

SYLLABUS – Spring 2014

New York City College of Technology Social Science Department

COURSE CODE: SOC 2201-D990 (89198)

TITLE: SOCIOLOGY OF AGING, TTH 10-11:15AM, Namm 1106

Number of class hours, lab hours if applicable, credits: 3 Class Hours, 3 Credits, BS Core

Enrollment requirement: Sociology 1101

Satisfies flexible core: Individual and Society

INSTRUCTOR

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Namm 627, Office Hours Tuesdays 11:30-1:00, Thursdays 2:00-2:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course looks at understanding aging as a process that occurs over a lifetime. Though the emphasis of this course is on aging in the US, we will look at some cross-cultural studies as comparison. The social, political, economic, as well as historical context have an impact on the elderly. We will address social institutions such as religion, community, and the family and their impact on the elderly experience. As we go through the different life stages that encompass a life we will address special issues related to aging. The point is to see the entire life leading up to older age as this informs the experience of the elderly.

Some of the underlying questions addressed in the course include: (a) In what ways does the socio-cultural environment affect the life experience? (b) What are the implications of culture, power, and social inequities in the expression and interpretation of one's life? (c) What can one person's life story tell us about our culture? (d) What are the special needs and concerns of the elderly?

COURSE CO/PREREQUISITE: SOC 1101

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK (S) AND/OR MATERIALS:

- 1) Morgan, Leslie A. and Suzanne R. Kunkel – Aging, Society, and the Life Course, 4th Edition Springer Publishing – ISBN 13: 0-8261-1937-9. (This is an expensive textbook (\$95) but you can order a cheaper online version from CheapTextbooks.com or BestWebBuys.com or Textbooks.com)
- 2) Additional **required articles** will be put on reserve at the library or you can print them out directly from City Tech's library website, click on "article" search, select database called "JSTOR" or "EBSCO", search by author's name &/or title of article. To print the article click on pdf file). (I want you to learn how to find peer reviewed scholarly articles)
- 3) Blackboard – I will use blackboard to post your grades, for course documents (including syllabus), occasional emailed announcements, etc. I do not post my lecture material online as I believe students learn better if they take notes. (Access "Blackboard" through the CUNY portal).

SEQUENCE OF TOPICS AND TIME ALLOCATIONS (Week by Week):

WEEK 1: Introduction (Classes Begin: Monday January 27, 2014) T 1/28, TH 1/30

Before the week's lectures you should have already read the assigned reading:

📖 Mandatory Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter one: Aging and Society (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)

***Homework:** Find a person over the age of 60 to interview during this course. You can interview an elderly relative, neighbor, or family friend. You might also find individuals to interview at a local senior facility or your religious institution/church. Set up a time to meet with your interview subject to introduce yourself. Obtain "informed consent" and explain the project details. Offer a pseudonym to protect your respondent's identity.

WEEK 2: Topic: Ways of looking at Aging: Aging as a Process, Aging as identity/performance, Misperceptions T 2/4, TH 2/6

📖 Mandatory Articles Reading Assignment:

1. Kaufman, Sharon "Cultural Components of Identity in Old Age: A Case Study" in *Ethos*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring, 1981), pp. 51-87 (Available on reserve at the library or find it on JSTOR –<http://www.jstor.org/stable/640088>)
2. Laz, Cheryl "Act Your Age" in *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (March 1998), pp. 85-113. Springer Publishing. (Available on reserve at the library or find it on JSTOR – www.jstor.org/stable/684926).
3. Conway-Turner, "Inclusion of Black Studies in Gerontology Courses: Uncovering and Transcending Stereotypes" in *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 5 (May 1995), pp. 577-588. Published by Sage Publications, inc. (www.jstor.org/stable/2784632)

***Homework:** start to write up possible questions or topics related to childhood experiences. You will use these as guidelines to

interview your respondent about their childhood (up to age 13) and a second set of questions to address their adolescent stage (14-17). There are a number of websites that can help you prepare interview questions (google life history interview questions). The Legacy project has good general suggestions for interview questions that you can adjust to fit your interview interests. www.legacyproject.org/guides/lifeintquestions.pdf Be sure to attach the interview questions that you use to the back of your paper.

WEEK 3: PART ONE: CHILDHOOD / How to study aging—planning your research interviews T 2/11, TH 2/13

📖 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter two: Studying Aging (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Myers, Scott “Childhood Migration and Social Integration in Adulthood”

***Homework:** Conduct your first interview. You can conduct 2 separate interviews for each stage (childhood & adolescent), or one longer interview to cover this early part of the person’s life. Often a person’s later identity is impacted and influenced by their early life experiences. It is important that you learn as much as you can about this stage as it may prove useful in your final analysis.

WEEK 4: PART ONE: CHILDHOOD / Cross-cultural Perspectives of Aging, T 2/18, TH 2/20 – NO class, classes follow Monday schedule

📖 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter three: An Aging World: Demographic Perspectives (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Duncan, Greg J., W Jean Yeung, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Judith R. Smith “How Much Does Childhood Poverty Affect the Life chances of children? *American Sociological Review* Vol. 63, No. 3 (June 1998), pp. 406-423. American Sociological Association. www.jstor.org/stable/2657556.

Optional Reading: Dickson-Gomez, Julia “ Growing Up in Guerrilla Camps: the Long-Term Impact of Being a Child Soldier in El Salvador’s Civil War” in *Ethos*, Vol 30., No. 4 (Dec., 2002), pp. 327-356.

***Due Thursday 2/20/14– 3 page fieldnotes and summary description of your respondent’s childhood & adolescent experiences.**

**** For Extra Credit summarize at least two of the assigned article readings (weeks 2-5) and relate them to the person you describe. These articles are on reserve in the library or on JSTOR. These summaries are in addition to the 3 page paper. You should write at least 1 page per article for extra credit. Address: article topic, thesis, methods, and apply /or relate to your data (the description of the person’s life story). See attached for details.**

WEEK 5: PART TWO: ADOLESCENCE / Individual & Society – how does your respondent fit into American Culture? T 2/25, TH 2/27

📖 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter four: The Aging Individual in Social Context (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Kools, Susan M. “Adolescent Identity Development in Foster Care” in *Family Relations*” Vol. 46, No. 3 (July 1997), pp. 263-271. (Available on JSTOR –www.jstor.org/stable/585124)

Optional: Vollebergh, W.A.M., J. Iedema, and Q.A. Raaijmakers (2001) “Intergenerational Transmission and the Formation of Cultural Orientations in Adolescence and Young Adulthood” in *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (Nov., 2001), pp. 1185-1198.

WEEK 6: PART TWO: ADOLESCENCE / Institution: Family, T 3/4, TH 3/6

📖 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter Five: Aging and the Family: Personal and Institutional Contexts (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Waldfogel, Jane and Sara McLanahan (2011) “Work and Family: Introducing the Issue” in *The Future of Children*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Work and Family (Fall 2011), pp. 3-14.

***Homework:** Write up possible questions or topics related to young adult and middle age experiences. You will use these as guidelines to interview your respondent about their adulthood (Adult Ages 19-39, Middle Age 40-55+). Conduct your second interview with our respondent focusing on their adult and middle age experiences.

WEEK 7: PART TWO: ADOLESCENCE / The role of family in the aging process, T 3/11, TH 3/13

📖 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

2. Ross, Catherine E. and John Mirowsky "Parental Divorce, Life Course Disruption, and Adult Depression" *Journal of Marriage and the family*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (Nov 1999), pp. 1034-1045. National Council on Family Relations. (Available on JSTOR – www.jstor.org/stable/354022).


Optional: Talks about the impact of immigrant experience for adolescents and how this affects their transition to adulthood.

1) Aquilino, William "From Adolescent to Young Adult: A Prospective Study of Parent-Child Relations during the Transition to Adulthood" in *Journal of Marriage and the Family* Vol. 59, No. 3 (Aug 1997), pp. 670-686. www.jstor.org/stable/353953.

****Due Thursday 3/13/14– 3 page fieldnotes and summary description of your respondent's adult and middle age experiences (Adult Ages 19-40, Middle Age 40-55+).**

**** For Extra Credit summarize at least two of the assigned article readings and relate them to the person you describe. These articles are on reserve in the library or on JSTOR.**

WEEK 8: PART THREE: ADULTHOOD TO MIDDLE AGE / Work, T 3/18, TH 3/20


 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter six: Work and Retirement in the Life Course (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. di Leonardo, Micaela "The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women, Families, and the Work of Kinship" *Signs*, vol 12, No 3 (Spring 1987), pp 440-453. Published by the University of Chicago Press. (Available on reserve or on JSTOR)

Optional Reading:

- 1) Counihan, Carole M. "Female Identity, Food, and Power in Contemporary Florence" in *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 61. No. 2 (April 1988), pp. 51-62. (Available on reserve or on JSTOR www.jstor.org/stable/3317156).
- 2) Logan, John R. "As Old As you Feel: Age Identity in Middle and Later Life" in *Social Forces*, Vol. 71. No 2 (Dec 1992) pp 451-467. (www.jstor.org/stable/2580019).

WEEK 9 PART THREE: ADULTHOOD TO MIDDLE AGE / Retirement, Film: Wild Strawberries, T 3/25, TH 3/27

 Mandatory Reading Assignment:


1. Tamir, Lois M. "Men at Middle Age: Developmental Transitions" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 464, Middle and Late Life Transitions (Nov. 1982), pp. 47-56. Published by Sage Publications, Inc. in association with the American Academy of Political and Social Science. (Available on reserve or on JSTOR)
2. Erikson, Erik H. (1976) "Reflections on Dr. Borg's Life Cycle" *Daedalus*, Vol. 105, No. 2, Adulthood (Spring, 1976), pp. 1-28. Published by: The MIT Press on behalf of American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20024398>

(Optional Reading)

- 1) Krause, Neal and Elan Bastida (2011) "Church-Based Social Relationships, Belonging, and Health Among Older Mexican-Americans" in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (June 2011), pp. 397-409. (Available on Wiley online, or can be accessed thru JSTOR)
- 2) Mui, Ada C. and Tazuko Shibusawa (2010) "Asian American Elderly in the Twenty-first Century : Key Indicators of Well-Being" in *Social Service Review*, Vol. 84, No. 2 (June 2010), pp. 319-320.

***Homework:** start to write up possible questions or topics related to your respondent's current experiences as a senior citizen in the US. You will use these as guidelines to interview your respondent about their senior period of their life (Age 60+). Conduct your fourth interview with our respondent focusing on the senior stage of their life.

WEEK 10 (MIDSEMESTER EVALUATION): PART FOUR: : TRANSITION TO SENIOR / Institution: Economics & its affect on Aging, T 4/1 TH 4/3

 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter Seven: Economics and the Aging Society (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Myeroff, Barbara (1978) "So What do you want from us here?" in *Number Our Days* (1-39) New York: Simon and Schuster. (Available on reserve from library)

(Optional Reading) 1. Vinick, Barbara H. "Remarriage in Old Age" in *Family Coordinator*, Vol. 27, No 7. Aging in a Changing Family Context (Oct 1978), pp. 359-363. Published by the National Council on Family Relations.

2. McCallion, Philip, Matthew Janicki and Lucinda Grant-Griffin "Exploring the Impact of Culture and Acculturation on Older Families Caregiving for Persons with Developmental Disabilities" *Family Relations*, Vol. 46, No. 4, Family Caregiving for Persons with Disabilities (Oct., 1997), pp. 347-357.

****Due Thursday 4/3 – 3 page fieldnotes and summary description of your respondent’s senior age experiences (60+).**
**** For Extra Credit summarize at least two of the assigned article readings and relate them to the person you describe.**
These articles are on reserve in the library or on JSTOR.

WEEK 11: PART FOUR: TRANSITION TO SENIOR Health & Aging, T 4/8, TH 4/10 (Midterm grades)

📎 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter Ten: Aging and Health of Individuals (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Traphagan, John W. “Contesting the Transition to Old Age in Japan” in *Ethnology*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Autumn 1998), pp. 333-350. University of Pittsburgh Publishing. (www.jstor.org/stable/3773786).

Optional: Koff, Sondra Z. and Harlan. V. Koff (1997) “Nursing Response to the Needs of the Elderly” *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (FALL, 1997), pp. 182-196 Published by: SPAEF. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23212705>

SPRING BREAK APRIL 14-22 (classes resume 4/23)

WEEK 12: PART FOUR: SENIOR / Healthcare and aging, TH 4/24 Homework due: article worksheets

📎 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter Eight: Aging and the Health: Individuals, Institutions, and Policies(in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Fingerman, Karen L. “The Good, The Bad, and the Worrisome: Emotional Complexities in Grandparents Experiences with Individual Grandchildren” In *Family Relations*, Vol. 47, No. 4, The Family as a Context for Health and Well Being (Oct 1998), pp. 403-414. Published by the National Council on Family Relations (jstor.org/stable/585271).

Optional: 2) Sutherland, Jean-Anne, Margaret M. Poloma, Brian F. Pendleton (2003) “Religion, Spirituality, and Alternative Health Practices: The Baby Boomer and Cold War Cohorts” in *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (winter 2003), pp. 315-338.

Homework: What are the major themes, issues, or concerns that your respondent talks about? Look for patterns – what does the person talk about over and over again? Is there a particular moment or stage in this person’s life that has had a profound impact on his or her life experience? Come to class with a list of 2-3 things that are important to this person’s life story. As your paper is due in two weeks, come to class with any questions regarding the paper.

WEEK 13: PART FOUR: SENIOR / Institution: Political Organization & aging, T 4/29, TH 5/1

📎 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter Nine: Politics, Government, and the Aging in America (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)
2. Bookman, Ann, and Delia Kimbrel (2011) “Families and Elder Care in the Twenty-First Century” in *The Future of Children*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Work and Family (Fall 2011), pp. 117-140.
3. Flores, Yvette G., Ladson Hinton, Judith Barker, Carol E. Franz, Alexandria Velasquez “Beyond Famililism: A Case Study of Ethics of a Caregiver of an Elderly Parent with Dementia” *Health Care for Women International*. Dec 2009, Vol. 30 Issue 12, p1055-1072.

Homework: Do you have a clear thesis statement? What have you learned from interviewing this person? What can this person’s story tell us about the experience of the aged in the US? You will need to use two articles in your analysis (see attached bibliography). Select two articles and write up the thesis statement and main ideas. How does this article support what your respondent said or not? Apply issues presented in the Morgan and Kunkel textbook as well. (Seek help from tutors in the Atrium tutorial center to help with developing a thesis and topic sentences)

WEEK 14: PART FOUR: SENIOR /Issues in aging: End of life, T 5/6, (10 page paper due Tuesday), TH 5/8

📎 Mandatory Reading Assignment:


1. Chapter 11: Baby Boomers and the Changing Landscape of Aging
2. Behar, Ruth “Death and Memory: From Santa Maria del Monte to Miami Beach” in *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Aug. 1991), pp. 346-384. New York: Blackwell Publishing on behalf of the American Anthropological Association. (Available on JSTOR – www.jstor.org/stable/656440)

Optional: Wexler, Geoff and Linda Long (2009) "Lifetimes and Legacies: Mortality, Immortality, and the Needs of Aging and Dying Donors" *The American Archivist*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2009), pp. 478-495
 Published by: Society of American Archivists. Article Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27802698>

**** You should be finishing your paper. Remember, I will not accept late papers.**

Homework: Finish writing your 10-page paper (see attached assignment description). Your paper is due Thursday 5/15.

WEEK 15:PART FIVE: SENIOR LIFE SUMMARIES, T 5/13, TH 5/15

 Mandatory Reading Assignment:

1. Chapter Twelve: The Dynamics of Aging in Our Future (in Morgan and Kunkel textbook)

Optional: 1) Olshansky, Jay S., Dana P. Goldman, Yuhui Zheng, John W. Rowe. (2009) "Aging in America in the Twenty-First Century: Demographic Forecasts from the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on an Aging Society" in *The Milbank Quarterly*, Vol. 87, No. 4 (Dec., 2009), pp. 842-862.

WEEK 16: Tuesday 5/20 (Finish up, Review), Thursday 5/22

***Final exam for this class THURSDAY 5/22**

ASSIGNMENTS and other course requirements:

This is an interactive lecture therefore you are required to attend the lectures, to have read the assigned readings, and participate in class discussions. In order to fulfill the requirements of the course you will need to find an elderly individual (over 60 years old) to interview throughout the course. You will have to meet with this person at least 5 times during the course to conduct interviews about different stages in their lives, You will be expected to turn in four short papers covering these various stages in their life course, and a large analytical paper addressing the person's life as a whole using articles and theories presented in the course.

METHOD OF GRADING

- Attendance and Participation – 10%
- Three short descriptive papers (3 pages each) due throughout the semester– 30%
- 10 page analysis paper using articles & theories from the course (see attached assignment) – 40%
- Final Exam – 20%
- Optional extra credit assignments: With your three short papers, add 2 pages of discussion of an article from the assigned reading for that section. Connect the article to the life story.

COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES/ASSESSMENT METHODS

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT METHODS
1. Have an understanding of micro and macro	1. Research project and exams.
2. Have an understanding of Sociological theories (Interactionism, Functionalism, Social Conflict theory, etc.)	2. Life course assignment and exams.
3. Have an understanding of the life course and special issues related to the aging experience.	3. Life course assignment and exams.
4. Have an understanding Aging with special attention to social institutions (Family, Political Economy, Economic Systems, Religion, Ethnicity, Gender, etc.)	4. Questions on exams.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES/ASSESSMENT METHODS

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT METHODS
1. KNOWLEDGE: Students develop knowledge of the concepts and theories deployed by sociologists in their analysis of social problems particularly as they relate to aging.	1. Research project and exams.
2. SKILLS: Students develop and use the tools needed for communication, inquiry, analysis and productive work.	2. Life course assignment and exams.
3. INTEGRATION: Students work productively within and across disciplines.	3. Life course assignment and exams.
4. VALUES, ETHICS, AND RELATIONSHIPS: Students understand and apply values, ethics, and diverse perspectives in personal, civic, and cultural/global domains.	4. Research project Questions on exams.

CITYTECH GRADE POINTS:

A	93-100	B	83-86.9	C	70-76.9	WU	Unofficial Withdrawal –More than 3 absents
A-	90-92.9	B-	80-82.9	D	60-69.9		
B+	87-89.9	C+	77-79.9	F	59.9 below		

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY STATEMENT

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

COLLEGE POLICY ON ABSENCE/LATENESS

A student may be absent without penalty for 10% of the number of scheduled class meetings during the semester. As this class meets twice a week the allowable absent is three classes.

Semester course is taught: Spring 2014:

Three Short Description Papers of Various Life Stages

Objectives:

The objective of this assignment is to introduce you to fieldwork research and to have you write up your own field notes. You will be conducting life histories interviews with someone over the age of 60 in order to get a first hand account of the experience of elderly people in the US. Later, in your final paper project, you will use the data from your interviews to support or test an analysis based on the themes from the course (See attached description of final paper).

Format:

- 1) 3 (**full pages**) typed, double spaced
- 2) 1 inch margins, 10 to 12 pt. font.
- 3) If you refer to an assigned or optional article related to that particular life stage, use proper citations and bibliography. *Do not use outside sources including the internet. These papers should be based on your interviews alone, but if you wish to address at least two articles from assigned reading or optional reading for those weeks you can receive extra credit points for writing additional pages (at least one page summary of article and discussion for each article).

Possible Research Projects:

You must pick a person who is 60+ years old who you can meet with and interview at least 5 or more times throughout the semester. You can interview an elderly relative, neighbor, or family friend. You might also find individuals to interview at a local senior facility or your religious institution/church. If you don't know anyone over the age of 60, consider the program "Volunteer with Brooklyn's Older Adults!" – you can find it on the following link as part of the <http://nyc.gov/service> programs:

http://www.nycservice.org//opportunities/index.php?opp_id=5766

Ethics

Be sure to be honest with the people you are observing. Tell the people you are interviewing that you would like to write a paper for a course based on his or her life story. Give informed consent. Ask permission and offer the person a pseudonym to protect their identity. Treat your respondent in a respectful manner. Anthropologists often use "gift exchange" as a way to show appreciation for the interviews and as a way to build rapport and connections.

Taking Notes:

Sometimes it is difficult to take notes while you are interviewing as every time you start to write something the person may stop talking. You can use *field jottings* – quick notes using key words that you will later type up into more detailed and descriptive *fieldnotes*. If you write down your notes after the event, be sure to do it as soon as possible. You would be surprised what you forget. When expanding on your notes reconstruct events, add details and impressions. Elaborate on your personal experiences as a participant and problems you may come across as an observer. If you use recording devices (tape recorders, digital cameras, video, etc.) for your interviews you must ask permission from your respondent.

Observations

A field researcher records activities and interactions with others, often in chronological order. Researchers should also note their own reactions and thoughts to the experiences observed. In your descriptions you should describe everything you see, hear, smell, feel. Consider drawing diagrams or pictures. You should describe **at least three** of the following:

- 1) *The temporal and spatial environment.* (Use of time and space), Where did you conduct your research? Describe your fieldsite - Describe the space – what did the place look like? What did you observe? Describe how long you observed the event (hours, # of days, etc.). When did you conduct your research (time of day, season, etc.).
- 2) *Language or discourse* (Incl. songs, chants, ritual statements, etc.) What did you hear? If there were songs, what were the lyrics? What did people repeatedly say? Is there a particular topic the person continues to talk about?
- 3) *Gestures or body language* (Incl. dance, movement, etc.), Describe the movement of people. What type of body language did the person have?

- 4) Clothes or body ornaments (Incl. costumes, formal v. regular attire, makeup, etc.), Describe what people wore. What does this say about the person?
- 5) *Colors*, Describe the colors you see. (In the environment, that the person wears, etc.)
- 6) *Material objects*. Describe statues, paintings, photographs, etc. Describe any symbolic items (flags, religious items, etc.) Describe the type of food served. Etc. What do these material items indicate about the person?
- 7) *Emotions* (happy, sad, scared, etc.) How did you feel? How did the person you interviewed appear to be feeling?,
- 8) Describe microcultural factors such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, etc., Did you share the same background as the person you interviewed? How did this impact your interview and your connection to the person?
- 9) Describe *explicit or implicit rules and norms*., What are the norms of behavior? What is the etiquette? Are there written rules? Are there any taboos?
- 10) If you can, try to identify possible patterns or themes related to the elderly but save your analysis for your final paper.

Use detailed descriptions. Use adjectives and adverbs. (A cat sits in the sun – or -- A fluffy orange tabby cat wiggles in the warmth of the sun). Use vivid fresh language. Emphasize what makes what you observed interesting, or unique. Use specific descriptive details. Give an impression for the reader by describing what you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. Researchers should also note their own reactions and thoughts to the experiences observed.

Interview techniques:

I will review this in lecture. The following is an adaptation from Russell Bernard's (1988) Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology. London: Sage Publications.

1) BEFORE THE INTERVIEW:

- A) Be open and honest about your intentions. Explain to your informant the goals of the assignment, and their rights as an informant (pseudonym, the right not to answer a question/informed consent). You will need to state that you did this in the ethics portion of your life history paper.
- B) Explain that you want to know what they think -- their observations, and opinions. Tell them/assure them that you are interested in what they have to say.
- C) Prepare for your interview. Prepare possible questions and topics, test equipment (batteries) if you are using tape recorders or video equipment, etc.

2) DURING THE INTERVIEW

- A) Let the informant lead the conversation. Balanced conversation goes back and forth equally. Though this may feel like a conversation, you want the informant to do most of the talking.
- B) Informants must have the time and energy to sit and talk to you.
- C) Make the informant feel safe/ comfortable, at ease. You must be non-threatening, self controlled, supportive, polite and cordial.

*The rule is to get an informant onto a topic of interest and get out of the way. Let the informant provide information into what he/she thinks is important.

3) THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS *Background: There are different types of interview techniques:

- A) Informal interviewing -- in the field conversations. Typically this occurs when doing participant observation.
- B) Unstructured interviewing- the interview is clearer. You sit down with the informant and hold an interview. You have a clear plan in mind but you don't have a lot of control over the informant's responses. You keep focused on a topic -- but you give your subject the ability to define the conversation.
- C) Semi-structured interviewing: you use an interview guide -- a written list of questions and or topics. An interview guide basically guides or directs the interview discussion but is open to follow up on leads -- be flexible to go with what the informant is saying.
" It shows that you are prepared and competent but that you are not trying to exercise excessive control over the informant (Bernard 1988: 205)" This is typically the best method for your life history paper.
- D) Very structured interviews -- usually when you are interviewing more than one person -- you use the exact same questions with all the people you interview in order to compare their responses.

4) WRITING THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS OR TOPICS *Remember that the interviewer (you) will define the focus of the interview, but the informant will determine the content -- the more responses from your informant the better.

- A) Informants must understand your questions. Be unambiguous -- make sure your questions cannot be understood or interpreted in different ways.
- B) Use vocabulary that your informant will understand.
- C) Design questions that your respondent can answer. They have to know enough about the topic to be able to respond. It has to make sense to them and their life experience. Ask questions that pertain to his/her life experience rather than vague opinions on topics they know little about.
- D) Make the questionnaire look well planned -- don't repeat two similar questions. Try to have questions flow naturally into one another

E) Contingencies and filter questions

Given a particular response you may have a different follow up question.

Are you married? No -- have you ever been married?

F) Try to avoid threatening questions -- but if you must ask a sensitive topic -- be descriptive and careful -- long preambles can lessen the intimidation

G) Avoid yes/no questions (or at least have a follow up question)

Avoid the either x or y questions -- this limits the possibility of a z response.

H) Don't take an emotional stand in the wording of a question -- remain neutral.

EX: "Should the legislative raise the drinking age to 21 in order to reduce the carnage among teens on our highways? (Bernard 1988)"

EX: Do you agree with the president when he says?

I) Avoid opinions on controversial issues -- stick to issues that directly relate to the person's life experience.

5) THEMES YOU SHOULD ADDRESS IN YOUR INTERVIEW

A) Simply ask your respondent to describe his or her life during a particular period in their life (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle age, senior).

B) What were some overall achievements and disappointment, major life events, etc?

C) Consider the historical context in which the period the person describes takes place. How might the socio economic context influence the person's life?

D) Target questions based on specific areas. You may already know something of interest about this person that you want to explore further.

E) Target questions that build on a theme or pattern.

F) Test a possible thesis. You want to connect the life story to American society and key issues and themes related to the elderly, therefore if you have some ideas about what your thesis might be -- ask your subject.

G) Be flexible. You may have an idea of what you want to learn from the interview, but if your respondent goes off on an interesting topic that you did not anticipate -- let him or her talk. Perhaps this new topic is more interesting than your original ideas.

H) Be ethical. Don't force your informant to talk about something he or she does not want to talk about.

6) GETTING THE INFORMANT TO TALK -- EXPAND ON QUESTIONS

A) Silent Probe

Wait (count in your head) until the informant continues. Be silent, hold your tongue. You can nod, mumble "uh huh"

B) Encourage the informant to continue with affirmative noises.

"Yes, I see" Right uh huh

C) Probe for more descriptive responses.

Instead of "How do you do X"

Ask, "What are all the things you have to do to do X"

Instead of "What is it like to live on a farm?"

Ask "Tell me about living on the farm -- what are all the things you had to do on the farm?"

D) Don't lead the responses as you may prejudice the answer.

"Don't you think that . . .?"

"You think that's right okay?"

E) Sometimes the informant gets upset if you keep asking obvious questions.

F) Encourage the informant to talk -- but don't be afraid to reel them in -- interrupt gracefully.

G) Phrased assertion-- You can ask about something that you already know about the person in order to get him or her to open up.

H) Be non judgmental in your reactions to your subject's responses.

Remain neutral -- don't react negatively.

7) THE MECHANICS OF THE INTERVIEW

A) Maintain eye contact with the person you interview (unless of course it would be culturally inappropriate)

B) Show interest in your subject's responses. You don't want to yawn or look bored. It is also not a good idea to chew gum or eat unless the person you interview is also doing so.

C) Writing down responses during the interview may stop the flow of the conversation -- jot down brief notes that you will fill in later.

D) Be aware that sometimes people stiffen up when you use a tape recorder or video. It may take a while before they feel comfortable.

8. DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGY: A) **What is the source of your research subject and what are your selection criteria?** ("rapport" how did you connect to this person, description of person, why you chose this person, etc.) B) **What were your**

research procedures? (Describe where you conducted the research, describe how you observed the event, how did you record the information, etc.) C) **How did you address ethics?** (Informed consent, pseudonym, benefit or harm to subjects, etc.)

POINT BREAKDOWN (10 points per paper – 30 points total):

I will be grading these three short papers leniently BUT THEY MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME. Basically if you do the assignment you will do well. I use this assignment to help give suggestions for your final paper. ** You must turn in the assignment ON TIME, as I will not accept late papers:

1. Format: 3 full written typed pages, 10-12 point font, 1-inch margins. (1 points)
2. Brief description of research methods (how did you conduct each interview, what did you do different in the next interview, etc.)[Selection criteria: why select this person? Demographic/background information; Procedures: Describe type of interview, how you input/gathered data, participant observation; Ethics: how did you handle “informed consent,” “pseudonym”, ethnical treatment, etc.] (2 points)
3. Detailed description of the life stage (Paper one: Childhood/Adolescent (state year born, early childhood experiences, family, etc), Paper two: Young adulthood/adulthood (Perhaps look at life transitions, school experiences, early jobs, dating, family, etc.), Paper three: senior experiences to present day. (what are the special issues that the elderly face today, how does the person perceive their overall life, what does this person do today, etc.) (4 points)
4. Overall impression of what you observed (2 points)
5. Overall spelling, grammar, style (1 points)
6. Interview questions should be attached to the back of your 3 page descriptive paper. (Structured interview, semistructured interview, unstructured informal interview)

***. EXTRA CREDIT POINTS: Discuss and apply an assigned article or a chapter from the textbook to your observations. (Additional ½ to 1 page per article)

DUE DATES FOR SHORT PAPERS (No late papers accepted) Each paper is worth 10 points:

1. Childhood description paper (up to age 13) & Adolescent description paper (ages 13-18) due week 4 – 9/20
2. Adults to Middle Age description paper (ages 19 to late 50s) due week 7 - 10/11
3. Senior Experience (Ages 60+) due week 10 - 11/1

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EXTRA CREDIT (2 points – Up to 6 points over the semester)

For each summary of the person’s life, you can earn extra credit if you summarize the assigned or optional articles. This is an additional 1 page per article (in addition to your 3 page papers). You must answer all of the following questions:

1. **What is the topic of the article?**
2. **What is the thesis of the article?**
3. **What themes apply to the person that you interviewed? What themes do not apply to the person’s life story?**
4. **Select a quotation from the article, properly cite, and explain in your own words what it means.**
5. **Explain how the quotation relates to your data (the person you interviewed).**
6. **Critically discuss the article: What do you like about the article’s thesis argument? What do you dislike about the article?**

DUE DATES (No late papers accepted)

FIRST PAPER: - Due 2/20/14

Childhood description paper (up to age 13) – use two of the following articles

Myers, Scott “Childhood Migration and Social Integration in Adulthood”

Messner, Michael “Barbie Girls versus Sea Monsters”

Denzin, Norman “Play Games and Interaction”

Duncan “How Much Does Childhood Poverty Affect the Life Changes of Children”

Adolescent description paper (ages 13-18)– use two of the following articles

Kools, Susan “Adolescent Identity Development in Foster Care”

Dickson-Gomez, Julia “Growing Up in Guerilla Camps: The Long Term Impact of Being a Child Soldier in El Salvador’s Civil War”

Ross Catherine and John Mirowsky “Parental Divorce, Life Course Disruption, and Adult Depression”

Aquilino, William “From Adolescent to Young Adult”

Vollebergh et al (2001) “Intergenerational Transmission and the Formation of Cultural Orientations in Adolescence and Young Adulthood”

Rumbaut, Rubén G., and Golnaz Komale (2010) “Immigration and Adult Transitions”

SECOND PAPER Due 3/13/14

Young Adults to Middle age/ later adults description paper (ages 19 to late 50s)– use two of the following articles

Aquilino, William “From Adolescent to Young Adult”

Counihan, Carole "Female Identity, Food and Power in Contemporary Florence"
di Leonardo, Micaela "The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women, Families, and the Work of Kinship"
Tamir, Lois M. "Men at Middle Age: Developmental Transitions"
Waldfoegel, Jane and Sara McLanahan (2011) "Work and Family: Introducing the Issue"

THIRD PAPER Due 4/3/14

Senior Experience (Ages 60+) use two of the following articles

Behar, Ruth "Death and Memory" From Santa Maria del Monte to Miami Beach"
Conway, Turner "Inclusion of Black Studies in Gerontology Courses"
Fingerman, Karen "The Good, The Bad, and the Worrisome; Emotional Complexities in Grandparents Experiences with Individual Grandchildren"
Flores, Yvette G., et. al. "Beyond Famililism: A Case Study of Ethics of a Caregiver of an Elderly Parent with Dementia"
Kaufman, Sharon "Cultural Components of Identity in Old Age"
Krause, Neal and Elan Bastida (2011) "Church-Based Social Relationships, Belonging, and Health Among Older Mexican-Americans"
Laz Cheryl "Act your Age"
Logan, John "As old as you Feel"
Mui, Ada C. and Tazuko Shibusawa (2010) "Asian American Elderly in the Twenty-first Century : Key Indicators of Well-Being"
Myeroff, Barbara " So what do you want from us here?"
Sutherland, Jean-Anne, Margaret M. Poloma, Brian F. Pendleton (2003) "Religion, Spirituality, and Alternative Health Practices: The Baby Boomer and Cold War Cohorts"
Traphagan, John "Contesting the Transition to Old Age in Japan"
Vinick, Barbara "Remarriage in Old Age"

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FINAL ANALYSIS PAPER PROJECT (40%)

WEEK 14: 5/6 – no late papers will be accepted, no emailed papers

Objectives:

The objective of this assignment is to have you apply your understanding of the main thesis arguments of 2 articles from the course (from library reserve &/or City Tech library article database (EBSCO or JSTOR). You must also make reference to issues presented in the Morgen/Kunkel textbook. Do not try to bulk up your paper by using outside sources from the internet (etc.) as I will simply cross it out and not consider it as part of your 10-page paper. The point of this paper is to show me you can read the assigned reading and apply your understanding of the reading to the data you collected – the life story. Do not simply cut and paste your short descriptive papers as your final paper is an analytical essay – you must have a 1) thesis statement presented in the introduction, 2) topic sentences for every paragraph in your data analysis section, 3) Analysis in every paragraph, 4) details from the life story in every paragraph. Draw on one or more themes or topics from the course.

Possible topics:

- You can address a particular life stage (childhood, adolescent, adulthood, etc.) that strongly impacted this person's life experience.
- You can discuss the construction of identity (Performance or process, gender identity, sexual identity, racial/ethnic identity, class/economic identity, etc.)
- You can look at a major life event in the person's life. (immigration, military experience, an accident, dealing with healthcare etc.)
- You can look at particular social institutions that impacted the person's life. (Family, Religion, Political, Economic, etc.)

Format: (Incorrect format will result in point deductions)

- 1) 10 typed pages, double-spaced (excluding your original midterm description and bibliography)
- 2) 1 inch margins, 10 to 12 point font
- 3) A minimum of 3 citations from the course reading (2 articles, 1 textbook)
- 4) Attachments: attach your three short description papers, attach a full correct bibliography (author of the article listed last name first, in alphabetical order, year of publication, title of article, title of edited book with editors, publisher and location of publication)
- 5) Late papers will not be accepted and you will receive 0 points. (no emailed papers)
- 6) Use of material other than your observations, the textbook, and the 2 articles will result in point deductions. (Do not add material you gathered from the internet)
- 7) Excessive typographical or grammar errors will result in point deductions.

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH(S) – 1 page (12.5 Points): The first paragraph should state the goals of the paper and your thesis statement. To what theoretical body of work does the experience of your observation data address? In other words, what two articles from our reading can you use to explain the life story that you collected? Look at the theory more than the actual topic. In order to develop a strong argument, you must start with a good debatable thesis statement. You should set up or foreshadow what you intend to cover in the body of your paper. Your thesis should include three parts: What, How, and Why.

1) WHAT is your objective? (What will you argue, describe, critique, compare, contrast, etc.?)

Your objective for this assignment is to understand the elderly experience in the US. Keep focused on your objective

-- don't stray from your objective

2) HOW will you prove WHAT you said?

The thesis tells the reader how you intend to prove your point -- you will be drawing your conclusions from the life story you collected and using the articles from the reader as supporting evidence. You will draw on certain topics within your data that will support your thesis. Use your raw first hand data as evidence to prove your thesis argument.

3) WHY are you writing this paper? (What will I show, prove, challenge, etc.?)

By doing WHAT you are supposed to do (Understand the elderly experience), and HOW you are going to do this (by presenting evidence from the life history you gathered and using the articles), you will show, prove, challenge "X".

Your thesis should be a debatable topic that you prove in the body of your paper.

** Your thesis should connect the experience of the aged in American Culture.

METHODOLOGY – 2 pages (25 points) In this section of your paper you should describe the methods you used to gather your data. Summarize how you conducted all your interviews. You **must** address the following:

(1) **What is the source of your research subject and what are your selection criteria?**, (How did you meet the person you interviewed? How did you gain rapport? Why did you select this person? What is the demographic background of this person (age, gender, place of birth, ethnicity, religion, Etc.)

2) **Describe your procedures**, (Describe the research site. You should describe the manner in which you took down your fieldnotes, Describe the equipment you used to record the data you gathered (cameras, recording devices, computer, pen and paper, etc.), Describe how, when, where you conducted the interviews and what type of questions you asked. (Questionnaires should be attached at the back of the paper). Did you conduct an informal interview, a semi-structured interview, or a structured interview?

3) **Describe how you addressed ethics** (potential harm, confidentiality/pseudonym, informed consent, respect, special issues related to the elderly, etc.)

BODY OF PAPER – 6+ pages (analysis and application of thesis) Use of 2 articles listed on the syllabus (50 points): Link your data and your claims. Relate the argument you present in the introduction to your observation data. You state a claim, now prove it with your data (the life story). You must use topic sentences. The first sentence of **every paragraph** needs a topic sentence that connects the main idea of the paragraph to your original thesis stated in the introduction. Use details from your interviews and analyze them. Your analysis should explain your interpretation of what you observed. Draw on ideas presented in the assigned reading. **Use quotations (no longer than ¼ page) from the reading, explain in your own words what the quotation means, and then connect to your observation data.** Do you agree with the author's analysis or do you think there can be another interpretation? Don't simply summarize the article's main thesis, you need to critically analyze it and apply it to what you observed. Explain the underlying meaning of what you observed by connecting it to your thesis – analyze what you think it means. Present sufficient evidence to prove your thesis but avoid sweeping generalizations.

Stick to using material that proves your point. Lets say you are concerned with topic/thesis A, but the data you present proves topic/thesis B. Though topic B may be interesting if it does not support the issue you intended to prove (topic A) then you must delete it. It is not supporting your argument. A common error that students make is that the introduction will set up a thesis claim but the end of the paper altogether is discussing another topic. Stick to your original idea and prove it in the body of the paper.

Remember to put your analysis into context. What is the political, economic, historical or cultural context? In other words, describe our American society (and in some cases a subculture within it).

CONCLUSION – 1 page (12.5 Points): Repeat point by point how you proved your thesis. Summarize all the key ideas that you presented in the body of your paper and restate how you successfully convinced the reader that your thesis is correct.

Please note: This paper assignment is very difficult for many students. You need to have an understanding of the main theory or concepts from the reading and be able to apply this to your own data. This is not a paper to start writing the day before it is due. Start working on it early enough so you can ask me questions. If you totally panic, try to at least summarize the theories, arguments, and concepts from at least 2 articles, and ideas and concepts from the Harris textbook. **DO NOT RESORT TO COPYING FROM THE INTERNET OR ANY OTHER SOURCE.** There are software programs that can search the internet for plagiarized materials. Copying another author's wording without quotation marks or references will result in an automatic "F" and a formal report to the college.

No late paper will be accepted.

Sociology of Aging Analytical Paper Grade Sheet

DESCRIPTIONS	POINTS	GRADE
INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH(S) – 1 Page	12.5 points	
Goals of paper (micro/macro), Research Question, Thesis Statement, What does your interview say about the elderly experience in the US? etc.		
METHODOLOGY – 2 pages	25 points	
Methods used to gather data: (1) What is the source of your research subject and what are your selection criteria? (Someone over 60, how establish rapport, etc.) (2) Describe procedures (type of interview, context & research site, equipment, participant observation, etc.), (3) Ethics (Informed consent, pseudonym, potential harm, etc.)		
BODY OF PAPER – 6+ pages (analysis and application of thesis) – use of 2 articles on syllabus	50 points	
Topic sentences and analysis in each paragraph		
Discuss/apply 2 articles listed on the course syllabus. Use quotations with citations from each article (no longer than ¼ page) and explain what the quote means in your own words. Explain how the quote applies to your research data. Do you agree with the author’s analysis or do you think there can be another interpretation? Don’t simply summarize the article’s main thesis, you need to critically analyze it and apply it to what you observed. Explain the underlying meaning of what you observed by connecting it to your thesis – analyze what you think it means.		
Use concepts & terms from course (refer to textbook by Harris)		
CONCLUSION – 1 page	12.5 points	
Repeat point by point how you proved your thesis. Summarize all the key ideas that you presented in the body of your paper and restate how you successfully convinced the reader that your thesis is correct		
POINT DEDUCTIONS		
1) 10 typed pages, double-spaced (excluding your original midterm description and bibliography) 2) 1 inch margins, 10 to 12 point font 3) A minimum of 3 citations from the course reading (2 articles, 1 textbook) 4) Attachments: attach your four short description papers, attach a full correct bibliography (author of the article listed last name first, in alphabetical order, year of publication, title of article, title of edited book with editors, publisher and location of publication) 5) Late papers will not be accepted and you will receive 0 points. (No emailed papers) 6) Use of material other than your observations, the textbook, and the 2 articles will result in point deductions. (Do not add material you gathered from the internet) 7) Excessive typographical or grammar errors will result in point deductions		
Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, use of another student’s paper, copying information from a book or website without proper citations/references/quotations marks, etc.	Automatic “F” for the assignment and a formal report to the Academic Integrity Committee.	
TOTAL POINTS (100 pts = 40% of your total grade)		

*NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED /NO EMAILED PAPERS ACCEPTED