Course Goals
How do you study something as nebulous as “youth”? Youth culture in America is really a pantheon of subcultures, each with its distinct focal concerns. This class is designed for sociology majors and graduate students with this question in mind. The most important aspect of this course will be methodology, how sociologists do their research. Students will learn about ethnomethodology, the study of the methods of everyday living practices of people in society. Field experience will be gained when you create an ethnograph of your own. We will also delve into the science of semiotics, the linguistic field that tries to make sense out of how culture is created. The ultimate goal of this class is to give you a deep appreciation for the experience of "youth" in American culture. The primary goal of this class is to give you a research experience that will prepare you for writing a masters thesis.

Student Evaluation
As this class is a unique experiment in post-modernist learning, it is designed to give you as much intellectual involvement as possible from many non-traditional sources. The expectations are high (this is a 400/500 level class) and your final grade rests on your performance in the following areas:

Journals (30%)
You will have weekly writing assignments to be kept in a personal journal. These assignments will range from thought pieces, several off-campus expeditions (for example, an analysis of a scene at a Portland music club) to film reviews.

Ethnogram (30%)
After we begin to discuss ethnography, you will begin your own field research. Choose a specific youth subculture on or off campus (for example, Krishnas, skaters or homeless youth) and, on a specified level, penetrate the group to study the style, dynamics and behavior. This paper is designed to be a rehearsal for a Masters thesis. Your final paper will be 25-30 pages.

Exams (20%)
Exams are an unfortunate reality. There was a time when scholarship was taken seriously and exams weren't needed. I think this was around a thousand years ago. Our two exams will be on Wed. **April 17** and Wed. **May 15.** Make-up exams (all essay) must be scheduled in advance. The final exam period (**June 12, 12:30**) will be used to discuss the ethnograms. Attendance is mandatory.

**Quizzes (10%)**

Short 1-2 question quizzes will be scattered throughout the quarter. These in-class quizzes will be based on the weekly reading assignments and your ethnograms.

**Class Attendance and Participation (10%)**

This is a methods course, not a cool spring blow-off class. Attendance is mandatory. **You get four (4) absences.** If you miss more than four classes, you **fail** the course. If you miss exactly four classes, your final letter grade will be lowered one letter (ex. B to C). There are no excuses, only choices. So if you think you're going to need a few days for some brain surgery or someone in your family is going bye-bye or you're on the PSU Bowling Team, you better parcel out those three days carefully. Students are expected to keep up with the readings. This is important for class discussion. Students called on to address a reading who aren't prepared will be marked down. Late assignments are worth 10% less each weekday they are past the due date. **Assignments over a week late will not be accepted.**

**Student expectations**

Because of the freshness and large amount of material to cover, the classroom discourse should be intense. Hopefully the lectures will inspire lively discussions. The solid reading load is essential and additional readings will be provided to you. But more learning comes from participation than regurgitation, so you should use all the resources available to this class, including your own life experiences. We are going to try to break as many molds as possible and still cover some important ground. Your commitment and input are crucial. This is a rare opportunity to learn qualitative methodology and apply it to a world very close by, youth culture. Let's rock.

**Incompletes**

We all have it rough at times. That’s why they call it the blues. Incompletes are no longer offered. If you cannot complete the course you can take the “F” and retake the course in the Spring of 2014.

**Classroom etiquette** Coming to class late is rude and disruptive to students and the professor. Please be here on time and turn off cell phones. **Laptops and iPads are not allowed to be used during class.** This classroom is an open forum for all opinions and positions but sexist and bigoted comments will be snarled at.

**510 students**

The expectations for the grad students in this class will be the same, except that their ethnograms will be more detailed and they will be given discussion leadership roles.
Texts

(S) Williams, J. Patrick (2011) *Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts*

(FH) Ferrell & Hamm (1998) *Ethnography at the Edge: Crime, Deviance and Field Research*


Additional readings to be handed out in class or put on reserve.

**Course plan of attack**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Readings:</th>
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| April 1 | My Generation - defining "deviant youth subcultures" | S: Ch. 1  
  L: Prologue  
  FH: Foreword (Adlers) |
| 8       | Ethnomethodology 1 - Research Roles  
  - guided conversations | L: Ch. 1  
  S: Ch. 2  
  FH: 2-19 (Ferrell/Hamm) |
| 15      | Ethnomethodology 2 - Logging Data  
  - field ethics | S: Ch. 3  
  L: Ch. 2  
  FH: 205-251 (Tunnel, Lyng) |
| 22      | Ethnomethodology 3 - content analysis  
  - coding data | L: Ch. 3  
  FH: 20-42 (Ferrell)  
  S: Ch. 4 |
| 29      | Ethnomethodology 4 - writing analysis | S: Ch. 5  
  FH: 44-85 (Fleisher, Arrigo)  
  L: Ch. 4 |
| May 6   | Semiotics - post-modern analysis of subcultural forms | S: Ch. 6  
  L: Ch. 5  
  FH: 132-145 (Kane) |
| 13      | Cultural diffusion and the commodification of rebellion - Marx and race in America | L: Ch. 6  
  FH: 87-110 (Kraska)  
  S: Ch. 7 |
| 20      | Feminist theory and the analysis of gender in subcultures | FH: 146-158 (Mattley)  
  L: Ch. 7  
  S: Ch. 8 |
Criminological theory and delinquent subcultures
(No class Monday – Memorial Day)

June 3 "British" structural theory and the role of class
FH: 254-272 (Hamm/Ferrell)

June 12 (12:30) Discussion of ethnograms and celebration of youth rites of passage.

"Life is a drink and you get drunk when you're young." - Paul Weller/The Jam
"Despite all my rage, I am still just a rat in a cage." - Billy Corgan/Smashing Pumpkins

“It’s a big world. It’s easy to get lost in it.” – Justin Bieber/Muppet