American Subcultures & Ethnic Groups

In this course we will explore a diverse set of subcultures that collectively make up the pluralistic fabric of American society. In no way could we possibly explore the numerous and rich diversity of these subcultures so of necessity we will focus on a selected subset of them. These will include subcultures based on youth and age, sexuality, interest and leisure, and ethnicity. You will have the option of selecting specific subcultures of interest to you to study in detail. We will ask a set of sociological questions that are pertinent to all subcultures that will make up the weekly themes of the course. These themes range from identity to language, symbols, beliefs and ideology, ritual practices, types of organization, inequalities of resources, status & stigma, and power and politics.

Each student is expected to select a particular subculture of your choosing to focus on throughout the course and become “the class expert” on that subculture. Your presentation, along with additional readings and resources will culminate in a final paper, and a final presentation of your paper to the class.

Class periods will consist of brief lectures by me with handouts, followed by discussion of readings based on 1 page reading responses (handed in), and student presentations with discussion. Each student will present a 3 page written critique of a relevant empirical article selected by you in consultation with me with copies of a 1 page summary to be distributed to fellow students. There will be two short noncumulative quizzes at mid-term and the end of the course. You will do a final paper of 8 pages (standard typed format) on a topic selected in consultation with me.

Students should submit hardcopies of all written work and also preserve them as electronic files.

Work cooperatively and have fun ...but no cheating or plagiarism.

Grades:

- Participation & Reading response 15%
- Two quizzes 2/6&3/6 (15 each) 30
- Article critique & presentation 15
- Final paper 40
- Total 100
Books:
Ross Haenfler, Subcultures. 2013.
Routledge. ISBN:978-0415530293

Simon & Schuster. ISBN: 978-1451694123

Lilia Fernandez – Brown in the Windy City:
Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Postwar Chicago. 2012
University of Chicago Press.ISBN:978-0226212845

Other assigned articles available on Canvas.

Topics and Readings:

Week 1 - Introduction – Culture & Subcultures
Jan 9-11

Tue - Yinger – Contraculture and Subculture

Thur – Haenfler – Chapters 1 & 2
Fine & Kleinman – Rethinking Subculture

Week 2 – Identity: Individual & Collective ** THUR Submit Subculture Selection **
Jan 16-18

Tue - Haenfler – Chapters 3-7

Thur - Fuller-Rowell et al. – National Identity, Discrimination, Ethnic Identity
Clarke –“Not Hiding, Not Shouting, Just Me”: Gay Men Identity
Reed – “We’re from Oz: Marking Ethnic & Sexual Identity in Chicago”

Week 3 - Boundaries – In-group & Out-group – Language & Symbols
Jan 23-25

Tue – Faberman – Chapters 1,2,3

Thur - Nelsen – Language Patterns within the youth subculture
Barton – How Like Perceives Like: “Gaydar”
Ek – “It’s Different Lives”: A Guatemalan-Am.’s Identity Construction
Week 4  Ideas, Beliefs, Ideology
Jan 30-Feb 1

Tue – Faberman – Chapters 4,5,6

Thur - Pew – A Survey of LGBT Americans Attitudes, Experiences, Values
Cervantes – Mexican American fatherhood
Ghaziani – Infighting & Ideology: Culture of the Chicago Dyke March

Week 5  Practices, Rituals, Ceremonies  ** FIRST QUIZ *** TUE FEB 6
Feb 6-8

Tue – Faberman – Chapters 7,8,9,10

Thur - Oswald – Generative Ritual Among Lesbians & Gay Men
Knottnerus & Loconto – Strategic Ritualization & Ethnicity: Italians
St. John – Liminal Being: Electronic Dance Music Cultures & Ritualization
Schneider – Defining Boundaries, Creating Contacts: Ethnic Parades

Week 6 Institutions & Organizations
Feb 13-15

Tue – Fernandez – Chapters 1,2

Thur - Portes – Bridging the Gap: Transnational & Ethnic Organizations
Murray – Institutional Elaboration of a Quasi-Ethnic Community
Flores-González et al.- “From HipHop to Humanization: Batey Urbano as a
Space for Latino Youth Culture

Week 7  Class & Status - Money, Economics & Resources
Feb 20-22

Tue – Fernandez – Chapters 3, 4

Thur - Hollingworth – Performances of social class, race and gender in youth
Moore- - alternative to what? Subcultural capital & commercialization
Volery – Ethnic entrepreneurship
Barrett & Pollack – Whose Gay Community? Social Class
Week 8  Power and Politics  
Feb 27-Mar 1

Tue – Fernandez – Chapters 5,6

Thur – McClendon – Social Esteem & Participation in Contentious Politics:  
    An LGBT Pride Rally  
Haider-Markel – Minority Group Interests & Political Representation:  
    Gay Elected Officials  
Mohamed – Can Protests Make Latinos Americans? Identity & Marches

Week 9 – Final Presentations  ** SECOND QUIZ **  TUE MAR 6 23  
Mar 6-8

Tue – Quiz 2 and Final Paper Presentations

Thur – Final Paper Presentations

Week 10 – Reading Week  
Mar 13-15  
T-Th

Week 11 – Exam Week  ** FINAL PAPERS DUE **  
Monday Mar 19 –Final Papers Due by 5pm at Rm 302 – 1812 Chicago Ave