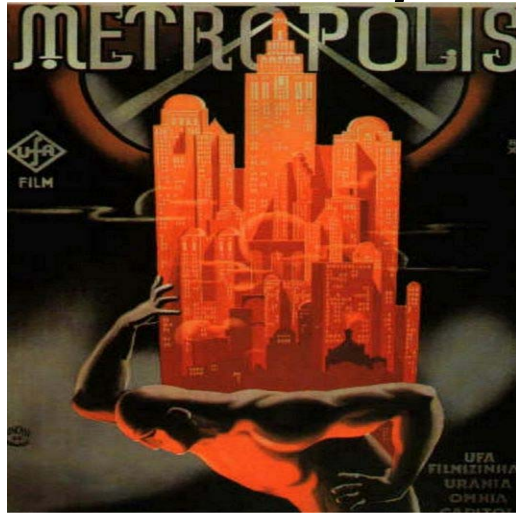


Bellevue Community College



SOC 265A (5870), The Urban Community, 5 Credits
Spring 2008: March 31st – June 10th
Daily 10:30 – 11:20 am, N-208

Sara Sutler-Cohen, Ph.D. ssutler@bcc.ctc.edu 425-564-5722

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 – 2:30 & Fridays, 12:30 – 1:30, D110-I

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course takes the Urban Center as its focus of sociological interrogation in order to better understand the many complexities of the culture of city life over time in America. The City will also be looked upon as a metaphor for social change, public life, conflict, order, and the history in which we create and engage. The city is a social, cultural, historical, and political phenomenon that changes as quickly as societies may “naturally” shift. We’ll look at urban renewal, architecture, immigrant diasporic identities, the culture of city labor, gentrification, suburbanization, the arts, urban sprawl, etc., paying close attention to wealth, poverty, crime, homelessness, family, class, etc. In addition, we will use sociological tools to interrogate the relationship between mass culture and society, with a goal of understanding popular culture’s role in strengthening (or eroding) city life. Course concepts will be demonstrated through lectures, readings, multi-media presentations, and library research.

- Please note that you’re required to go into the city of Seattle about once a week.

“The reality is it’s up to you guys to figure out how the media works and break through.”

– Claudia Dreifus

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we sometimes talk about provocative material. Please be advised that, when we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it’s an opportunity for learning. You may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please know, however, that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or classroom climate, feel free to speak with me about it right away.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email or come to see me during office hours. Emergency preparedness is important! If you need course modifications, adaptations, or accommodations because of a disability, I can refer you to our Disability Resource Center (DRC). If you prefer, you may contact them directly by going to B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their website at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/>

EXPLORE THE LMC! BCC's Library and Media Center is at your fingertips! I *strongly* encourage you to visit the Library at least once a week, but you can also access it via the web. Talk to a Reference Librarian at the Library (D-126), by calling (425)564-6161, or by email bccref@bcc.ctc.edu.

Main Library Media Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/>
For the LMC online catalog: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/catalogs.html>
For article databases: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/periodicals.html>

READING REQUIREMENTS:

- *The Urban Sociology Reader*. Edited by Jan Lin and Christopher Mele
- *Real Change News*, available in Seattle (see <http://www.realchangenews.org>)
- Handouts and articles

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Any current pocket Dictionary of the English Language
- Any current Sociology Dictionary
- *A Writer's Reference, 6th Ed.* By Diana Hacker. See the companion website here: <http://www.dianahacker.com/>

LEARNING AND COURSE OUTCOMES: Upon your dedicated participation and subsequent completion of this course, you will:

- Demonstrate a general knowledge and comprehension of how our experiences in city life vary from one another, and of how some folks perceive those experiences.
- Examine how the city has been socially constructed as well as examine the social construction of The City itself. Issues of class, race, and gender are also fully integrated throughout as the course examines how economic status has affected identity and power structures within urban cultural identity.
- Gain an understanding of the structural components of The City with a focus on city planning and architecture and how these components affect the building of communities in urban centers.
- Develop an understanding of the effect cities and city planning has on poverty and homelessness.



GENERAL RULES & EXPECTATIONS:

- Attend all class meetings.
- Complete readings and homework assignments *on time*.
- More than **four** unexcused absences or late attendances will lower your grade, and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with me *prior to* the absence or tardy, unless in an emergency. Excused absences included doctor's visits, family emergencies, and sometimes work-related issues.
- **All** electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom at **all** times. This includes cell phones, blackberries, laptops, etc. If you need a laptop to take notes, I will need verification.
- Emailed assignments are not accepted, unless you arrange it with me prior to the assignment deadline.
- Late work is accepted, but 10% of the grade is taken off for each day your work is late **under all circumstances**. Make-up quizzes are not allowed, unless your absence is excused. Exceptions sometimes happen, but you need to discuss that with me privately.
- I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Side-talking and whispering is disruptive to the class as a whole as well as to individual students. This is not acceptable in my classroom, so I insist that you refrain from it. Continued disrespectful behavior in class may result in your being asked to leave and will result in your participation credit lowering.
- You are responsible for your own learning in the classroom. If you miss class, please connect with your colleagues to find out what you missed.
- There are **no extra credit assignments** for this class. Please turn in your work on time and ask questions when you have them.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Coursework consists of weekly homework assignments, exams (no Final Exam), and one major group research assignment, which will culminate into a presentation at the end of the course. There are job assignments for students uncomfortable with public speaking.

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:

<u>Participation:</u>	150
<u>Homework:</u>	400
<u>Exams:</u>	200
<u>Research & Presentation:</u>	250
<u>Total:</u>	1000

The Fine Print (or, what I really mean by that table above):

Participation:

- Come to class and be *on time*
- Provoke energetic discussion, speak out, and listen actively
- Work diligently and respectfully in your groups
- **Always** bring your readings to class with notes for discussion
- Look up words you don't understand or know
- Ask lots of questions
- Think critically about the world around you

Exams, randomly delivered and randomly scored: Exams cover everything up through the week of the test and will usually include multiple choice and short-answer questions (either or both). Your responses should be clear and concise. Your short-answer responses must range from no less than one full (four-sentence) paragraph, to three full paragraphs. Questions are based on readings, in-class discussion, and lecture material. Information about point distribution will be on each exam.

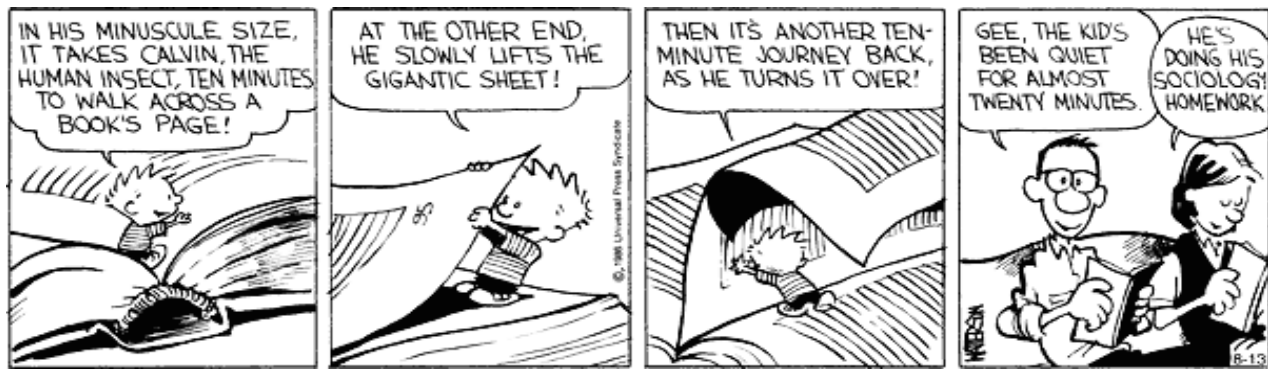
Research Project and Group Presentation: Your project will include research, short papers (1 – 2 pages), and a final Group Presentation. You will be asked to study a section of Seattle and present your findings at the end of the course. I will provide a folder for this project so that when you turn it in, all notes and reports remain in one place. I will ask for the folders at random points throughout the quarter, so be sure to keep it up to date and always bring it to class. We'll go over some ideas in the second week of classes.

For all of your written work:

Please submit proofread work *only*. Sloppy writing will be returned for a rewrite once and docked 10%. Rewritten work is expected by the following class meeting. Your font should be Times, 12 pts, double-spaced with a 1" margin all around. Your work *must* be cited using either MLA style, and you must always, *always* give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Even when you don't quote directly, give credit where credit is due. Title pages are not counted as page numbers due. Similarly with bibliographies, these are not counted as page numbers due. If you decide to place your personal and class information on the first page of your paper instead (which is fine), please do not take up more than for single-spaced lines at the top right or left corner of the page.

Written work is evaluated on:

- ✓ Content
 - Fulfilling the assignment.
 - Developing your argument and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument.
 - Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.
- ✓ Writing Style
 - Excellent command of the written English language. In other words, most excellent grammar. **NOTE: If you struggle with grammar and spelling or are an ESL student, please let me know! I'm happy to work with you and point you in the right direction.**
 - Clarity of thought.
 - Good organization and attention to detail.
 - Persuasiveness of your argument/s.
 - Creativity. Make it an interesting read!
 - PROOFREAD your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in.
 - Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different set of discussions. ☺



Grading:

90-100 = A. The A paper is coveted. It's a paper that shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that demonstrates your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your "writing voice." That is, I want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another.

80-89 = B. The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and/or media and/or lecture material as you could be. I should see that you're being challenged and that you're struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C. The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

60-69 = D. Ah, the D. D is for "Don't be Discouraged." I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. A D paper is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material and there you're not responding to the questions raised in class. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A D and below may be resubmitted once during the quarter. I enter the better grade.)

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY: We will set the rhythm of the class in the first couple of weeks. I envision a learning community, one in which I am a participant as well. I am a firm believer in being a lifelong learner and to that end I often carry away a lot more information from students than I ever expect. I am most interested, for the purposes of this class, to see how well we can all wrap our minds around the idea of thinking critically about the various issues and themes presented about the social world in which we live. You should expect to be exposed to new and various ways of thinking and knowing. As a learning community, we will be helping one another think through all of the ideas that connect back to course themes.

When you don't see your own images through the media or in books, you start thinking you're weird, and your self-esteem gets bruised.

- Francisco Alarcón, poet and director of Spanish for Native Speakers, UC Davis

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (ALWAYS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

<p><u>WEEK:</u> DATES AND THEMES</p>	<p><u>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:</u> READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES VARY BUT ARE ALWAYS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS</p>
<p>ONE March 31st – April 2nd No class April 3rd and 4th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Introduction to the course City Dweller and The Self The Sociological Imagination The Architecture of City Life, Urban Spaces, and Community</p>	<p><u>Readings (please have your reading done by Friday this week only):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Urban Sociology Reader (Reader):</i> "Introduction," "Community and Society," "The Metropolis and Mental Life" <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the syllabus and write a 1-2 page commentary on what you think the three most important points are, and why. • Write a 1-2 page commentary on The Sociological Imagination. Include an example of how you might use it in studying the city. <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> "Perhaps the world's second worst crime is boredom. The first is being a bore." - Jean Baudrillard</p>
<p>TWO April 7th – 11th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Which comes first: Culture or Society? Is Culture a What or a Who? Urbanism and Community, Cont'd</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader:</i> "Urbanism as a Way of Life," "Urbanism and Suburbanism as Ways of Life: A Reevaluation of Definitions," "Theories of Urbanism" <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to your assigned Seattle Neighborhood for 2 hours and observe. Provide an account of what you notice people doing in pairs, groups, and individually. Be respectful and discreet. <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> "Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible." - Frank Zappa</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WEEK:</u> DATES AND THEMES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:</u> READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES VARY BUT ARE ALWAYS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS</p>
<p>THREE April 14th – 18th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Urban Sprawl The Natural City Ecological Forces of The City</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader</i>: Part II: The Form and Function of Cities • <i>Real Change</i> Interview Section <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a 1-2 page commentary on your <i>Real Change</i> article <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “Books are funny little portable pieces of thought.” - Susan Sontag</p>
<p>FOUR April 21st – 25th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Homelessness Difference and Inequality Race and Class Public Health Wealth</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader</i>: Part III: Inequality and Social Difference • <i>Real Change</i> Community Section <p><u>Film:</u> “Dark Days”</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work: Bibliography and Annotations • Write a 1-2 page commentary on your <i>Real Change</i> article <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “All you touch and all you see is all your life will ever be.” -- Roger Waters</p>
<p>FIVE April 28th – May 2nd <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Intersectionality: Race, Class, and Gender Queering space in The City The Glass Ceiling and The Second Shift</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader</i>: Part IV: Gender and Sexuality <p><u>Film:</u> “It Was A Wonderful Life”</p> <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website Evaluation (see handout) • Write up from each group member on progress • Check out the website: Poor News Network: http://www.poormagazine.org/ and write one discussion question for class on Friday <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “College isn't the place to go for ideas.” - Helen Keller</p>
<p>SIX May 5th – 9th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> The concept of a global city The “outsider” in the city Revitalization and Ethnic Spaces</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader</i>: Part V: “Globalization and Urban Change • <i>Real Change</i>, News Section <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come up with two discussion questions based on your <i>Real Change</i> readings this term. <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.” - Alex Haley</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WEEK:</u> DATES AND THEMES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:</u> READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES VARY BUT ARE ALWAYS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS</p>
<p>SEVEN May 12th – 16th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Catch up discussion on readings Midterm Exam study session Group work overview and check-in</p>	<p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm Exam Friday • Using Ebsco Host via the LMC database (use Academic Search Premier), locate and read: “Inner-City Dislocation” by William Julius Wilson. Write a review <i>and</i> an analysis (see handout) • Write up from each group member on progress <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “You think you’re so clever and classless and free.” -- John Lennon</p>
<p>EIGHT May 19th – 23rd <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Sociological understanding of the culture of the city Museums as class-based public art Economy and Society</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader</i>: Part IV: Culture and The Urban Economy • <i>Real Change</i>, Arts and Entertainment Section <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit a museum in Seattle and write a 2-3 page commentary/report (see handout) <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “The only thing more pathetic than Indians on TV is Indians watching Indians on TV.” Evan Adams (Coast Salish) as Thomas Builds-The-Fire in “Smoke Signals”</p>
<p>NINE May 27th – 30th (No class May 26th) <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Urban Segregation Urban Ethnic Enclaves International Culture Social Movements, Social Change</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reader</i>: Part VII, Urban Exclusion and Social Resistance • <i>Real Change</i>, Student Choice <p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s in the news? See handout • <i>Real Change</i>, 2 Discussion Questions <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “I think the future of humanity will be like the past, we’ll do what we’ve always done and there will still be human beings. Granted, there will always be people doing something different and there are a lot of possibilities.” - Octavia Butler</p>
<p>TEN June 2nd – 5th (no class June 6th) <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Mass Media Popular Culture City Life tomorrow</p>	<p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Presentations! <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.” - Marcus Garvey</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>WEEK:</u> DATES AND THEMES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:</u> READINGS ALWAYS DUE MONDAY ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES VARY BUT ARE ALWAYS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS</p>
<p>ELEVEN: June 9th – 10th <u>Thematic Overview:</u> Closure</p>	<p><u>Assignments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Presentations! <p><u>Quote of the Week:</u> “A friend is someone who gives you total freedom to be yourself.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Jim Morrison</p>

EMAILING ME: When you email me, ALWAYS put in the SUBJECT LINE the following, in this order: SOC 265 – YOUR NAME – SUBJECT

For example: **SOC 265 – Jane Doe – Question about Exam #5.**

Your emails will be answered much faster this way. For ease of communication, it is ESSENTIAL that you stick to this mode of emailing me.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR: I am of Tsalagi (Cherokee), Irish, Romany/Gypsy, and Russian Jewish descent. I received my Ph.D. in Sociology (with a parenthetical notation in American Studies) from UC Santa Cruz. I received my first MA in Sociology from Humboldt State University and my second MA in Sociology from UCSC, my BA in Sociology and Journalism from Mills College, and my AA in English and Creative Writing from Vista Community College. This is my second year here at BCC. I am Editor-In-Chief for *Native Realities*, the journal for Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers and the Native American/Indigenous Studies Area Chair for the Popular Culture and American Culture Association's SW/Texas Regional Conferences. I love to write and am currently working on a memoir. I'm an avid Scrabble player, tattoo enthusiast, and I definitely drink too much coffee. I probably work too much as well, but who's counting? I live in Central Seattle with my thirteen-year-old son.

Thank you for a wonderful term! ☺