

**Department of English
Carleton University
Winter 2014
ENGL 2100B: Popular Culture
Tue/Wed: 2:35 pm-3:55 pm
Location: Tory Building 240
(Please confirm location on Carleton Central)
Instructor: Dr. Mayurika Chakravorty
Office: DT 1915
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30 -12:30 (or by appointment)
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Course Description

This course explores a variety of critical approaches to the study of popular culture in today's globalized world. Challenging the notion that pop culture represents merely low-brow entertainment, we shall explore how pop culture is shaped by and in turn shapes the way we see and interpret the world around us. The course will study various theoretical coordinates within the field while critically engaging with different forms of popular culture including films, television, music, internet and other new media.

Course Material

Required Text:

John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader* (4th edition)

ISBN-13: 978-1405874212

NOTE: The textbook is available for purchase at Octopus Books (116 Third Ave;
www.octopusbooks.ca; 613.233.2589).

Evaluation

20% -- Participation (In-class + CuLearn Discussion Board). Students will be graded in terms of preparedness/ level of participation in class discussions as well as on CuLearn discussion boards.

[***NOTE***: Students are expected to attend all classes, having read and reflected upon the materials according the syllabus. **Absence from more than 5 classes per term may result in a 'Failed' final grade, regardless of submitted assignments or exam results.**]

30 (15+15) % -- Short Response Papers (2). 500-700 words typed in Times New Roman (font size 12) with 1.5 spacing.

25% -- In-class Mid-term Exam. On materials covered in class.

25% -- Final Essay (2500 words). The topic must be decided by a stipulated date in consultation with me.

Course Policies/ Class Etiquette

-- All Assignments are mandatory. In the case of late submission of an assignment, there will be a penalty of 5% of the total mark per day unless there is a pressing and well-documented reason and the student has informed me beforehand.

-- All assignments need to be handed in class (in addition to an electronic copy submitted through CuLearn). Please do not drop in the department drop-box (unless specified in the syllabus or in class) or slip it under my door. If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.

-- To ensure active participation and lively discussion in class, I do not recommend the use of laptops in class. However, if you wish to type your notes on the computer, you may do so using a word-processing software (e.g. MS Word). But absolutely no internet browsing/e.mail checking/social-networking in class. Cell-phones need to be put away in silent mode during class hours.

-- Private conversations or noise of any kind will not be tolerated. Rude and/or disruptive students will be asked to leave and, in extreme cases, may be barred from the course.

-- Please come to class on time (and prepare to stay for the entire class) to be marked present for the day. If you have a pressing reason (e.g. a doctor's appointment) for late arrival or early departure, please inform me in advance.

-- In this class, you will be using CuLearn to communicate with me or with one another, submit assignments, post reflections or questions about the readings etc. You are responsible for ensuring that you have a Carleton computer/email account and for checking this account on a regular basis. I will be using CuLearn to post announcements, reminders, and grades as well as to email about anything related to this class. Please use the "mail" function in CuLearn to send me any messages. This will help to ensure that you have a record of any sent message in case it does not reach me.

-- Although it is expected that we shall discuss a wide variety of perspectives on the topics discussed in this class, we are also required to do so in a respectful manner. Racist, sexist, homophobic, or ableist comments are unacceptable. To this end, students must familiarize themselves with the regulations concerning conduct and academic standing as outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Reading Schedule

Week 1 (January, 7-9):

Day 1 (Tuesday, January 7): Introduction

Day 2 (Thursday, January 9): What is Popular Culture? (reading uploaded on CuLearn)

Week 2 (January 14-16):

Day 3 (Tuesday, January 14): **Culture and Civilization** Arnold/Leavis (3-19)

Day 4 (Thursday, January 16): **Culture and Civilization** Arnold/Leavis (3-19)

Week 3 (January 21-23):

Day 5 (Tuesday, January 21): **Culturalism** Williams (32-39) /E. P. Thompson (41-44)

Day 6 (Thursday, January 23): **Culturalism** Hoggart (26-31) /Hall and Whannel (45-51)

Week 4 (January 28-30):

Day 7 (Tuesday, January 28): **Marxism** Marx/Engels + Adorno (55-74)

Response Paper I Due

Day 8 (Thursday, January 30): **Marxism** Adorno+ Gramsci (74-80)

Week 5 (February 4-6):

Day 9 (Tuesday, February 4): **Marxism** Bennett + Storey (81-97)

Day 10 (Thursday, February 6): **Gender and Sexuality** Rakow (183-198) Radway 199-215

Week 6 (February 11-13):

Day 11 (Tuesday, February 11): **Gender and Sexuality** Radway 199-215 Geraghty 216-223

Day 12(Thursday, February 13): **Gender and Sexuality** Judith Butler 224-236

Week 7 (February 18-20): *Winter Break No Classes*

Week 8 (February 25-27):

Day 13 (Tuesday, February 25): ***Midterm***

Day 14 (Thursday, February 27): **Structuralism/Post-Structuralism** Barthes 261-270

Week 9 (March 4- 6):

Day 15 (Tuesday, March 4): **Structuralism/Post-Structuralism** Wright 270-283 Macherey 285-301

Day 16 (Thursday, March 6): **Structuralism/Post-Structuralism** Althusser 302-312 Foucault 313-319

Week 10 (March 11-13):

Day 17 (Tuesday, March 11): **Race, Racism and Representation** Gilroy (355-363) +Bobo (365-371)

Day 18(Thursday, March 13): **Race, Racism and Representation** Hall (374-382) + Cornel West (383-387)

Response Paper II due

Week 11 (March 18-20):

Day 19 (Tuesday, March 18): **Race, Racism and Representation** hooks (Postmodern Blackness 388-394) Amir Saeed (395)

Day 20 (Thursday, March 20): **Postmodernism** Baudrillard (409-415) +TBA

Week 12 (March 25-27):

Day 21 (Tuesday, March 25): **Postmodernism** Wilson (Fashion and Postmodernism 444-452) Perryman (Dr. Who...472-488)

Day 22 (Thursday, March 27): **Postmodernism/ Politics of the Popular** TBA

Week 13 (April 1-3):

Day 23 (Tuesday, April 1): **Politics of the Popular** Bourdieu (498-506) Hall (508-518)

Day 24 (Thursday, April 3): **Politics of the Popular** TBA

Week 14 (April 8):

Day 27 (Tuesday, April 8): Review *Final Essay Due*

Academic Honesty

All students are expected to be aware of and abide by the University's academic integrity policy. Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in

this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov. 8, 2013 for the Fall term and March 7, 2014 for the Winter term.

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.

For Religious Observance:

Students requesting academic accommodation for religious observance should make a formal, written request to the instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Please make requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. Accommodation will be worked out directly, and on an individual basis, between the student and instructor. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. If you have any questions about this, please refer to the Equity Services website (<http://www.carleton.ca/equity/>) for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodations policies. You may also contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Studies Advisor in Equity Services (<http://www.carleton.ca/equity/>) to complete a Letter of Accommodation. The student must also make an appointment with me to discuss her needs at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.