

Sociology of Culture  
SOCI 4260-1/5260  
MWF 1-1:50  
BLB 155

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Office hours: Mondays 2:15-3:30 or by appointment (email works best)

What is culture? How do cultures shape individuals, nations, and economies? And what kinds of social processes influence cultural production and consumption (art, music, literature, movies, television)? This course looks at questions of culture through a sociological lense, and at society through a cultural lense. Most of the readings will be from cultural sociology and the sociology of culture, but we will also discuss anthropology, literary criticism, philosophy, and cultural history.

The course is fairly theoretical as sociology courses go, and requires serious reading and discussion. It is particularly suitable for students interested in the media, arts, literature, religion, social theory, and cultural differences.

### Readings

1. Articles linked from this site
2. Articles available in JSTOR.org from on-campus computers

### Assignments

Undergraduates (4260):

Two exams, 25% each  
Plus a final exam, 30%  
Pop quizzes, 20%

Graduate students (5260):

2-page response papers on 1 reading from any six weeks of the course. Students cannot submit more than one response paper per week (6 papers, 5 points each, 30 points total). The papers should be professional quality, and should include full scholarly citations where

appropriate, critique of the readings, discussion of the applicability of the readings to one's own research, and ideas for future research.

Graduate students do not need to take the mid-term exams

Active participation in every class (10 %)

Pop quizzes, 20%

Final Paper (40%)\*

The paper should be a research proposal or very thorough literature review with a title page, abstract (max. 150 words), and introduction justifying the project. Research proposals should specify a research question, predictions, methods, and data to be used. A literature review should specify weak areas in the literature and discuss possible research directions to address these. Formatting and editing, including parenthetical notation and references, should be professional quality (APA, ASA, MLA, or Chicago-style references are acceptable).

\*Doctoral students who wish for this course to count toward the globalization concentration must write a 10-pg. globalization-related final paper.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory, and active participation in class discussion is encouraged.

Attendance will not be taken, but absence will be noted.

There will be no make-up quizzes. Make-up exams can be scheduled for the week following the original exam date, but are generally more challenging than the original exam.

### Syllabus

Part I: Introduction

William Sewell jr., The Concept(s) of Culture (download from bottom of this page)

Part II: Marx and Critical Theory

[Critical Theory](#), from Standord Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, [The Culture Industry](#)

Part III: Max Weber and Values Analysis

Max Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions" (download from bottom of this page)

Max Weber, ["The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism"](#)

Bryan Turner, Islam, Capitalism and the Weber Theses (bottom of page)

Samuel Huntington, Cultures Count (bottom of page)

### Exam 1 Friday February 20

#### Part IV: Cultural Anthropology and Cultural Relativism

Ruth Benedict, [The Diversity of Cultures](#)

Clifford Geertz, [Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture](#)

Richard Shweder, "On the Return of the 'Civilizing' Project" (bottom of page)

#### Part V: Emile Durkheim and Neo-Durkheimian Cultural Sociology

Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, [Introduction and Chapter 1](#)

Film: "Warriors of the Amazon"

Jeffrey Alexander and Philip Smith, [The Strong Program in Cultural Theory](#)

Tognato, "A Neo-Durkheimian Perspective on Central Banking" (5260 only) (bottom of page)

#### Part VI: Culture and Social Class

Sulkunen, Pekka. [Sociology Made Visible: On the Cultural Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu](#)

Pierre Bourdieu, Social Space and Symbolic Power (5260 only) (bottom of page)

Bourdieu, [The Field of Cultural Production](#) (read through pg. 40) and [The Market of Symbolic Goods](#)

Small, Harding, and Lamont, [Reconsidering Culture and Poverty](#) (5260 only)

#### Part VII: Culture and Morality

Andrew Sayer ["Class, Moral Worth and Recognition"](#) (sayer.pdf at bottom of page)

Lamont et al. ["Cultural and Moral Boundaries in the United States"](#) (attached at bottom of this page)

Gretchen Purser, The Dignity of Job-Seeking Men (attached at bottom of this page)

Shai Dromi "Penny for Your Thoughts" (bottom of the page)

Gabe Ignatow, Culture and Embodied Cognition (bottom of the page)

Samuel Perry ["Racial habitus, moral conflict, and white moral hegemony within interracial evangelical organizations"](#) (bottom of this page)

### Exam 2 Friday March 27

#### VIII. Cultural Consumption

DiMaggio and Mukhtar, "Arts Participation as Cultural Capital in the United States" (bottom of page)

Richard Peterson and Roger Kern, "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore" (bottom of page)

Lizardo and Skiles, [Highbrow Omnivorosity on the Small Screen](#)

Bethany Bryson, [Anything But Heavy Metal](#)

Part IX: The Culture Industries

clip from [The Devil Wears Prada](#) (Cerulean Sweater)

Peterson and Anand, [The Production of Culture Perspective](#)

Richard Peterson, Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music (get from JSTOR)

Wendy Griswold, American Character and the American Novel (get from JSTOR)

Final Exam

\*Students with disabilities are invited to meet during office hours, or to email, to discuss any special needs for this class.

\*As for all classes at UNT, academic dishonesty, plagiarism, collusion and falsification of academic records or the attempt to do these things constitute academic dishonesty, as per the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline. All exams for this course are closed-book and closed-notes unless otherwise specified by the instructor.