

Youth in Law and Society
SOCY 292.01
Professor Robert Garot

W, 7-10 PM; TRL 101

Office: Palme House 106

Office Hours: Weds., 11-5 or by appointment

Sociology Office: Palme House, 101 Ward Street

Perspectives and Overview of the Course

The status and behaviors of youth have been increasingly criminalized over the past 20 years. The first half of this course will work towards putting such criminalization in perspective, by: 1) asking students to reflect on their own experiences as youth, 2) grappling with historical constructions of youth, and 3) examining youth and place. The second half will then begin to probe the ways in which youth have been criminalized, especially in terms of conceptualizing them as gang members.

It is essential that you *wrestle* with the readings for each week, and *mull over* how they apply to your own experience. I hope to open new perspectives to you, and what transforms “information” into a “perspective” that opens up new ways of thinking is wrestling with what you encounter. For each reading, I hope that you work to understand not just *what* the author is saying, but *why*. What received wisdom is she or he trying to challenge? With what ideas might they be competing? What is their evidence? I hope that you will enhance for yourself the value of what you read through the paired (and perhaps literally opposed) habits of mind of skepticism (“Ought I really believe that?”) and suspended disbelief (“What if it were true?”).

The idea is to foster an intense, searching class discussion. A great deal of learning happens in discussion, when one’s new ideas, guesses, hunches, ideological convictions, and moral persuasions rub unexpectedly up against others’. I will assist this process through my questioning in class, and want you to have challenged each reading so that you, in turn, can be challenged by others in class.

Please feel free to discuss topics further with me after class, or before class by appointment. Be sure to exchange phone numbers with two or three other students and form study groups.

Requirements

Weekly Presentation

For this course, you are required to become an expert on one week’s readings. You will be responsible for presenting that week’s readings to the course, finding additional legal, sociological, and general literature from the library. *Be sure to take time to discuss your presentation with me beforehand.* You may use any of the props which are standardly available in class to facilitate your presentation. Your presentation will be worth 10% of your course grade, and another 5% will be based on how well you participate during the presentations of others. *I may provide pop quizzes, based on the readings, as part of your participation grade.*

Exams

Two exams are required for this course, each worth 25% of your grade. The exams will be composed primarily of short answer and short essay questions, although I may occasionally use a

multiple choice, matching, or true/false format. Exams will be based on lectures and readings. *I will make special accommodations regarding exams (rescheduling, etc.) only for those students who have discussed their concerns with me ahead of time, and have provided documentation of the necessity for accommodation.* Further details about exams will be discussed in class. Note that the material listed on the day of the exam will be covered after the exam, and will not be included on the exam.

Papers

Two papers are required for this course. The first is a short (4-5 page) autoethnography, based on a poignant experience in your life as a teen. The second is a 10-15 page term paper which may be based on either analyzing your autoethnography in terms of concepts from the course, or expanding your weekly presentation into a more substantial analysis. Papers not handed in on time will lose one course percentage point for each day they are late. *I do not accept papers sent electronically.*

Grading Policy

You will not be graded on a competitive basis, so in theory everyone can do well in the class. However, in order to get a top grade, students will be expected to achieve standards of excellence in their work. If you are dissatisfied with any grade you receive, you must submit a written request for a review of the grade, including a defense, no later than one week after the work is handed back to the class. By requesting a review of the grade you receive, you invite the possibility that the new grade will be lower than the original grade, as well as the possibility that it will be higher. Points will be distributed as follows:

Weekly Presentation: 10%

Participation: 5%

Exams (2): 50%

Autoethnography: 10%

Final Paper: 25%

A+ 98-100	B+ 88-89	C+ 78-79	D+ 65-69
A 93-97	B 83-87	C 73-77	D 55-64
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 50-54

Cheating/Plagiarism

Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be referred to the College Provost. For guidelines on avoiding these offenses, please see your Student Handbook.

Required Readings

All readings for this course are held on reserve in the library, and some are on electronic reserve. Be sure to complete each week's readings PRIOR TO coming to class.

Weekly Topics and Readings

Please note that the following schedule, including project and exam dates, is tentative, and may change based on how quickly we cover the material.

Part I: Conceptualizing Youth

Week 1: Autoethnography and Macro Perspectives

Wednesday, September 3rd

- Ellis, Carolyn. 1993. "'There are Survivors': Telling a Story of Sudden Death." The Sociological Quarterly. 34(4):711-730.
- Mortimer, Jeylan T. and Reed W. Larson. 2002. The Changing Adolescent Experience. New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 1-17.

Week 2: Historical Perspectives

Wednesday, September 10th

- Lesko, Nancy. 2001. Act Your Age: A Cultural Construction of Adolescence. New York: Routledge. Pp. 1-90.
- Hine, Thomas. 1999. The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager. New York: Avon Books. Pp. 1-42.

Week 3: Youth and Place

Wednesday, September 17th

- Katz, C. 1998. Cool Places. New York: Routledge. (various excerpts)
- Autoethnography due**

Week 4: Inner-City Ecologies

Wednesday, September 23rd

- Bourgois, Phillipe. "In Search of Horatio Alger: Culture and Ideology in the Crack Economy"
- Anderson, Elijah. 1999. Code of the Street. Chapter 2.

Week 5: Rural Ecologies (*Available online*)

Wednesday, September 30th

- Panelli, Ruth. 2002. "Young Rural Lives: Strategies Beyond Diversity." Journal of Rural Studies. 18(2):113-122.
- Hunter, Kathryn and Pamela Rhiney-Kehrburg. 2002. "Rural Daughters in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States: An Historical Perspective." Journal of Rural Studies 18(2): 135-143.
- Kraack, Anna and Jane Kenway. 2002. "Place, Time and Stigmatised Youthful Identities: Bad Boys in Paradise." Journal of Rural Studies 18(2):145-155.

Week 6: Youth in School

Wednesday, October 7th

- Fordham, Signithia. 1988. "Racelessness as a Factor in Black Students' School Success: Pragmatic Strategy or Pyrrhic Victory?" Harvard Educational Review. 58(1):54-84
- Fine, Michelle. 1988. "Sexuality, Schooling, and Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire." Harvard Educational Review. 58(1):29-5.

Exam #1: October 15th, first half of class

Part II: Conceptualizing Gangs

Week 7: Studying Gangs

Wednesday, October 15th

The Modern Gang Reader: “The History of Gang Research,” pp. 15-21. “Barrio Gangs,” pp. 22-32, “The Working Gang,” pp. 144-156.

Week 8: The Gang Myth

Wednesday, October 22nd

Katz, Jack. 2000. “The Gang Myth.” Pp. 172-187 in Social Dynamics of Crime and Control, Susanne Karstedt and Kai-D Bussmann (Eds.). Oxford: Hart Publishing.

McCorckle, Richard C. and Terance D. Miethe. 1998. “The Political and Organizational Response to Gangs: An Examination of the ‘Moral Panic’ in Nevada.” Justice Quarterly. 15(1):41-64.

Week 9: Defining “Gangs”

Wednesday, October 29th

Bursik, Robert J. Jr. and Harold G. Grasmick. “Defining and Understanding Gangs.” Pp. 2-14 in The Modern Gang Reader.

Horowitz, Ruth. 1990. “Sociological Perspectives on Gangs: Conflicting Definitions and Concepts.” Pp. 37-54 in C. Ronald Huff Ed. Gangs in America. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage.

Cohen, Albert K. 1990. “Foreward and Overview.” Pp. 7-21 in C. Ronald Huff Ed. Gangs in America. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage.

Garot, Robert. 2002a. “Varieties of Students’ Accounts of Gang Affiliation.”

Week 10: Gangs and the Community

Wednesday, November 5th

Venkatesh, Sudhir Alladi. 1997. “The Social Organization of Street Gang Activity in an Urban Ghetto.” American Journal of Sociology. 1031:82-111.

Garot, Robert. 2002. “Staff’s Ways of Coming to Terms with Gangs: Relational Practices”

Week 11: Gangs and Schools

Wednesday, November 12th

Trump, Kenneth S. 1996. “Gangs and School Safety.” Pp. 45-60 in Allan M. Hoffman Ed. Schools, Violence and Society. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Brotherton, David C. 1996. “The Contradictions of Suppression: Notes from a Study of Approaches to Gangs in Three Public High Schools.” The Urban Review. 28(2):95-117.

Week 12: Gangs and Dress

Wednesday, November 19th

Holloman, Lillian O., Velma Lapoint, Sylvan I Alleyne, Ruth J. Palmer, and Kathy Sanders-Phillips. “Dress-Related Behavioral Problems and Violence in the Public School Setting: Prevention, Intervention, and Policy—A Holistic Approach.” Journal of Negro Education. 65(3):267-281.

Garot, Robert. 2003. “‘It’s the Way you Wear Them’: The Enforcement of School Dress Codes and the Embodiment of Dress at an Inner-City Alternative School.” Forthcoming, *Ethnography*.

November 24th-30th: Happy Thanksgiving

Week 13: Youth Jurisprudence
Wednesday, December 3rd

Duncan, Garrett Albert. 2000. "Urban Pedagogies and the Celling of Adolescents of Color." Social Justice. 27(3):29-42.

Zimring, Franklin E. 1998. "Toward a Jurisprudence of Youth Violence." Crime and Justice. 24:477-501

Week 14: Youth in Prison
Wednesday, December 10th

Nurse, Anne M. 2001. "The Structure of the Juvenile Prison: Constructing the Inmate Father." Youth and Society. 32(3):360-394.

Wordes, Madeline and Sharon M. Jones. 1998. "Trends in Juvenile Detention and Steps toward Reform." Crime and Delinquency 44(4):544-560.

Final Paper Due December 10th

Final Exam Date and Time to be Arranged based around your exam schedules

General Writing Guidelines*

Format and Presentation

Do not skip lines between paragraphs (like I'm doing here). Use an easily legible font, 12-point size works in most types. Papers should be typewritten, double-spaced with approximately 1" margins. Number all pages. Papers should be stapled. This means no plastic binders, no folding the edges together and no paper clips. The following information should appear in the upper right-hand corner of the first page: name, student ID#, date, paper topic number, and title. A bibliography is a necessary part of a research paper (see Citation, below), and should be attached at the end.

General Organization

You should make sure that you read the paper assignment instructions and follow them closely. The most important feature of your paper is that you have answered the question you have chosen. No matter how good your ideas are, if can't demonstrate your understanding of the question, and give an answer to it in your paper, then you will not do very well.

Academic papers have introductions, bodies, and conclusions. An introduction should be simple and explicit, and describe what you are going to do, and in what order. It should provide a complete "road map" for the rest of the paper. Tell your reader something about the study you are conducting, what you will focus on in the paper, what points you will be making, what you will argue, and what you will conclude. It is perfectly acceptable to use the first person voice and say, "I will focus on ...", after all who is writing this paper, anyway?

The body of the paper must be well organized. You must use paragraphs to divide your thoughts. A paragraph is a set of sentences with one common idea. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and make one main point. Your argument should flow logically from one paragraph to the next. Please use subheadings if they are appropriate or help the reader navigate through different sections of the paper. I should be able to make sense of your paper, in a general way, by reading the introduction, the first sentence of each paragraph, and the conclusion.

In your analysis, you will need to make explicit links between your "data" and the relevant course material. You will need to organize your paper around a description of the data you are analyzing and a review of the course material that helps to make your points. You should address all of the analytical issues I have proposed in the question. You may find that these do not exhaust the points you need to make, and answering your own additional questions may help further your analysis. Don't overlook a review of the course material (even though you know that I already know it). That way I can determine how fluent you are with the concepts, and how well you are able to apply them to your subject matter. There are various strategies for integrating the course material with an analysis of your data, but these are indispensable.

For your conclusion, restate the paper's highlights and take the opportunity to tie things up neatly. You may restate ideas from your opening paragraph. Repeat your thesis and briefly summarize the main evidence you have included. After reviewing your main points, you may speculate, include personal reactions, pose additional questions or suggest avenues for future research, and the like. If you have some doubts about whether your format will work effectively for the assignment, please feel free to consult with me first.

Citation

This is sometimes tricky, but by this point in your academic career, it is essential that you do it correctly. It is expected that you will use material from the texts and lecture to analyze your subject. Thus, whether you use direct quotes or paraphrases, you must give credit to the authors of those words, when they are not your own.

If you cite a lecture, do it this way: (Lecture, 9/9/02). However, relying solely on lecture citations for material that is also in the readings reveals to me that your familiarity with the readings is inadequate. So you should be sure to prioritize. Where appropriate, always cite the original source and not my delivery of it in lecture.

Directly quoted course materials from the reader should be cited in one of the following ways.

"Self-absorption is consistent with the emphasis on self-satisfaction fostered by capitalism in general and advertising in particular" (Karp, 1996:176).

Or alternately:

David A. Karp (1996:176) suggests that, "self-absorption is consistent with the emphasis on self-satisfaction fostered by capitalism in general and advertising in particular."

Also, be sure to cite any ideas that you borrow, not just quoted text. For instance:

Many analysts have noted how self-absorption may be fostered by capitalism (Karp, 1996:176).

Any direct quotation that is longer than three lines needs to be set off from the body of the paper by indenting and single-spacing. Since your papers will be double-spaced and indented only to begin paragraphs, you will see the contrast. Be careful to differentiate between what the textbook authors are saying themselves, and the other authors that they may in turn quote. Cite accordingly. Do not string quotes together without putting them in context with your own prose.

When you use a direct quote, place it in the context of a sentence that includes an explanation of what the quote means and why it is useful in service of the point you are making.

A full reference, including the author's name, book or article title, publishing information and page numbers will appear in a separate, alphabetically organized bibliography at the end of the paper, under the heading, "References." Refer the bibliographies of our articles as examples.

Style

In general, write as simply as possible. Never use a big word, when a little one will do. Big words don't necessarily convey intellectual prowess – especially when they are awkwardly used. Your word choice should be appropriate to formal writing: no slang, and no contractions ("can't", "don't"), unless you are quoting others or it somehow better helps you to make your point. You must use words that actually exist, and words must be used correctly. Look up definitions and spellings if you are unsure. Spell check often misses words.

Avoid using the indefinite "you". You will notice that I am addressing these instructions to you; that is, I am using the second person. That is because I am giving these instructions to a definite person or set of persons. In your papers, unless you mean to address the reader directly, do not use "you" when you mean to use "one" or "we." Refer to yourself as "I" instead of the royal "we." It is perfectly acceptable to use the first person singular in papers – it is not too informal. Use "we" for the author and the reader together: "We have seen how breaching experiments disturb our taken-for-granted notions about reality." Never refer to "society" as an active agent (that's my pet peeve), as in, "Society requires that people follow norms."

Avoid "a lot" (and by the way it's not spelled "alot"), and "very". Hemingway and Morrison do not need them, and neither do you. Don't confuse "their/there/they're" or "it's/its", or "to/two/too", or "were/we're/where", etc. Also please differentiate between "suppose" and "supposed" – these are not interchangeable, and are almost always improperly applied. These are sets of words that give students trouble, so please be careful.

Try to avoid using "he", "his", or "mankind" to mean anyone or all in general. If for some reason you have a strong ideological commitment to using "he" as the generic, you may do so, but it is not accurate, and there are other options available.

Make sure that nouns and verbs agree in number. Avoid sentence fragments. Make sure that the sentences you write have subjects and predicates. Verbs are also necessary. Do not leave a clause hanging without these necessary components. Avoid run-on sentences. Make sure that if you link things together in a sentence that you do so by using the proper connective words or punctuation marks. These kinds of mistakes can often be caught by reading your paper aloud. If it sounds wrong, it probably is.

Always follow the parsimony principle. That is, use as few words as possible to make your point.

Process

One way to start is by saying your ideas out loud, and writing them down. Just get the words out of your head and onto the page where you will be able to work with them more easily. I strongly

suggest that you write more than one draft of your paper. Most successful papers are begun well in advance of the night before the assignment is due. The best way to start is to just spew out a messy first draft, getting all of your ideas and facts down on paper (if you write long-hand) or your computer screen (if you prefer to word process). Then, a second draft will help you to organize the sections, focus your argument, and refine the content and style.

You must be at this point before you come to see me about your paper. Although we will be unable to read entire drafts, we may be able to discuss with you specific parts of your thesis or analysis, and/or help you with difficulties in transitions between ideas or sections of your argument. A final draft is useful for correcting spelling and grammatical errors, and for formatting the paper. You must proofread your own paper. It is not acceptable to turn in a paper with typographical errors, misspellings, nouns and verbs that do not agree, misused words, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, etc. You may want to rewrite the beginning or end of your paper in the last draft. Often in composing your paper, you will have changed your focus or ideas somewhat by the time you finish. You will want to make sure that these changes are reflected in a new version of your introduction or conclusion.

Finally, re-read your own paper and imagine that someone else wrote it. Does it make sense? Fix it, if it doesn't. You may also want to get someone else to read your paper and give you comments. It is often hard to be objective when you are so close in the writing process. If you have trouble with your writing, get help: see me during office hours, or seek assistance from the writing center on campus. For further suggestions on writing, I suggest:

Richlin-Klonsky, Judith and Ellen Strenski (Eds.). 1994. A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers. New York: St. Martin's Press.
Becker, Howard S. 1986. Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Also, please feel free to visit during office hours for personal assistance.

Good luck, and start writing now!

* This document adapted with thanks from Dr. Kerry Ferris' Case Study Essay Guidelines.