

ANALYSIS OF POPULAR CULTURE

[CMM3840-M01]

Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. Rosana Vivar

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Office Hours: San Ignacio Hall, Floor 3,
Office 306. Monday & Wednesday from
10:30 to 11:30

Class meets:

Mon & Wed from 14:30 to 15:45.

Classroom: San Ignacio Hall B

Course Credit: 3.0 hours

Course description

As soon as culture abandons the territory of ideal and universal values, it becomes accessible, concrete and multiple. The films we watch, the music we listen to, the celebrities we admire or the clothes we buy, shape the “cultural humus” that defines us as individuals within different communities. But who manages culture in an increasingly globalized world? How is culture embedded in our everyday rituals?

This course takes as its starting point the discussion of culture as a social practice, and inquires into the discussion of the relationships between culture and power. In the first part of the semester we will look at the conceptualization of the notions of popular culture and mass culture in order to illustrate how both forms of cultural reproduction establish relations of conflict and dialogue through different places and times. While the first part of the course will provide the students with a theoretical background to understand how different groups appropriate culture, interrogate it, and use it to different sociopolitical ends, the second part of the semester will take a more practical stand. At this stage we will analyze contemporary cultural practices and texts ranging from cultural pilgrimages, fan-art and sport events to music videos, pop songs and news stories. During this more practical phase, the student will become familiar with case study research and will acquire some of the methodological tools required to undertake their final research paper.

Course Goals

By the end of the course you will:

- Understand the concepts and most prominent theories that have reflected on the notion of culture.
- Become aware of the ideologies that work behind our consumption practices.
- Gain knowledge of contemporary cultural practices where cultural agency is negotiated in the face of transnational forces.
- Think critically about different texts that circulate in our media scape.
- Learn to appreciate cultural practices that might seem outlandish to you.
- Be able to develop a case study research.

Methods of evaluation

Grades will be calculated out of 100 points as follows:

Individual Work:	2 Short Papers: 200 (100 points each)
	Mid-term Exam: 100
	Final Exam: 150
	4 Quizzes: 100 (25 point each)
	Participation: 100
	Attendance: 100
Team Work:	Final Presentation: 100
	Final Paper: 150

Through the course students will have to reflect on their own role as consumers, readers and producers of different texts and practices and their impact on several cultural contexts. Class participation is not only encouraged but a prerequisite to meet the requirements of the course and be graded satisfactorily. Students' interventions should happen at all class meetings and they shall be based on regular readings assigned for the day. Remember that readings are not only essential materials to improve your knowledge of the subject, but also valuable resources you can feed into class discussion to support your ideas (also a great opportunity to test your thoughts and feedback to the class).

All the other readings will be provided to students via Google Drive.

The level of preparation of the students will be evaluated through 4 Quizzes that will cover different aspects of the assigned texts and that will be unannounced. Quizzes will consist in one question to be answered in a short written piece (no longer than 10 minutes). Papers, exams and team presentations will be explained in detail throughout the course.

Final Grade Scale

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
910-1000 points	890-909	860-889	830-859	800-829	770-799	730-769	700-729	615-699	615 or less

Course Policies

- Attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at the beginning of each class. You are allowed up to 3 excused absences, which must be in all cases documented (e.g. missing work justified with a document signed by the Health Center). Documented absences should be notified to me via email.
- A student's grade (overall and for participation) will suffer after second unexcused absences.
- Lateness will be recorded and will impact your grade negatively. Regular lateness will lower your grade considerably, using my own criteria.
- A student who submits work after the due date and without reasonable justification will receive a reduced grade. Work arriving more than a week late will be assigned a grade of zero.
- Computers and tablets must be used only for the purposes of each class (typing notes and looking up information connected to the discussed topics). Devices must be put away during screenings. Students that do otherwise will be recorded as absent.

Tentative Schedule

This is a tentative schedule and it is subject to change as the semester progresses depending on your learning needs.

Day	Description of topics	Assignments	Readings/Films for the day
Wed, Jan 10	Introduction to the course		
Mon, Jan 15	Towards a definition of Culture I		R. Campbell et al. (2013). "Surveying the Cultural Landscape", in <i>Media & Culture</i> , pp. 18-25.
Wed, Jan 17	Towards a definition of Culture II		R. Williams (1958). "Culture is ordinary"
Sun, Jan 21	Last Day to Drop a Class without a Grade W and/or Add a Class; Last Day to Choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Option:		
Mon, Jan 22	Mass culture and Social Control		T. Adorno and M. Horkheimer (1944). "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception", in <i>Dialectic of Enlightenment</i> .
Wed, Jan 24	Conflicts between Mass Culture and Popular Culture		A. Ross (2016). "Bob Dylan as Richard Wagner", from <i>The New Yorker Magazine</i> . https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/bob-dylan-as-richard-wagner
Fri, Jan 26	No Classes. Application Deadline for Spring Semester Degree Candidates		
Mon, Jan 29	Culture and Power I: Cultural Imperialism and Globalization		G. Yúdice (2003). <i>The Expendiency of Culture</i> , pp.9-25.
Wed, Jan 31	Culture and Power II: Tourism and City Branding (I)		Movie: <i>Vicky, Cristina, Barcelona</i> (Woody Allen, 2008) J. Seabrook (2003). "Nobrow culture", from <i>The New Yorker Magazine</i> . http://www.johnseabrook.com/nobrow-culture/
Mon, Feb 5	Culture and Power III: Tourism and City Branding (II)		G. Julier (2008). Branded places, in <i>Culture of design</i> .
Wed, Feb 7	Culture and Power IV: Hegemony and Ideology	Paper 1 due	A. Gramsci (1971). "Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State", in J. Storey's <i>Cultural theory and Popular Culture: A Reader</i> .
Mon, Feb 12	The Popular: Historiography of the Concept.		P. Burke (1981). "People's History or Total History" in <i>People's History and Socialist Theory</i> , pp.4-9.
Wed, Feb 14	Ash Wednesday. Registration for Summer 2018 Begins		
	Readings of the Popular as a critical force I		P. Stallybrass and A. White (1986). "Bourgeois Hysteria and the Carnavalesque", in Simon During: <i>The Cultural Studies Reader</i> .

Mon, Feb 19	Readings of the Popular as a critical force II		J. Fiske (1987). "Pleasure and Play", in <i>Television Studies</i> .
Wed, Feb 21	MID-TERM EXAM		
Fri, Feb 23	No Classes (Winter Break)		
Mon, Feb 26	Subcultures I: Style and the birth of counter-culture.		Movie: <i>Quadrophenia</i> (Franc Roddam, 1979) D. Hebdige (1979). Chapter 6 from <i>Subcultures</i> .
Wed, Feb 28	Subcultures II: Cult cultures		E.Mathijs and X.Mendik (2008). "What is a Cult Film?", in <i>The Cult Film Reader</i> .
Mon, Mar 5	Subcultures III : Case Study		Movie: <i>The Big Lebowski</i> (Joel and Ethan Cohen, 1998). B.Klinger: "Becoming cult: The Big Lebowski, replay culture and male fans", in <i>Screen</i> , Volume 51, Issue 1, 1 March 2010, Pages 1–20.
Wed, Mar 7	Identities I: Popular Culture as <i>Other</i>		Music video: <i>Borders</i> (M.I.A) A. Appadurai (1990). "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy", in <i>The Cultural Studies Reader</i> .
Fri, Mar 9	Last Day to Drop a Class and Receive a Grade of W		
Mon, Mar 12	Identities II: Popular Culture and Social Conflict	Paper 2 due	A. Méndez Rubio (2002). Culture and Social Conflict, in <i>Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies</i> , Volume 3, Issue 2.
Wed, Mar 14	Identities III: National Cultures in Film		Movie: <i>La Comunidad</i> (Álex de la Iglesia, 2000)
Thu, Mar 15	Last Day to Submit Transfer Application for Fall Semester		
Mon, Mar 19	Identities IV: National Cultures in Film		G. Vincendeau and R. Dyer (1992). Introduction to <i>Popular European Cinema</i> , 1992.
Wed, Mar 21	Global Popular Culture I: TV and Media rituals		Nick Couldry (2007). "Media Power: some hidden dimensions", in <i>Stardom and Celebrity: A Reader</i> .
Mon, Mar 26	Easter break		
Wed, Mar 28	Easter break		
Wed, Apr 4	Registration for Fall 2018 Semester Begins		
	Global Popular Culture II: Icons, Myths, Celebrities (I)		G. Turner (2007). "The economy of Celebrity", in <i>Stardom and Celebrity: A Reader</i>
Mon, Apr 9	Global Popular Culture III: Icons, Myths, Celebrities (II)		S. Varrile: "Is that girl a monster? Some notes on authenticity and artistic value in Lady Gaga", in <i>Celebrity Studies Journal</i> , Volume 3 2002, Issue 2.

Wed, Apr 11	Global Popular Culture IV: Fans		M.Hills (2002). "Fan Cultures between Consumerism and Resistance", in <i>Fan Cultures</i> .
Mon, Apr 16	Global Popular Culture V: Transmedia Storytelling (I)		C. Scolari, P. Bertetti and M. Freeman (2014). "Towards and Archaeology of Transmedia Storytelling", in <i>Transmedia Archaeology</i> .
Wed, Apr 18	Presentations & Discussion		
Mon, Apr 23			
Wed, Apr 25	Global Popular Culture VI: Transmedia Storytelling (II)	Final paper due	Transmedia Story: Case Study
Mon, Apr 30	Final reflections on the course, questions and queries.		
Wed, May 2	Día de la Comunidad (Campus Closed)		
Fri, May 4	FINAL EXAM (15:30-18:30)		

UNIVERSITY CALENDAR SPRING 2018

JANUARY	
Wednesday 10	First Day of Classes
Sunday 21	Last Day to Drop a Class without a Grade W and/or Add a Class; Last Day to Choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Options
Friday 26	No Classes Application Deadline for Spring Semester Degree Candidates
FEBRUARY	
Wednesday 14	Ash Wednesday Registration for Summer 2018 Begins
Thursday 22	No Classes (Winter Break)
Friday 23	
Tuesday 27	Professors' Deadline to Submit Midterm Grades
MARCH	
Friday 9	Last Day to Drop a Class and Receive a Grade of W
Thursday 15	Last Day to Submit Transfer Application for Fall Semester
Monday 26 to Wednesday 28	Semana Santa Holiday (Campus Closed)
Thursday 29	Jueves Santo (Campus Closed)
Friday 30	Viernes Santo (Campus Closed)
APRIL	
Wednesday 4	Registration for Fall 2018 Semester Begins
MAY	
Tuesday 1	Día del Trabajador (Campus Closed)
Wednesday 2	Día de la Comunidad (Campus Closed)
Thursday 3	Spring 2018 Final Day of Classes
Fri day 4 to Thursday 10	Spring 2018 Final Exams
Friday 11	University Housing Move-out Date
Saturday 12	Commencement
Sunday 13	Professors' deadline to submit spring 2018 final grades

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

University Statement on Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and

professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office [website](#). Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

University Title IX Statement: Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

Students with Special Needs: In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/student-resources>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

(IF APPLICABLE): Mandatory Trips/Activities: Students enrolled in this class must participate and make payment for all mandatory trips/activities. The prices posted on the web are approximate; the final price will be based on the number of students enrolled on the last day of the Add/Drop period. All students, including those who withdraw from the class after this date, are required to pay these fees, which are non-refundable, unless the trip is cancelled due to low enrollment. Please review SLU-Madrid's trip policies, available on-line.