



## Anthropology and Popular Culture

ANTH 493/593

Meets: Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:00-4:20

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Instructor: Angela Montague

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Drop-in Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:00-12:30 and by appt.

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### Course description:

This class introduces the student of Anthropology to the world of Cultural Studies. We will examine the intellectual foundations of cultural theory and the methodological approaches that have been taken in the analysis of popular culture. In this course we will seek to determine how the study of popular culture offers insights into the conditions of the reproduction of social relations and how these insights might benefit anthropological inquiry and vice versa. Through the analysis of film, sport, television, advertising, “folklore,” fashion, and public display events we will attempt to put popular culture into its larger social and political framework.

\*All readings are on Canvas

#### Required books:

- Storey, John: Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: Reader 4<sup>th</sup> edition
- Storey, John: Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction 7<sup>th</sup> edition

#### Recommended books:

- Strinati, Dominic: An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture
- Guins and Cruz: Popular Culture: A Reader

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### A NOTE ABOUT COURSE READINGS:

The readings in this course may be difficult for some students. In this class, it's very important to be an active reader. Have a purpose when you read! As you read, regularly ask yourself, “Am I getting it?” If not, go back and find the place where you last understood the material and re-read from that point forward. Also, you should take notes as you read. Try making an outline of the material by organizing the main ideas and supporting details. Or, write a brief summary of the main ideas. Or, make comments in the margins. Regardless, you should always highlight or underline the main points as you read. If you are having trouble concentrating, take a break and come back to the readings later. Please know that I am always available to assist you with any of the readings. Do not hesitate to come to my office hours for help! My goal as an instructor is to help you succeed.

## Course Objectives:

1. Address how anthropology adds to and utilizes theories and methods applicable to the study of popular culture and the field of Cultural Studies
  2. Understand what makes culture 'popular' and what popular culture is
  3. Determine how the study of popular culture offers insights into the conditions of the reproduction of social relations
  4. Critically analyze popular culture and explore the relationships between popular culture and social values
  5. Understand the role of popular culture and the way it reflects and influences culture and society
  6. Examine the social and cultural context of popular culture products and practices
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## Requirements and Grade Evaluation

<u>Exams and Assignments</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Attendance & Participation	15%	Daily (1 free absence)
Blog Participation	15%	weekly (2x2)
Midterm Exam	15%	Assigned week 5, hand in week 6
Discussion Facilitation	15%	Sign-up week 1
Research Project	20%	Tasks due weeks 2, 4, 6, final 9
Final Exam	20%	Assigned week 10, hand in finals

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## Course Requirements:

- **Course Structure:** This class will follow a combination lecture and seminar format. Most days will have a lecture (or presentation) in the first half then have a discussion in groups based on questions provided by the instructor and/or those facilitating that day. Students will be expected to participate actively in group and class discussions. Class participation will combine self, peer, and instructor evaluations.
- **Attendance and participation is mandatory.** Class lectures and discussion will be critical to your ability to grapple with the readings analytically; it is essential that you are in class, engaged, and ready to participate. Each of you is responsible for any material, announcements, assignments, and/or schedule changes made during class. If you miss a class, you will need to ask another student for notes and reflections about what was covered and transpired. Attendance will be taken daily. (15% of grade)
- **Blog posts:** By the end of week one we will have a course blog where we can share pop cultural 'artifacts' and have an online discussion about theories that contextualize them. You are required to post twice weeks 1-5 (unit 1) and 6-10 (unit 2) for a total of four times. You are also required to respond (thoughtfully) to at least two other students' posts

each unit. This is a way that we can take the discussion out of the classroom and interact more with popular culture. (15% of grade).

- Blog is at: <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/anth493sp16>
  - Discussion Facilitation. Beginning Week 2, you will sign up to facilitate a class with a group of 3-4 other students. You will provide an interactive workshop that engages the readings assigned for the day. Students are encouraged to utilize artifacts of pop culture in an applicable and analytical fashion so that they lead an exercise/discussion that allows us to deconstruct the readings and better understand the author's arguments. Evaluation of this will be based on utilization and integration of the reading material, and the overall participation level of the class. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize popular culture mediums to construct their workshops, but remember the discussion must be analytical in nature – rather than merely descriptive or allowing for unsubstantiated opinions. Thus questions will have to be crafted carefully to make sure discussions really work for the readings we are discussing. (15% of grade)
  - Midterm Exam. Conceptual in nature, this exam will ask you to define and explain particular terms, and explain particular arguments and conceptual frameworks discussed up to that point. These will be short analytical essays that require the conceptual grasp of the course readings and materials. It will be reviewed in class, Thursday week 5, but you will have the opportunity to type it up at home and turn it in the following Tuesday (15% of grade)
  - Research Project. As we know the area of popular culture is immense, and there is no way that we can cover even a substantial portion in 10-weeks. Thus, the purpose of this project is for you to examine a particular area, issue, form of popular culture in much greater depth and detail. You can choose any medium of popular culture that interests you, but you must have an analytical question that allows you to deconstruct the elements that shape your popular culture form, and how it relates to the 'reproduction of social relations.' Undergraduate papers should be 5-6 double-spaced pages, and graduate papers should be 8-12 pages. Final Projects Due week 9 (20% of grade)
    - Tasks 1-2 (10 points): Topic, research question by week 2
    - Tasks 3-4 (10 points): collect and analyze 10 sources, produce works cited/bibliography by week 4
    - Tasks 5-6 (30 points): Annotated bibliography of 5 sources by week 6
    - Task 7 (30 points): Summary of your research with intro/concluding paragraphs by week 9
  - Final Exam. A comprehensive exam covering topics from the entire course. It will follow the format of the midterm. We will go over the topics in class on Thursday of week 10, you will then take it home and type it up and return it during our final exam time. (20% of grade)
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## Expectations:

- Preparation: I expect you to come to class prepared, having read the material before hand and thought critically about it. If there is anything that you do not understand, please make a note of it so that we can address it as a class.
    - Also, please plan to be prepared to share your pop culture journal with the class on Thursdays. If you find anything else pertinent to the class (news articles/books/videos) please bring them up in class or email me.
  - Attendance: Please be on time and stay until the end! Attendance will be taken daily by your group. Many announcements and important information is conveyed in lecture, it is prudent to attend. The syllabus is NOT a substitute for coming to class.
  - Absences: if you know that you are going to miss a class, please let me know **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** and make a plan to make-up what you missed (get notes from a classmate, watch a film outside of class, etc.). I will not give you your own personal lecture; you are responsible for your absence. In the event of an excused absence, and only if it will affect your grade, we can work out a plan to make up the attendance points missed.
  - No work will be accepted late. There are only two exceptions: 1) a documented medical emergency and 2) major religious observances that necessitate absence from class. In the case of the latter, the student must present notice in writing to the instructor by the second class meeting. Otherwise: I do not accept late assignments!
  - **THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT.**
  - Collegiality and Respect: Please be respectful of other students and the instructor. Please do not interrupt when someone else is speaking, do not use computers for social networking YouTubing, etc.; do not text-message in class—these things are disruptive and rude and will not be tolerated! Failure to follow these guidelines will result in losing participation points.
  - Internet/email: We will be using Blackboard and the Internet for a number of things in this class. Please check your email frequently as I will use it for many class-related announcements. Please let me know if you find challenges in meeting this requirement for whatever reason so that we can make an alternative available to you.
  - Academic Integrity. Students are to know and adhere to all regulations concerning Academic Honesty as detailed in the University of Oregon Bulletin. Do not submit material from the Internet or other sources as your own. A student will receive a grade of 0 (zero) on any assignment discovered to be in violation of the academic integrity regulations
  - Accommodations: if you are having significant challenges in meeting ANY of the requirements of the course please let me know immediately. If you have a documented disability, please inform me if it interferes with your ability to excel in any aspect of the course. Also, please investigate campus resources for academic accommodations through
  - Contact: Email is the best way to get a hold of me; I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours on weekdays, and by Monday if you email me after 4 pm on Friday otherwise. Please put 'ANTH 4/593' in the subject line for any email correspondence so that it doesn't get lost in the millions of messages I receive. I will have regular office hours--make use of them.
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Reading Schedule (subject to change as needed): Because there are a lot of readings from the Storey Reader, prioritize the ones that are starred with an \*, read/skim the others in the section

Week 1	Readings
<u>Tuesday 3/29:</u> Introductions, Definitions, Anthropology and Cultural Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Syllabus</li> <li>• Storey Intro: “What is Popular Culture” pp. 1-14</li> <li>• [Canvas] <i>Recommended:</i> Carla Freccero, “Cultural Studies, Popular Culture, and Pedagogy” from <i>Popular Culture</i>, New York: NYU Press, 1999</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 3/31:</u> Culture and Civilization (Form groups, and Facilitation sign-up)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “The ‘Culture and Civilization’ Tradition” pp. 17-36</li> <li>• Part One in Storey Reader</li> <li>• *Matthew Arnold “Culture and Anarchy”</li> <li>• *F.R. Leavis “Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture”</li> </ul>
Week 2:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 4/5:</u> Culturalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Culturalism” pp. 37-58</li> <li>• Part Two in Storey Reader:</li> <li>• * Raymond Williams “The Analysis of Culture”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 4/7:</u> Intro to Marxism and the Frankfurt School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Marxism” pp. 59-88</li> <li>• Part Three in Storey Reader</li> <li>• *Marx and Engels “Ruling Class and Ruling Ideas”</li> <li>• *Marx “Base and Super Structure”</li> <li>• *Adorno “On Popular Music”</li> <li>• [Canvas] *Benjamin, Walter. “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.” (96-102)</li> </ul>
Week 3:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 4/12:</u> Marxism and Hegemony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part Three Storey Reader, cont’d</li> <li>• *Gramsci, Antonio. “Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State” (in Storey 210-216)</li> <li>• *Storey “Rockin’ Hegemony...”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 4/14:</u> Marxism and Commodification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Canvas] Debord, Guy. “The Commodity as Spectacle.” (109-114)</li> <li>• [Canvas] Marx, Karl. “The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof.” (89-95)</li> </ul>

Week 4	Readings
<u>Tuesday 4/19</u> : Psychoanalysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Pschoanalysis”</li> <li>• Part 5 Reader</li> <li>• *Freud “The Dream-Work”</li> <li>• *Lacan “The Mirror Stage”</li> <li>• *Zizek “From Reality to Real”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 4/21</u> : Structuralism and Post-Structuralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Structuralism and Post-Structuralism”</li> <li>• Part 5 Reader Cont’d</li> <li>• *Roland Barthes “Myth Today”</li> <li>• *Louis Althusser “Ideology and Ideological State App...”</li> </ul>
Week 5:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 4/26</u> : Feminism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Gender and Sexuality”</li> <li>• Part 4 Reader</li> <li>• *Rakow “Feminist Approaches to Popular Culture”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 4/28</u> : Queer Theory MIDTERM assigned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Judith Butler “Imitation and Gender Insubordination”</li> <li>• [Canvas] Sender, Katherine. 2006. “Queens for a day: Queer Eye for the Straight Guy and the neoliberal project.” <i>Critical Studies in Media Communication</i>, 23, 2. 131-151</li> <li>• [Canvas] Judith Butler “Gender is Burning”</li> <li>• [online] Reena Mistry “Madonna and <i>Gender Trouble</i>” <a href="http://www.theory.org.uk/madonna.htm">http://www.theory.org.uk/madonna.htm</a></li> </ul>
Week 6: MIDTERM due	Readings
<u>Tuesday 5/3</u> : Film: Reel Bad Arabs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Race and Racism”</li> <li>• [Canvas] Edward Said excerpts from “<i>Orientalism</i>”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 5/5</u> : Race and Racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part 6 Reader</li> <li>• *Stuart Hall “What is This ‘Black’ in Black Popular Culture?”</li> <li>• *bell hooks “Postmodern Blackness”</li> </ul>
Week 7:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 5/10</u> : Postmodernism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro: “Postmodernism”</li> <li>• Part 7 Reader</li> <li>• *Jean Baudrillard “Precession of the Simulacra”</li> <li>• *Barbara Creed “From Here to Modernity”</li> <li>• [Canvas] Shannon R. Mortimore-Smith “Fueling the Spectacle: Audience as “Gamemaker” from <i>Bread, Blood and the Hunger Games</i></li> </ul>

<u>Thursday 5/12:</u> NO CLASS	Watch the Hunger Games!
Week 8:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 5/17:</u> Materiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro “The Materiality of Popular Culture”</li> <li>• Part 8 Reader: *Michel de Certeau “The Practice of Everyday Life”</li> <li>• [Canvas] Webb Keane “Signs are not the garb of meaning...:”</li> <li>• [Canvas] <i>Recommended</i>: Arjun Appadurai “The Social Life of Things” excerpt</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 5/19</u> Objects and Museums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Canvas] Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett "Objects of Ethnography" 17-78 and "Destination Museum" 131-176. From <i>Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.</li> </ul>
Week 9:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 5/24</u> Tourism and Authenticity Watch: Cannibal Tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Canvas] Silver, I. “Marketing Authenticity in Third World Countries”</li> <li>• [Canvas] Bruner, E.M “The Maasai and the Lion King: Authenticity, Nationalism, and Globalization in African Tourism”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 5/26:</u> Proof of Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Canvas] Dean MacCannell “Cannibal Tours”</li> <li>• [Canvas] Susan Sontag “In Plato’s Cave” from <i>On Photography</i></li> <li>• [Canvas] Susan Stewart “Objects of Desire: The Souvenir” from <i>On Longing</i></li> </ul>
Week 10:	Readings
<u>Tuesday 5/31:</u> The Politics of the Popular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storey Intro “The Politics of the Popular”</li> <li>• Part 8 Reader</li> <li>• *Pierre Bourdieu “Distinction...”</li> <li>• * Terry Lovell “Cultural Production”</li> </ul>
<u>Thursday 6/2:</u> Course wrap-up Final paper assigned	Continue above
Finals Week:	
Final Exam Time TBA	