

Department of Sociology
THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

Soc 582b: Sociology of Youth
Winter 2003

Prof. James Côté

W 9:00-12:00 5406

Office hours are T 10:00-12:00 in 5401 SSC.

Course Description:

The Sociology of Youth is a rapidly growing area of study in Europe, North America, Australia, and many countries in the British Commonwealth. Likewise, the literature is burgeoning, both in terms of journal articles ([Sociology Abstracts](#) lists over 19,000 hits since 1994 for the keyword “youth”) and books (UWO lists 2400 holdings relevant to “youth” published since 1995 and over 9000 relevant to “adolescence and youth”). This area cuts across all areas of sociology, including those in our own department like demography, health, gender, family, and social class.

We will cover a range of topics, but have some flexibility to accommodate the interests of specific students enrolled in the course. The preliminary list of topics below specifies two topics per week, with additional topics that can be covered if one or more students have a special interest in them. Thus, the actual topics we cover this term will be determined during the first class on the basis of discussions of student interests.

Students wishing a primer of this area can audit my undergraduate Sociology of Youth course (Soc. 105a/b).

Recommended Reading:

Tyyska, V., Long and winding road : adolescents and youth in Canada today Canadian Scholars' Press, 2001. HQ799.C2T99 2001 (Amazon.ca)

Jeylan T. Mortimer, Reed W. Larson (eds.) The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood Cambridge University Press, 2002. HQ796.C4514 (Amazon.ca)

Grade Breakdown:

Participation:	20%
Essay:	50%
Presentation(s):	30%

Expectations regarding course involvement

My role: My role in this course is as **your guide**. This is a fast-growing area in which teaching requires a breadth of knowledge acquired from years of involvement in the field. In addition, to being a major contributor to this area, I am currently a member of the Executive Board of the International Sociological Association Research Committee (34) on the Sociology of Youth, and Editor of the International Bulletin of Youth Research. In these positions, I know and am in touch with the lead researchers in the world in this area of study. Accordingly, I can direct inquiries about research matters, make contacts for students, help students make arrangements to attend key conferences (including making presentations), and point the way to publishing in academic journals.

In spite of my background in this area, I will not be assigning material that I have written. Students react in different (sometimes negative) ways to being assigned material that their professors have written, so I will not bring my published works directly into the course. Students are free to read them on their own, and should do so if the material is relevant to their papers, but the class is off the hook in terms of discussing it in my presence.

The grades I assign are meant to provide honest feedback on an actual performance (and are not merely subjective evaluations of the student as a person). My ability to make judgements in this regard has been nurtured over some 20 years of teaching and guiding students. However, over that time, grades have undergone significant inflation related to the competitive pressures associated with career mobility. As a result, some instructors grade on a system that more highly rewards students, but may give false feedback as to actual performance and underlying abilities. Other professors grade on the old system, providing feedback based on standards of excellence, but some students can resent this if they have been given false feedback in the past.

I grade on the old system, but I make it very clear what performance has to be achieved to receive an “A” or “A+.” These standards are specified below for each component of the course. If you will not be satisfied with anything less than an “A” but do not feel you can measure up to my criteria, this is not the course for you.

Expectations regarding students’ roles:

Participation in seminar discussions: Students are expected to come to class each week prepared to engage in the designated discussion topics. The designated readings are the primary responsibility of the presenter, but **all** class members are expected to have a working familiarity with them such that they can engage in in-depth discussions.

I cannot stress enough that simply sitting in on classes without contributing will not yield a high participation grade. Similarly, contributions to discussions are expected to be thoughtfully derived from assigned readings and course themes, and not merely ad

hoc opinions. This is a seminar course in which students learn how to discuss complex material in group settings. The instructor is there only as a guide, and should not be relied upon to “rescue” discussions..

The final participation grade is determined after all classes have been held. Student performance is assessed using the following guidelines. (However, note that marks will be lost for unnecessarily dominating class discussion - assessment is of quality, not quantity of contributions. In addition, simply bringing in ideas from other courses does not constitute “independent thought” or “higher-order reflection.”)

A+ range = consistent exemplary contributions that go beyond assigned readings, bringing in higher-order reflections relevant to the topic at hand;

A range = thoughtful contributions with ALL comments based on a close reading of, and reflection on, the assigned readings (vs. ad hoc opinions based solely on personal experience);

B range = regular contributions with SOME comments based on a close reading of, and reflection on, the assigned readings (vs. ad hoc opinions based on personal experience);

C range = regular attendance and some opinion-based contribution

Presentations. In making presentations, students are expected to summarize the assigned reading(s) for a discussion topic and then to lead the discussion, introducing questions or issues that frame the material. Readings for each topics will not normally exceed a total of 30 - 40 pages. We will "cycle" everyone through the discussion topics throughout the course, with the number of presentations depending on the level of enrollment in the course. In the class schedule below, two topics are listed per week, All students will have a say in which topics they present, to the extent that this is possible given the composition of the class. Everyone is free to bring in additional readings if they wish, and should provide these at least one week in advance.

To enhance this course as a professional learning experience, all class members will rate each presenter on a standardized sheet that I will provide (below). The completed rating sheets are to be put in my mail box by the next morning, at which time I will compile them into a report to be given to the presenter. All comments passed on to the presenter will be without attribution.

Essay. A 15-20 page essay should constitute a review and critical analysis of one of the topics covered in this course. The paper should note the accomplishments in the topic area, the strengths and limitations of the methodologies, and the foreseeable future in terms of how much interest the area will generate and the problems it might ameliorate. It is due one week after the last class. See the grading form below.

Topic outline with review readings

Week 1: Course Introduction and Overview

Course requirements and expectations
Student interests - topic selection
An overview of the sociology of youth
“The lost children of Rockdale County”

Topic Areas for Presentation

Week 2 - 3: What is “youth”?

- Overview

Tyyska, Vappu. Long and winding road: Adolescents and youth in Canada today, Toronto, Canadian Scholars Press, 2001, ch. 1.

- Anthropological views

Schlegel, Alice & Barry, Herbert. Adolescence: An anthropological inquiry. The Free Press, 1991. Ch 1 & 3

- Psychological views

Arnett, Jeffrey. “Emerging Adulthood.” American Psychologist, 55, 2000, 469-480.

- Sociological views

Wyn, Johanna & White, Rob. Rethinking youth, Sage, 1997, Introduction & Ch. 1 - “The concept of youth.”

- Critical views - assumptions challenged

Lapsley, Daniel, Enright, R.D. & Serlin, R.C. “Toward a theoretical perspective on the legislation of adolescence.” Journal of Early Adolescence, 5, 441-446.

AND/OR

Payne, Monica. “Limitations unlimited: Interrogating some finer points of the ‘scientific study’ of adolescence.” Journal of Youth Studies, 4, 175-194.

Week 4: Cultural Differences in the Experience of Youth

- Ethnic Differences

Condon, Richard. Inuit youth: Growth and change in the Canadian Arctic. Rutgers, 1987. Ch. 2 & 9

Gabor, Peter, Thibodeau, S., & Manychief, S. "Taking flight? The transition experiences of Native youth." In Burt Galaway & Joe Hudson. Youth in transition: perspectives on research and policy, Thompson, 1996, ch. 9.

- International Comparisons

Brown, Bradford & Larson, Reed W. "The Kaleidoscope of adolescence: Experiences of the world's youth at the beginning of the 21st Century." The World's Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the Globe Edited by B. Bradford Brown, Reed W. Larson, T. S. Saraswathi, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Week 5: Cohort & Generational Issues

- Adult-youth relationships

Schultze, Q. J. et al.. Dancing in the dark : youth, popular culture, and the electronic media, Eerdmans Pub. Co, Grand Rapids, MI, 1991, ch. 1.

- Current Cohort

Schneider, B. & Stevenson, D. The Ambitious Generation, Yale University Press, 1999, ch. 4 - "The importance of aligned ambitions."

Week 6: Identity Issues

- Pioneering work: Erikson

Erikson, Erik. "Late adolescence" (1956). In Stephen Schlein A way of looking at things: Selected papers from 1930 to 1980 Erik H. Erikson, Norton, 1987, 631-643..

Erikson, Erik. "Psychosocial identity." (1968). In Stephen Schlein A way of looking at things: Selected papers from 1930 to 1980 Erik H. Erikson, Norton, 1987, 675-684.

- Contemporary concerns: Postmodernism

Rattansi, A. & Phoenix, A. "Rethinking youth identities: Modernist and postmodernist frameworks." In Bynner, J., Chisholm, L., & Furlong, A. (Eds.). Youth, citizenship and social change in a European context. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1997.

Week 7: Family & Parenting

- Intergenerational relationships

Tyyska, Vappu. Long and winding road: Adolescents and youth in Canada today, Toronto, Canadian Scholars Press, 2001, ch. 4.

- Parenting Styles

Steinberg, L. "We know some things: parent-adolescent relationships in retrospect and prospect," Journal of Research on Adolescence, 11(1), 1-19.

Week 8: Health and Risk Factors

- Health Trends

Ozer, Elizabeth, MacDonald, T. & Irwin, C.E. "Adolescent health care in the United States," In The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson Cambridge University Press, 2002, Ch. 5 .

OR

Thiede Call, Kathleen. "Adolescent health and well-being in the Twenty-first century: A global perspective." Journal of Research on Adolescence, 12, 69-98.

- At-Risk Youth

McWhirter, Jeffries et al. At-risk youth: A comprehensive response Brooks/Cole, 1998, ch.1 & 11.

Tait, Gordon. Youth, sex, and government. Peter Lang, 2000, ch.3 "Governing the 'at-risk' youth"

Week 9 - 10 : Education & Work

- High School

Tyyska, Vappu. Long and winding road: Adolescents and youth in Canada today, Toronto, Canadian Scholars Press, 2001, ch. 2.

Steinberg, Lawrence. Beyond the classroom: Why school reform has failed and what parents need to do. Simon & Schuster, 1996, Ch. 1 & 4.

- University

Levine, Arthur & Cureton, J.S., When hope and fear collide, Jossey Bass, 1998, ch. 6 - "Academics: Search for an insurance policy."

- Education-Work Transition

King, Alan, & Peart, M. "Factors inhibiting the transition of youth to work and to adulthood." In Burt Galaway & Joe Hudson. Youth in transition: perspectives on research and policy, Thompson, 1996, ch. 18.

Alan Kerckhoff, "The transition from school to work" In The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson Cambridge University Press, 2002.

- Wages and Opportunities

Tyyska, Vappu. Long and winding road: Adolescents and youth in Canada today, Toronto, Canadian Scholars Press, 2001, ch. 3

Shanahan, Michael, Mortimer, J., & Kruger, H. "Adolescence and adult work in the twenty-first century. Journal of Research on Adolescence, 12, 99-120.

Week 11: Youth Culture

- **Peer and Media Influences**

Tyyska, Vappu. Long and winding road: Adolescents and youth in Canada today, Toronto, Canadian Scholars Press, 2001, ch. 6.

Davis, N. "The gang as pseudo community." Youth crisis: Growing up in the high-risk society. Westport, CT: Praeger, ch 9.

- **Critical Approaches**

Tait, Gordon. Youth, sex, and government. Peter Lang, 2000, ch. 1, "Beyond subcultures."

Week 12: Policy Issues

- **Positive Youth Development**

Catalano, Richard F., M. Lisa Berglund, Jeanne A. M. Ryan, Heather S. Lonczak, and J. David Hawkins "Positive Youth Development in the United States: Research Findings on Evaluations of Positive Youth Development Programs. with 4

commentaries and a response.” Prevention & Treatment, 5,
<http://journals.apa.org/prevention/> (via Weldon online)

Youniss, James & Allison Ruth. “Approaching policy for adolescent development in the 21st century.” In The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson Cambridge University Press, 2002, ch. 8 .

Week 13: The Future & Intergenerational Relations

Jeffrey Arnett “Adolescents in Western countries in the 21st century: Vast opportunities - for all?” In The World's Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the Globe edited by B. Bradford Brown, Reed W. Larson, & T. S. Saraswathi, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

- Intergenerational Justice

Lee, Daniel, Generations and the challenge of justice. University Press of America, 1996, Intro., ch. 1 & 2.

Other topics that can be covered if there is student interest:

Demographic Issues

Elizabeth Fussell & Margaret E. Greene “Demographic trends affecting youth around the world” The World's Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the Globe Edited by B. Bradford Brown, Reed W. Larson, T. S. Saraswathi, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Elizabeth Fussell “Youth in aging societies.” In The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Political Participation

Kimberlee, Richard. “Why don’t British young people vote at general elections” Journal of Youth Studies, 2002, 3, 85-98.

Youniss, James, et al. “Youth civic engagement in the twenty-first century.” Journal of Research on Adolescence, 2002, 12, 121-148.

Deviance Issues

Cullen, F.T. & Wright, J.P. "Criminal justice in the lives of American adolescents." In The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson Cambridge University Press, 2002.Ch 4, pp. 88-129.

Cognitive & Moral Development

Kegan, 1994. "The hidden curriculum of youth," Ch. 1 In over our heads pp. 15-36.

Gender Differences in the Experience of Youth

Varpalotai, Aniko. "Canadian girls in transition to womanhood." In Burt Galaway & Joe Hudson. Youth in transition: persepctives on research and policy, Thompson, 1996, ch. 10.

Huston, A.C. & Alvarez, M. "The socialization context of gender role development in early adolescence," in G. R. Adams, R. Montemayor and T. P. Gullotta (ed.), Biology of adolescent behavior and development (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990).

Hill, John & ME Lynch, "The intensification of gender-related role expectations during early adolescence," in J. Brooks-Gunn and A. C. Petersen (ed.), Girls at puberty: Biological and psychological perspectives (New York: Plenum, 1983).

Heilman, Elizabeth "The struggle for self: Power and identity in adolescent girls." Youth & Society, 30, 182-208.

Harris, Anita, Sinikka Aapola & Marnina Gonick. "Doing it differently: Youth women managing heterosexuality in Australia, Finland, and Canada. Journal of Youth Studies, 2000, 3, 373-388.

Global perspectives

T. S. Saraswathi and Reed Larson "Adolescents in global perspective: An agenda for social policy." The World's Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the Globe Edited by B. Bradford Brown, Reed W. Larson, T. S. Saraswathi, Cambridge University Press, 2002, ch 11.

Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson "Macrostructural changes and the reshaping of adolescence" In The changing adolescent experience : societal trends and the transition to adulthood edited by Jeylan T. Mortimer & Reed W. Larson Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Evaluation sheet for SOC 582 seminars.

Presenter's name: _____

Your name: _____

Criteria	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C
Comprehensiveness of reading review							
Insightfulness of questions							
Follow-up to class questions							
Ability to carry the class							
Overall assessment as a learning experience							

COMMENTS (use overleaf if needed):

Comprehensiveness of reading review:

Insightfulness of questions :

Follow-up to class questions :

Ability to carry the class :

Overall assessment as a learning experience:

Recommendations to improve future presentations:

Essay Grade Feedback for: _____ in Soc. 582

	Inadequate	Adequate	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
	- ↔ +	- ↔ +	- ↔ +	- ↔ +	- ↔ +
Style/organization/structure					
Grammar/spelling					
Review of relevant theory					
Discussion of methodologies					
Discussion of the future of the area					
Originality/insight					
Thesis development and defence					

Your overall grade is one of the following:

Outstanding - "A+": _____ you have written an essay that analytically is highly innovative and challenging, and extremely well written; truly outstanding ... suitable for submission to a journal with minor revisions

Excellent - "A": _____ analytically you have gone "beyond" the material, creating a synthesis of course material; and it is well written; clearly a step beyond the average quality for a paper written at this level ... suitable for the use in a graduate thesis

Satisfactory to Good - "B": _____ you have demonstrated a competent grasp in the independent conceptualisation of the material and did not make errors in its application; evidence of acceptable writing and conceptualization at the graduate level

"C": _____ you presented a basic "common sense" argument and/or summarized material without demonstrating an ability to independently conceptualize it; represents below average comprehension and writing ability at the graduate level

"D/F": _____ this paper is unacceptable as a submission in a graduate course.

Comments:

“Starter” book readings for various topics, available at Weldon Library

Demographic Issues

Bibby, R. W., Canada's teens: today, yesterday, and tomorrow. Stoddart, 2001. HQ799.C2B518

Wallace, C. & Stola, D. Patterns of migration in Central Europe. Palgrave, 2001. HB2068.7.A3P38

Wallace, C. & Kovatcheva, S. Youth in society: the construction and deconstruction of youth in East and West Europe. St. Martin's Press, 1998. HQ799.E9W35

Cohort & Generational Issues

Furlong, A. & Cartmel, F. Youth People and Social Change. Open University Press, 1997. HQ799.G7F86

Austin, J. & Willard N. M. Generations of youth: youth cultures and history in twentieth-century America. New York University Press, 1998. HQ796.G4173

Health and Risk Factors

Schulenberg, J., Maggs, J., & Hurrelmann, K. Health risks and developmental transitions during adolescence. Cambridge University Press, 1997. RJ47.53.H435

Dryfoos, J. G. Safe Passage: Making it Through Adolescence in a Risky Society. Oxford, 1998. HV1431.D794

Schulenberg, J., Maggs, J. L., Hurrelmann, K. Health risks and developmental transitions during adolescence. Cambridge University Press, 1997. RJ47.53.H435

Wilson, D. K., Rodrigue, J. R. and Taylor, W. C. Health-promoting and health-compromising behaviors among minority adolescents. American Psychological Association, 1997. RJ102.H438

Deviance Issues

Tanner, J. Teenage Troubles: Youth and Deviance in Canada. Nelson, 1996. HV9108.T35

Haugaard, J. J. Problematic Behaviors During Adolescence. McGraw-Hill, 2001. RJ506.B44 H28

Tatum, B. L. Crime, violence and minority youths. Ashgate, c2000. HV9069.T388

Hazlehurst, K. & Hazlehurst, C. Gangs and youth subcultures : international explorations. Transaction Publishers, 1998. HV6437.G35

Klein, M. W. The American street gang: its nature, prevalence, and control. Oxford University Press, 1995. HV6439.U5K58

Policy Issues

Lerner, R. M. America's Youth in Crisis: Challenges and Options for Programs and Policies. Sage, 1995. HQ796.L382

Zimring, F. E. American youth violence. Oxford University Press, 1998. HV9104.Z57

Williamson, H. Youth and policy : contexts and consequences: young men, transition and social exclusion. Ashgate, 1997. HQ799.G7W45

Gender Differences in the Experience of Youth

Johnson, N. G. , Roberts, M. C., & Worell, J. Beyond appearance: a new look at adolescent girls. American Psychological Association, 1999. HQ798.B43

Mazzarella, S. R. & Pecora, N. O. Growing up girl: popular culture and the construction of identity. P. Lang, 1999. HQ798.G77

O'Donnell, M. Uncertain masculinities : youth, ethnicity, and class in contemporary Britain. Routledge, 2000. HQ799.E52L656

Herdt G. Gay and lesbian youth. Harrington Park Press, 1989. HQ76.25.G38

Ethnic & Cultural Differences in the Experience of Youth

Helve, H. & Wallace, C. Youth, Citizenship and Empowerment. Ashgate, 2001. HQ799.2.P6Y63

Chisholm, L. Growing up in Europe: contemporary horizons in childhood and youth studies. Walter de Gruyter, 1995. HQ792.E8G76

Ghuman, P. A. Singh. Asian adolescents in the West. BPS Books, 1999. HQ799.G7G494

Hall, J. Canal Town youth: community organization and the development of adolescent identity. State University of New York Press, 2001. LC4069.3.H35

Herd, G. & Leavitt, S. Adolescence in Pacific Island societies. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998. GN663.A53

Contemporary Institutional Conditions

Youth Culture

Fornas, J. & Bolin, G. Youth Culture and Late Modernity. Sage, 1995. HQ796.Y5927

Bennett, A. Popular music and youth culture: music, identity and place. St. Martin's Press, 2000. ML3470.B45

McRobbie, A. Postmodernism and popular culture. Routledge, 1994. HM101.M364

Skelton, T. & Valentine, G. Cool places: geographies of youth cultures. Routledge, 1998. HQ796.C773

Epstein, J. S. Youth culture: identity in a postmodern world. Blackwell, 1998. HV1431.Y684

Youth & the Market Economy

Miles, S. Youth lifestyles in a changing world. Open University Press, 2000. HQ796.M54

Côté & Allahaar, Generation on Hold: Coming of Age in the Late Twentieth Century. Stoddart, 1994.

Côté, Arrested Adulthood, New York University Press, 2000.

Youth & the Family &/or Religion

Ancona, F. A. Crisis in America: father absence. Nova Science Publishers, 1998. HQ756.A57

Wallace, C. & Kovatcheva, S. Youth in society: the construction and deconstruction of youth in East and West Europe. St. Martin's Press, 1998. HQ799.E9W35

Youth & Education

Steinberg, L. Beyond the classroom: Why school reform has failed and what parents need to do. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. LC205.S74 1996

Youth & the Workplace

Crysdale, S. & MacKay, H. Youth's Passage Through School to Work. Thompson, 1994. HD6276.C33T63

Blanchflower, D. G. and Freeman, R. B. Youth employment and joblessness in advanced countries. University of Chicago Press, 2000. HD6270.Y674

The Future & Intergenerational Relations

Wyn, J. Rethinking youth. SAGE, 1997. HQ796.W95

Arber, G. and Attias-Donfut, C. The myth of generational conflict : the family and state in ageing societies. Routledge, 1999. HN380.Z9I585