**YOUTH SUBCULTURES**

**SYA 4663**

**SPRING 2018**

**LOCATION:**

**Classroom:** Arts and Letters 242

**Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30 – 4:50 pm

**Credit Hours:** 3.0 credits

**Prerequisites:** 3 sociology courses at the 1000, 2000 or 3000 level or permission

**CONTACT:**

**Instructor:** Philip Lewin, PhD

**Office:** Culture and Society Building, Rm. 260

**Email:** [lewinp@fau.edu](mailto:lewinp@fau.edu) (this is the preferred method of contact)

**Phone:** 678-770-8425

**Website:** https://canvas.fau.edu/

**Office Hours:** TR 1:30 to 2:30, 5:00 to 6:00 pm; W 1:00 to 3:00; and by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:** Alberto Gomez-DaBoin, BA

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**COURSE OVERVIEW:**

This course will explore the realm of youth subcultures, which, roughly defined, are groups of young people who differentiate themselves in some way from the so-called “mainstream.” Over the course of the semester, we will study the various theories that have emerged to explain and inform them. These theories explore how and why subcultures emerge, how they color the lives of individual participants, and how “mainstream” society responds to them. We will also delve into a number of substantive areas that scholars have identified as significant dimensions of subcultural participation, including: hipness, authenticity and status; race, gender and sexuality; resistance and social change; and ecstatic rituals.

While I will use to variety of techniques to help you learn the course material, including lectures, group activities and films, I will devote the lion’s share of class time to group discussion. You should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading and actively participate in your own learning, not to passively absorb knowledge. We will work through the material as a class—all teaching and learning from one another.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES and LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The objectives and learning outcomes for the course will be to:

* review a variety of historical and contemporary youth subcultures
* familiarize students with how scholars from various theoretical traditions have thought about and studied them
* gain insight into how subcultures both transform and reproduce social relations, especially as they pertain to race, gender, class, and sexuality
* explore the broader dynamics of social behavior as they manifest in and through subcultural participation, especially as they relate to identity construction, culture formation, and status distinction
* arrive at some consensus as to the worth of “subculture” as an analytic concept

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

All readings will be available to download on our course Canvas page.

You must rent or purchase the film *Quadrophenia*, which can be streamed online via Amazon.

**CLASSROOM POLICIES and ETIQUETTE:**

1. You should arrive to class on time and remain focused until it ends (i.e. you should not disrupt instruction by packing up your belongings early).
2. Be sure to bring the assigned readings to class.
3. You may not use a laptop computer in this class.
4. You may not use your cellphone, sleep, work on crossword puzzles, or engage in anything unrelated to the course during class time.
5. You should be respectful to both me and your peers during class discussions.
6. If you violate any of the above policies, I will ask you to leave the classroom. Repeated violations will result in administrative withdrawal.
7. Please allow 24 hours for a response to emails. If you have a serious concern regarding your progress in the course, please plan to meet with me in person.

**ASSESSMENT and GRADING:**

1. **ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION:** You are expected to prepare for, attend and participate in each class session. This does not mean simply showing up to class; it means completing the required course readings prior to the session, dutifully taking notes, asking unsolicited questions in class, actively contributing to class discussions, and visiting my office hours to review course material. I will assess participation by keeping a daily attendance log, keeping track of your contributions to class discussions, distributing unannounced reading quizzes, assigning occasional homework (e.g. blog posts, short writing assignments), requiring in-class activities, and periodically evaluating the quality of your lecture notes. I will aggregate these grades at the end of the semester to determine your participation score, which is worth 15 percent of your final grade.
2. **GROUP OBSERVATION ASSIGNMENT:** With a group of other students from the class, you will observe and analyze a subcultural event during the semester (you might go to a hip hop performance, a comic book convention, a rave, a punk concert, a Critical Mass ride, a gaming tournament, a skate park, a tattoo parlor, a political protest, etc.). Your group should remain in the observation setting for at least one hour. Afterwards, the group will craft a reflection paper (6-8 pages). The reflection should consist of two parts. The first part should describe in detail the setting the group observed and the events that transpired in its presence. The second section, drawing from course material, should engage in analysis. For example, the group might formulate some thoughts on the specialized vernacular that it overheard, consider why those who it observed wore particular articles of clothing, and so on. I will divide the course into groups, elaborate on the nature of this assignment, and discuss how to write a strong paper during our **2/15** session. The assignment will be worth 20 percent of your final grade and is due by 11:59 pm via Canvas on **3/22.** If you experience trouble working with or coordinating the assignment with your group, you should contact me ASAP.
3. **FILM ANALYSIS:** During the semester, we will watch several films. Before the semester ends, you must choose **ONE** film on which to write an analysis. Your paper should be 5 – 7 pages in length (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12-point font), and it should draw from course materials to analyze the film’s subcultural themes. I will provide additional information about how to structure your essays and how I will evaluate them throughout the semester and during an in-class discussion on **2/15**. The film analysis is due via Canvas by 11:59 pm on **4/24** and will count 20 percent toward your final grade.
4. **EXAMS:** I will administer two exams during the semester. The exams will cover assigned readings, lectures, and the films that we view. I will provide further details about their format as they approach. While the final exam will emphasize material from the last unit of the course, it will also probe your knowledge of material that recurs throughout the semester. The midterm will be worth 20 percent of your final grade, and the final exam will constitute 25 percent of your final grade. The date of each exam is listed on the timetable (**2/20** and **4/26**). Please note that you will take the first exam online via Canvas.

**SUMMARY of GRADING and ASSESSMENT:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Assessment Component** | **Point Value** |
| Participation | 15 points |
| Observation assignment | 20 points |
| Film analysis | 20 points |
| Midterm exam | 20 points |
| Final exam | 25 points |
| **Total** | **100 points** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Points |
| A  A-  B+  B  B-  C+  C | 93 - 100  90 - 92  87 - 89  83 - 86  80 - 82  77 - 79  73 – 76 |
| C-  D  F | 70 - 72  60 - 69  0 – 59 |

**ABSENCES, LATE WORK, MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, and MAKE-UP EXAMS:**

1. Make-up exams, paper extensions, accommodations for missed class/participation, etc. will be administered only in the case of excused absences. Absences are considered excused if they result from religious observance, military duty, a medical or childcare emergency, a funeral, jury duty, or participation in an officially sanctioned university event (e.g. a sports meet). If you have missed or suspect you will miss a class for one of these reasons, it is your responsibility to notify me ASAP in order arrange for accommodations. Please note that I reserve the right to request verifying documentation for your absence, that I do not post powerpoint notes to Canvas nor distribute them via email (you should plan to see me during office hours in order to get caught up if you have missed class), and that make-up exams may be administered in a different format relative to the original.
2. If you miss class for a reason that is not listed above (e.g. oversleeping, going on a vacation, going to work, broken down vehicle, etc.), accommodations will be made only at my discretion.
3. Your essays are due at times I have specified, in the form I have specified. If you do not follow the directions (e.g. email me a paper that is due in hard copy form), I will mark your paper late. Late papers will be penalized 10% per day late, beginning one minute after the due date. Please note that I will not make exceptions for printer issues, internet outages, work, lacking money for printing on your FAU card, etc.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations: <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf>

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 203 (954-236-1222); or in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8585) —and follow all SAS procedures. For more information, go to <http://fau.edu/sas/>

**COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS) CENTER**

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

**TIMETABLE**

Depending on how the course develops, modifications to the syllabus might be needed. I will announce any deviations in class and/or through email. You should complete the reading listed in each box beforethat particular meeting.

**GETTING STARTED**

1/9: What is culture? Distinguishing subcultures, social words and idiocultures. No reading.

**THE AMERICAN TRADITION OF SUBCULTURE STUDIES**

1/11: Research Methods. Read Polsky, “Research Method, Morality and Criminology”

1/16: Strain Theory. Read Bukowski, “Ham on Rye”

1/18: Strain Theory. Silva, “Working Class Pains”

1/23: Case study: Teenage Satanists. Read Lowney, “Teenage Satanism as Oppositional Youth

Subculture”

**THE BRITISH TRADITION OF SUBCULTURE STUDIES**

1/25: Lecture on British subculture studies. Read Cohen, “Subcultural Conflict”

1/30: Lecture on post-war British subcultures. Read Haenfler, “Skinheads” and view [“Quadrophenia”](https://www.amazon.com/Quadrophenia-Phil-Daniels/dp/B00G4I6C0O/ref=tmm_aiv_swatch_1?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=)

at home.

2/1: Incorporation. Read Hebdige, “The Meaning of Style”

2/6: Incorporation. Film: “[Merchants of Cool](http://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cvideo_work%7C2339567)”

**POST-SUBCULTURE STUDIES**

2/8: Lecture on post-subcultural theory and postmodern subcultures. Read Bennett & Kahn

Harris, “Introduction” in *After Subculture*

2/13: Hipness, status and subcultural capital. Read Thornton, “The Social Logic of Subcultural

Capital”

2/15: Review for Exam. Discuss group observation and film analysis.

2/20: **MIDTERM EXAM**

**RACE AND RACISM IN SUBCULTURES**

2/22: Race as subcultural capital. Film: [*Afro-Punk*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fanQHFAxXH0)*.*

2/27: Race and cultural appropriation. Read Harkness, “Hip Hop Culture and America’s Most

Taboo Word”

3/1: Race and cultural appropriation. Read Rodriguez, “Color-Blind Ideology and the Cultural

Appropriation of Hip Hop.”

3/6: **SPRING BREAK**

3/8: **SPRING BREAK**

3/13: Race and hate-based subcultures. Read Blee, “Becoming a Racist” and view

[“Charlottesville: Race and Terror”](https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/charlottesville-race-and-terror-vice-news-tonight-on-hbo/59921b1d2f8d32d808bddfbc?playlist=59925430603c8b495bbbdbe2) at home.

**GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN SUBCULTURES**

3/15: Race and masculinity in subcultures. Read Rios, “The Consequences of the Criminal Justice

Pipeline on Black and Latino Masculinity”

3/20: Girls’ resistance. Read Schilt, “I’ll Resist You with Every Inch and Every Breath.”

3/22: Case study: drag culture. Film: [*Paris is Burning*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hedJer7I1vI).**Group observation paper due.**

3/27: Drag culture. Read Rupp and Taylor, “Drag Kings and Drag Queens”

**AUTHENTICITY, RITUAL and SUBCULTURAL IDENTITY**

3/29: Postmodern identity, the body and ritual. Read Kang and Jones, “Why Do People Get Tattoos.” 4/3: Ecstatic ritual and selfhood in subculture. Read Lewin, “Embodying the Postmodern Self.”

4/5: Edgework in subcultures. Read Shay, “Virtual Edgework: Negotiating Risk in Role-Playing

Gaming” and view [“The Mystical Universe of Magic”](https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/magic-the-gathering-inside-the-world39s-most-played-trading-card-game/55e0cf3edef5f894792e5d60) at home.

**SUBCULTURES, SOCIAL PROTEST, AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

4/10: Lifestyle movements. Read Cherry, “I was a Teenage Vegan”

4/12: Lifestyle movements. Read George, “Organizing a Coincidence”

4/17: Leftist counterculture. Read Storey, “Rockin’ Hegemony” and view

“[The Weather Underground](https://vimeo.com/33006390)” at home.

4/19: Subcultural scenes. ReadAnderson, “Understanding the Alteration and Decline of a Music

Scene.”

4/24: **READING DAY. Film analysis due via Canvas by 11:59 pm.**

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, April 26th, 1:15 – 3:45 pm.**