

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
Department of Sociology
Sociology 105b UW 001
Sociology of Youth
Winter 2003

Instructor: Prof. J. Côté
Office: 5401 SSC
Office Hours: T 10:00-12:00 AM
Class times: T 3:00-5:00 2024 SSC
R 4:00-5:00 3028 SSC

Course Description:

This course provides a general coverage of the literature and issues related to the sociological study of adolescence and youth. The course begins with a coverage of public perceptions of youth, the major sociological theories, and perspectives on how this period of life has changed throughout history. The course then examines the political economy of youth in terms of mass education, youth culture, gender differences, and generational relations. The common theme from the political economy perspective is youth as a socially constructed category that serves dominant interests at a macro level, with both positive and negative consequences for youth at a micro level.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to read in preparation for lectures as specified in the lecture outline. Readings will be explained in class to some extent, but there will also be extensive class discussions of material in the readings based on the assumption that students have prepared for class. Accordingly, the more students prepare for class by **reading the relevant material in advance**, the higher the quality of classes and the more everyone will benefit personally and intellectually from the course.

Two exams will determine the final course grade. If class size permits, they will be a mix of multiple choice and short essay. However, if the class gets too large, the exams may be entirely multiple choice. Exams will be based on lecture material, class discussions, and assigned readings. The first will be given in class on February 11 and will be worth 40% of the course grade. The final will be worth 60%.

Required Readings:

Custom Course Readings: Readings in the Sociology of Youth W2003, available at Inprint in the UCC.

LECTURE OUTLINE

Week 1: Course Introduction and Overview**"The lost children of Rockdale Country"**

- Read:**
- (1) Schultze, "The Big Chill."
 - (2) Steinberg, "We know some things: parent-adolescent relationships in retrospect and prospect."

Week 2 & 3: Images of Youth & Formal Academic Theories

- Read:**
- (1) Wyn & White, "The concept of youth."
 - (2) Côté, "The discovery of youth."

Week 4 & 5: Political Economy Changes in the Transition to Adulthood

- Read:**
- (1) Allahar & Côté, "The disenfranchisement of youth," pp. 121 - 141.
 - (2) Côté, "The Brave New Society," pp. 155-171.

Week 6: Midterm (February 11)**Week 7-8: The Political Economy of Education**

- Read:**
- (3) Levine & Cureton, "Academics: Search for an insurance policy."
- Read:**
- (4) Steinberg, "Beyond the classroom."

Week 9-10: The Political Economy of Youth Culture**"The merchants of cool"**

- Read:**
- (1) Côté, "The Brave New Society," pp. 171-186.
- Read:**
- (2) Côté, & Allahar, "Youth: The disinherited generation," pp. 247 - 264.
 - (3) Davis, "The gang as pseudo community."
 - (4) Côté, "A social history of youth in Samoa."

Week 11: The Political Economy of Gender

- Read:**
- (1) Côté, "The conquest of youth."

**Week 12: Cohort and Generational Shifts
in the Political Economy**

Read: (1) Côté & Allahar, 2001. "Youth: The disinherited generation," pp. 264 - 277.

Read: (2) Schneider & Stevenson, "The importance of aligned ambitions."

Week 13: The Future

Read: (1) Allahar & Côté, "The disenfranchisement of youth," pp. 141 - 148.

Read: (2) The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs, "Youth in progress: The transition to adulthood in Sweden in the 1990s."

Read: (3) Stanford Center on Adolescence, "Creating citizenship."