts at use. **If you only fulfill the basic requirements of an assignment, you will earn a C.** Simply managing to write multiple pages on a topic does not earn one an A.

D-level work is marginal; it fulfills some of the basic requirements of the assignment, but not all of them. It demonstrates a superficial understanding of the theories and concepts at use.

F-level work is unacceptable; it does not fulfill the basic requirements of the assignment. It demonstrates little to no understanding of the theories and concepts at use.

Exams

There will be 2 in-class exams given during the semester. Exam One (**Feb. 19**) counts 100 points and Exam Two (**April 21**) is 110 points. I will give you more information on the format of the exams during the course of the semester. Each exam will cover the readings assigned plus any lectures, films, and in-class discussions. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting with a classmate or me to catch up. **There are no make-up exams except in case of emergency.** Going home for a long weekend or not hearing your alarm clock are examples of unacceptable excuses for missing an exam. If you are unable to take an exam, you must leave me a message via phone or email **before** the exam begins. Additionally, the excuse must be verifiable (e.g., police report, hospital records). When allowed, make-up exams are done in my office. Make-up exams may be a different format than the regularly scheduled exam.

Subculture Portfolio

The major portion of your grade will be based on your independent research on a subculture of your choice. The case study will include three items that you will complete throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, you will turn in your entire portfolio and you will have the opportunity to present your findings to your classmates.

You must choose the subculture you will be researching by **Thursday, February 5** at the latest. *Only three students will be allowed to research any one subculture, so do not wait until the last minute to choose your subculture.* By 2/5, you will hand in a paragraph stating which subculture you have chosen and why you are interested in studying this subculture. Make sure to read all of the following assignments carefully before choosing your subculture. You must choose a subculture that is primarily youth-related (so do not choose an occupational subculture like IRS agents or an adult-specific subculture like nursing home residents).

As a class, we will compile a list of subcultures (and websites about them) on WebCT. This will help provide information on the subcultures we will be studying throughout the semester, and it should also help provide portfolio choices to students who may be less familiar with certain esoteric subcultures.

Portfolio Format and Grading

The completed portfolio will be in a two-pocket folder. Please do NOT use a three-ring binder. All written work should be typed and printed (see paper policies for more information). I encourage you to conserve paper by not attaching separate title pages or bibliographies to your work—simply typing your name on the first sheet will suffice, and you can type your bibliography at the end of the last paragraph of your paper. You DO need a bibliography, though. Keep all of your assignments from your case study in your portfolio so I can chart the course of your progress throughout the semester. Each part of your portfolio is weighted and graded differently, and your complete portfolio will be worth 140 points.

Portfolio Contents and Grading	
Literature and Sources	15 points
Methods and Concepts Proposal	15 points
Subculture Analysis Essay	100 points
Class Presentation	10 points
Total	140 points

Portfolio Contents

These are brief explanations of the assignments included in the subculture portfolio. I will distribute more information on each assignment in class.

1. Literature and Sources (15 points, due 3/5)

Once you have chosen a subculture, you will compile one academic journal article and two artifacts (websites, newspaper articles, etc.) on your subculture. This will provide a beginning foundation for your research on the subculture. You will write a review of the article and a description of the artifacts in a 2-4 page paper.

2. Methods and Concepts Proposal (15 points, due 4/9)

After we have covered a good portion of the theories, methods, and analytic concepts used for studying subcultures, you will write a 1-2 page proposal of your research methods and the theories and/or analytic concepts you will use in your subculture analysis. You may use more than one method in your research, but you must limit your theories/concepts to only two or three.

3. Subculture Analysis Essay (100 points, due 5/5)

This 5-7 page essay will serve as your final examination in the course, as it counts as much as an exam, and, more importantly, as it will demonstrate the knowledge you have acquired throughout the entire semester. In this essay you will analyze your subculture according to two or three subcultural theories and/or analytic concepts. This will be a research paper in that you will be applying the work of subcultural scholars to your subculture, but it will also reflect your own original research on the subculture itself.

4. Class Presentation (10 points)

The last two sessions of class, along with the final exam period, will be devoted to a cumulating activity—your subculture portfolio presentations. You will each have 5-7 minutes to present your subculture to the class. These presentations should include aspects of your subculture analysis, and a decidedly sociological focus.

Film Review

We will watch and analyze many film clips throughout the semester, which will prepare you for your review of the film *Between Resistance and Community: The Long Island DIY Punk Scene*. This film is not available to rent commercially, and will only be shown once in class on **Tuesday, March 17.**

I will NOT loan out my personal copy of this film, so make sure you are in class to see the film!

For the film review, you will write a 3-5 page paper addressing specific questions on resistance, which will directly relate to that week's readings. I will provide these questions before the film begins. The review will be due in class on **Thursday, March 26.** This film review counts for 75 points.

Class Preparation and Participation

This component of the course will count for 75 points. 50 points will come from class preparation, which will be measured by reading quizzes. 25 points will come from class participation.

Class Preparation and Reading Quizzes (50 points)

This course is designed to be a learning experience for everyone involved, with the understanding that no one enrolled in the course will already have a clear understanding of all the information we will cover during the semester. Since this course will emphasize your active participation in this learning experience, it is necessary that you attend class regularly and participate in class discussions. In order to fully participate in the course, you will need to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings or having completed the required homework. Out of respect for your busy schedules, I have tried to keep the reading to a manageable level, about 30-40 pages per week. It should not be difficult to keep up with the required readings.

Class preparation will be measured by randomly scheduled reading quizzes. We will have seven quizzes that count 10 points each, and I will drop your two lowest grades.

In-Class Participation (25 points)

Participating in class discussion counts toward your final grade. Class participation will be evaluated on an A-F grading scale, which will then be translated into a points system for the course. I will distribute a handout in class outlining A-level to F-level participation (and their accompanying points). This handout will also be posted on WebCT.

As society, including our campus, becomes more technology-friendly and -savvy, so do the distractions posed by such technologies to our learning. **Make sure your cell phone is turned off when you enter class.** I understand if you forget to do this once, but if your phone rings more than once, or if you send text messages during class, it will negatively affect your grade. If you are expecting a life-or-death phone call, let me know before class starts. You can set your phone to vibrate and discreetly leave the class to take the call. (Love lives, gossip, and spring break plans are not life-or-death situations—they just sometimes seem that way.)

Likewise, **you will not need to use laptop computers to take notes in this class.** This course is primarily discussion-based, not lecture-based. Further, the goal of this upper-level course is not to take copious notes but rather to think, discuss, and use the ideas we are working with. If you can make a case to me that you need to use a laptop for a sound academic reason (e.g., if you are a notetaker), you *may* be allowed to use one. If a student does gain permission to use a laptop for note-taking, then he or she will need to sit on the last row of the class so as to not distract other students with their laptop screen, and will need to keep the laptop closed during class discussions. Failure to do so will result in a loss of laptop privileges, and a poor participation grade.

Attendance

Class attendance is required and will affect your final grade in the following way:

0 days missed	= 10 points added to final grade (out of 500 points)
1 day missed	= 5 points added to final grade
2-4 days missed	= no grade change
5-8 days missed	= 5 point subtracted from final grade for each absence (up to 20 points subtracted from final grade)
9 or more days missed	= automatic administrative withdrawal from the class

Note that you may miss up to four days of class without penalty—**use them wisely.** Knowing this, you do not need to provide documentation for any absences. **There are no exceptions to this attendance policy—as long as school is in session we will have class.** Attendance will be taken every day by passing around an attendance sheet. It is your responsibility to make sure you sign the attendance sheet.

Arrive to class ON TIME. Coming late to class is disruptive and disrespectful to your classmates and me. Arriving more than 5 minutes late to class equals ½ absence. Arriving more than 15 minutes late to class equals one absence. If you know you need to arrive or leave early for a particular class period, please tell me in advance.

Note that a withdrawal after the midpoint withdrawal deadline (Tuesday, March 24) will result in a grade of WF. Except under the most serious and highly unusual circumstances, no incompletes will be given.

Academic Honesty: Cheating will not be tolerated in any form. This includes, but is not limited to, looking at other students' papers during exams and submitting unoriginal, plagiarized assignments (typically from internet sources). See WebCT for information on ASA citations and plagiarism. All students should understand University policies regarding cheating and its consequences. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty": www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm

Disability or Health-Related Issues: Students with a disability or a health-related issue who need a class accommodation should make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible.

*****Paper and Other Class Policies*****

Papers should be turned in during the class period when they are due. **Papers will be penalized one letter grade for each 24-hour period they are late.** This 24-hour period begins when our class period ends.

Papers should be typed and printed when you turn them in. **I do NOT accept papers via email or WebCT** except in cases of emergency, like in cases that would necessitate make-up exams. See the exam section of the syllabus for those rules. Your printer not working is NOT an emergency. Printers are widely available on campus.

Although I try to foresee potential roadblocks to your learning, I cannot predict all the questions you might have about a particular assignment. **Failure to understand the rules and requirements of this course is NOT a sufficient excuse for a failure to complete the class assignments properly.**

If you have any questions, please see me during office hours or make an appointment to meet. That being said, I expect you to be prepared enough to be able to ask such questions well ahead of time. Thus **I do NOT answer questions about exams or papers in the 24-hour period before they are due.**

Human Rights Statement: All students should know that the department of Sociology has a Human Rights Committee for the resolution of student grievances. Any student registered for a sociology course at the University of Georgia who feels that he or she has not been treated in a fair or professional manner by an instructor is advised to follow these procedures:

- 1) The student should discuss his or her problems with the instructor of the course, unless extenuating circumstances prohibit this.
- 2) If that discussion does not resolve the grievance, the student should then discuss the problem with the Head of the Sociology Department.
- 3) If that discussion does not resolve the grievance to the student's satisfaction, the student may request the activation of the Human Rights Committee by submitting a letter to the Chair of the Human Rights Committee, Department of Sociology, University of Georgia.

The Human Rights Committee will have the responsibility of investigating all charges in accordance with the procedures on file in the Sociology office, copies of which are available to students. The Committee will also have the responsibility of making recommendations in writing to the Head, copies of which will be made available to the student complainant and the instructor involved. The Department Head will review the recommendations and make a decision in writing, with copies to the student complainant and the instructor of staff member involved. Any appeal of that decision must be to the Dean of the college of Arts and Sciences.

Time Table:

This timetable is subject to change, depending on how the class progresses, but I will announce in class any changes and post new syllabi on WebCT if need be. **The reading listed next to each class meeting is what we will discuss on that day, and thus should be completed before that class meeting.** "GT" refers to Gelder & Thornton; the other names refer to the course readings available on WebCT.

TUESDAY	THURSDAY
WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS	
	Jan 8 Introduction and review of syllabus
PART ONE: AMERICAN SUBCULTURAL STUDIES	
Jan 13 The Sociological Concept of Culture Readings: Becker 1986 (WebCT) Last day to drop (Last day to add is Wednesday, January 14)	Jan 15 Introduction to American Subcultural Studies Readings: GT p. 1-24
Jan 20 Taxi-Dancers Readings: GT 2 & 3	Jan 22 Refinements in the Subculture Concept & Jazz Musicians Readings: GT 4 & 37
Jan 27 American Subculture Theory Summary Readings: GT 6	Jan 29 Film and Theory Application Exercise
PART TWO: BRITISH SUBCULTURAL STUDIES	
Feb 3 Introduction to British Subcultural Studies Readings: GT Part Two Intro (p.81-81), GT 7	Feb 5 Working-Class Subcultures Readings: GT 8 & 10 SUBCULTURE CHOICE DUE TODAY
Feb 10 "Spectacular" Subcultures: Punk Readings: GT 11	Feb 12 Film and Theory Application Exercise
Feb 17 British Subculture Theory Summary Exam Review Discuss Final Projects	EXAM ONE

PART THREE: METHODS OF STUDYING SUBCULTURES	
Feb 24 Ethnography Readings: GT 5, Hodkinson (WebCT)	Feb 26 Semiotic & Content Analysis Readings: Semiotic Analysis (WebCT), Using Visual Materials (WebCT)
PART FOUR: SUBSTANTIVE TOPICS AND NEW ANALYTIC CONCEPTS	
March 3 Resistance: Teenage Satanists Readings: Lowney (WebCT)	March 5 Resistance: Riot Grrls Readings: Schilt (WebCT), GT 9 LITERATURE AND SOURCES DUE TODAY
March 10 NO CLASS – Spring Break	March 12 NO CLASS – Spring Break
March 17 Film: Between Resistance and Community	March 19 Style: Teddy Boys Readings: GT 26 & 27
March 24 Style: Bike Messengers and Skateboarders Readings: Kidder (WebCT), GT 24 MIDPOINT WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE	March 26 New Subcultural Theories: Cultural Sociology Readings: GT 17 FILM ANALYSIS DUE TODAY
March 31 New Subcultural Theories: “Post”- Subcultural Theories and Globalization Readings: Bennett & Kahn-Harris (WebCT), GT 48	April 2 Authenticity: Hip Hop Readings: McLeod (WebCT)
April 7 Authenticity: Straight Edge Readings: Williams (WebCT)	April 9 Responses to Subcultures: Swing Kids and Nazis Readings: Wallace & Alt (WebCT) METHODS AND CONCEPTS PROPOSAL DUE TODAY

<p>April 14</p> <p>Responses to Subcultures: Punk and Metal, Japanese Manga and Murder</p> <p>Film and Theory Application Exercise</p> <p>Readings: Rosenbaum & Prinsky (WebCT), GT 45</p>	<p>April 16</p> <p>Closing comments on subcultural studies</p>
<p>PART FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</p>	
<p>April 21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXAM TWO</p>	<p>April 23</p> <p>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</p>
<p>April 28</p> <p>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS</p> <p>LAST DAY OF CLASS</p>	
<p>FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Tuesday, May 5, 8:00-11:00am</p> <p>COMPLETE STUDENT PRESENTATIONS ON FINAL PROJECTS</p> <p>SUBCULTURE ANALYSIS ESSAY DUE TODAY</p>	