Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences - *Te Kura Kete Aronui*

SOCY202 – Popular Culture

SISU Paper Outline – 2018

Sociology Programme - School of Social Sciences

<http://www.waikato.ac.nz/wfass/subjects/societies-cultures/sociology/>

**Lecturer & Tutor** Romain VUATTOUX  
 Email: [vuattoux@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:vuattoux@waikato.ac.nz)

Tel: 18816548006  
 Office: J401( Hongkou) **Lectures & Tutorials** Wednesdays 8:15-11:35 Room 423 (Songjiang)

**Description:**

This paper examines a range of concepts, theories and debates characterising the development of popular cultural studies as a field of inquiry. In particular, this paper emphasizes a Cultural Sociology framework that sees culture as intimately connected to the social and power relations of everyday life. The point of departure is Raymond Williams’ assertion that culture is the product of ordinary material life, produced by all social actors, rather than only by the privileged elite.

Popular culture is critically analysed within the context of the cultural industries that have commercialised and commodified the production of culture in late/post-modernity. The paper highlights the tensions between the contradictory elements that characterise contemporary popular culture; such as its being highly commercialised, whilst also a site for the public communication of (at times) critical and resistant discourses and practices.

**Learning Outcomes/Objectives:**

The objectives of this paper are to enable you:

1. to situate a variety of popular cultural forms within their wider social and cultural context(s),
2. to analyse forms of popular culture as sites of cultural power and its contestation.
3. To develop your understanding of the cultural politics of representation, identity construction and public communication,
4. to enhance your capacities as an independent learner by developing conceptual, analytical and critical thinking skills.

***Note: Information contained in this course outline may be subject to change.***

**Required Texts:**

* SOCY202-SISU Popular Culture Course Reader Part I and II

**Highly Recommended Reading:**

* Storey, J. (2009). *Cultural theory and popular culture: An introduction*. (7th edition). US: Routeledge.
* Cohen, B. (Ed.). *Being cultural.* Auckland: Pearson
* Strinati, D. (2004). *Introduction to theories of popular culture.* (2nd edition). US: Routledge

**ASSESSMENT**

The weights and dates for each piece of assessment are distributed as follows:

*Attendance & participation - 5%*

Attend lectures and participate in your group and class discussions, listen to your teammates and contribute. In university you are responsible for your own studies, and expected to come to class prepared. The purpose of the tutorial groups within the lectures is to give you the opportunity to participate in a series of structured discussions and to share your well-informed opinions and thoughts on various topics with your classmates. The skills developed are useful, and the work involved is good practice for the exam, tests and assignment below.   
  
NOTE: Simply attending is not the same as participating. You will earn points for participation but not for attendance, however you will lose points for missing a lecture or tutorial.

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| Test 1 Week 5 | Multiple choice and short answers (10%) - In class |
| Test 2 Week 7 | Short answers (10%) – In class |
| Assignment Week 9 | **Commentaries (25%)**  **Due Friday 27th April 8PM**  **1 hard copy to class by 1PM on Saturday 28th (Week 10)**  You must include your English name, the name of this paper and the name of the assignment in the file name and in the subject line of the email |
| Exam  Week of 22nd May | Multiple choice, short answer and essay 50% |

***More information about each assignment will be distributed in class.***

The expected workload for this paper is at least 9-10 hours per week throughout the shortened semester.

**Good behaviour in class and class rules:**It is considered rude and impolite to talk, whisper, read magazines, eat, drink, text, sleep or otherwise distract from the lecturer and disturb fellow students during lectures. All mobile phones must be turned to silent before lectures start and place in the box used for that effect. You are expected to take notes.

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| ATTENTION!!  Part of the exam will consist of addressing this question:  *Outline and discuss a form of popular culture that you have observed or participated in, but which has NOT been a major topic in this class.*  Be sure to address the following questions in your essay:   1. What is the meaning and significance of this form of popular culture for you, and/or for others who engage with it? 2. Why is this form of popular culture interesting from a sociological perspective? Relate your chosen form of popular culture to at least two different sociological concepts or themes discussed in the lectures or readings. |

**Eligibility to Pass this Paper:**

Students will not be eligible to pass this paper unless they have submitted some work for each pieces of assessment. You are expected to assume personal responsibility for your own learning by attending all lectures, keeping up with the required readings, participating in classroom and submitting good quality work on time. The grading scale applied at Waikato is as follows:

100-90% A+  
89-85 A  
*84-80* A-  
79-75 B+  
74-70 B  
69-65 B-  
64-60 C+  
59-55 C  
54-50 C-   
49-40 D Fail  
0-39 E Fail (No re-exam   
 possible)

Policy on Missed Tests:   
You must attempt all tests in this paper. If, for reasons outside your control, you are unable to sit the tests on the scheduled dates you must notify the paper lecturer and arrange to sit the test at another time. Test re-sits will only be offered in exceptional circumstances such as illness; appropriate documentation will be required.   
  
Extensions Policy & the Process of Applying for an Extension:  
You are advised to map out your workload for the semester, manage your time effectively and submit your assessments by the due date. If, for reasons beyond your control (such as serious illness, suspected influenza, death in the family, or personal injury) you are unable to submit an item of work by the due date, you can apply for an extension, providing supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, counselor’s letter, or bereavement notice).

Please note that an application for an extension should be made no later than three days before the date on which the assessment item was due, unless there are circumstances that prevent this (such as Influenza). In such cases, applications can be made via telephone or email and followed up with a formal application at a later date. Please also note that written work cannot be accepted after marked assessments on the same or similar subject matter have been returned to any other students enrolled in the paper.

**Policy on late submission of assignments**

Late submissions which have not been granted an extension will lose FIVE PERCENT of the value of the piece of work for each day overdue. No late essays which have not been granted an extension will be accepted once marked essays have been returned.

**Policy on being beneath or exceeding Word Limits:**

A word count must be provided at the end of the each assessment. A 10% deduction will be made to the grade of any assignment that exceeds or is beneath the stated word limit – and work beyond or below the limit will not count positively toward your grade.

**Cheating & Plagiarism:**The School of Arts and Social Sciences is aware that sometimes students attempt to cheat in tests. We are committed to eliminating such cheating as far as possible, for the sake of the vast majority of students who behave ethically and work hard for their degrees. To this end, the following rules have been introduced for tests:

* All bags must be left up the front of the room.
* All cellphones, iPods and other electronic devices must be turned off and left in the boxes provided for them or inside your bags.
* Where possible, students must not sit directly next to each other.
* Students must bring their ID cards and display them on the desk while doing the test.
* No notes, papers, dictionaries (electronic or paper) may be used during tests.

It is expected that you will research (i.e. your work will be informed by relevant scholarship in the area) and that all your work submitted for assessment be written by YOU, in your own words. Whenever you draw on someone else’s words, ideas, or research findings (from a book, journal article, website, conference paper and so forth), it is important that you inform your reader immediately (even when summarizing or paraphrasing) by giving the author’s last name and year of publication in brackets, for example: Smith (1999). You must also make it clear when quoting directly by either enclosing all quoted material in “quotation marks”, or indenting a long quote (over 40 words). ***Failure to accurately and fully acknowledge your sources constitutes plagiarism***.

Plagiarism means presenting as one’s own work the work of another, and includes the copying or paraphrasing of another person’s work in an assessment item without acknowledging it as the other person’s work through full and accurate referencing; it applies to assessment (as defined in the Assessment Regulations) presented through a written, spoken, electronic, broadcasting, visual, performance or other medium. (University of Waikato Calendar, 2013, pp. 124-125)

Penalties for plagiarism range from lowered marks, requests to resubmit work or, in the worst cases of plagiarism or cheating (those deemed to constitute misconduct), to no credit or even suspension from the University. Please also note that the Regulations make it clear that plagiarism cannot be defended with the argument that it was not an intentional act to appropriate another person’s work or writing.

**Introduction to the Course & Topics**This outline of topics is subject to change, unless instructed otherwise you are expected to have read all the material prior to each class. Some lectures also might be set aside and not taught to accommodate student learning needs and more intensive understanding of fundamental material.

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|  | **TOPIC** | **Readings** |
| **Week 1** | **Introduction to Paper & Topics. What is Popular Culture?** | Cohen, Introduction to Part 1,  pp. 3-4. **(Available in electronic format)** Cohen, Cultural Studies and Sociology, pp. 9-20. **(Available in e-format)**  Storey, ‘Culture’ in Cultural Studies, pp. 21-29 **(Available in e-format)** |
| **Week 2** | **Historical Developments: Industrialisation & Mass Leisure.**  **The Mass Culture Debates.**  **Sport, Mass Entertainment, & Commercialisation.** | Cross, *Leisure for the masses.*  Cross, *Participants and spectators: Modernization of sport as leisure.*  Storey, The ‘Culture and Civilisation’ tradition. Williams, R (1976) “Culture” and “Masses”, pp. 25-32 J.A. Mangan, Hyun-Duck Kim, Angelita Cruz & Gi-Heun Kang (2013). Rivalries: China, Japan and South Korea – Memory, Modernity, Politics, Geopolitics – and Sport, The International Journal of the History of Sport, 30:10, 1130-1152. **(Available in e-format)** |
| **Week 3** | **The Frankfurt School and Beyond.** | Kellner, The Frankfurt School and the Culture Industry, pp. 52-65.  Introduction to part II pp.83-88 Marx, K. (1972) The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof, pp.89-95 Jameson, F. (1990) Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture, pp. 115-128 |
| **Week 4** | **The Cultural Politics Of Globalization.**  **Glocalization.** | Lie, *What’s new about cultural globalization?* Ritzer, *Globalization, McDonaldization and Americanization*.[www.mcdonaldization.com](http://www.mcdonaldization.com/) *What is McDonaldization?*  Anthony Fung (2006). 'Think globally, act locally': China's rendezvous with MTV.*Global*  *Media and Communication* 2006 2: 71. Fuhua Huang (2013). Glocalisation of Sport:  The NBA's Diffusion in China, *The International Journal of the History of Sport,* 30:3, 267-284. **(Available in e-format)** |
| **Week 5** | **Indigenization and Cultural Hybridity**  **+ Test 1** | Jeroen de Kloet (2005). Sonic Sturdiness: The Globalization of “Chinese” Rock and Pop, *Critical Studies in Media Communication,* 22:4, 321-338. **(Available in e-format)**  Doobo Shim (2006). Hybridity and the rise of Korean popular culture in Asia *Media Culture Society,*  28: 25. |
| **Week 6** | **Pop Music** | Bennett, *Youth culture and popular music.* Heidi Netz Rupke and Grant Blank (2009). ‘‘Country Roads’’ To globalization:Sociological  models for understanding American popular music in China. *The Journal Of Popular Culture,* 42(1), 126-146. **(Available in electronic format)** |
| **Week 7** | **Reverse Cultural Flow    Consumerism & Identity**  **Shopping, Subjectivity & Resistance**  **Disneyfication.   + Test 2 (10%)** | Huaiting Wu and Joseph Man Chan (2007). Globalizing Chinese martial arts cinema: the global-local alliance and the production of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon. *Media, Culture & Society*, 29: 195. Reynolds, Consumption, Culture and Change, pp. 211-227. **(Available in e-format)** Song, Geng and Lee, Tracy K (2012). "New Man" and "New Lad" with Chinese Characteristics? ... *Asian Studies Review,* 36, 3. **(Available in e-format)**  Introduction to part III, pp. 147-150 Jing Wang (2005). Bourgeois bohemians in China? Neotribes and the urban imaginary. *The ChinaQuarterly,* 183, 532-548. **(Available in e-format)** Wasko, J. (2001) Corporate Disney in Action, pp. 184-196  Giroux, *Children’s culture and Disney’s animated films.* |
| **Week 8** | **Stardom & Celebrity Culture. The Politics & Practices of Fandom. The Sociological Significance of Fan Cultures.** | Rojek, Celebrity, pp. 243-255. **(Available in e-format)** Fiske, *The cultural economy of fandom.*  Jenkins, ‘G*et a life!’ Fans, poachers and nomads*.Ling Yang (2009). All for love: The Corn fandom, prosumers, and the Chinese way of creating a superstar.*International Journal of Cultural Studies,* 12: 527 |
| **Week 9** | **Assignment – Commentaries (25%) (No lecture or tutorial – Office hours Monday)  Catch up with your readings** | |
| **Week 10** | **Reading the Romance.**  **The Postmodern Praxis of Lady Gaga. Fashion & Subculture.** | Christian-Smith, *Romancing the girl.*  Taylor, *‘The urge towards love is an urge towards (un)death’.*  Corona, *Memory, monsters, and Lady Gaga.* **(Available in e-format)**  Kawamura, *Japanese teens as producers of street*  *fashion.*  Antonia Finnane (2005). China on the catwalk:  Between economic success and nationalist anxiety. *The*  *China Quarterly,* No. 183, Culture in the Contemporary  PRC, pp. 587-608. **(Available in e-format)** |
| **Week 11** | **Body Art & Body Modification.** | Jones, The Body in Popular Culture, pp. 193-210. **(Available in e-format)** Irwin, *Legitimating the first tattoo: moral passage through informal interaction.* **(Available in e-format)** |
| **Week 12** | **Review** | No readings |
| **Week 13** | **Exam** | |

More detailed information on each lecture will be provided in class.