

## **Soc131: Sociology of Youth**

**Fall 2023**

Instructor: Professor Charles Thorpe

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

Email: [cthorge@ucsd.edu](mailto:cthorge@ucsd.edu)

Office: SSB 464

Office hours: Wednesdays 11am- 1pm

Class schedule: Tu, Th 3.30pm – 4.50pm

Class location: CSB004

Final Exam period: December 11, 3pm – 6pm

### **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 30% 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.

### **Submitting Mid-Term and Final**

*Submit to Turnitin* via Canvas before the end of the day. Coursework is only treated as submitted if it is logged by Turnitin.

### **Late Penalties**

The midterm grade will be reduced by half a grade point (i.e. from A to A-, from A- to B+, from B+ to B etc.) for every week that it is overdue.

All work must be turned in *before the end of the final exam period.*

### **Midterm (take-home coursework)**

Prompt:

How did the rise of childhood characterize modernity and how does its decline characterize postmodernity?

Write 1000 words plus bibliography

Due – via Turnitin upload on Canvas – by **midnight of Tuesday, Week 4 (October 24).**

### *Referencing in Midterm*

Your papers should include a bibliography.

You should reference any text that you quote or draw ideas from, including online sources. Use the Harvard system of referencing

In text:

(Author, date of publication: page number)

E.g. (Moore, 2010: 45)

And include in bibliography full details: Author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication.

*You should only refer to the required reading set for the course.*

**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

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

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.

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

Sharon Stephens, "Children and the Politics of Culture in 'Late Capitalism'," Chapter 24 of Morrison ed., *The Global History of Childhood Reader*.

### **Week 2: From Modern to Postmodern Childhood and Youth**

**Tu:** Lecture: Youth: cultural ideal and folk devil

**Th:** Discussion:

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=dFBxEclK9K4>

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), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II-wxfV11Fg>

*Gimme Shelter* (documentary film, 1970), \$3.99 to rent, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNOvgRf0\\_Ck](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.

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:** Lecture: From the Counterculture to The New Spirit of Capitalism

**Th:** Discussion

*The Lost Boys* (film, 1987), \$3.99 to rent, [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=the+lost+boys+movie](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+lost+boys+movie)

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."

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

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=3PI9um9s-4>

It's Gonna Blow: San Diego's Music Underground, 1986-1996 (film, 2015), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHr0QgJCC\\_Y](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.

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.

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

## **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:**

**THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS**

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

**Tu:** 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."

**Th:** 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."

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

**Tu:** Lecture: 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.

John Della Volpe, *Fight: How Gen Z is Channeling their Fear and Passion to Save America* (2021), Chapter 2: "Just a Student"

June Edmunds and Bryan S. Turner, "Global Generations: Social Change in the Twentieth Century," *The British Journal of Sociology* 56 (4) (2005): 559-577.

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.