

Culture & Networks
Sociol 797CN (Spring 2019 / time TBD)

Mark C. Pachucki, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
mpachucki@umass.edu

At the root of this class is an exploration of the idea that culture is shaped through social interactions and relationships with others; and that the opposite is also true. Networks coalesce, are transformed, and dissolve because of cultural change – and indeed, there are good reasons to think of networks as a form of culture as well. This is a graduate course that has a dual focus on subfields of the sociology of culture and social networks; and as such, there is a tradeoff here. I make a choice for breadth across these fields rather than the requisite depth that either one deserves (indeed, entire careers have been devoted to each one). Still, the course is based on the conviction that using a lens of the study of culture can be a useful entry point into the study of social networks, and vice versa.

The format of the course is partially discussion-based, and partially practical application.

- a) Discussion: I will spend time each week giving key background and context to how the work articulates with the development of the field, and each week one (or two) of you will lead a discussion introducing the material (no more than 15 minutes), and we'll spend the remainder of the time engaging with the questions raised by the discussants. This discussion will touch on conceptual/methodological contributions of the studies, how they articulate with prior approaches, and any challenging questions they raise.
- b) The practical application part of the course will involve you identifying and working with a model dataset (provided to you by me) that has both relationship and culture information, and then doing three workshop assignments.

Your goals in this course to take the topical knowledge and skills you learn during the term to develop a research paper to inform a comps, dissertation chapter, or independent manuscript. Any of these final products will be evaluated by me, but part of your course grade will come from thoughtful peer reviews of your classmates' presentations to help them advance their thinking should they decide to develop it further into a publication, thesis, or dissertation. Starting in Week 2, if you have not signed up as one of the week's two discussants, you will be required to write and submit a 1-page memo (single-spaced, 12pt font) on an aspect(s) of the reading(s) that you found interesting (or provocative, or problematic) to Moodle by Wednesday @ 12n. The list of weekly *supplemental* readings) is intended to provide extra detail for those that wish it; these are not required.

Grading: 30% class participation and engagement (including serving as discussant and your reflection papers); 30% workshop assignments; 40% final paper.

Required text: McLean, Paul. 2016. *Culture in networks*. John Wiley & Sons.

If you have not had formal exposure to social network methods, you may wish to familiarize yourself with key concepts in one of the following texts:

- Book: Scott, John P. 2000. *Social network analysis: a Handbook*. Sage Publications.
- Book: Borgatti, Stephen P., Martin G. Everett, and Jeffrey C. Johnson. 2013. *Analyzing social networks*. SAGE Publications Limited.

Week 1: Network origins of culture (w/o January 21)

- Breiger, Ronald L. 1974. "The Duality of Persons and Groups." *Social Forces* 53(2):181-90.
- Fine, Gary Alan. 1979. "Small Groups and Culture Creation: The Idioculture of Little League Baseball Teams." *American Sociological Review*:733-45.
- McLean, Paul. 2016. *Culture in Networks*. Chapters 1-3 (pp.1-64), Chapter 5

Also recommended:

- Emirbayer M. 1997. "Manifesto for a relational sociology." *American journal of sociology* 103(2):281-317
- Collins R. 2003. "A network-location theory of culture." *Sociological Theory* 21:69-73

Week 2: Cultural origins of networks (w/o January 28)

- Emirbayer, Mustafa and Jeff Goodwin. 1994. "Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency." *American journal of sociology*:1411-54.
- McPherson, M., L. Smith-Lovin and J. M. Cook. 2001. "Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27:415-44.
- Lizardo, O., 2006. "How cultural tastes shape personal networks." *American sociological review*, 71(5), pp.778-807.
- McLean, Paul. 2016. *Culture in Networks*. Chapter 6 "Networks from culture".

Also recommended:

- Friedland, Roger and John Mohr. 2004. "The Cultural Turn in American Sociology." *Matters of culture: Cultural sociology in practice*:1-68.

Week 3: Towards synthetic perspectives (w/o February 4)

- Pachucki, Mark A. and Ronald L. Breiger. 2010. "Cultural Holes: Beyond Relationality in Social Networks and Culture." *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol 36 36:205-24.
- Fuhse, Jan and Sophie Mützel. 2011. "Tackling Connections, Structure, and Meaning in Networks: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in Sociological Network Research." *Quality & quantity* 45(5):1067-89.
- McLean, Paul. 2016. *Culture in Networks*. Chapters 7 & 8.

Also recommended:

- Rule, Alix and Peter Bearman. 2015. "Networks and Culture." *Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Art and Culture*:161.
- Mische, A., 2011. Relational sociology, culture, and agency. *The Sage handbook of social network analysis*, pp.80-97.

Week 4: Measurement of meaning structures (w/o February 11)

- Mohr, John W. 1998. "Measuring Meaning Structures." *Annual review of sociology*:345-70.
- Mohr, John W. and Craig Rawlings. 2015. "Formal Methods of Cultural Analysis." in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 9, edited by J. D. Wright: Elsevier.
- Lee, Monica and John Levi Martin. 2015. "Coding, counting and cultural cartography." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 3(1), pp.1-33.
- Bail, Christopher A. 2014. "The Cultural Environment: Measuring Culture with Big Data." *Theory and Society* 43(3-4):465-82.

*** Workshop Homework 1 due ***

Week 5: Culture & cognition (w/o February 18)

- Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American sociological review*:273-86.
- Vaisey, Stephen. 2009. "Motivation and Justification: A Dual-Process Model of Culture in Action." *American Journal of Sociology* 114(6):1675-715.
- Srivastava, Sameer B., and Mahzarin R. Banaji. 2011. "Culture, cognition, and collaborative networks in organizations." *American Sociological Review* 76(2): 207-233.
- Lizardo, O. and Strand, M., 2010. "Skills, toolkits, contexts and institutions: Clarifying the relationship between different approaches to cognition in cultural sociology." *Poetics*, 38(2), pp.205-228.
- Martin, John Levi. 2010. "Life's a Beach but You're an Ant, and Other Unwelcome News for the Sociology of Culture." *Poetics* 38(2):229-44.

Also recommended:

- Brashears, M. E. and E. Quintane. 2015. "The Microstructures of Network Recall: How Social Networks Are Encoded and Represented in Human Memory." *Social Networks* 41:113-26.

Week 6: Culture, networks, & social class (w/o February 25)

- Erickson, Bonnie H. 1996. "Culture, Class, and Connections." *American journal of sociology*:217-51.
- Edelmann, A. and Vaisey, S., 2014. "Cultural resources and cultural distinction in networks." *Poetics*, 46, pp.22-37.
- Lin, N., 2017 [1999]. "Building a network theory of social capital." In *Social capital* (pp. 3-28). Routledge.

Also recommended: TBD

Week 7: Meaning-making processes & network mechanisms (w/o March 4)

- Fuhse, Jan A. 2009. "The Meaning Structure of Social Networks." *Sociological Theory* 27(1):51-73.
- Godart, Frédéric C and Harrison C White. 2010. "Switchings under Uncertainty: The Coming and Becoming of Meanings." *Poetics* 8(6):567-86.
- Gondal, Neha, and Paul D. McLean. "Linking tie-meaning with network structure: Variable connotations of personal lending in a multiple-network ecology." *Poetics* 41, no. 2 (2013): 122-150.
- Yeung, King-To. 2005. "What Does Love Mean? Exploring Network Culture in Two Network Settings." *Social Forces* 84(1):391-420.

Also recommended: TBD

*** Workshop Homework 2 due March 8***

***** No class Week 8 : March 11-18 – Spring Break *****

Week 9: Research ethics with relational data (w/o March 18)

Kadushin, Charles. 2005. "Who benefits from network analysis: ethics of social network research." *Social Networks* 27: 139-153.

Metcalf, Jacob, Emily F. Keller, and danah boyd. 2016. "Perspectives on Big Data, Ethics, and Society." *Council for Big Data, Ethics, and Society*.

TBD: (likely a Human Subjects Application that we'll study and pick apart)

Week 10: Social movements & networks (w/o March 25)

Ghaziani, Amin and Delia Baldassarri. 2011. "Cultural Anchors and the Organization of Differences a Multi-Method Analysis of LGBT Marches on Washington." *American Sociological Review* 76(2):179-206.

Gould, R.V., 1991. "Multiple networks and mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871." *American Sociological Review*, pp.716-729.

Granovetter, M., 1978. "Threshold models of collective behavior." *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(6), pp.1420-1443.

Also recommended:

Mohr, John W and Vincent Duquenne. 1997. "The Duality of Culture and Practice: Poverty Relief in New York City, 1888--1917." *Theory and society* 26(2):305-56.

Padgett J, Ansell C. 1993. "Robust action and the rise of the Medici, 1400–1434." *American Journal of Sociology* 98(6):1259–319

*** Workshop Homework 3 due ***

Week 11: Cultural production and networks (w/o April 1)

Goldberg, Amir, Michael T. Hannan, and Balázs Kovács. "What does it mean to span cultural boundaries? Variety and atypicality in cultural consumption." *American Sociological Review* 81.2 (2016): 215-241.

Goldberg, Amir. "Mapping shared understandings using relational class analysis: The case of the cultural omnivore reexamined." *American Journal of Sociology* 116.5 (2011): 1397-1436.

Lizardo, O. 2014. "Omnivorousness as the Bridging of Cultural Holes: A Measurement Strategy." *Theory and Society* 43(3-4):395-419.

Lena, J.C. and Pachucki, M.C., 2013. "The sincerest form of flattery: Innovation, repetition, and status in an art movement." *Poetics*, 41(3), pp.236-264

Also recommended:

DiMaggio, Paul. 1987. "Classification in Art." *American Sociological Review*:440-55.

Sonnett, J. 2016. "Ambivalence, indifference, distinction: A comparative netfield analysis of implicit musical boundaries." *Poetics*, 54, 38-53.

Week 12: Cultural preferences, attitudes, & tastes (w/o April 8)

Lewis, K., 2016. "Preferences in the early stages of mate choice." *Social Forces*, 95(1), pp.283-320.

Vaisey, Stephen and Omar Lizardo. 2010. "Can Cultural Worldviews Influence Network Composition?" *Social Forces* 88(4):1595-618.

Schultz, J. and Breiger, R.L., 2010. "The strength of weak culture." *Poetics*, 38(6), pp.610-624.

Lewis, K., Gonzalez, M. and Kaufman, J., 2012. "Social selection and peer influence in an online social network." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109(1), pp.68-72.

Also recommended:

Erickson, Bonnie H. 1988. "The Relational Basis of Attitudes." Pp. 99–121 in *Social Structures: A Network Approach*, Vol. 99, edited by B. Wellman and J. Bercovitz. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Week 13: What's next: the future of the analysis of culture and networks (w/o April 15)

Readings TBD

Also recommended:

Week 14: Final project presentations and group feedback, Part 1 (w/o April 22)

In this class session, your goal is to publicly summarize (in 10 minutes) your final project, lessons learned, and next steps. This will serve as a workshop of sorts, and allow you to integrate feedback from your peers in time for the final paper submission.

Week 15: Final project presentations and group feedback, Part 2 (w/o April 29)

In this class session, your goal is to publicly summarize (in 10 minutes) your final project, lessons learned, and next steps. This will serve as a workshop of sorts, and allow you to integrate feedback from your peers in time for the final paper submission.

***** *Final papers due May 9* *****