

Soc131: Sociology of Youth

Fall 2024

Instructor: Professor Charles Thorpe

<https://sociology.ucsd.edu/people/faculty/faculty%20members/charles-thorpe.html>

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Office hours: Tuesday 2pm and Thursday 5pm

Class schedule: Tu, Th 11am-12.20pm

Class location: CSB004

Final Exam period: Wednesday December 11, 11.30am- 2.30pm

Description of course

How is youth understood as a social category? How is youth represented in media such as film and television and what social meanings are attached to youth? How has youth developed as a distinct identity in modern society? Is there a distinct 'youth culture' and what are its characteristics? In what ways are plural youth identities expressed through different subcultures? How is subcultural identity established and what meanings and values are encoded in subcultural style? What new modes of identity formation and political expression are made possible by social media networking? How have young people been impacted by, and responded to, transformations of capitalism from Fordism to post-Fordism, intensifying consumerism and social inequality. How have youth subcultures sought to resist consumer culture, even as youth culture is intensely commodified. How is resistance coopted and shaped by consumerism?

Required reading

It is your responsibility to keep up with the reading for each week. If you do not do the reading for the week specified, you will quickly fall behind and it will be very difficult to catch up and prepare for coursework and the exam.

Readings listed under the class schedule are available via Canvas

Canvas

I have set up a Canvas site for the course – I will post a copy of this syllabus on Canvas. I may also post additional readings, any further course policies or instructions, and relevant internet links.

Note: the Canvas site contains an extensive archive of weblinks relevant to the course material that can help deepen your understanding and expand your knowledge.

Participation:

While I will be giving some lectures (see schedule below), many class sessions will be focused on discussion. For this reason, *it is very important that you do the reading and/or view any assigned films prior to the session* for which they are listed in the schedule.

Assessment Percentages

Annotations: 20%

Attendance: 10%

Midterm: 35%

Final exam: 35%

Annotations

These must take up a minimum of 2 double-spaced pages per session for which they are set and they may be bullet-points. You can do longer annotations if you wish. Annotations will be due on each day for which readings are set for class discussion. You should do the reading before the discussion and upload your annotation to canvas before midnight on that day.

This term, you will complete a reading and screening outline most weeks--due at key points throughout the term. These annotations are graded on a P/NP basis. They are meant to provide early preparation for your papers and assignments in the course. In order to pass this assignment, you will need to turn in all individual reading/screening outlines that meet the following criteria. You are welcome to use bullet points (vs. complete paragraphs).

- Two questions that came up for you in the reading and screenings.
 - Consider things you didn't understand or that struck you. You might also think about this portion as a way to start thinking about questions to frame your papers.
- Summarize the academic readings for the week or for the topic heading from the schedule: 1 paragraph/set of bullet points.
- Summarize the documentaries or fiction films for the week, if there are any (1 paragraph/set of bullet points).
- Put the different elements of the course for that week (e.g. lecture, readings, films) in conversation with one another (1 paragraph/set of bullet points).

When you turn in your annotations for the week, be sure to include your name and the Annotation #.

Please note that these are not commented on by Professor Thorpe, unless you specifically ask for feedback by going to office hours.

Grading criteria for annotations

Meeting the requirements = P (you get an A+ for the assignment, or 100%).

Not meeting the requirements = NP (you get **zero** points for the assignment).

If you complete all the annotations satisfactorily, you will receive the full 20% for this portion of the course grade.

Submitting annotations. A Canvas portal will be created to turn in annotations. You should upload your annotation by midnight of the day on which the relevant discussion occurs. LATE ANNOTATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED, unless in case of illness or family emergency.

The first annotations will be due on Thursday of Week 1 on the readings set for that day and subsequently, annotations will be due each day in which there is a class session given over to discussion.

You will not receive feedback on annotations except to confirm that you have completed the annotation to the requirements (in which case you get full marks for the annotation). If you do not get this confirmation, you should assume that you have not completed the annotation or not completed it satisfactorily.

Midterm Exam: In-class midterm. Bring at least one blue book and 2 pens to the exam. No notes or electronic devices allowed. The midterm exam will cover course material from up to end of Week 3.

Final Exam: In-class final: Exam questions will be posted to Canvas in Week 10. The exam will be conducted during the exam period (December 11, 3-6pm) under exam conditions with no notes or electronic devices allowed. Bring 2 blue books and 2 pens to the exam.

Class schedule

Week 0

Th: Overview: Syllabus and assignments

Week 1: Modernity and the Invention of Childhood and Youth

Tu: Lecture: Childhood and youth as historical constructions

Th: Discussion

Lauren Langman, "From Subject to Citizen to Consumer: Embodiment and the Mediation of Hegemony," in Richard Harvey Brown ed., *The Politics of Selfhood; Bodies and Identities in Global Capitalism* (University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 167-188.

William A. Corsaro, "Historical Views of Childhood and Children," Chapter 4 of idem, *The Sociology of Childhood* (4th Edition) (Sage, 2015).

Helga Zeiher, "Institutionalization as a Secular Trend," in Jens Qvortrup, William A. Corsaro, and Michael-Sebastian Honig, *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 127-139.

Joseph E. Illick, "African American Childhood," Chapter 12 of Heidi Morrison ed., *The Global History of Childhood Reader* (Routledge, 2012).

Canizales, S. L., & Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2022). Working-class Latina/o youth navigating stratification and inequality: A review of literature. *Sociology Compass*, 16(12), e13050.

Arnett, J.J., Žukauskienė, R. and Sugimura, K., 2014. "The new life stage of emerging adulthood at ages 18–29 years: Implications for mental health." *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 1(7), pp.569-576.

Week 2: From Modern to Postmodern Childhood and Youth

Tu: Lecture: Youth: cultural ideal and folk devil

Th: Discussion:

Talcott Parsons, "Psychoanalysis and the Social Structure," *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 19(3) (1950), 371-384. Read pages 378-382, section titled "An Example of the Use of Motivational Categories for Sociological Purposes: American Youth."

Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (Routledge, 2002 [orig. 1972]), Chapter 1 "Deviance and Moral Panics"

Marcel Danesi, "The Fountain of Youth," Chapter 1 of idem, *Forever Young: The 'Teen-Aging' of Modern Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003)

Patricia Holland, *Picturing Childhood: The Myth of the Child in Popular Imagery* (2004), chapter 5 "No Future: The Threat of Childhood and the Impossibility of Youth."

Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, "Contemporary Youth and the Postmodern Adventure," *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 25 (2) (2003): 75-93.

Week 3: Neoliberalism and Youth

Tu: Lecture: Neoliberalism, The War on Kids, and Inequality

Th: Discussion:

The War on Kids (documentary film, 2009), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFBxEcIk9K4>

Henry Giroux, "Racial Injustice and Disposable Youth in the Age of Zero Tolerance," *Qualitative Studies in Education* 16 (4) (July-August 2003): 553-565.

Aaron Kupchik and Torin Monahan, "The New American School: Preparation for Post-Industrial Discipline," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 27 (5) (2006): 617-631.

Derek W. Black, *Ending Zero Tolerance: The Crisis of Absolute School Discipline* (New York University Press, 2016), Chapter 1 "From Friends to Enemies."

Kay S. Hymowitz, "Who Killed School Discipline?" *City Journal* (Spring 2000), <https://www.city-journal.org/article/who-killed-school-discipline>

Week 4: Youth Consciousness and the Sixties Counterculture

Tu: Lecture: Fordism, Social Change and the Sixties

Th: Discussion

Woodstock (documentary film, 1970, directed by Michael Wadleigh), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjX060wApQE>
Watch full film. 3 hrs, 43 mins. \$3.99 to rent.

Gimme Shelter (documentary film, 1970), \$3.99 to rent, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNOvgRf0_Ck

Herbert's Hippopotamus: Marcuse and Revolution in Paradise (documentary film, 1996), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnZ8WaiXnBY>

Lauren Langman, "Dionysus - Child of Tomorrow. Notes on Postindustrial Youth" *Youth and Society* (1971): 80-99.

Randall Collins, "Youth Cultures and Deference and Demeanor," in idem, *Conflict Sociology* (New York: Academic Press, 1975), 219-224.

Simon Frith, "Rock and the Politics of Memory," *Social Text* 9/10 (1984): 59-69.

Jeremi Suri, "The Rise and Fall of an International Counterculture, 1960-1975," *American Historical Review* 114 (1) (February 2009): 45-68.

Week 5: The Ambivalent Legacy of the Sixties

Tu: Midterm Exam

Th: From the Counterculture to The New Spirit of Capitalism

Discussion:

The Lost Boys (film, 1987), \$3.99 to rent, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU3zI-563z4>

Rob Latham, "Youth Fetishism: The Lost Boys Cruise Mallworld," Chapter 1 of idem, *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs, and the Culture of Consumption* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

Steve Hall, Simon Winlow and Craig Ancrum, *Criminal Identities and Consumer Culture: Crime, Exclusion and the New Culture of Narcissism* (Routledge, 2008), Chapter 5: "Consumerism and Counterculture."

Lauren Langman and Maureen Ryan. "Capitalism and the Carnival Character: The Escape from Reality." *Critical Sociology* 35, no. 4 (2009): 471-492.

Hermanowicz, Joseph C. "A Theory of Despair Among US College Students", *Planetary Sociology, Current Perspectives in Social Theory* Vol. 40 (2023), pp. 227-249.

Week 6: Subcultures

Tu: Lecture: Subcultures: Resistance through Rituals

Th: Discussion

This is England (2006 film) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_9QPrpbHw

John Clarke, "The Skinheads and the Magical Recovery of Community," in Tony Jefferson and Stuart Hall, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (Hutchinson, 1976), pp. 99-102.

Dick Hebdige, "Reggae, Rastas & Rudies," in Tony Jefferson and Stuart Hall, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (Hutchinson, 1976), pp. 135-155.

Robert Walser, "Rhythm, Rhyme and Rhetoric in the Music of Public Enemy," *Ethnomusicology* 39 (2) (Spring/Summer 1995): 193-217.

Week 7: Subcultures cntd.

Tu: Discussion

Ryan Moore, *Sells Like Teen Spirit: Music, Youth Culture and Social Crisis* (NYU Press, 2009), Chapter 1-4.

Merchants of Cool (documentary film, 2001), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tYRoiJvhJ4>

It's Gonna Blow: San Diego's Music Underground, 1986-1996 (film, 2015), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHr0QgJCC_Y

Th: Discussion

Angela McRobbie and Jenny Gardner, "Girls and Subcultures: An Exploration," in Tony Jefferson and Stuart Hall, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (Hutchinson, 1976), pp. 209-222.

Mary Celeste Kearney, "Productive Spaces: Girls' Bedrooms as Sites of Cultural Production," *Journal of Children and Media*, 1 (2) (2007): 126-141.

Siân Lincoln, S. (2015). "'My Bedroom Is Me': Young People, Private Space, Consumption and the Family Home," In: Casey, E., Taylor, Y. (eds) *Intimacies, Critical Consumption and Diverse Economies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 87-106.

Anna Gough-Yates, "'A Shock to the System': Feminist Interventions in Youth Subculture—The Adventures of *Shocking Pink*" *Contemporary British History* 26 (3) (September 2012): 375-403.

Helen Reddington, "The forgotten revolution of female punk musicians in the 1970s." *Peace Review* 16, no. 4 (2004): 439-444.

Laura Miller, "Those Naughty Teenage Girls: Japanese Kogals, Slang, and Media Assessments," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 14(2) (2004): 225-247.

Dobson, Amy Shields. "'Sexy' and 'Laddish' girls: Unpacking complicity between two cultural imag(in)ations of young femininity." *Feminist Media Studies* 14, no. 2 (2014): 253-269.

Week 8: Commercial Appropriation of 'Alternative' Youth Culture and the Emergence of Post-Subculture

Tu: Lecture: The Concept of Post-Subculture and Criticisms of Subcultural Theory

Th: Discussion:

Generation Like (documentary film, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqamKb7gTWY>

Sabrina Rubin Erdely, "Kiki Kannibal: The Girl Who Played With Fire," *Rolling Stone* April 15, 2011, <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/kiki-kannibal-the-girl-who-played-with-fire-20110415>

Andy Bennett, "The Post-Subcultural Turn: Some Reflections 10 Years On," *Journal of Youth Studies*, 14 (5) (2011): 493-506

Jeremiah Morlock and Felipe Ziotti Narita, *The Society of the Selfie* (University of Westminster Press, Chapter 3: "Neoliberal Impression Management.")

Week 9: Consumerism, Inequality, and the Fragility of the Postmodern Self

Tu: Discussion:

Sweet Sixteen (film, directed by Ken Loach, 2002), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rsDPu9wgjs>

Hall, Winlow, and Ancrum, *Criminal Identities and Consumer Culture*, Chapter 3: “Consumption and Identification: Some Insights into Desires and Motivations.”

Th: THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS

Week 10: The Generational Mediation of Social Change: Youth and the Transformations of Self and Values

Tu: Lecture: Youth, Students, and Protest: The Generational Mediation of Social Change

Th: Discussion

Lauren Langman, “After Marcuse: Subjectivity – From Repression to Consumption, and Beyond,” *Radical Philosophy Review* 20 (1) (2017): 75-105. Read from beginning of section “The Coming of Liquid Selfhood” to end of article.

Ruth Milkman, “A New Political Generation: Millennials and the Post-2008 Wave of Protest,” *American Sociological Review* 82 (1) (2017): 1-31.

Cecile van der Velde, “‘What Have You Done to Our World?’: The Rise of a Global Generational Voice,” *International Sociology* 38 (4) (June 2023): 1-27.

James Treadwell, Daniel Briggs, Simon Winlow and Steve Hall, “SHOPOCALYPSE NOW: Consumer Culture and the English Riots of 2011,” *British Journal of Criminology* 53 (1) (2013): 1-17.

Michael J. Thompson, “From Solidarity to Identity: Group Narcissism and the Decline of Left Politics,” Forthcoming in Daniel Burston and Kurt Jacobsen, *Authoritarianism in All Its Guises: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Right, Left and Center* (Routledge, 2024).

Christopher Pollard, “‘If We Burn... Then What?’ A new book asks why a decade of mass protest has done so little to change things,” *The Conversation* (February 28, 2024), <https://theconversation.com/if-we-burn-then-what-a-new-book-asks-why-a-decade-of-mass-protest-has-done-so-little-to-change-things-221116>