

University of Georgia
Fall 2009
Sociology 3010: Sociology of Culture

Dr. Erin Winter
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Office Hours: 11:30-12:30 T/TH

Textbooks:

1. Wendy Griswold. 2004. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.
2. Philip Smith (ed). 2001. *Cultural Theory*. Malden Mass: Blackwell Publishers.*
3. Philip Smith (ed). 1999. *The New American Cultural Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*
4. Lyn Spillman (ed). 2002. *Cultural Sociology*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers.

Purpose and Goals of the Course:

This course is intended to provide students with a broad overview of scholarship concerning the Sociology of Culture. Over the course of the semester we will study both classic and contemporary approaches and issues pertaining to sociologically studying culture. As one of the most prolific subfields within the discipline of sociology, the sociology of culture literature is profuse. As such, organizing the material and choosing representative work is a challenge made harder by the fact that it must all fit into one semester. As a result, some work that should be included is inevitably left off of this syllabus. However, I encourage all of you to ask me for additional references should anything stimulate your sociological imagination.

Grades and Evaluation

Grades for the course will be based on the following items:

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
4 Exams	20% each
1 Group Assignment	15% each
Class Participation	5%
Total	100%

Exams (each worth 20% of the final grade)

We will have four exams. Each exam will cover the readings assigned plus any lectures, films, and in-class discussions. If you miss a class, *you* are responsible for asking a classmate to share information with you so that you may 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.

Group Presentations (15% of final grade)

You, along with other group members, are required to analyze a cultural object of your collective choosing and present your work to the class. The analysis that you and your group produce – and then present to the class – must consider all points on the cultural diamond as conceptualized by Wendy Griswold in your textbook by this same author. After your group collaboration ends, you will each have the opportunity to peer review each group member’s contribution to the final product. These peer reviews WILL influence your individual final grades on the assignment.

In-Class Participation (5% of final grade)

I will also keep track of who participates and who does not, as participating in class discussion will count toward your final grade. Class participation will be evaluated on an A-F grading scale, which will then be translated into the points system for the course. Class participation counts for 5% of the final grade. Class participation should reflect good class preparation as well as standards of politeness and respect. Engaging in side conversations, making disruptive and off-topic comments, reading newspapers, using cell phones, sleeping, and similarly rude behaviors are disruptive and I will not tolerate them. Make sure your cell phone is turned off when you enter class.

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

Letter Grade	Number Grade
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	88-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D+	68-69
D	63-67
D-	60-62
F	0-59

***NO LAPTOPS ALLOWED IN CLASS.**

Assigned Readings: (due on the date noted)

*It is the student's responsibility to obtain the texts noted above in order to read the required material by the due date noted on the syllabus. Doing so may require creative methods and sources beyond the University Bookstore, such as purchasing from online retailers.

**Philip Smith is the editor of two assigned texts. To avoid confusion, I denoted the book entitled *Cultural Theory* as Smith-a and the book entitled *The New American Cultural Sociology* as Smith-b.

Aug 18: Orientation

Aug 20: Introduction

- Spillman, "Introduction: Culture and Cultural Sociology": Pp 1-12
- Griswold, "Culture and the Cultural Diamond": Pp 1-17
- Griswold, "Cultural Meaning": Pp 18-24

Aug 25: Classic Approaches to Culture

Marx -

- Smith-a, "Culture in Classical Social Theory": (Marx) Pp 6-9
- Griswold, "Cultural Meaning": Pp 25-30
- Smith-a, "Culture as Ideology in Western Marxism": Pp 37-47
- Spillman, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception": Pp 39-45

Aug 27: Classical Approaches to Culture

- Griswold, "Cultural Meaning": (Weber) Pp 35-39
- Smith-a, "Culture in Classical Theory": (Weber) Pp 13-18
- Smith-a, "Culture in Classical Theory": (Simmel) Pp 18-21
- Spillman, "The Metropolis and Mental Life" by George Simmel: Pp 28-38

Sept 1: Classical Approaches to Culture

Durkheim -

- Smith-a, "Culture in Classical Social Theory": (Durkheim) Pp 9-13
- Smith-a, "The Durkheimians: Ritual, Class, Sacred p 74-96, Smith

Sept 3: Durkheim continued

- Griswold, "Culture as a Social Creation": Pp 44-68
- Smith -b, "The Computer as Sacred and Profane" by Jeffrey C. Alexander: Pp 29-46

Sept 8: Groups

Sept 10: Exam 1

Sept 15: Analyzing Culture

- Smith-a, “Culture as Action in Symbolic Interactionism, Phenomenology, and Ethnomethodology”: Pp 58-73
- Spillman, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture” by Clifford Geertz: Pp 63-69
- Spillman, “Cultural Power” by Pierre Bourdieu: Pp 69-76

Sept 17: Action

- Smith-b, “Culture and Social Action” by Ann Swidler: Pp 171-187
- Smith-a, “Culture, Structure, and Agency: Three Attempts at Synthesis”: Pp 133-150
- Spillman, “A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation”: Pp 324-328

Sept 22: The Production and Reception of Culture

- Griswold, “The Production, Distribution, and Reception of Culture”: Pp 69-92
- Smith-a, “The Production and Reception of Culture”: Pp167-182

Sept 24: Production

- Spillman, “Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music” by Richard A. Peterson: Pp164-177
- Spillman, “Market Structure, the Creative Process, and Popular Culture: Toward an Organizational Reinterpretation of Mass-Culture Theory” by Paul DiMaggio: Pp 151-163
- Spillman, “Art Worlds” by Howard Becker: Pp 178-188

Sept 29: Production

- movie: Merchants of Cool

Oct 1: Reception

- Spillman, “Raced Ways of Seeing” by Darnell Hunt: Pp 120-129
- Smith-b, “The reception of Derrida’s Work” by Michele Lamont: Pp 93-109

Oct 3: Reception

- Smith-b, “The Ambiguous and Contested Meanings of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial” by Robin Wagner-Pacifici and Barry Schwartz: Pp 151-166
- Smith-b, “Censorship, Audiences, and the Victorian Nude” by Nicola Beisel: Pp 109-126

Oct 8: Groups

Oct 13 EXAM 2

Oct 15: Social Problems

- Griswold, “Cultural Constructions of Social Problems”: Pp 93-115
- Spillman, “Civil Society and Crisis: Culture, Discourse, and the Rodney King Beating” by Ronald N. Jacobs: Pp 272-286

Oct 20: Organizations

- Griswold, “Culture and Organizations: Getting Things Done in a Multicultural World”: Pp 116-137
- Smith-b, “Honor and Conflict Management in Corporate Life” by Calvin Morrill: Pp 230-260

Oct 22: Community

- Griswold, “Technology, Community, and Global Culture”: Pp138-156
- Spillman, “The Search for Political Community: American Activists Reinventing Commitment” by Paul Lichterman: Pp 300-311

Oct 27: Groups

Oct 29: Exam 4

Nov 3: student work-day

Nov 5: student work-day

Nov 10 – Dec 3: Student Presentations

This syllabus is a general outline for the course. It may be changed with no advance notice. changes will be announced in class. It is the student’s responsibility to account for all changes.

Academic Honesty: Cheating will not be tolerated in any form. All students should understand University policies regarding cheating and its consequences. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” See http://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.

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.