

Sociology of Culture

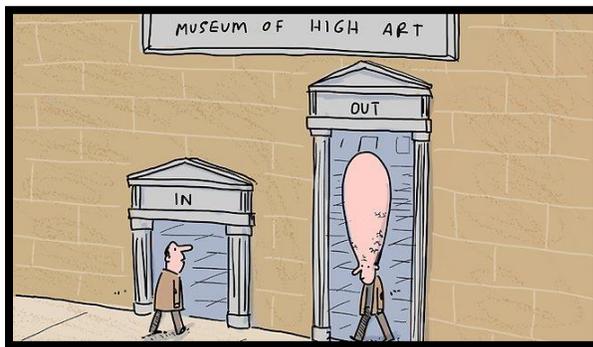
SOC 125

Instructor: David Orzechowicz
Class Time: T/R 6:10-7:30pm
Class Location: Young 194

Email: djorzechowicz@ucdavis.edu
Office Hours: T/R 8-9am (SSH 2249)
By appointment

TA: Courtney Caviness
Email: ccaviness@ucdavis.edu

Office Hours: T 4:30-6:30pm & by appt
Office: SSH 282



Course Overview

Culture. In (and out of) sociology, culture is a ubiquitous if vague term, referencing material things, activities, shared interests and values, the fine arts (more than the popular arts), and shared referents. What links these various associations together in a distinctly sociological way? How does culture “come to be,” and how does it impact social life?

This course will survey theoretical and empirical sociological work on culture. We will consider some of the ways in which sociologists conceptualize culture, including macro and micro approaches. In particular, we will look at how culture is implicated in social action and interaction, identity formation, and inequality as well as the influence of social factors on the production and consumption of cultural goods.

The first 6 weeks of the course will survey sociological approaches to culture. The last 4 weeks of class will focus exclusively on queer cultures, applying theories from earlier in the term to the formation, maintenance, meaning, and inequalities within different queer cultures.

Course Goals

1. Understand the various meanings of and ways to study culture in sociology.
2. Understand and be able to apply the sociological perspective to the study of culture.
3. Appreciate how culture gets produced and how it (re)produces inequality.
4. Apply the concepts and theories we learn in weeks 1-7 to an extended study of queer cultures to contextualize and understand a set of subcultures in American society.
5. Improve our communication skills.

Student Responsibilities

- **See the TAs or me when you fall behind.** We are all invested in seeing you succeed. The sooner we are aware of a problem, the more options we have to help get and keep you on track.
- **Give me advance notice of any accommodations you may need.** I will do my best to accommodate students' documented needs. We all exist in the massive bureaucracy of the UC system, and Davis in particular. This means that there are many things that I can only do if given ample notice. A good rule of thumb: the sooner the better.
- **Read the syllabus, assignments, and any emails sent by the instructor or TAs so that you are aware of all course policies and any important dates.** I will not accept excuses along the lines of "I didn't know..." for something that is clearly spelled out in a course document
- **If you have questions, start by seeing if you already have the answer (in an assignment prompt or in the syllabus) BEFORE approaching the TAs or myself.** There are about 95 students in the class, with only the TA and myself to facilitate learning. It is much easier for us to give the class as a whole the attention and guidance people may need to succeed when we can avoid questions for which you already have answers. **If you are emailing the TAs or me with a question about the class, you must include in your email what steps you have taken to find the answer yourself.**
- **Come to class, pay attention, participate, and be respectful.** This class – any class really – will be far more enjoyable if you are present, prepared, active in your engagement, and supportive of one another. Active engagement does not necessarily mean asking questions or speaking out; it can also include active note-taking and participation in small-group work.
- **Write professional emails.** You do not need to email me with the formal "Professor Orzechowicz." But you should: have some sort of salutation/address ("David" or "Dear Dr. O", for example); write in complete sentences; avoid text lingo; be polite, in the same way you would want a coworker or boss to use a polite tone when they write to you.
- **Be honest.** If you cheat, you fail. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. If you find yourself in a position where you feel that your options are to either fail an assignment or cheat, let a TA or me know. We would rather figure out an academically-honest solution than have to send anyone to Student Judicial Affairs.

Expectations for Me

The following outlines what you may expect of me as your instructor:

- **A sincere effort to help you learn the course material.** Since my ultimate goal is to help you learn and succeed, I intend to spend enough time and effort on class preparation to make the material as understandable and as interesting as I possibly can.
- **Accessibility.** I agree to be available to you outside of class should you desire help. I encourage you to come to my office hours whenever you have a question or concern. I am more than happy to help. Please try to make it your personal goal to visit my office hours at least once this quarter. I think you will find it helpful. If my office hours are not convenient for you, we can schedule an appointment that fits your schedule. *Please see Course Policies, below, for my e-mail policy.*
- **Attention.** When you are speaking, you will have my undivided attention.
- **Fairness.**

4 Ground Rules for Class

- **One Diva, One Mic.** Only one person speaks at a time.
- **One Stage, Many Divas.** No one person should monopolize discussion; everyone gets the opportunity to voice their thoughts, questions, and insights.
- **Technology in the Classroom.** Please turn off or silence all cell phones. Please do not text in class. While I discourage students from being online during class – psychologists have found that multitasking divides our attention, not expand it – if you do feel you need to be online on your computer, please sit in the back 2 rows, so as to minimize distractions for others. If you will not be online, please do not sit in the last 2 rows – leave them for your peers who may need to get online.
- **Use gender-neutral pronouns (they, them, theirs) when referencing another person in class.** We cannot assume someone's gender identity simply by looking at them. To make this a safe place for everyone, use gender-neutral language when talking about anyone in class.

Course Policies

1. **Extensions:** If something is going to be late, always contact me beforehand. Given the circumstances, I may give you an extension, but extensions are not guaranteed.

Sociology of Culture

- Late Penalty:** If you turn an assignment in late without an approved extension, it will be marked-down a full letter grade for the first day. For each additional day the assignment is late, your grade will be reduced by an additional 1/3 of a letter grade. Each weekend day counts as one day. For example, if you write a “B” quality paper due Friday, and you turn it in on the following Monday, you will receive a “D+”
- Medical Excuses:** If you are unable to make class or turn in an assignment late due to physical or mental health reasons, you must get a letter from your doctor/therapist, including an office telephone number, written on official letterhead paper. **The medical excuse must make clear that you were not able to attend class or hand in the assignment on the due date.**
- Plagiarism:** I adhere to University policies on plagiarism. See <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/avoid.htm> for those policies. I will report cases of plagiarism to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.
- Contesting Grades:** If you disagree with the grade you receive on an assignment and wish to contest the grade, you must resubmit the original assignment to the instructor *no sooner than 24 hours and no later than 1 week* after it has been returned to you *with a 1 page (min) argument* as to why you deserve a better grade. This written justification should be specific in its argument, and should engage the original prompt, the work you submitted, and the feedback you received. If, after contesting the grade, you still feel you did not receive the grade you deserve, you may submit the same materials to the instructor. The grade you receive from me will be your final grade, and may go up or down.
- Email:** I will return all emails within 48 hours of their receipt. This means that last-minute questions and extensions may be missed, so plan accordingly. I will not address substantive course questions over email; past experience has shown me that email exchange is a poor way of discussion course material. You can email me to set up an appointment or inform me of an absence. But if you have questions about a concept, theory, reading, or lecture, they are best addressed in-person. Also, answers to some questions can be found in the syllabus and assignment prompts. *Please* check these documents before emailing me with questions.

Course Reading

Required texts: All required course readings will be available on the course smartsite. (<https://smartsite.ucdavis.edu/portal/site/soc125s15>).

Student Disability Policy

If you have any documented educational needs, please advise me at the beginning of the quarter so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Assignments and Grading

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Posting Date</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Percentage of Final Grade</i>
<i>Participation</i>	----	<i>Daily</i>	10%
<i>Cultural Event Reflections</i>	10.01	11.24	10%
<i>Midterm 1</i>	10.01	10.07	25%
<i>Midterm 2</i>	11.03	11.09	25%
<i>Final Exam</i>	----	12.07	30%

Note: *Midterms will be take-home essays. Over the course of the term, you will be expected to attend, participate in, or watch your choice of cultural events, a full list of which will be made available on 10.01, and write short reflections that connect the events to course material. These will be submitted as a packet on 11.24, in-class. The final exam will potentially consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions, with a possible group component, and will be open-note SO LONG AS YOU BRING IN PRINTED MATERIALS. Phones, tablets, computers, and any digital form of course material will be strictly prohibited.*

Sociology of Culture

Reading and Exam Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
09/24	Introductions	No Required Readings.
09/29	Theories of Cultural Production: Art Worlds	Alexander, Victoria D. 2003. "Art Worlds." Pp. 67-75 in <i>Sociology of the Arts: Exploring Fine and Popular Forms</i> . Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing. Simpson, Charles R. 1981. "The Dealer: Gatekeeper to the Art World." Pp. 31-51 in <i>SoHo: The Artist in the City</i> . Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
10/01	Theories of Cultural Production: Production of Culture Approach	Peterson, Richard A. 1990. "Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music." <i>Popular Music</i> 9:97-116. Gray, Herman. 2004 [1995]. "The Transformation of the Television Industry and the Social Production of Blackness." Pp. 57-69 in <i>Watching Race: Television and the Struggle for Blackness</i> . Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
10/06	The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchies (Part 1)	Levine, Lawrence. 1990. "William Shakespeare in America." Pp 13-45 in <i>Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America</i> . Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
10/08	The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchies (Part 2)	Levine, Lawrence. 1990. "William Shakespeare in America." Pp. 45-81 in <i>Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America</i> . Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
10/13	Culture & Power: Habitus	Wacquant, L. (2005). "Habitus." In J. Beckert and M. Zafirovski (Ed.), <i>International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology</i> (pp.317-321). London, UK: Routledge. Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 67:747-76.
10/15	Culture & Power: Cultural Capital	Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." Pp. 241-258 in <i>Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education</i> , ed. John C. Richardson. New York, NY: Greenwood Press. Hall, J. 1992. "The Capital (S) of Culture." Pp. 257-83 in <i>Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality</i> . Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
10/20	Culture & Power: General vs. Specific Habitus	Desmond, Matthew. 2007. "Country Masculinity." Pp. 18-53 in <i>On the Fireline: Living and Dying with Wildland Firefighters</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
10/22	Small-Group Cultures	Fine, Gary Alan. 2010. Group Cultures and Subcultures. Chapter 20 in <i>Handbook of Cultural Sociology</i> . Eds. John R. Hall, Laura Grindstaff, and Ming-cheng Lo. New York, NY: Routledge. Fine, Gary Alan and Michaela De Soucey. 2005. "Joking cultures: Humor Themes as Social Regulation in Group Life." <i>Humor</i> 18:1-22.

Sociology of Culture

Reading and Assignment Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
10/27	Cultural Repertoires	Sharone, Ofer. 2014. "The Chemistry Game Experience and Self Blame" Pp. 51-85 in <i>Flawed System, Flawed Self: Job Searching and Unemployment Experiences</i> . Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
10/29	Cultural Repertoires	Sharone, Ofer. 2014. "The Specs Game Experience and System-Blame" Pp. 114-41 in <i>Flawed System, Flawed Self: Job Searching and Unemployment Experiences</i> . Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
11/03	Interaction Ritual & the Formation of Group Culture	Cottingham, Marci D. 2012. "Interaction Ritual Theory and Sports Fans." <i>Sociology of Sport Journal</i> 29:168-85. <i>Raider Nation</i> . https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y0EoN5wAFE
11/05	The Structural Foundations of Gay & Lesbian Cultures	D'Emilio, John. 1983. "Forging a Group Identity: World War II and the Emergence of an Urban Gay Subculture." Pp. 23-39 in <i>Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities</i> . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. D'Emilio, John. 1983. "Dual Identity and Lesbian Autonomy: The Beginning of Separate Organizing Among Women." Pp. 92-107 in <i>Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities</i> . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
11/10	Drag Culture (part 1)	Simmons, Nathaniel. 2014. "Speaking Like a Queen in RuPaul's Drag Race." <i>Sexuality & Culture</i> 18:630-48. In-class video: <i>Paris Is Burning</i> .
11/12	Drag Culture (part 2)	Rupp, Leila J., Verta Taylor, and Eve Ilana Shapiro. (2010.) "Drag Queens and Drag Kings: The Difference Gender Makes." <i>Sexualities</i> 13: 275-294.
11/17	Leather/Kink Culture	Rubin, Gayle S. 1998. "The Miracle Mile: South of Market and Gay Male Leather, 1962-1997." Pp. 247-72 in <i>Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture</i> . San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books. Hennen, Peter. 2008. "Feeling a Bit under the Leather: Hypermasculinity, Performativity, and the Specter of Starched Chiffon." Pp. 134-78 in <i>Faeries, Bears, & Leatherman</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
11/19	Gay & Lesbian Cultures in Organizations	Green, Adam Isaiah. 2011. "Playing the (Sexual) Field: The Interactional Basis of Systems of Sexual Stratification." <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 74:244-66. Hammers, Corie. 2009. "An Examination of Lesbian/Queer Bathhouse Culture and the Social Organization of (Im)Personal Sex." <i>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</i> 38:308-35.

Sociology of Culture

Reading and Assignment Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
11/24	Gay Cultures & Normativity	Orzechowicz, David. "Fierce Bitches on Tranny Lane: Sexuality, Culture, and the Closet in Theme Park Parades." <i>Research in the Sociology of Work</i> , 20:227-52.
11/26	Thanksgiving Day	No Class.
12/01	Queer Reading	Doty, Alexander. 1993. I Love Laverne and Shirley: Lesbian Narratives, Queer Pleasures, and Television Sitcoms. Pp. 39-62 in <i>Making Things Perfectly Queer: Interpreting Mass Culture</i> . Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. Meyers, Michaela D.E. 2013. Slashing Smallville. <i>Sexuality & Culture</i> 17:476-93.
12/03	"Not Gay" Cultures	Han, Chong-suk, et al. 2014. "You're Better Respected When You Carry Yourself as a Man: Black Men's Personal Accounts of the Down Low 'Lifestyle.'" <i>Sexuality & Culture</i> 18:89-102. Ward, Jane. 2015. "Bars, Bikers, and Bathrooms: A Century of Not-Gay Sex." Pp. 51-82 in <i>Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men</i> . New York: New York University Press.
12/07	Final Exam	8:30 – 10:30pm