

SOCIOLOGY 4J03 – C01
Selected Topic in Sociology: Art, Culture, and Inequality
Term II (3 units)

Winter 2016

Date and Time: Wednesdays 11:30am – 2:20pm
Location: Burke Science Building 121

Instructor: Professor Chong
Office: KTH-609 Ext.: 23607
Office Hours: Wednesdays
Book at tinyurl.com/profchong
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar examines how the world of art and popular culture is implicated in reproducing inequality. Topics include the relation between race and genre, gender and artistic legitimacy, as well as class and consumption. Readings are drawn from a variety of fields including cultural sociology, economic sociology, and organizational studies; readings will also reflect multiple methodological approaches to develop students' literacy of both quantitative and qualitative research. This course is primarily oriented towards students with a strong interest in art and culture, but will also be useful to those interested in meaning-making and the role of culture in race, class, and gender stratification.

Important Dates

Mid-term recess: Mon. Feb. 15 – Fri. Feb. 20, 2016
Last day to add/drop: Wed. Jan. 13, 2016

Seminar Format

The seminar comprises three components: (1) Student-led seminar presentations, which include conveying the contents of selected readings and leading class discussion; (2) Short contextual lectures provided from the professor connecting assigned readings to the learning objectives of the course and larger sociological debates; and (3) In-class exercises that engage students' experiential learning styles in relation to course content as well as the concrete writing, speaking, and analytical skills students will need to be successful in this course – and will be of use for other academic/professional contexts.

Expectations and Evaluation:

Seminar Contribution	40%
Seminar Presentation (20%)	
Participation (20%)	
Seminar Paper	40%
Paper consultation (5%)	
Final Paper Presentation (10%)	
Final Paper Manuscript (25%)	
In-Class Comprehension Test	20%

Seminar Contribution Details 40%

Seminar Presentations (20%)

Objectives

The purpose of these presentations is to ensure that students, both presenters and audience members, have a good understanding of the key concepts presented in the readings. Teaching others is an excellent way to learn and engage with course materials in a deep way; and sometimes students are able to ask and communicate ideas to their own cohort in ways that complement formalized instruction offered through readings and the Professor. The objectives of the presentation, then, are to provide students with an opportunity to question, clarify, and critique the assigned materials through class discussion and think about how separate studies combine to illuminate something new about the relation between culture and inequality.

Technical Details

- Presentation will typically last between 10-15 minutes
- Summarize the main goals, findings, and conclusion of your assigned article.
- Prepare a handout to accompany your presentations
 - These should be distributed in class *and* posted to Avenue to Learn by the beginning of class the day of your presentation
- Facilitate group participation by preparing group discussion questions or activities
 - You are encouraged to meet with the Professor prior to your presentation to go over the range of ways you might encourage class interaction around themes in your presentation

Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrating an in-depth comprehension of the issues and findings presented in the assigned reading;
- Effectiveness of communication core concepts, and;
- Ability to stimulate critical thinking about course material through class discussion/activities

Seminar Participation (15%)

What do you think? Given that this is an advanced seminar, student participation is crucial to the success of the classroom! In addition to participating in class-discussion prompted by the Professor during lecture, and fellow students during paper presentations, there will be regular learning activities integrated into each class. These activities are designed to: (i) challenge students to apply ideas presented in lecture to real-life case studies; (ii) develop group communication skills and foster a participatory classroom culture; and (iii) allows the Professor to identify if some ideas or concepts from lecture and seminar presentations need to be clarified. Participation will be evaluated by the Professor throughout the term. Occasional sign-in sheets will be circulated as another means of determining student participation.

Seminar Paper Details 40%

Paper Consultation (5%)

Objectives

The first step towards turning in a great final paper is to start thinking about your paper early on in the term. A second step is to getting feedback early from a trusted peer so that you can make adjustments to your focus, topic, or approach while you still have lots of time 'course-correct'. Students will get the opportunity to take both steps in one-on-one consultations with the Professor during which we will discuss the suitability of topics and potential sources, which will facilitate students' writing.

Technical Details

- Create a 1-2 page proposal for your final paper. Your proposal must address the following questions:
 - *What is the topic you want to address?* [1-2 sentences]
 - *How would you state your research interest in the form of a question?*
 - *What is it that you find interesting about this topic?* [1-2 paragraphs]
 - *Can you name at least 2 readings assigned in our class that would be relevant to your topic?*
 - *What are some other sources that would be useful to you?* [include bibliographic entries of at least 3 scholarly articles or book chapters from outside course material]
- Provide a hard copy of your proposal to the Professor during your research consultation to help ground the conversation
- Consultations will be held during regularly scheduled class time and run approximately 10 minutes.

Evaluation Criteria

This is a Pass/Fail grade in that students either produce a proposal and attend their consultation meeting or they do not. The more you develop your thinking about your seminar paper before the consultation, however, the more you will get out of it.

Final Paper Presentation (10%)

Objectives

Students are asked to present an outline of their final papers in the final weeks of the semester. This will enable students to gain valuable feedback from the Professor and fellow students on how they might improve their papers before the final due date. It is also an opportunity for students to learn about what their fellow students have been working on and gain further exposure on the multiple ways that art, culture, and inequality can be studied.

Technical Details

- Presentation should last approximately 10 minutes
- The content of your presentation may vary depending on how far you are into developing your final paper; however, you should do your best to answer the following questions
 - *What is the research question?*
 - *How did you go about trying to find an answer in existing literature? What types of studies were you looking for?*
 - *What are the central findings, themes, or conclusions that emerges from your reading so far?*
 - *How does your paper connect to ideas presented in class?*
- Students will also prepare a handout to be circulated in class that summarizes this same information. *It is recommended that your handout parallel the organization of your paper to facilitate consideration of how to structure your arguments in addition to concerns with content.*

Evaluation Criteria

The presentation accounts for 10% of your final grade. The first 5% is awarded by the Professor for presenting your paper in a pass/fail fashion. The second 5% is awarded by the classroom of your peers. Your fellow students will evaluate your presentation based on how successfully they think you've addressed and conveyed the information listed above. Remember that in addition to receiving a grade, this is an opportunity for you to get feedback on any outstanding questions and concerns about how to proceed with your paper.

Final Paper Manuscript (25%)

Objectives

Students are asked to take the tools they have gained in the course and explore specific substantive areas related to the link between art, culture, and inequality. You will produce a short paper “without results” meaning that no original research is required; however, the paper should contain a clearly thesis statement summarizing what you have found from reviewing and synthesizing the literature on your topic.

Technical Details:

- Papers should be 10-12 double-spaced pages in standard font (excluding references)
- Any bibliographic format is acceptable
- You will submit your paper electronically to Avenue to Learn
- Some questions to bear in mind when preparing the final manuscript:
 - *Do you identify a clear research question?*
 - *Do you offer an appropriate overview of the relevant studies/literature?*
 - *Is the content of your handout adequate for supporting the contents of your presentation?*
 - *Is there a clear connection drawn between the course materials and your paper?*

*Evaluation Criteria**

- Demonstrating understanding of relevant literatures
- Application of key concepts and ideas presented in assigned readings and lecture
- Quality and clarity of argument
- Writing structure and style.

* *Note:* MSAFs cannot be used on course requirements during final examination periods. Your final paper is due during the final examination period. Late submission will lose 5% per 24 hours of lateness, with the clock beginning to tick at 3pm on the due date.

In-Class Comprehension Assessments 20%

We will have an in-class comprehension assessment. This test is designed to evaluate student learning and comprehension as well as give students an opportunity to reflect on several weeks' of core course information in a cumulative manner. The nature of the assessments will vary depending on the needs, interests, and final number of students in the classroom, but may include group quizzes, in-class mini essays, and case study analyses.

Course Schedule

Every attempt will be made to follow this schedule, but it is subject to change at Professor's discretion.

Session 1 (Jan 6): Mapping our Intellectual Journey: Where are we going?

No reading assigned

Session 2 (Jan 13): What is Sociological about Art and Culture?

STUDENTS SIGN UP FOR SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

Prompt: Determining headlines in art and society

Alexander, V. D., & Bowler, A. E. (2014). Art at the crossroads: the arts in society and the sociology of art. *Poetics*, 43, 1-19.

Peterson, Richard. 2004. "The Production of Culture Perspective." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 30: 311-334

Session 3 (Jan 20): What do paintings, your family, and the Marauders all have in common? On the many definitions of culture.

Prompt: What do we mean by culture?

Spillman, L. 2002. "Introduction: Culture and Cultural Sociology." *Cultural Sociology*. Edited by L. Spillman. Malden, Massachusetts, Blackwell Publishers Inc.: 1-16. Available online via google books.

*** In-class Tutorial: "How to Read Academic Articles the way Professors Intended"**

Case Study: Rivera, L. A. (2011). *Ivies, extracurriculars, and exclusion: Elite employers' use of educational credentials. Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 29(1), 71-90.

Session 4 (Jan 27): If Art and Culture are so subjective, why are the patterns of inequality so predictable?

Prompt: Comparing creative and traditional labour markets.

Lamont, Michèle, Stefan Beljean, and Matthew Clair. Forthcoming. "What is Missing?: Cultural Processes and Causal Pathways to Inequality." *Socioeconomic Review*.

Seminar Discussion Papers

- Bielby, Denise D., and William T Bielby. 1996. "Women and Men in Film: Gender Inequality Among Writers in a Culture Industry." *Gender & Society* 10(3): 248-270.
- Entwistle, J., & Mears, A. (2013). Gender on Display: Performativity in Fashion Modelling. *Cultural Sociology*, 7(3), 320-335.
- Stokes, A. (2015). *The Gendered Organization of Creative Cultural Work: A Case Study of the Fashion Industry*. Dissertation Chapter.

Session 5 (Feb 3): How Winning can make you a Loser in the Art World

Prompt: Talk of Marcel DuChamp aka "Is it Art or a Toilet?"

Baumann, S. (2007). "A general theory of artistic legitimation: How art worlds are like social movements." *Poetics* 35: 47-65.

Seminar Discussion Papers

- Li, Peter S. 1994. "A World Apart: The Multicultural World of Visible Minorities and The Art World of Canada." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 31:365-391.
- Mears, A. (2010). Size zero high-end ethnic: Cultural production and the reproduction of culture in fashion modeling. *Poetics*, 38(1), 21-46.
- Peterson, K. (2003). "Discourse and Display: The Modern Eye, Entrepreneurship, and the Cultural Transformation of the Patchwork Quilt." *Sociological Perspectives* 46 (4): 461-490.

Session 6 (Feb 10): In-Class Test

**** Feb 17: READING WEEK – NO MEETING ****

Session 7 (Feb 24): The Burden of Being Authentic in the Arts

Prompt: Iggy Azalea, Macklemore, Frank Ocean – which one these acts does not belong?

Peterson, R. A. (2005). In Search of Authenticity*. *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(5), 1083-1098.

Seminar Discussion Papers

- Appelrouth, S., & Kelly, C. (2013). Rap, Race and the (Re) Production of Boundaries. *Sociological Perspectives*, 56(3), 301-326.
- Donze, P. L. (2010). Popular Music, Gender, and Sexualization: A Latent Class Analysis of Artist Types. *Revise and Resubmit from Poetics: Journal of Empirical Research on Culture, Media, and the Arts*.

Session 8 (March 2): Praise as a Mechanism of Inequality

Prompt: Let's read some reviews.

Ridgeway, C. L. (2013). Why status matters for inequality. *American Sociological Review*.

Seminar Discussion Papers

- Chong, P. (2011). "Reading Difference: how race and ethnicity function as tools for critical appraisal." *Poetics* 39(1)
- Schmutz, V., & Faupel, A. (2010). Gender and Cultural Consecration in Popular Music. *Social forces*, 89(2), 685-707.

Session 9 (March 9): Seminar Paper Consultations

Session 10 (March 16): McMaster Sociology of Art and Culture In Action

Guest Lecture: Nikki-Marie Brown, PhD Candidate in Sociology, McMaster
Lecture title: TBA

*** In-class Tutorial: "What does it mean to *USE* the literature in my essay?"**
Case Study: Brown, Nikki-Marie. Study of music scenes in Toronto and Hamilton.

Session 11 (March 23): We are what we eat, drink, read, etc.

Prompt: What's on your profile?

Lamont, M and Fournier, M. (1992). Introduction. *Cultivating differences: Symbolic boundaries and the making of inequality*. University of Chicago Press.

Seminar Discussion Papers

- Bryson, Bethany. 1996. "'Anything But Heavy Metal': Symbolic Exclusions and Musical Dislikes." *American Sociological Review* 61:884-899.
- Johnston, J. and S. Baumann (2007). "Democracy versus Distinction: A Study of Omnivorousness in Gourmet Food Writing." *American Journal of Sociology* 113(1): 165-204.

Session 12 (March 30): Seminar Paper Presentations

Session 13 (April 6): Art, Culture, and Inequality Revisited

Lecture, but no readings assigned.

POLICIES ABOUT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using turnitin.com to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

I have a zero tolerance policy. Any and all confirmed plagiarism cases will be automatically reported to the Academic Integrity Office and made a matter of official university record. The student will also be given a score of 0 based on relevant assignment criteria

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.