In the current period a plethora of youth resistance actions, movements and subcultures have developed in response to socio-economic dislocations on a global scale. From rebellious students, youth riots in England to graffiti writers in Rio de Janeiro to politicized gangs in Quito and New York and the globalized Occupied Wall Street movement an endless range of symbolic and substantive responses by youth to their felt conditions of marginality can be observed and studied. In this seminar we will excavate this dynamic and fluid social field through focusing on theories and empirical studies that help to explain the continuity and discontinuity of youth social and cultural resistances over time. Questions of race/ethnicity, class, gender and age will be addressed as we trace the meanings and representations of youth reactions to industrial and post-industrial societies within and across their highly ambiguous political and cultural locations. Students will be expected to carry out small research projects that in some way reflect the transgressive practices, rituals and possibilities of youth in the late modern metropolis.
The seminar has two major goals: (i) to explore the range of sociological theories that explain youth social and cultural resistance, and (ii) to critically interpret the different forms that this resistance takes in the context of an evolving and highly contradictory transnationalist capitalist order. We will focus in particular on the origins of youth subcultures as they emerge during both modernity and late modernity and their construction within changing notions of criminal and non-criminal deviance.

Please note:

1. You will also have the opportunity to attend and present at the Critical Criminology Common Sessions that was formed more than two decades ago by Dutch prison abolitionists and will take place during April 29-May 2 at the University of Hamburg, Germany. This conference is student-oriented and is held every semester at one of the following universities: Athens, Thrace (Greece), Barcelona, Bologna (transitional status), Budapest, Erasmus (Rotterdam), CUNY (John Jay and the Graduate Center), Ghent (Belgium), Hamburg, Porto, Kent and Middlesex (UK).

Requirements

Students will read a broad sampling of empirical and theoretical works that have defined the U.S. and British traditions of subcultural studies, covering contributions from the Schools of Chicago and Birmingham (U.K.) to an emerging global literature on youth resistance, including works from Australia, Brazil, France, South Africa and Italy. A central question we will be addressing in this course is the degree to which youth subcultures are accommodationist, resistant and/or transformative. Students will be required to complete a take-home midterm exam (30% of grade), summarize and critique the readings in class (20%), and write a term research paper (approximately 5,000 words) which will be presented to the class towards the end of the semester (50%).

Student Skills

Aside from becoming proficient in various subcultural discourses and figuring out that the social relations in this upside down, crisis-ridden world are undergoing rapid transformation students will learn how to critically analyze, think through research questions, write with a sociological imagination and design a project that could eventually be the basis of a dissertation. In short, students will do what’s expected of graduate students.

Texts


**Recommended:**


All other articles are either on electronic reserve at John Jay Library (see designated course code) or at the Mina Rees library which is designated by ERes. Where there is nothing designated for an article I have asked the library to find it and put it on electronic reserve. I have asked the Mina Rees for copies of all the books to be on reserve. Regarding the videos – some of them we will watch in class and others will be on reserve, depending on time constraints.

**Schedule of Classes and Readings**

**Part One - Theories of Subcultures and Resistance: From the Age of Reason to the Age of Punishment**

Lecture 1: Introduction and Task Assignments: Theories of Resistance


Read:
Required - Gelder part 1; Clifford Shaw’s “The Jack-Roller: A Delinquent Boy’s Own Story” chapter 1 (JJCRJ804); Frederic Thrasher’s “The Gang” chapter 1 (JJCRJ804 and in Gelder: 218-227); “Chicago Criminologists,” British Journal of Criminology, 1976 (16)1: 1-17.

Recommended:

Lecture 3: U.S. Liberal/Radical Youth Deviance Studies.

Read:

Recommended:

Lecture 4: Deviance Studies Meet Gramsci: The Birmingham School

Read:
Required – Gelder, part 2; David Downes’ “The Delinquent Solution” chapter 5 (JJCCCRJ804); Brotherton and Barrios chapter 4.

Lecture 5: Left Neo-Realism and Beyond Birmingham.

Read:

Read:

Recommended:
Jay Macleod’s “Ain’t No Makin’ It” chapters 1-3 & 11 ; Michael Males’ “Scapegoat Generation” chapters 1 and 9..

Lecture 7: Youth and Resistance in Late Modernity: Agency, History and the Rupture

Read:

Recommended:

Take-Home Mid-Term

Part Two - New Urban Frontiers: Youth Acting and Being Represented on the Global Stage

Lecture 8: Youth Flows in Comparative Contexts

Read:
Required –Hagedorn A World of Gangs (2011); G. Pleyers Alter-Globalization (2010); Norma Mendoza-Denton Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice Among Latina Youth Gangs, pages 1-41. Dos Santos, chapter 4 (GTS); Stephenson, chapter 5 (GTS);
Hallsworth and Ransom, chapter 2 (GTS). Paul Mason’s sociological reporting see.. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/feb/05/arab-spring-global-revolution;

Recommended:

Documentary (selected parts): “Fruits of War.”

Lecture 9: New/Old Urban Frontiers – Race, Class and Gender in the Life-Worlds of Gangs and Street Organizations

Read:

Recommended:
Tom Hayden’s “Street Wars” chapters 2, 6 and 9; Ric Curtis (G & S); Peter Marsh (Gelder and Thornton); www.gangresearch.com

Documentary: “Black and Gold” by Big Noise Productions (special guest Antonio Fernandez)

Lecture 10: Whiteness in Dystopia

Read:
Required - Donna Gaines “Teenage Wasteland”; Ralph Larkin (GTS); Randy Blazak “Ethnic Envy: How Teens Construct Whiteness in Globalized America” (GTS); Pete Simi and Barbara Bretts “An Extreme Response to Globalization: the Case of Racist Skinhead Youth” (GTS); Michael Flynn (GTS); Mark Hamm “Hammer of the Gods Revisited” (JCRJ804).

Part Three: Disparate Resistances: Place, Performance and Epistemology.

Lecture 11:

Read:
Required - Elana Zilberg Space of Detention (2011) Intro and chapters six and seven; John Leonisa Ardizone “Motivating and Supporting activist Youth: A View from Non-
formal Settings” (GTS); Finkelstein and Curtis (GTS); David Harvey “Rebel Cities (2012)” chapters 1, 5, 6, 7.

Recommended: Jean Skandlyn et al “Integrating Interventions: Outreach and Research among Street Youths in the Rockies” (GTS);

Lecture 12: Getting High But Not So Dry.

Read:

Recommended:

Lecture 13: Music, Movin’ and Stylin’.

Read:
Required – Geld Mayer part 7; Jeff Chang’s “Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop” (all); Tricia Rose’s “Black Noise” chapters 2 and 3; Robin Kelley’s “Kickin’ reality, kickin’ ballistics, gangsta rap and post-industrial Los Angeles” in “Race Rebels”; Juan Flores’ “Puerto Rocks: New York Ricans Stake their Claim” in “From Bomba to Hip-Hop”; part 5 in Gelder. Paul Gilroy “Jewels Brought from Bondage”...chapter 3 from The Black Atlantic (1993).

Recommended:
Murray Foreman’s “The Hood Comes First”; Rap Music and Street Consciousness by Cheryl L. Keyes. Chicago: University of Illinois. 2004; Chapters 1 & 9 in William Perkins’ “Droppin’ Science”; see Alix Sharkey on “The Meaning of Cool” (JJCCRJ804 ERes); In Gelder see Hebdige: pp288-298; MacDonald: pp. 312-325; Borden: pp. 256-270.

See also documentaries: “Style Wars” and “From Mambo to Hip Hop” (Henry Chalfant et al) and listen to this... http://soundcheck.wnyc.org/2012/nov/28/bronx-gangs-elusive-record-resurfaces-four-decades-later/

Student Presentations

Lecture 14: Resistance in Social Science
Read:

Required – D. Conquergood “Interventions and Radial Research,” The Drama Review, 46,2 (Summer), 2002; Brotherton “Methodological Notes” (to be emailed); Fine, Torre, Boudin et al. “Participatory Action Research: From Within and Beyond Prison Bars” (on web); Juris and Khasnabish 2013 “Ethnography and Activism within Networked Spaces of Transnational Encounter” in “Insurgent Encounters…” pp1-36. (Duke University Press).

Student Presentations