

JNST 000K-01 Breaking Norms

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1-2, or by appointment

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TTh 2:30-3:50

In this class, we explore the dynamic relationship between individuals and society through theory and practice. We engage in a range of desocialization exploriments, breaking social norms to probe the connections between society and self. We analyze our experiences with the exploriments from a range of theoretical perspectives, highlighting the prospects for danger, liberation and environmental sustainability involved with accomplishing, breaking and resisting social norms. We apply our awareness of the complex, socially constructed nature of social norms to understand the continuing effects of colonization; the Protestant ethic; interactions in racialized and gendered spaces; cell phone and Internet use; and the effects of consumption on environmental sustainability. We end the course by exploring the prospects for liberation through transforming norms, society and self.

Objectives

This course is designed to empower students to:

- 1) Develop the willingness and ability to question assumptions about social reality, society and self.
- 2) Develop reflective and critical insight into their own relationships to cultural practices and assumptions.
- 3) Apply a range of theoretical perspectives to understand the effects of social norms and the prospects for danger and liberation involved with accomplishing and resisting them.
- 4) Develop critical thinking and communications skills.
- 5) Practice writing as a generative and recursive decision-making process.
- 6) Produce multi-draft, analytical writing projects, integrating ideas and perspectives from scholarly sources and fieldwork data.