Course Description

As new media both rapidly democratize communications and globalize cultures while participation in formal state-focused politics declines in many industrialized societies, political scientists can no longer ignore the complex interactions between politics and popular culture. This interdisciplinary, political sociology course applies theoretical approaches including structuralism, mass culture theory, semiotics, the Frankfurt School, Marxism and political economy, feminism, and postmodernism, to such core themes as political power, consent/dissent, gender, race, class, sexuality, childhood, globalization, and (post-)colonialism in film, TV, animation, music, news media, advertising, gaming, pornography, and new digital media. Students will have opportunities to offer term work in creative formats if they choose.

Warning: This course contains explicit theories and mature analyses that some may find disturbing. May affect ability to suspend disbelief and/or enjoy popular culture. Student discretion is strongly advised.
Course Requirements

The final course grade will be based on the following components:

- **Presentation**: 15% (6-8 pages)
- **Journal**: 25% (based on 5 seminars)
- **One major paper/creative medium**: 40% (15-20 pages) Due March 12
- **General Participation**: 20% (based on readings)

**Presentation - 15%**

Each student will lead one seminar, to be chosen during the first seminar (Jan. 9), and confirmed no later than the second seminar (Jan. 16), probably with at least one other person, depending on the number of students and interest in given topics. M.A. students are to read **at least 4 articles** (amounting to at least 65 pages), PhD students at least 5. Provide a synopsis of the major themes that link the articles/chapters together and distinguish them from one another, paying attention to their methodologies. What are their most interesting and important contributions and why? What are their strengths and weaknesses? How have they enriched (or not) your understanding of the topic in question?

**Presentations MUST NOT EXCEED 15 minutes**, as it is a large class and others will have a lot to say. A 6-8-page paper (depending on format – see below) is due on the presentation date.

You may offer your presentation in a creative format – to be discussed with the Instructor beforehand. Depending on the format chosen, we will discuss an appropriate deliverable item.

**Journal - 25% - February 13 and March 26**

The Journal is due in two installments, the first on February 13, the second on March 26.

This assignment is based on the readings you will select from those assigned for 5 seminars. You must choose at least 2 weeks/topics from among the first 6 seminars. M.A. students will be expected to address at least 2 readings (comprising 20 pages or more altogether) for each journal entry; PhD students should address at least 3 items. The journal is to consist of summaries of the materials read, together with 2 sets of responses to them:

1. **intellectual responses** - evaluate the factual information offered in the materials, as well as methodologies, approaches, arguments, logic, organization, contrasting approaches and ideas, and purposes. What is the crux of the issue being discussed, and what is the author trying to say? Is the approach persuasive? How does the material expand our body of knowledge of the issues involved?

2. **personal responses** - beyond its intellectual properties and impact, how does the material expand your personal understanding of popular culture?

There are no minimum or maximum page requirements for the journal, although obviously length will be an indicator of effort. An average week’s entry might range from 2 to 4 pages. Your
journal will chart your learning process and you will be able to track shifts in your attitudes and directions of thought over the term, so feel free to use your creative talents in making it.

Conduct of the seminar and participation grade - 20%

All students are expected to prepare carefully for each seminar by reading a chosen core of required readings listed under each week’s topic, and preparing, in addition to notes for private study, a list of questions and issues emerging from those readings for discussion in the seminar.

You will be tempted to base your comments and questions only on your own experience and opinions of popular cultural products. Resist.

The general participation grade will be distributed over a variety of kinds of participation in the seminars over the whole length of the course, principally based on the required readings, including: questions and comments to presenters; faithfulness and steadiness in building up central ideas and themes from week to week as our base of knowledge and shared vocabulary grow (which of course requires steady attendance); contribution of information and analysis to the seminars on the basis of good preparation; and, of course, civility and collegiality in providing good questions and bridges into the discussion for others, as well as both collaborating with and arguing against other viewpoints in the development of themes.

Please note that the participation grade is not for attendance, although obviously regular attendance is a prerequisite of a good participation mark. N.B. 20% is the difference between an A and a C...

Students who do not participate in seminars will receive a zero for this required component of the course, resulting in a final grade of F for the whole course.

One major paper/creative medium - 40% - (15-20 pages) Due March 12

Choose a well-known popular culture ‘text’ or artifact that is overtly ‘political’ (a book, film, TV show/episode, advertising series, video game, prime time animation, music video, song/album, fashion, YouTube video, etc.). Apply two of the theoretical approaches to popular culture outlined in the Strinati text (and/or elsewhere) and think through various possible readings of your chosen material. Which approach yields the richest and most fruitful insight into the text/artifact?

Your choice of text/artifact MUST be approved by the instructor.

Required Texts (available at Octopus Books, 116 3rd Ave., [at Bank St.], Tel: 613 233 2589)


**SEMINAR TOPICS AND READINGS**

**SEMINAR 1 (JAN. 9): INTRODUCTION**

- general introduction to the course
- presentation schedule
- film viewing schedule

**SEMINAR 2 (JAN. 16): THEORIES AND DEFINITIONS**


Dines and Humez:
- Douglas Kellner, “Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture”: 7-18

John Street, POLITICS AND POPULAR CULTURE, (Polity Press: Cambridge, 2007): chs. 1, 2

Holt Parker, “Toward a Definition of Popular Culture”, in History and Theory 50 (May 2011): 147-170


Ken Robinson, “RSA Animate – School Kills Creativity/ Changing Education Paradigms”

**SEMINAR 3 (JAN. 23): CONSENT/DISSENT: POP CULTURE AS OFFICIAL OPPOSITION?**

Strinati, ch. 4, “Marxism, Political Economy, and Ideology”


Dines and Humez:
- Dwayne Winseck, “The State of Media Ownership”: 19-24
- James Lull, “Hegemony”: 33-36
• Jamie Warner, “Political Culture Jamming: the Dissident Humour of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart”: 145-154

Timothy M. Dale and Joseph F. Foy, HOMER SIMPSON MARCHES ON WASHINGTON: DISSENT THROUGH AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE, (Univ. of Kentucky Press, 2010):
  • Carl Bergetz, “It’s Not Funny ‘Cause It’s True: the Mainstream Media’s Response to Media Satire in the Bush Years”: 257-276
  • Joseph J. Foy, “Introduction: Tuning in to Democratic Dissent”: 1-20
  • Timothy M. Dale, “The Revolution is Being Televised”: 21-35
  • Jamie Warner, “The Daily Show and the Politics of Truth”: 37-58
  • Beth Heidelberg and D. Schultz, “Mr Smith Goes to the Movies”: 59-74


  • Betty Kaklamanidou, “Michael Moor’s Documentaries: Popular Politics with a Vengeance”: 148-158

“Rick Mercer: Political Satire and Election 41”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoxN3SCSB4I&feature=relmfu


http://books.google.ca/books?id=2d1o2UVq5G4C&pg=PA95&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false


Gil Scott-Heron – “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGaRtqrlGy8

The Simpsons – http://www.wtso.net/movie/409-605_Sideshow_Bob_Roberts.html
The Simpsons uses Fox News as a Punching Bag
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QatG3Y7ev4Y&feature=related
Stephen Sewell, “Does Pop Culture Turn Us Into Consumer Slaves?”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vY5zbQJp5s

Renata Salecl, “RSA Animate – Choice”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bqMY8xzW0&feature=related

Film: Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media (1992)
Film: “Rich Media, Poor Democracy” (260893) 2003, 30 mins.

**SEMINAR 4 (JAN. 30): WORLD DISNEYFICATION**

Dines and Humez:
- Lee Artz, “Monarchs, Monster, and Multiculturalism: Disney’s Menu for Global Hierarchy”: 383-388

  - Christiane Staninger, “Disney’s Magic Carpet Ride: Aladdin and Women in Islam”: 65-77
  - Richard Finkelstein, “Disney’s Tempest: Colonizing Desire in The Little Mermaid”: 131-1471

Mike Budd and M.H. Kirsch, eds., RETHINKING DISNEY: PRIVATE CONTROL, PUBLIC DIMENSIONS, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005):
  - Radha Jhappan and Daiva Stasiulis, “Anglophilia and the Discreet Charm of the English Voice in Disney’s Pocahontas Films”: 151-177


**Film: “Mickey Mouse Monopoly: Disney, Childhood and Corporate Power”, (256807), 2001, 52 mins.**
Dines and Humez:

- Dafna Lemish, “The Future of Childhood in the Global Television Market”: 355-364
- Juliet Schor, “From Tony the Tiger to Slime Time Live: the Content of Commercial Messages in Children’s Advertising”: 365-374

- Sharna Olfman, “The Sexualization of Childhood”: 1-4
- Matthew B. Ezell, “Pornography, Lad Mags, Video Games and Boys”: 7-32
- Diane E. Levin, “So Sexy So Soon”: 75-88
- Melissa Farley, “Prostitution and the Sexualization of Children”: 143-164


Sue Jackson and Elizabeth Westrupp, “Sex, Post-feminist Popular Culture and the Pre-Teen Girl”, Sexualities, 13 (3): 357–376 (WebCT)

Charles Wankel and Shaun Malleck, EMERGING ETHICAL ISSUES OF LIFE IN VIRTUAL WORLDS, (Information Age Publishing: Charlotte NC, 2010):
- Andrew A. Adams, “Virtual Sex with Child Avatars”: 55-72

Dafna Lemish, Kirsten Drotner, et. al., “Global Culture in Practice: A Look at Children and Adolescents in Denmark, France and Israel”, European Journal of Communication (December 1998), 13 (4): 539-556


Strinati, ch. 3, “Structuralism and Semiology”

Dines and Humez:
• Sut Jhally, “Image-Based Culture”: 199-204
• Gloria Steinem, “Sex, Lies, and Advertising”: 235-242
• Rosalind Gill, “Supersexualize Me!: Advertising and the ‘Midriffs’”: 255-260
• Jackson Katz, “Advertising and The Construction of Violent White Masculinity: from BMWs to Bud Light”: 261-269


  • Carolyn Pedwell, “The Limits of Cross-Cultural Analogy: Muslim Veiling and ‘Western’ Fashion and Beauty Practices”: 188-199


Film: “No logo: brands, globalization, resistance”, (RSV) 51 mins.

MONDAY FEB. 20, WINTER BREAK - NO CLASS

SEMINAR 7 (FEB. 27): FEMININITY/ MASCULINITY/QUEERYING SEXUALITY

Strinati, ch. 5, “Feminism”, ch. 6, “Postmodernism”

Dines and Humez:
  • Richard Butsch, “Ralph, Fred, Archie, Homer, and the King of Queens: Why Television Keeps Recreating the Male Working-Class Buffoon”: 101-110
• Sue Tait, “Television and the Domestication of Cosmetic Surgery”: 509-518
• Candace Moore, “Resisting, Reiterating, and Dancing Through: the Swinging Closet Door of Ellen DeGeneres’s Televised Personalities”: 531-540

Derek A. Burrill, DIE TRYIN’: VIDEOGAMES, MASCULINITY, CULTURE, (Peter Lang: New York, 2008):
• ch. 1, “Masculinities, Play and Games”: 13-44
• Conclusion: 137-142

ch. 6 “Identity and the Body”: 169-198

Rob Cover, “First Contact: Queer Theory, Sexual Identity, and “Mainstream” Film”, International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2000: 71-89  (WebCT)

• Margaret C. Ervin, “The Might of the Metrosexual: How a Mere Marketing Tool Challenges Hegemonic Masculinity”: 58-75
• Michel Boucher, “Do You Have What It Takes To Be a Real Man?: Female-to-Male Transgender Embodiment”: 192-231


“Ellen”, coming out show, 1997:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it5P0pYCBA
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QI1tB8gHzeE&feature=related

Film: Generation M: Misogyny in Media and Culture” (268054), 2008, 60 mins.
Film: Further Off The Straight And Narrow (265378), 2006, 60 mins.

SEMINAR 8 (MARCH 5):
WAR AS

VIDEO GAMES, VIOLENCE, ENTERTAINMENT

• Introduction: 1-19
• ch. 3, “Reality War”: 73-90
• ch. 4, “War Games”: 91-112
• ch. 5, “Toying with Militainment”: 1331-138
  • Marcus Power, “Digital War Games and Post 9/11 Geographies of Militarism”: 198-214
  • Helga Tawil-Souri, “The Political Battlefield of Pro-Arab Video Games on Palestinian Screens”: 215-237

Dines and Humez:
  • John Sanbonmatsu, “Video Games and Machine Dreams of Domination”: 427-436
  • Kevin Schut, “Strategic Simulations and Our Past: the Bias of Computer Games in the Presentation of History”: 437-442
  • Elena Bertozzi, “You Play Like a Girl: Cross-Gender Competition and the Uneven Playing Field”: 443-454

  • David Leonard, “Virtual Gangstas, Coming to a Suburban House Near You”: 49-69


Mark B. Salter, “The Geographical Imaginations of Video Games: Diplomacy, Civilization, America's Army and Grand Theft Auto IV”, Geopolitics (April 2011), 16 (2): 359-388 (WebCT)

David Leonard, “Not a Hater, Just Keepin' It Real: The Importance of Race- and Gender-Based Game Studies”, Games and Culture (January 2006), 1 (1): 83-88 (WebCT)


Film: Militainment, Inc.: Militarism And Pop Culture (270746), 2007, 124 mins.
Film: Gamer Revolution, Part 1 (266859), 2006, 44 mins.
Film: Gamer Revolution, Part 2 (266860), 2006, 44 mins.

Seminar 9 (March 12): new media/ (anti-) social media

Dines and Humez:
  • Danah Boyd, “Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: the Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life”: 409-418
• Jessica Ringrose, “Are You Sexy, Flirty, Or a Slut?: Exploring ‘Sexualization’ and How Teen Girls Perform/Negotiate Digital Sexual Identity on Social Networking Sites” 99-116

• LaChryystal Ricke, “PoliticalTube: the Impact of YouTube on Politics”: 113-125


Eugeny Morosov, “RSA Animate - The Internet in Society: Empowering or Censoring Citizens?”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uk8x3VsUgU&feature=related

“It’s Over Steve!!!”: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kn5RzQCx7So
“Adolph Harper, Prime Minister of Canada”: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p34Wc9PmW-Y&feature=related

SEMINAR 10 (MARCH 19): POP PORN

Dines and Humez:
• Feona Attwood, “No Money Shot: ... New Sex Taste Cultures”: 283-292
• Karen Boyle, “That’s So Fun: Selling Pornography to Men to Women in The Girls Next Door”: 293-300
• Jane Caputi, “The Pornography of Everyday Life”: 307-320
• Tricia Rose, “There Are Bitches and Hoes”: 321-326

• Preface and Introduction: ix-ixxixi
• ch. 2, “Pop Goes the Porn Culture: Mainstreaming Porn”: 25-46
• ch. 4, “Grooming for Gonzo: Becoming a Man in Porn Culture”: 59-78
• ch. 5 “Leaky Images: How Porn Seeps into Men’s Lives”: 79-98
• ch. 6, “Visible or Invisible: Growing Up Female in a Porn Culture”: 99-120
• ch. 7, “Racy Sex, Sexy Racism”: 121-140
• ch.8, “Children: The Final Taboo”: 141-162

• Katherine N. Kinnick, “Pushing the Envelope: the Role of Mass Media in the Mainstreaming of Pornography”: 7-26
• Mardia Bishop, “The Making of a Pre-pubescent Porn Star” Contemporary Fashion for Elementary School Girls”: 45-56
• Dawn Heinecken, “Toys Are Us: Contemporary Feminisms and the Consumption of Sexuality”: 121-136
• Hannah B. Harvey and Karen Robinson, “Hot Bodies on Campus: The Performance of Porn Chic”: 57-74


Film: Price Of Pleasure (268053), 20089, 55 mins.

SEMINAR 11 (MARCH 26): GLOBALIZATION

Dines and Humez:
• Henry Jenkins III, “Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in the Age of Media Convergence”: 545-551


• Ashish Rajadhyaksha, “The "Bollywoodization" of the Indian cinema: cultural nationalism in a global arena”: 190-200
• Nitin Govil, “Bollywood and the frictions of global mobility”: 201-215
**SEMESTER 12 (APRIL 2):**

- Gregory W. Streich, “Mass Media, Citizenship, and Democracy: Revitalizing Deliberation?”: 51-72
- Thomas J. Johnson and Barbara K. Kaye, “Democracy’s Rebirth or Demise?: The Influence of the Internet on Political Attitudes”: 209-228

Ch. 10 (120-134)


- Andrea L. Press, “‘Feminism? That’s So Seventies’: Girls and Young Women Discuss Femininity and Feminism in America’s Next Top Model”: 117-133
- Shelley Budgeon, “The Contradictions of Successful Femininity: Third-Wave Feminism, Postfeminism and New Femininities”: 279-292


John Street; Sanna Inthorn, “You’re an American Rapper, So What Do You Know?” The Political Uses of British and US Popular Culture by First-Time Voters in the UK”, New Political Science (December 2010), 32 (4): 471-484 (WebCT)
Academic Accommodations

For students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs at least two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by (March 7, 2012 for winter term examinations).

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such 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, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional 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.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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 include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at 4 p.m., stamped with that day’s date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Grading: Assignments and exams will be graded with a percentage grade. To convert this to a letter grade or to the university 12-point system, please refer to the following table.
Grades: Final grades are derived from the completion of course assignments. Failure to write the final exam will result in the grade ABS. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Connect Email Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student’s responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com, or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.