

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
SOC281H1F: CULTURE & INEQUALITY**

**SUMMER 2014
MONDAY & WEDNESDAY 12PM-2PM**

Instructor: Joshua Harold
Office Location: 725 Spadina Ave, Room 225 – Office A
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:15-3:15pm
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Class Location: SS 2117

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Course Description

Culture can be something we observe in a museum, experience while on vacation, or taste in a restaurant. It can also be the shared traditions, values, norms, and practices of groups of people. The broad and often sweeping use of the term “culture” can make it difficult to pinpoint precisely what culture is and its relationship to social processes and practices. In this course we ask: how does culture work to naturalize and reproduce social inequality? How might culture reflect or reinforce group boundaries and inequalities? To unpack these questions and others, this course will critically survey how location in socioeconomic, ethnic, gender, and generational groups shapes individual cultural repertoires, how culture affects individual positions in stratification hierarchies, and the role of culture in group boundaries and struggles.

NOTE: Prerequisites

Prerequisites: SOC101Y1 or SOC102H1 or SOC103H1
Students without this/these prerequisite(s) will be removed at any time they are discovered and without notice

Attendance

It is important to attend all scheduled lectures. Material that is not covered in the course readings will be discussed during lectures, and this material will be on the tests. Other important information about assignments and the course more generally will be provided during lectures. If you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to get the information you missed from your peers. The course instructor and teaching assistant will not provide you with information about missed lectures.

Course Materials & Readings

It is important to do all the required readings and to come to lecture having read the material in advance of that class. Course readings are journal articles and are available for reading or downloading through the university's library website. A couple of the readings and other materials are not available through the library website, but will be posted to blackboard by the instructor. If you need assistance accessing the readings through the university website, you are strongly encouraged to book a research consultation. This is done directly through the library (Robarts, for example).

Course Website

The course website (Blackboard) can be accessed at <http://portal.utoronto.ca>. You will need a valid UTORid to access the website. On the website you will find the course syllabus, various announcements as they are made, your grades, and other course-related materials. It is your responsibility to make sure you are up to date with course news and materials.

Electronic Communication

To ensure your emails receive a response, please note the following about email correspondence:

- Emails about assignments, tests, and course materials should be directed to the TA.
- Emails must be sent from your University of Toronto email account. Emails sent from other accounts (e.g., Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail, etc.) will not receive a response.
- All emails must have the course code (e.g., SOC281) in the subject line. Emails without the course code in the subject line will not receive a response.
- All emails should contain the student's full name and student number.
- Avoid sending emails that ask for readily available information. Emails that ask for information that is provided in the course outline (e.g. "how much assignment X worth") will not receive a response.
- Every effort will be made to respond to student emails in a timely manner; however, instant or even overnight responses are not always possible. Please be patient. We will respond to emails as soon as we can.

Course Evaluation

Midterm Test: 30% (May 28)

Term Paper: 40% (June 9)

Final Exam: 30% (June 23, 12-2pm)

Details about the tests and assignment will be distributed in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Every effort will be made to follow the schedule outlined below; however, some changes may be needed and will be made at the discretion of the instructor.

A Note on Optional Readings: You are not required to read the optional readings, however, some themes, concepts, and ideas from them may be brought up in lectures from time to time. You are responsible for knowing the material from optional readings brought up in lectures.

May 12: Culture & Cultural Repertoires

Sewell, William. 1999. "The Concept(s) of Culture." Pp.35-61 in *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*, eds. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt. Berkeley: University of California Press

Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51:273-286.

May 14: Cultural Classification & Boundaries

Lamont, Michele, and Virag Molnar. 2002. "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28:167-195

Optional:

Alba, Richard. 2005. "Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries: Second Generation Assimilation and Exclusion in France, Germany and the United States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(1): 20-49.

May 19: No Class – Victoria Day; University Closed

No New Readings; Class Cancelled

May 21: Cultural Capital & Stratification

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241-258 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by John G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press.

Erickson, Bonnie H. 1996. "Culture, Class, and Connections." *American Journal of Sociology* 102: 217-251.

May 26: (Re)production of Culture & Inequality

Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families

and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67:747-76

Optional:

Erickson, Bonnie H. 2008. "The Crisis in Culture and Inequality." Pp. 343-362 in Steven J. Tepper and Bill Ivey, (eds.), *Engaging Art: The Next Great Transformation of America's Cultural Life*. New York: Routledge

Mears, Ashley. 2010. "Size zero high-end ethnic: Cultural production and the reproduction of culture in fashion modeling," *Poetics* 38: 21-46.

May 28: MIDTERM TEST

No Readings; In-class Midterm Test

June 2: Culture, Gender, and Inequality

Swenson, R. 2009. "Domestic divo? Televised treatments of masculinity, femininity and food." *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 26(1), 36-53.

Dumais, Susan. 2002. "Cultural Capital, Gender, and School Success: The Role of Habitus." *Sociology of Education* 75: 44-68.

**June 4: Culture, Race, and Inequality
(ASSIGNMENTS DUE IN CLASS)**

Baumann, Shyon, and Loretta Ho. 2014. "Cultural Schemas for Racial Identity in Canadian Television Advertising." *Canadian Review of Sociology* 51(2): 152-169.

Quillian, Lincoln. 2006. "New Approaches to Understanding Racial Prejudice and Discrimination." *Annual Review of Sociology* 32:299-328.

Optional:

Bean, Frank D., Jennifer Lee, Cynthia Feliciano and Jennifer Van Hook. 2009. "The New U.S. Immigrants: How Do They Affect Our Understanding of the African-American Experience?" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 621: 202-220.

June 9: Highbrow/Lowbrow Culture and Social Divisions

DiMaggio, Paul. 1982. "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston, Part I: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America." *Media, Culture, and Society* 4:33-50.

Optional:

Ollivier, Michele, Guy Gauthier, Alexis Hieu Trong. 2009. "Cultural classifications and social divisions: A symmetrical approach." *Poetics* 37: 456-473

June 11: Omnivorous Consumption and Inequality

Johnston, Josée, and Shyon Baumann. 2007. "Democracy versus Distinction: A Study of Omnivorousness in Gourmet Food Writing." *American Journal of Sociology* 113(1):165-204

Veenstra, Gerry. 2010. "Culture and Class in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Sociology*. Pp. 83-111

June 16: Managing Cultural Inequality

Pugh, Allison. 2011. "Distinction, Boundaries or Bridges?: Children, Inequality and the Uses of Culture." *Poetics*. 39 (1): 1-18.

Optional:

Kusenbach, Margarethe. 2009. "Salvaging Decency: Mobile Home Residents' Strategies of Managing the Stigma of 'Trailer living.'" *Qualitative Sociology* 32: 399-428

June 18: Culture, Inequality, and the Labour Market

Rivera, Lauren. 2012. "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." *American Sociological Review*. 77: 999-1022.

Optional:

Spillman, Lyn. 1999. "Enriching Exchange: Cultural Dimensions of Markets," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 58: 1041-1071

Late Assignments

All students are expected to submit a hard copy of their assignment at the beginning of class on the due date. Late submissions that are more than 5 days late will not be accepted. The penalty for late assignments is 5% per day, including weekends and holidays. For example, if you submit your paper 2 days late and get a grade of 80%, you will lose 10% and get a grade of 70%. This penalty is strictly enforced unless proper documentation of medical illness is provided. You MUST submit a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoroto.ca). This form may only be completed by a physician, surgeon, nurse practitioner, dentist or clinical psychologist. NO other medical documentation will be accepted. A doctor's note is NOT sufficient. Submit the form to the instructor in a sealed envelope addressed to the instructor, in class or during the instructor's office hours. In case of personal or family crisis, you must get a letter from your registrar. College registrars are very

experienced, very discreet, and there to help you. A letter from your registrar should also be submitted to your instructor in a sealed envelope addressed to the instructor, during class or during the instructor's office hours.

Submission of late Assignments:

- Submissions that are more than 5 days late will not be accepted.
- Assignments will not be accepted via email. You must submit assignments in hard copy.
- All late assignments should be dropped off in Room 225 at 725 Spadina Avenue, 2nd Floor (open Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).
- You **MUST** use the date/time stamp machine on your assignment and then place it in the second year drop box. This is the only place to leave your assignment.
- Assignments placed in the drop box without a date/time stamp will receive a grade of zero, no exceptions.
- Please note you cannot drop off the assignments on the weekends or on the evenings as the department is closed.

Missed Tests

Students who miss a test will receive a grade of zero; UNLESS within 48 hours (2 days) of the missed test, students who wish to write the make-up test apply to do so by submitting a written request that explains why the test was missed, accompanied by proper medical documentation (Verification of Student Illness or Injury form). A written request **MUST** include the name, student number, telephone number, and email address of the student so that the date, time, and place of the make-up test can be communicated to the student. Under no circumstances will a make-up test be granted without proper documentation from a physician or college registrar. The make-up test will be the last opportunity to write the test, even if valid documentation can be provided. A student who misses a test and the subsequent make-up test for a valid reason will not have a third chance to take the test. Instead, the grade assigned for the missed test will be the same as the grade the student earns for the other test in the course.

Plagiarism

Any form of cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Be careful to avoid plagiarism. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. To avoid any confusion about plagiarism, you should familiarize yourself with the Academic Handbook and the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" available through the Faculty of Arts and Science. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document.

Grade Appeals

The instructor and teaching assistant take the marking of assignments and tests very seriously, and will work diligently to be fair, consistent, and accurate. Nonetheless, mistakes and oversights occasionally happen. If you believe that to be the case, you must adhere to the following rules:

- If it is a mathematical error simply alert the instructor of the error.
- In the case of more substantive appeals, you must:
 1. Wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark.
 2. Carefully re-read your assignment, all assignment guidelines and marking schemes and the grader's comments.
 3. You have 14 days after receiving a mark to appeal it.

If you wish to appeal:

A. You must submit to the instructor a written explanation of why you think your mark should be altered. Please note statements such as “I need a higher grade to apply to X” are not compelling. Also, please note that upon re-grade your mark may go down, stay the same, or go up.

B. Attach to your written explanation to your original assignment, including all of the original comments. Submit a hardcopy of the package to the instructor during office hours, in class, etc.

C. You will receive a response via email or in person about your re-grade.

Accessibility and Accommodations

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please contact Accessibility Services at (416) 978-8060 or visit their website www.accessibility.utoronto.ca