

Alternative Societies

L4090A, Autumn term
Third Year Sociology Option
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Sociologists have often analysed and criticised the world. The aim of this module is to look at alternative societies that their assessments and criticisms imply. We will look at utopianism, what it involves and what state it is in today. We will discuss alternatives like communism, co-ops, and participatory economies as well as alternative types of living in communes or intentional communities. We will examine alternatives in phenomena like urban social centres and freeganism or skip diving and food counter-cultures. We will discuss what an alternative society that is green would have to look like and how we could have a society where we all work a lot less. We will discuss the benefits or otherwise and possibilities of a world society with no borders which restrict our movement. We will discuss what alternative kinds of education could look like and how society and our lives could be slower. We will finish by looking at alternative ways of achieving alternative societies, alternative forms of politics.

Topics

1. Utopianism
2. Communism
3. Participatory economies and co-ops
4. Counterculture in a hippy commune
5. Social centres, freeganism and food counter-culture
6. Reading Week
7. Green society
8. Society beyond paid work
9. Global society without borders
10. Alternative education
11. The slow society
12. Alternative Routes to Alternative Societies

Introductory background reading

Martin Parker et al (eds) *The Dictionary of Alternatives*

Assessment

This module will be assessed by a 5000 word essay and a 1000 word essay.

If you'd like to be added to this year's Study Direct site contact Luke Martell on l.martell@sussex.ac.uk