

Carleton University
Winter 2015
Department of English
ENGL 2100B
Topics in Popular Culture: Globalization, Bollywood and Popular Culture in
Contemporary India
Time: Wed/Fri: 16:05-17:25
Location: SA (Southam Hall) 416
(Please confirm location on Carleton Central)
Instructor: Dr. Mayurika Chakravorty
Email: mayurika_chakravorty@carleton.ca; mayurix@gmail.com
Office: DT 1915
Office Hours: Fri: 14:30-15:30 or by appointment

Course Description:

This course gives an overview of popular culture in post-millennial (post-2000) India as the country gradually opened up to the economic and socio-cultural forces of globalization. The transition of a largely rural agro-centric India to an urban, service and manufacture oriented one, also resulted in fundamental transformations in the Indian socio-cultural landscape. This course will explore how globalization not only ushered in a new era of consumer-driven mass culture industry, but also changed the entire face of popular literary and visual culture in the country. We shall analyze a variety of material including popular fiction (graphic novel, YA fiction, fantasy), visual media (Bollywood movies, TV shows), and other cultural forms like music, fashion, and sports. Some of the key areas/issues that we are going to focus on include youth subculture, the role of digital media, representation of class, caste, religion, gender and sexuality, besides newer forms of identity politics as reflected in the popular culture of contemporary India.

Course Material:

[You will need to buy only the first three books on the list – they have been ordered through the Carleton University Bookstore. The films will be screened in class*. The essays will be either put on reserve at Carleton Library or will be available online.]

1. **No Guns at my Son's Funeral**, Paro Anand, 2005.
2. **Turbulence**, Samit Basu, 2013.
3. **Sita's Ramayana**, Moyna Chitrakar and Samhita Arni, 2011.
4. **The World Before Her** Nisha Pahuja, 2013.
5. **Dostana**, Tarun Mansukhani, 2008.
6. **3 Idiots**, Rajkumar Hirani, 2009.
7. **Slumdog Millionaire**, Danny Boyle, 2008.
8. **Queen**, Vikas Bahl, 2014

[*Occasionally, when available online/through Carleton library, you might be asked to view a video at home before class discussions].

In addition we are also going to explore selected TV show episodes, music videos, advertisements, documentaries on food, fashion and sports besides other 'new' genres in contemporary India.

You will also be required to read a few short essays on relevant topics – these will be put on reserve at the library or will be available online.

Evaluation:

Attendance/Participation: 10%

You will be graded in terms of preparedness for the class as well as the level of participation in class discussions. You are expected to attend all classes, having read and reflected upon the material according to the syllabus. Since this course involves screening of several audio-visual materials in class, it is absolutely imperative to attend classes regularly. Most of the videos are not available online for viewing later.

[***NOTE***: Absence from more than 5 classes per term may result in not being allowed to sit in exams or to handing in assignments.]

Weekly Journal: 15%

You need to post your thoughts, reflections on the material that has been discussed that week. Each entry should be minimum 150 words and need to be uploaded on CuLearn by 10 pm every Sunday (beginning January 18).

Response Papers (2): (15+15) 30%. Two short response papers on any text or topic related to the course. They are not expected to be rigorously analytical research papers. They are rather your responses to a text (a film, novel or an essay) or a topic after it has been discussed in class. They should not be book reviews or summaries of texts. These papers should demonstrate your comprehensive understanding of a text or issue as well as your ability to write with coherence and clarity. Each paper should be about 1.5 pages long (in size 12 font, 1.5 spacing) and should follow MLA style. **Due on January 30 and March 11.**

Midterm: 20%. The midterm will be held in class during regular class hours on **February 25**. The students will be tested on their overall understanding of the material covered up to that point. The format will be decided in consultation with the class.

Final Exam: 25%. The final exam will take place during the formal examination period at the end of the fall semester. It will evaluate the students' understanding and retention of the course material including class lectures and discussions. The format will be a combination of short and long answer type questions. The students will be able to choose from a list of questions within each of the two sections (short and long).

Course Policies

-- All assignments are mandatory and class tests need to be written on the dates specified. If you are unable to make it to class on the day of an in-class assignment, please send me an e. mail in

advance as soon as you can. You will need to provide a doctor's note (if you are ill) or other relevant documentation.

-- 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 you have informed me beforehand.

-- All assignments (take-home, essays and term papers) need to be handed in class. 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.

Classroom Etiquette:

-- 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.** All computers need to be closed during in-class assignments/tests. **Cell-phones need to be put away in silent mode during class hours.**

-- **Please come to class on time and be prepared to stay for the entire class.** Coming late or leaving early is highly disruptive and disrespectful towards your professor and fellow students. If you arrive late due to unforeseen circumstances, please minimize the disturbance by sitting in a seat close to the door. If you leave early (unless there is a valid reason and you have informed me in advance, e.g. doctor's appointment), you will be marked absent for the day even if you have signed the attendance sheet.

-- **Please do not chat/whisper during a lecture, screening, or class discussions. It is unacceptable in a university setting.**

-- 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: The Undergraduate Calendar can be accessed online at:

<http://www.carleton.ca/cuuc/>

Schedule of Classes:

Week 1: Introduction

Day 1 (Wednesday, January 7): Introduction

Day 2 (Friday, January 9): Watch *3 Idiots* (in class)

Week 2: What Young India Wants?

Day 3 (Wednesday, January 14): Discuss *3 Idiots* + Read “What Young India Wants?” (on reserve; can be accessed through ARES on CuLearn)

Day 4 (Friday, January 16): Discuss *No Guns at my Son’s Funeral*

Week 3: What Young India Wants?

Day 5 (Wednesday, January 21): Discuss No Guns + Watch *Slumdog Millionaire*

Day 6 (Friday, January 23): *Slumdog Millionaire*

Week 4: The Idea of India: Many Indias

Day 7 (Wednesday, January 28): *Slumdog Millionaire* + essay “Democracy’s failing Light” (CuLearn)

Day 8 (Friday, January 30): Watch *Satyameva Jayate* (TV Show “Truth Will Prevail”)

Response Paper I due

Week 5: The Idea of India: Many Indias

Day 9 (Wednesday, February 4): Discuss *Satyameva Jayate*

Day 10 (Friday, February 6): Watch *The World Before Her*

Week 6: Indian Feminisms

Day 11 (Wednesday, February 11): Discuss TWBH + Essay “Indian Feminisms” (on reserve)

Day 12 (Friday, February 13): Discuss *Gulabi Gang* (link shared on CuLearn)

Week 7: Winter Break (Feb 16-20): No Classes

Week 8: Indian Feminisms

Day 15 (Wednesday, February 25): **Midterm**

Day 16 (Friday, February 27): Queen

Week 9: Love and Sexuality in Popular Culture

Day 17 (Wednesday, March 4): Discuss Queen

Day 18 (Friday, March 6): Discuss Dostana (Friendship)

Week 10: Love and Sexuality in Popular Culture

Day 19 (Wednesday, March 11): Queen + Dostana + essay (TBA)

Response Paper II due

Day 20 (Friday, March 13): Watch selected Ad videos + discuss essay “Advertising in India” (link shared on CuLearn)

Week 11: Graphic Novel/ Epics in Popular Culture

Day 21 (Wednesday, March 18): Watch selections from *Sita Sings the Blues*

Day 22 (Friday, March 20): Discuss *Sita Sings the Blues* + *Sita's Ramayana*

Week 12: Fantasy and Superheroes

Day 23 (Wednesday, March 25): Discuss *Turbulence*

Day 24 (Friday, March 27): Discuss *Turbulence*

Week 13: Global Bollywood

Day 25 (Wednesday, April 1): Marketing Bollywood ‘Song and Dance’

(watch selected videos) + discuss essay “Tradition and Transgression in Bollywood Dancing” (on reserve)

Day 26 (Friday, April 3): **Statutory Holiday**

Week 14: Review

Day 27 (Wednesday, April 8): **Review + Discussion on the Final Exam**

Student Services:

All students are also strongly encouraged to take advantage of the services offered at Carleton University, such as the following:

Learning Support Services (LSS): LSS offers students a variety of free services, including academic-skills workshops and information sessions, bookable study rooms, a Tutor Referral Service, and a supportive staff of Peer Helpers. To learn more about these services, visit LSS on the fourth floor of the MacOdrum Library, contact them by phone at 613-520-2600, ext. 1125, or visit them online at www.carleton.ca/lss.

Writing Tutorial Service (WTS): The WTS offers students free one-on-one assistance with academic writing. To learn more about this free service, visit www.carleton.ca/wts. To make an appointment for a 50-minute session, call 613-520-2600, ext. 1125, or visit in person at the LSS Help Desk on the fourth floor of the MacOdrum Library.

Student Academic Success Centre (SASC): SASC offers students support in the form of free one-on-one academic advising and study-skills appointments. To learn more about these services, visit www.carleton.ca/sasc. To make appointments for an advising or study-skills session, call 613-520-2600, ext. 7850, or visit the centre in person at 302 Tory.

Career Development and Co-operative Education (CDCE): CDCE is an on-campus centre for career development, employment preparation, and experiential learning opportunities for Carleton students. Students are encouraged to use the various services provided by

CDCE throughout their time at Carleton by visiting its two service locations. The Career and Resource Centre is located at 401 Tory (613-520-6611); the Co-op and Employer Centre is located at 1400 CTTC (613-520-4331).

International Student Services Office (ISSO): ISSO is at the heart of Carleton's international student community. It supports international students, including incoming and outgoing exchange students, and promotes cross-cultural understanding within the Carleton community. ISSO is also responsible for the administration of Carleton's 80+ exchange programs. For more information, visit ISSO at 128 University Centre or contact by phone 613-520-6600. For general email inquiries, write to isso@carleton.ca; for exchange-program inquiries, write to exchange@carleton.ca. Website: www.carleton.ca/isso.

The Office of Student Affairs: The Office of Student Affairs oversees the Co-Curricular Record. The Co-Curricular Record is an official record designed as a means of recognizing all students' "out of class" involvement in student leadership development, extra-curricular activities, and Carleton community service opportunities. To learn more about the Record, visit 430 Tory (613-520-2573), or www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs.

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.

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.