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YM665 – Youth Culture and Trends

Asbury Theological Seminary

Class Sessions meet June 21–24 2004

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Course Description: This course explores the issues facing youth today including sex, drugs/alcohol, media, music, family pressures, and modern philosophies. Students will examine theories of adolescent development, observe teenagers in secular and church settings, and prepare to minister to youth as they struggle with the issues of their culture.

Course Focus: This class studies the realm of youth in relation to their culture and the broader social influences that shape their thinking and living; and our perspective of youth. The class will study youth as a micro-culture (local youth culture) and as a macro-cultural phenomenon (including the broad cultural influences that have shaped our notion of youth across the centuries). A *central thesis* of this course is that youth culture struggles much like the Church in its attempts to resist and transform the broader social influences of the dominant culture. Unfortunately youth often do not have the resources to achieve their goal. Instead youth are often "domesticated" by the dominant culture through consumer strategies. The challenge for the church is to provide the resources for youth and adults to mutually create an authentic "Christian Youth Culture" that mirrors the local church's effort to model a counter-culture through formation, discernment and transformation strategies.

Course Outcomes: Upon completion of this course the student will

1. Define youth and "adolescence" as broad cultural concepts

2. Identify key components of local youth culture
3. Identify larger social influences that shape both youth practice and adult perspectives of youth
4. Develop ministry strategies that faithfully employ the ability of youth in ministry formation and discernment.

Class Texts

1) **Web-based Publications:** Chapman R. Clark, "Entering Their World: A Qualitative Look at the Changing Face of Contemporary Adolescence," *Journal of Youth Ministry* (Fall 2002) available on-line (6/9/2004) at http://ayme.gospelcom.net/jym_article.php?article_id=21 Read also the five part seminar on Qualitative Research courtesy Don Ratcliff (6/09/2004) at <http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/dratcliff/qual/> (apx. 25 pages). Also read Dean G. Blevins, "The Means of Grace and Christian Religious Education: Formation, Discernment, Transformation" 15 pages, online <http://homepages.trevecca.edu/faculty/dblevins/Writings/Means%20Book%20Chapter%204.htm>.

2) Patricia Hersch, *A Tribe Apart: A Journey Into the Heart of American Adolescence* (New York: Ballentine Books Readers Companion, 1999), 379 pages; **OR** Barbara Schneider & David Stevenson, *The Ambitious Generation: America's Teenagers, Motivated but Directionless* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 276 pages. **NOTE: Hersch is the primary text** but please read Schneider & Stevenson if you have read Hersch for a different class for your book report. Regardless bring your copy of Hersch to class (we will discuss both texts at some point during class).

3) Pete Ward, *God at the Mall: Youth Ministry that Meets Kids Where They are At* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 160 pages.

4) Michael Warren, *Youth, Gospel, Liberation*, 3rd edition (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 2000), 185 pages.

5) *Choose One of the following texts for a resource review:* (additional options may be adopted but require advance approval)

- Dean Borgman, *Hear My Story: Understanding the Cries of Troubled Youth* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003).
- Colleen Carroll, *The New Faithful: Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002)
- James E. Côte' and Anton L. Allahar, *Generation on Hold: Coming of Age in the Late Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1996) Currently out of print.
- Richard W. Flory and Donald E. Miller, *Gen-X Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2000)
- Henry A Giroux, *Channel Surfing: Racism, The Media and the Destruction of Today's Youth* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998)
- Henry A. Giroux, *Fugitive Cultures: Race Violence & Youth* (New York: Rutledge, 1996)
- James Garbarino, *Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them* (New York: The Free Press, 1999)
- Tom Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager* (New York: Avon/Bard Books, 1999)
- Lorraine Delia Kenny, *Daughters of Suburbia: Growing Up White, Middle Class, and Female* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000)
- Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson, *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys* (New York: Ballentine Books, 1999)
- Lauraine LeBlanc, *Pretty In Punk: Girls' Gender Resistance in a Boys' Subculture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002)
- Mike A. Males, *Framing Youth: 10 myths about the Next Generation* (Monroe, Ma.: Common Courage Press, 1999)
- William R. Myers, *Black and White Styles of Youth Ministry: Two Congregations in America* (New York: The Pilgrim Press 1991) Currently out of print.
- Walter Mueller, *Understanding Today's Youth Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale 1994, 1999).
- Mary Pipher. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls* (New York: Ballantine Books 1994)

- Chris Richards, *Teen Spirits: Music and Identity in Media Education* (London: Taylor & Francis/UCL Press, 1998).
- Quentin J. Schultze, Roy M. Anker, James D. Brattt, William D. Romanowski, John W. Worst, Lambert Zuidervaart, *Dancing in the Dark: Youth, Popular Culture and the Electronic Media* (Eerdmans, 1991) Currently out of print.
- Rachel Simmons, *Odd Girl Out* (Harcourt, 2002)
- Merton P. Strommen and Richard A. Hardel, *Passing on the Faith: A Radical New Model for Youth and Family Ministry* (Winona, Minn.: Saint Mary's Press, 2000)
- Rosalind Wiseman, *Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence* (Crown Pub, 2002)

Note: Other readings may be provided and additional sources are expected for research papers

* For an audio resource to support the class, order *Youth Culture & the Church* with Mardi Keyes & Pastor Mark DeVries from the [Mars Hill Audio Journal: Conversations Series, 1-800-331-6407 or www.marshillaudio.org](#)

Class Assignments:

1. Class participation: (400 pts) Class participation in an intensive format includes not only class discussion but also faithful reading and reflection of the assigned material before and during class sections. While book reports are not required of all assigned reading, it is assumed the student will read to develop a familiarity with the major concepts discussed by each author as a part of class discussion. In preparation for the class students do the following:

A) Read the resources provided by Chapman and Ratcliff and **complete a preliminary survey of youth culture** base on the LASTS guidelines for cultural analysis. This preliminary survey should be a self assessment of your current understanding of youth culture, which does not require additional outside interviews/research. **Using the worksheet provided** merely record the cultural "clues" you already possess about your current

youth culture (particularly of the youth in your church or local setting) using the LASTS rubric located online:

<http://homepages.trevecca.edu/faculty/dblevins/Teaching%20Presentations/Youth%20Culture%20and%20Ministry/LASTS%20cultural%20guide.htm>

Please Note: We will plan on one "Field Trip" to the local Mall on Tuesday evening to observe and discuss local youth culture. Please reserve the evening for this assignment.

B) Identify at least one on-line resource for Culture-based youth ministry to add to the resource website under the rubric of Formation, Discernment or Transformation. To help you understand the categories please read the accompanying article "The Means of Grace and Christian Religious Education: Formation, Discernment, Transformation" on-line: <http://homepages.trevecca.edu/faculty/dblevins/Writings/Means%20Book%20Chapter%204.htm>.

For additional information see the working Resource Website being designed located on-line:

http://homepages.trevecca.edu/faculty/dblevins/Syllabi/Masters/resource_website_for_youth.htm

2. Book Report/Resource Review synopsis (200 points) :

- Write one 8–10 page book report (150 points) **Due June 21st** on the following
 - *A Tribe Apart*
 - *The Ambitious Generation*
- Resource synopsis (50 points) **Due June 24th** The student will be expected to **choose one of the optional reading on Youth Culture** from the recommended texts class readings (no report, just acknowledge the reading) **write a one–two page overview** of the salient points in the text **and offer an oral synopsis in class.**

3. Macro Culture Research paper: (12–15 pages, 400 points). **Due June 28th (12 noon CST) by email attachment:** Choose one large generative theme

(sexuality & abstinence, violence, education, poverty, ethnicity) trace its relationship to youth culture in the United State, using research to back your investigation, and suggest a ministry response using Ward and Warren as resource texts. Resources include class readings, library research, and other credible outside research such as The ADOL (Adolescent Directory On Line) located at: <http://education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/adol.html> and the National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth <http://www.ncfy.com/index.htm> and Bolt.com at <http://www.bolt.com/>. Additional statistical information may be helpful in some circumstances, for an example see: <http://www.youthspecialties.com/central/stats.html>. Professor's warning: if using outside websites be sure to utilize credible sources based on accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency and coverage. For more information see web <http://144.16.72.189/is213/213-2000-2001/webeval/undwebev.html> If unsure a website is credible check with the professor first before using/citing it as a source.

FORMAT FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS:

- All papers should be double-spaced, typed, with one-inch margins and 12 font. Citations should follow standard form and style (APA, MLA, Turabian/Chicago) including bibliography.
- Papers are due on the day assigned and, in most cases, will be used for class discussion
- Quotations should be clearly marked and sources must be noted in end/footnotes
- Note: quotations should be kept to a minimum
- No folders or binders please
- Email attachments preferred for feedback & grading purposes

Tentative Course Outline

Adolescence and Youth Culture: (Definitions and Social Discourse)

- Introductions: Reason for Class
- Challenges to Youth, Culture, Ministry (Case Studies: the Lost Children of Rockdale County & WWJD)
- Defining and studying Micro Culture (LASTS)
 - Local cultures (the youth minister as ethnographer)
 - In local society (revisit Rockdale)
(Case Study: Tribe Apart/Abandoned Generation Analysis)
 - In the church
- Defining and studying Macro Culture
 - A brief history of youth
 - Mediated Youth: Romance and control (Case Study: Merchants of Cool)
 - Macro influences: generative themes in the lives of youth
(Vignettes: Tough Guise and What a Girl Wants)
- **Field Trip (Tuesday night to local mall) and LASTS self-study discussion**

Developing ministry with and through Youth Culture

- Global/Local Youth Culture as Resistance and Transformation (Reading discussion of *God at the Mall*, and *Youth Gospel Ministry*)
- Formation, Discernment & Transformation
- **Oral Synopsis of Reading Resource**
- Creating a youth ministry of formation, discernment and transformation
 - Current approaches & viability (Case Study: Hell House)
 - Reading discussion
 - Constructing alternative models (Case Study: Thirteen)

- Youth In the culture of the church

*For organizations at work developing new forms of youth ministry see the following:
Princeton Institute for Youth Ministry at <http://www.ptsem.edu/iym/index.htm> **Search Institute**
 at <http://www.search-institute.org> **Youth Theological Institute** at
<http://candler.emory.edu/RESOURCES/YTI/>*

Grade Scale:

1000–926: A 925–901: A–
 900–875: B+ 874–826: B 825–801: B–
 800–775: C+ 774–726: C 725–701: C–
 700–675: D+ 674–626: D 625–600: D– 599 or Below: F

Grade Descriptions

- "A"–EXCEPTIONAL WORK (surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives)
- "B"–GOOD WORK (strong, significant achievement of course objectives)
- "C"–ACCEPTABLE WORK (basic, essential achievement of course objectives)
- "D"–MARGINAL WORK (inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives)
- "F"–UNACCEPTABLE WORK (failure to achieve course objectives)

Promptness

The instructor will provide both “timely” and “substantive” feedback to students regarding their assignments. “Timely” response means that for assessments of student work during the course of the academic term, the professor will have work marked, graded, and returned within one week of its submission; if the class has more than 40 students, the professor may take up to two weeks. In addition, the professor will provide “substantive” feedback that alerts students to what they have done well and how they might improve their performance in subsequent work.

Late papers will not receive written feedback, nor is the professor bound to meet the one week turnaround.

Special Accommodation

Students needing special accommodations for this class should notify the professor no later than the first day of the course.

Inclusive Language:

Students are urged to use inclusive language wherever possible both in their oral and written work/participation. This guideline is intended to help sensitize the Asbury Theological Seminary community and to provide help in moving beyond our present habits to more just expressions (FH).

Academic Integrity:

The standards of conduct that are articulated in the Asbury Theological Seminary's Student Handbook concerning academic matters are important to the integrity of our community and the high ethical standards we expect of those who are preparing for Christian ministry. Abuse of these policies will be handled as stipulated in the handbook.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the presenting of another's ideas or writings as one's own; this includes both written and oral discourse presentations. Response to plagiarism may include requiring an assignment to be redone, automatic failure of a course or, in some extreme cases, recommended dismissal from the Seminary (FH). Please make sure any borrowed material is properly documented.

Guidelines for a Book Review

1. Read the book thoroughly and thoughtfully. If you need a better understanding of how to read a book, see Mortimer Adler's *How to Read a Book* for some helpful suggestions.
2. Examine the table of contents carefully. Then write a brief overview of what the book is about. What are the central ideas and how are they developed? One or two compact paragraphs should be sufficient since you will develop this overview in the next section; never more than a page.

3. Provide a review of the book. What were the major sections in the work and how was each section developed? What major and relevant issues were the controlling themes? What was interesting or helpful?
4. Interact personally with the thrust of the book. What did you learn? Where do you disagree with the author(s)? Why? What applications did you discover in the approach taken by the author(s)? For whom would this book be valuable? Why do you think the professor wanted you to read this particular book?
5. Type, or have typed, the review to turn in, using double spacing and following a specific format as in *Form and Style* by Carol Slade (includes APA, MLA and Turabian/Chicago so be specific and consistent).
6. Follow the suggested guidelines in an orderly and logical manner.
7. Proof-read the finished review, and be sure that it is neat and free from spelling and grammatical errors.
8. Major on major points and give minor emphasis to the lesser points.
9. Make sure that it is turned in ON TIME!