

SOCIOLOGY 4BB3E: Sociology of Higher Education: The Changing Nature of the University in Relation to the Youth and Student Activism in the 1960s

Winter, 2020

Class Time: Wednesdays, 7 – 10 P.M.

Class Location PGCLL M25

Instructor: Prof. Cyril Levitt

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:30-3:20 pm

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Course Description:

Much has been written about the two great modern revolutions – the economic or industrial and its much later outgrowth, the post-industrial, and the political – the American, French, Russian, Chinese, Cuban, etc. But these have been detached from another, quieter revolution – the educational – which has proven to be related to both and in various ways, an extension of each. The post-industrial revolution would not have been possible without the explosive development of higher education in the 1960s. This course will consider the changes in the nature and role of the universities, primarily in the Western world, but worldwide more generally, focusing on the student activism of the 1960s. We will not only look at important texts, but follow the development of the student movements through popular music, film and documentaries which were created at the time and in retrospect both as an expression of these movements and as an attempt to grasp their significance. Students will be asked to read about the history and sociology of these movements in the context of the changing role and nature of the university in the post Second World War period and will be encouraged to think about their own experiences in post-secondary education in the aftermath and in light of these movements.

Texts and Resource Material:

The main text for the course will be C. Levitt, *Children of Privilege: Student Revolt in the Sixties*, University of Toronto Press, 1984. This text can be purchased from the McMaster University Bookstore as Custom Courseware. The main argument in the text concerns the changing nature of higher education in the sixties especially in relation to middle class mobility as experienced by that generation of students. The student activism of that decade is shown to be a reaction to the changing nature of the universities in society and a response on the part of the students entering the university systems at that time. One of the main purposes of the course will be to provide access to students in the class to material relevant to the experiences of students during that tumultuous decade, including documentaries, music, youth culture, popular film, etc. The attempt will be made to integrate the objective changes of higher education in relation to economy and culture with the subjective meanings and responses as expressions of those changes on the part of the students. The student activism will be discussed in relation to the civil rights and peace movements of the fifties and sixties, and from the middle of the 1960s of the protests against the war in Vietnam.

Although we are only using one text in the course, for the purposes of preparing your outline and major paper you ought to consult with the enormous literature on the universities and student activism in the sixties. We are fortunate at McMaster to have the largest collection of radical student literature from the past at the archives of the Mills Library. These include the papers of the leading student radical organizations including those most active in the 1960s such as the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND), The Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), the mainstream but increasingly radicalized Canadian Union of Students (CUS) and many others. These represent a valuable resource for researchers, and, depending on your chosen topic, may prove to be an important source for your own work. The films and documentaries made in and about the sixties will be another significant resource for the research on your papers. There have been many popular documentaries on television and on the web concerning the sixties and these may also be useful as a resource for your own research in relation to the topic of your choice. For example, the series on the sixties aired by CNN is a case in point. Although it goes far beyond the confines of the topic in this course, it, and others like it provide a broader historical background for purposes of general orientation to the major events of that decade.

Evaluation:

Students may elect to submit two papers of 10-12 pages each, one in the middle of the course and the other at the end, or one major paper of 20-22 pages at the end of the course. Students are free to choose their own topics which must first be cleared with the instructor. The one major paper should be no shorter than 18 and no longer than 23 pages in length not including bibliography in 12-point type and normal margins at the top and sides. Papers should be submitted to the instructor electronically on or before the last date of class.

Possible Topics for the Major Paper:

The following are possible, but by no means the only topics that might be suitable for the major paper:

The class-based nature of student activism in the sixties

Changing mobility patterns in relation to student activism in the sixties

The impact of the War in Vietnam on student activism in the sixties

The vicissitudes of the economic revolution in terms of the student activism of the sixties

The role of music in the student, civil rights and peace movements of the sixties

Student politics then and student politics now: a comparison and contrast

The roots of contemporary student politics in the student activism of the 1960s: Feminism, Gay rights (LGBTQ), identity politics, environmentalism, indigenous studies

The Free Speech Movement (Berkeley) in the sixties and “Political Correctness” on contemporary campuses: A comparison and contrast

Sociology and the Social Sciences in light of the activism in the sixties and beyond

Course Schedule:

The course will begin on Wednesday, January 8, 2020. It is customary in some courses to present a week by description of the material to be covered. But this is a new course and auxiliary material has been ordered for class use and it is uncertain when the material will be delivered. As a result a general overview of the course will be offered here in terms of the topics to be covered but without the precision of an exact timetable. (The topics will be covered in no particular order):

1. The history of universities with special emphasis on the developments in the post-Second World War era
2. The role of higher education in social mobility (the educational revolution)
3. The history of (student) activism and radicalism and linkages with other social movements
4. The role of music in the counter-culture and political activism
5. Economic, political and cultural developments in the sixties and before
6. The impact of the generation of the sixties on subsequent generations
7. The Old Left and the New Left (Marxism, socialism, anarchism)
8. Changes in the social relations among students in the sixties: the “pill”, abortions on demand, the end of *in loco parentis*, employment opportunities
9. The universities and the expansion of the public sector
10. Feminism, environmentalism, gay rights, equity and affirmative action, identity politics
11. The situation in Canada in comparison with that in the United States and Germany
12. The changes in curricula in the sixties and its impact on the universities today

Course Learning Objectives:

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, <http://ccl.mcmaster.ca/COU/pdf/Undergraduate%20Degree%20Level%20Expectations.pdf>). It will help students develop knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, theories, methodologies and recent advances within the sociology of education. Moreover, assignments completed through it will allow students to develop their ability to 1) gather, review, interpret and evaluate information, as well as 2) compare the merits of alternate hypotheses within the discipline.

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.

(If applicable) In this course we will be using a software package designed 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.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. [Student Accessibility Services](#) can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

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.

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.