

Critical Thinking-Fall 08

Prof. Nielsen. Office hours: Tues: 3-4 PM, Wed 10-12 AM

Texts: Sociology: A Very Short Introduction. Steve Bruce. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Ideology: A Very Short Introduction. Michael Freeden. Oxford University Press, 2003.

Globalization: A Very Short Introduction. Manfred B. Steger. Oxford Univ Press, 2003.

Ecocriticism: The New Critical Idiom. Greg Garrard. Routledge, 2004.

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment (Papers due on Thursdays)</b>
1-8/26-28	Introductions, Overview, SOCIOLOGY REVISITED Subculture Paper	Read <u>Sociology: A Very Short Intro</u> . (See Guidelines). Plan Subculture paper
2-9/2-4	Introductions, Social construction Subculture Papers	<b>Subculture paper due 9/4/08</b> (see Grades & Papers).
3-9/9-11	POLITICAL CULTURES Liberal & Conservative worldviews	Read 1 <sup>st</sup> half of <u>Ideology</u> (See Guidelines). <b>Prepare subculture paper for class presentation</b>
	Begin subculture paper presentations	
4-9/16-18	Presentations continued	Read 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of <u>Ideology</u>
5-9/23-25	Analysis of political cultural products Presentations continued	
6-9/30-10/2	Presentations continued	
7-10/7-9	Presentations concluded	<b>Political Cultural Product Analysis paper due</b> (See Grades & Papers)
8-10/14-16	GLOBALIZATION & contested concepts	Read <u>Globalization</u> (See Guidelines)
9-10/21-23	Globalization in context	
10-10/28-30	Globalization experienced	<b>Globalization paper #1 due</b> (See Grades & Papers)
11-11/4-6	Globalization concluded	<b>Globalization paper #2 due</b> (See Grades & Papers)
12-11/11-13	ECOCRITICISM	Read <u>Ecocriticism</u> (See Guidelines)

13-11/18-20 Environmentalism in literature &  
Cultural products

14-11/25-27 THANKSGIVING BREAK

15-12/2-4 Ecocriticism concluded **Ecocritical analysis paper due**  
(See Grades & Papers)

16-12/9-11 Review: Visuals, Contested Concepts: Discourse, Postmodern, Post-structural,  
Social construction of reality (SCR); Science & Sociology

**Final Exam: Final Review Paper due Mon 12/15/08 – 1:30 PM or**  
**Wed 12/17/08 – 8:00 AM (see Grades & Papers)**

Fall 08 Graded Assignments  
Critical Thinking-Prof. Nielsen

Attendance.....	100 pts
Participation.....	100 pts

**Subculture-SCR (social construction of reality) Paper.** Choose a subgroup, subculture, any social entity that you belong to or have had experience in—e.g., job site (restaurant, office, construction site); student group or organization (jazz club, political campaign, student government); team or individual sport (bike racing, tennis, football); family-based group.

Use your understanding of “social construction of reality” from both class discussion and the Steve Bruce text, Sociology: A Very Short Introduction to write a sociologically informed, descriptive analysis of this sub-world.

The paper should be approximately 5 pages and should present in rich detail (what social scientists call “thick” description) this particular social setting or activity. Emphasize the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the group, especially as it is reflected in its language. Highlight or point out the assumptions inherent in the group’s use of “in” terms and its worldview(s). What are its taken-for-granted(s)? What is the shared dominant worldview(s)? **Due Sept 4**  
..... 100 points

**In-class presentation of Subculture-SCR paper.** Rearrange or transform your subculture paper in order to present it in class. This works well in a Power Point format but you can use whatever format works best so long as it is different from the written version. You can bring “show and tell” items such as costumes or uniforms, music, photos, etc. if appropriate. This should be no longer than a 10-15 minute presentation with additional time for questions & discussion.

**Presentations begin 9/9** ..... 100 points

**Analysis of Political Product Paper.** Select a cultural product (ad, article, slogan, debate, etc.) from the current political election scene. Using Michael Freeden’s Ideology: A Very Short Introduction and class discussion about liberal and conservative worldview differences, write an analysis of the item or items that shows what worldview or political ideology is reflected in the product(s). Address questions such as “Does it work (on the public)?” And if so, why? Does it appeal to you and if so why? Categorize it according to the “Continuum of arguments from truth seeking to persuasion” Figure handed out in class.

**Due Oct 9**..... 100 points

**Globalization 1 Paper.** Using Manfred Steger’s Globalization: A Very Short Introduction and any other information you have about globalization, write a 2-3 page paper that defines the term globalization. You may paraphrase but don’t copy the text. Be sure to include all the variations and complexities involved in the word “globalization.”

**Due Oct 30**..... 100 points

**Globalization 2 Paper.** In Globalization: A Very Short Introduction, Steger suggests there is “cognitive dissonance” or inconsistencies and contradictions between one’s personal experiences of a globalizing world and one’s discourse or definition of the process. In other words, there is a local versus global divide. Write a 2-3 page paper that describes your own (or your family’s or friends’) experience of globalization and say how it relates to the way you think and talk about globalization.

**Due Nov 6**..... 100 points

**Ecocriticism Paper.** Select an environmentally related cultural product (advertisement, newspaper article, news report, film, documentary, book, article, slogan). Using Garrard's Ecocriticism text as a guide, write an approximately 5 page analysis of the product. Address issues such as what tropes (see Garrard's categories) or metaphors are dominant in the work? What tradition in ecocriticism does it item reflect? What ecocritical issues are raised?

**Due Dec 4.....** 100 points

**Review Paper.** Using review themes from class discussion, consider material covered over the semester to address the question, what has been of value? What has made you think differently or reinforced your thinking about any of the subjects covered during the semester? What topics, themes or assignments stand out?

**Due Dec 15 or 17 at Final Exam time**  
200 points

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

(1) If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)

Disability Services' letters for students with disabilities indicate legally mandated reasonable accommodations. The syllabus statements and answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found at [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)

(2) Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, {{insert your procedures here}} See full details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

(3) Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>

(4) The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

(5) All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>