

Culture and Society

Emory University

Sociology 221
Fall 2006
TU/TH 11:30-12:45
106 Tarbutton Hall

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Course Overview

This course is an introduction to the wide-ranging topics studied and theories used by sociologists of culture. As such, in this course we will focus on several major themes and questions in the sociology of culture. We begin by “developing a vocabulary” that we will use throughout the semester, so that we will all have a better idea of what sociologists mean when they talk about concepts such as “culture” and “social structure.” In sections two, three, and four, we examine the classical treatments of culture found in the respective works of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. In each of these sections, we will examine the contribution of the classical theorists before turning to contemporary applications. In section two, we learn about Marx and use Marxist theories to attempt to answer questions about media and cultural production. In section three, we focus on Weber and will examine cultural capital and the differences between popular and high culture. In section four, we use the work of Durkheim and contemporary theories of morality and religion to examine religion and religious aspects of secular life. In the final short sections of the course we examine two substantive areas in the sociology of culture: social movements in section five and art in section six. In these sections we will ask questions such as: “How do cultural factors influence the success or form of social movements?” and “What are the social constraints that artists face when creating?”

Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation

I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day. In addition, I will often use class time to integrate the readings and to introduce material that is *not* found in the readings. You will be rewarded for regular attendance; if you miss no classes during the semester, I will add two points to your final grade. If you miss only one class, I will add one point. For every three classes you miss, your participation grade will automatically be lowered 1 (percentage) point (out of 10). Aside from this, your participation grade will be subjective (i.e. it is up to me, as your teacher, to determine in the end your participation grade). Since I offer you the opportunity to accrue extra points for attendance, I **will not** offer extra credit.

Your participation grade will also reflect your preparation and respectfulness to others in the class. **Cell phones should be on silent (not vibrate) or off during class.** If you feel exceptional circumstances prevent you from meeting this requirement one day, you *must* see me in advance, or I *will not* give you credit for class attendance that day. In addition, **if you are more than 5 minutes late, your attendance for that day will not be counted.** Any pop quizzes given in class will be averaged into your participation grade. Your participation will count 10% of your final grade.

Examinations

There will be a midterm and a final examination, both in class. These exams will be primarily short answer (a few sentences should answer each question) and essay (a few paragraphs each). I will

distribute a study guide for both exams to help you prepare. The mid-term exam is worth 20%, and the final exam is worth 25% of your final grade.

Assignments

During the course of the semester, you will complete three short written assignments, called memos. For each three-page memo, I will ask a question that will require you to synthesize the readings and to think sociologically. I will distribute a total of four memo assignments, but you are only required to complete three of them. Think ahead and choose the three that best fit your interests and schedule. If you turn in 4 memos, only the first three will be graded. Each memo will be worth 10% of your final grade, for a total of 30%.

Presentation/Paper

During the course of the semester, you will be responsible for leading discussion among a small group (4-5) of your classmates. The number of times you will lead discussion will depend on how many people are enrolled in the class. Each time you lead discussion, the other group members will grade you on your preparation, your ability to engage them in the discussion, and your enthusiasm for the material (!). You will also write a 3 page paper on ONE of the articles for which you lead discussion. In this paper, you will present the theoretical background, methods, and findings of the article, and offer criticisms and/or implications of the article. You will sign up to present at the close of the drop/add/swap period, and I will distribute more details about this assignment at that time. The paper will be worth 10% of your final grade, and the average of the grades your group members give you will be worth 5%, for a total of 15%.

Late Assignment Policy

Assignments are due within the first five minutes of class on the day listed on the course schedule. You may turn in your assignment late, but I will take off **5 points per day including the due date and the date I receive your paper**. This penalty may be waived if you have a valid reason (that decision is up to me) **and** if you talk with me (or get an email response from me) at least 12 hours before class begins. If I determine your excuse is not valid, or if you do not contact me in time, the penalty will not be waived. Exams will not be rescheduled unless you experience a personal emergency (as defined by me, not by you). In order to reschedule, you must notify me the day you realize there will be a problem. As the professor, I make the final decision.

Honor Code Statement

All work for this class falls under the provisions of the Emory College Honor Code. To review the Honor Code, please see this website: <http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/students/honor.html> If you have questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, it is *your responsibility* to review the appendix to the Honor Code at the above website. *It is your responsibility to contact me with your questions*. This is serious. Do not let a misunderstanding cause you to fail the course.

Please Note: This syllabus may be changed at my discretion. Please keep up with the most current version of the syllabus, available on the Blackboard site (we will go over this 05 September 2006).

Course Materials

Because this course will cover a wide range of material as an introduction to the very broad topic of cultural sociology, most of the readings will be on electronic reserve. You will have one text, available for purchase in the Emory University Bookstore:

Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Your Evaluation

The following table summarizes the assignments and exams for the semester. *I reserve the right to give pop quizzes if I feel that you are not keeping up with the reading.* If I do so, they will be averaged into your participation grade.

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage of Class Grade
Memo One	14 Sep (Th)	10%
Memo Two	26 Oct (Th)	10%
Memo Three	09 Nov (Th)	10%
Memo Four	28 Nov (Th)	10%
<i>(Pick Three Memos)</i>		----- 30%
Presentation	varies	5%
Paper	varies	10%
Midterm Exam	05 Oct (Th)	20%
Final Exam	15 Dec (FRI)	25%
Participation		10%
TOTAL		100%

Course Schedule

Section One: Developing a Vocabulary

31 Aug (Th) *Introductions: What is Culture?*

05 Sep (Tu) *Cultural Diamond*
Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Chapter 1.

07 Sep (Th) *Social Construction and Reification Culture as a Social Creation*
Zerubavel, Eviatar. 1985. *The Seven Day Circle: the History and Meaning of the Week*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Introduction and Chapter 7.

Memo #1 Distributed

12 Sep (Tu) Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Chapter 3.

- 14 Sep (Th) *Culture as Toolkit, Cultural Power and Resources*
 Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. 1998. "Church Culture as a Strategy of Action in the Black Community." *American Sociological Review* 63: 767-784.
- Fine, Gary Alan. 2004. "Adolescence as Cultural Toolkit: High School Debate and the Repertoires of Childhood and Adulthood." *Sociological Quarterly* 45: 1-20.

Memo #1 Due

Section Two: Marx, Ideology, and Resistance

Introduction to Marx

- 19 Sep (Tu) Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Pages 21-39 (first half of Chapter 2).
- Peiss, Kathy. 1998. *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture*. New York: Metropolitan Books. Selection TBA.

Media Production and Resistance

- 21 Sep (Th) *Cultural Production*
 Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Chapter 4.
- 26 Sep (Tu) *The Role of Media Organizations*
 Bielby, William T. and Denise D. and Bielby. 1994. "'All Hits Are Flukes': Institutionalized Decision Making and the Rhetoric of Network Prime-Time Development." *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (5): 1287-1313.
- 28 Sep (Th) *Media Production and Organizations*
 Griswold, Wendy. 2000. *Bearing Witness: Readers, Writers, and the Novel in Nigeria*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, pp. 60-88.

Mid-term Study Guide Distributed

- 03 Oct (Tu) *The Role of the Audience*
 Shively, JoEllen. 1992. "Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films Among American Indians and Anglos." *American Sociological Review* 57: 725-734.
- Jhally, Sut and Justin Lewis. 1992. *Enlightened Racism: The Cosby Show, Audiences, and the Myth of the American Dream*. Boulder, CO: Westview. Chapter 4.
- 05 Oct (Th) **Mid-Term Exam!**
- 10 Oct (Tu) Fall Break! (no class)

Section Three: Weber, Status, and Exclusion

Introduction to Weber

12 Oct (Th) Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Pages 39-51 (second half of Chapter 2).

Status Groups and Interaction

Aversa, Alfred, Jr. 1990. "When Blue Collars and White Collars Meet at Play: The Case of the Yacht Club." *Qualitative Sociology* 13: 63-83.

High Culture and Cultural Capital

17 Oct (Tu)

Distinction

Lamont, Michèle. 1992. *Money, Morals, and Manners: The Culture of the French and American Upper-Middle Class*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3.

19 Oct (Th)

Reproduction

Annette Lareau. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67:747-76.

Memo #2 Distributed

24 Oct (Tu)

Exclusion

Bryson, Bethany. 1996. "Anything But Heavy Metal': Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes." *American Sociological Review* 61: 884-899.

26 Oct (Th)

Canonization

Bauman, Shyon. 2001. "Intellectualization and Art World Development: Film in the United States." *American Sociological Review* 66: 404-426.

Memo #2 Due

Section Four: Durkheim, Interaction, Solidarity, and Religion

Introduction to Durkheim

31 Oct (Tu)

Symbolic Interactionism, Boundaries

(Review) Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Pages 61-77.

Duneier, Mitchell and Harvey Molotch. 1999. "Talking City Trouble: Interactional Vandalism, Social Inequality, and the 'Urban Interaction Problem.'" *American Journal of Sociology* 104: 1263-95.

Contemporary American Religion and Morality

02 Nov (Th)

Durkheim on Religion, Totems

(Review) Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Pages 52-60.

Wagner-Pacifi, Robin, and Barry Schwartz. 1991. "The Vietnam Veterans

Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past." *American Journal of Sociology* 97 (2): 376-420.

Memo #3 Distributed

07 Nov (Tu) *Subcultural Identities*
Smith, Christian. 1998. *American Evangelicalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5.

09 Nov (Th) *Morality*
Luker, Kristin. 1984. *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 7.

Memo #3 Due

Section Five: Social Problems, Social Movements and Social Change

14 Nov (Tu) Griswold, Wendy. 2004. *CSCW*. Chapter 5.

16 Nov (Th) *Using the Media:*
Roscigno, Vincent J. and William F. Danaher. 2001. "Media and Mobilization: The Case of Radio and Southern Textile Worker Insurgency, 1929-1934." *American Sociological Review* 66: 21-48.

21 Nov (Tu) *Media Selection:*
McCarthy, John D., Clark McPhail, and Jackie Smith. 1996. "Images of Protest: Dimensions of Selection Bias in Media Coverage of Washington Demonstrations, 1982 and 1991." *American Sociological Review* 61: 478-499.

Memo #4 Distributed

23 Nov (Th) **Thanksgiving Holiday**

28 Nov (Th) *Picking Sides:*
Eliasoph, Nina. 2004. "'Close to Home': The Work of Avoiding Politics," pp. 130-140 in *Cultural Sociology*, edited by Lyn Spillman. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Memo #4 Due

Section Six: Art as Collective Activity

30 Nov (Th) Becker, Howard. 1982. *Art Worlds*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 1.

05 Dec (Tu) Alexander, Victoria. 1996. "Pictures at an Exhibition: Conflicting Pressures in Museums and the Display of Art." *American Journal of Sociology* 101 (4): 797-839.

07 Dec (Th) Lachmann, Richard. 1988. "Graffiti as Career and Ideology." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 229-250.

Final Study Guide Distributed

12 Dec (Tu) Last Day of Classes! (no reading)

15 Dec (FRI) FINAL EXAM: 4:30-7:00 pm.