<u>AMST 203: Popular Culture in America</u>

- Instructor: Dan Greene
- Office: 0132 Holzapfel Hall
- Office Hours: 2-3 Tuesday and Thursday, or by appointment
- Telephone: 5-1354
- Email: dgreene1@umd.edu
- Course website: http://blog.umd.edu/amstspace/

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11-12:15, Holzapfel 0106.

Pre- or co-requisites: None

"The capacity to *constitute* classes and individuals as a popular force—that is the nature of political and cultural struggle: to make the divided classes and separated peoples....That is why 'popular culture' matters. Otherwise, to tell you the truth, I don't give a damn about it."

--Stuart Hall, *Notes on Deconstructing the Popular* (1981)

"Ralph Lauren was borin' before I worn him."

--Kanye West, "Brand New" (2006)

Course Description:
This course examines various dimensions of the production and consumption of popular culture practices, both historical and contemporary, in the United States. One premise of this course is that whether conceived of as peoples' systems of shared meanings, attitudes, and values or as the texts and practices of everyday life, popular culture performances and artifacts are "made." Popular culture forms thus reveal much about who past generations think they were, who we think we are, and who we think others are and were. Popular culture can also reveal much about social and cultural tensions in and across time. A second premise underlying this course is that in their popular culture activities, people create culture and society. In other words, in practices such as music, sports, reading, TV watching, and more, people shape and negotiate cultural messages and values, economic activity, institutions, and the very social relationships that underlay local, national, and international communities. Focusing on the analytical categories of race, gender, class, sexuality, and nation, we shall explore popular culture as a site of cultural production and meaning making.

Learning Outcomes (General Education Category Humanities):

Students who satisfactorily complete all reading and writing assignments will have achieved the following Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate understanding of critical concepts in the study of popular culture.

- Demonstrate understanding of the methods, theories, and sources used by scholars of popular culture.

- Demonstrate critical thinking in the evaluation of sources and arguments in the study of popular culture.

- Identify and assess self-reflexively your own values, beliefs, and practices regarding American popular culture within the terms of class discussions and written arguments.

- Complete a research project/paper on a topic in popular culture, using a variety of sources.

- Formulate a thesis related to a specific topic in the study of popular culture and support the thesis with appropriate evidence and argumentation.

Section-specific outcomes

- Engage unfamiliar persons, spaces, and cultural practices in participant-observation research.

- Use the study of popular culture to enhance or reframe other social, political, or economic issues.

- Engage in media production, curation, and research to explore the study of popular culture in other contexts and express them to both specialist and lay audiences.

- Practice multiple forms of college-level communication, argumentation, critique, and learning.

Section-specific themes:
- The study of popular culture is an investigation into how 'the popular' gets constructed and managed
- Popular culture can be experienced as, among other possibilities, a text with multiple interpretations read, an event with conflicting experiences we live, and a game with changing rules.
- For each popular cultural practice, there are multiple perspectives on it and ways to engage with it. Dominant and subversive practices change over time.
- The experience of popular cultural practices, and what counts as 'popular', varies systematically across different groups, periods, and media. How it varies is politically, economically, and socially important. Sometimes the things we taken for granted or as beneath our notice are the most powerful.

General structure of the class

In order to help students learn skills applicable in multiple contexts beyond college classrooms, practice the methods of American Studies, and engage similar material in multiple modes so as to improve recall, there will be a variety of different types of assignments in this course. There is no large term paper and no formal blue-book exams. Instead there are three units with a series of research projects and a final presentation that acts as a capstone assessment. Assignments are designed so that if you don't feel confident in one area (e.g., speaking up in class), you can make it up in another (e.g., writing online). They're also designed to give you some choice in what you research. Each week

- The pair of students curating our course site http://blog.umd.edu/amstspace will have their post up by noon Sunday
- Students will read the necessary texts assigned for each Tuesday or Thursday class session, take notes, and review the material before class (see 'In-Class Participation' for more information)
- Students will tweet at least three times (see 'Twitter Diaries' for more information)
- Students will post a brief reply to their peers' curation post for the week by class time Thursday, and respond to anyone else you find interesting (see 'Curation Project' and 'Weekly Blogging' for more information)

- Students will continue working on their research projects (see 'Research Projects' for more information) if they chose to do one that unit

At the big picture level, there are four overarching units that organize the semester, each with their own set of small projects. This course is designed around a specific set of learning outcomes, fulfilled by projects, and texts, discussion, and blogs that should help you work through each outcome. Each week has a particular theme related to the overarching unit and the course outcomes. Each week will be 'curated' by a pair of students who will take over the course's blog at http://blog.umd.edu/amstspace/ for the week, adding context, media, and discussion that augment the instructor's work in class. Individual classroom sessions will almost never be a start-to-finish lecture because pedagogy research and educational psychology consistently demonstrate that students retain information better and develop skills faster when they are actively engaged in discussion of those ideas or usage of those skills. With this in mind, classroom sessions will vary in style and will include a mix of discussion of research and news, small-group activities, thought exercises, film viewings with Twitter backchannels, informal debates, and project presentations. Online work augments in-class work but doesn't repeat it. Online work—curation and discussion, research projects, Twitter participation—demonstrates understanding of and engagement with course materials, creates sub-networks of interest or expertise among students, and extends class debates to new fields and materials. I am always interested in hearing perspectives from other academic fields and life experiences not covered in class. If time or space does not permit fielding these ideas in class, there is always space to—professionally, respectfully—voice these perspectives online.

PDF versions of copyrighted works and the course gradebook will be available on ELMS, UMD's online learning space which students access via their directory ID. For a number of reasons which we'll discuss in class, ELMS is not ideal for the sort of community building we want for our augmented course. So the majority of online activity—weekly curation projects, blogs, debate, project presentations, helpful resources—   happen on a course-specific WordPress blog at http://blog.umd.edu/amstspace. Students will be walked through the mechanics of the site in the first weeks of class, but it requires no special skills. Learning WordPress is another (valuable, marketable) skill that goes towards the Course-Specific Outcomes. Important course announcements will be emailed and posted to ELMS. In addition to emailing them to the instructor, students will post all major assignments online so that they can review each other's work, comment, and so the instructor can point out quality examples for other students to learn from before the next round of assignments.

Grading and assignments
Major assignments will have their own grading rubrics, but students will be able to get a sense of what they offer from the below. All assignments have a point value, with everything adding up to 1000, so students should be able to estimate their grade at any point in the semester—though grades will be regularly updated on ELMS' gradebook. ELMS is only an unofficial record of grades, the instructor's copy is final. There is no extra credit. All written assignments should be polished products with few, preferably no, spelling or grammar errors. Please do not hand in first drafts, your grades will reflect the amount of attention paid to the writing process.

In-class participation—125 points

Attendance is not graded in this class. You are graded for your active participation in class. This means asking and answering questions, bringing up evidence from readings and elsewhere, and pushing discussion in new directions. You don't need to have an expert handle on every text we read to get full participation credit. We read some tough stuff and if you're confused about something then other people probably are too, so it'll definitely help to bring up these concerns in class. The instructor grades your participation in each class session out of 5 points, the total throughout the semester is

then converted to a score out of 100. Not showing up means no points, but showing up and sleeping, texting, or spending time on Facebook also means no points. **Students automatically receive 5 points if they show up on time, speak up, pay attention, and complete the brief warm-up writing activity that will begin most classes.**

Curation Project—125 points

Older iterations of this course included a weekly 'media packet' which fleshed out theoretical and research-driven ideas with creative works, news reports, and background history. This year, this responsibility will be taken over by one pair of students each week. Pairs will be assigned by the instructor. **By noon every Sunday, these students will have posted 3-4 items to the course website (http://blog.umd.edu/amstspace/) which they think augment the readings and activities for the week—obviously this requires some prior planning and reading ahead—along with a 750-word reflection on why these items were chosen and how they augment the class discussion, and at least three discussion questions for each class section that week.** This is where you bring in the shows, movies, musicians, artists, and games that we don't get to talk about in class. You're in charge.

The reflection doesn't need to have a central thesis but should still be a focused, professional, considered piece of writing that demonstrates comprehension of the week's ideas—curators are our experts for the week. Good questions cover the whole week, link texts together, engage with course themes, and are open-ended enough to allow for disagreement and debate (i.e., they can't be answered with 'yes' or 'no'). For example, 'Is this game racist?' is a bad question but 'How does this game express or deny the way race works offline?' is a better question. Curators will also have to manage the discussion that follows their posts, responding to other students questions, concerns, and critiques and making links between ideas. The instructor will demonstrate content curation in the first week of class.

Weekly Blogging—one required and three of your choice each unit, ten total—125 points

Students must post ten 250-word responses to the weekly curators' reflection, after reading or viewing the posted media over the course of the semester. Students **must** respond to the first curation post—which the instructor will write—so that any questions about the course can be addressed (these are 'gimme' points). **After that, students must complete three responses each unit.** This is a balance between requiring students to respond to *everything* and still ensuring regular participation. If you have a particularly bad week or aren't particularly into the readings, feel free to skip that week. You'll just have to do next week's. If students choose to complete more than 10, only the 10 highest scores will count.

Students may expand on a reaction to a particular text and its link to class texts, argue with a particular point of the curators reflection, or situate the debate in a broader political, economic, and cultural context. All blog posts should have a core argument, supporting evidence, and links to ideas discussed in class and/or online as the argument dictates. Each blog post will be graded out of 5 points and the total for the semester will be converted to a score out of 125. The initial post is the only one required but students can demonstrate increased mastery of the content and recognition of others' points, and thereby increase their score, by adding responding to others' comments and/or reassessing their argument. The instructor will post a blogging prompt and an example response in the second week. Responses should go up as soon as you get a chance—it'll help you with the readings and give you more time to respond to other people later—but the absolute deadline for first posts is before class starts on Thursday. After the first few weeks, the instructor pretty much leaves this space alone except to record grades—the curators manage the discussion. Previous classes have reported that this is their space and not the instructors, and that's a good thing—students should take this discussion where they'd like it to go, while still adhering to the rubric. The instructor will only step in to correct gross breaches of the rubric or class decorum.

Twitter Usage and Two Twitter Diaries—one required, one of your choice--100 points each, 200 total

Students are required to create a Twitter account for this class or use an established one to participate. Please follow the instructor @Greene_DM once you've picked an account, so that he can know your account and put you on the class list (the list is also how you'll see who else is in the class). After you're listed, feel free to unfollow Dan—it won't hurt his feelings.

Much of the research and most of the texts we'll be discussing are debated in earnest on Twitter and related pop culture news and events often take on a life of their own on Twitter. It is a media environment very much representative of the production and consumption of popular cultures today—so critical assessment of one's Twitter usage is a good model to apply to other technologies and spaces. Students are required to tweet at least three times each week with the course hashtag (#amst203). At least one of these should comment on course readings, others may link to relevant Web items or offline events, communicate with classmates, or report observations related to class. Students are encouraged to archive their tweets via [Twistory](), [HootSuite]() or another service. This will facilitate the assigned 750-word Twitter diaries which students will write up twice during the semester, both of which will reflect on Twitter usage and users in relation to that unit's themes. **Students are required to complete the first unit's diary—so they can get feedback early on—but can choose which of the next two to complete**. If students complete all three, the two highest grades will be recorded. Students are encouraged to explore the Twitter ecosystem in a way which facilitates their own interests as well as the three units on texts, events and games. Twitter use will also augment some other class activities, such as warm-ups and film screenings. The instructor will review Twitter techniques and tools in the first weeks of class. Diaries must be emailed to the instructor and posted to the course website before the beginning of class on October 4, November 1, and December 4.

Research Projects—one required, one of your choice—125 points each, 250 total

One of the main skills built in this class is a proficiency with qualitative social science methods (e.g., content analysis, participant-observation research, interviews, autoethnography). Students will complete two out of a possible three research projects, write up their findings in a formal 1000-word report, and post the findings online for the class to see and comment on. The first assignment will focus on reviewing the ads and shows in one hour of TV so as to comment on audiences, producers, messages, and experiences. The second will have students attending an event they wouldn't normally attend and observing the social space and participants in it. The third will have students regularly playing a game they normally wouldn't and commenting on the rules and the culture of it. **Students are required to complete the first unit's research project—so they can get feedback early on—but can then choose which of the next two to complete**. If students complete all three, the two highest grades will be recorded. Research projects are always due at the end of each unit. Students are encouraged to explore communities with which they have some familiarity but which they are not intimately involved in—to maintain some critical distance. The instructor will review applicable research techniques and tools in the first weeks of each unit. A detailed rubric for each assignment will be given early on in the semester. Fieldwork assignments must be emailed to the instructor and posted to the course website before the beginning of class on October 4, November 1, and December 4.

Final Presentations—175 points

Students will work in assigned pairs on a 10-15 minute presentation that will 'pitch' a pop cultural product to the rest of the class. Your TV show, film, clothing line, play, dance, fair, sport, videogame, etc. should be pitched as both fun and educational (e.g., it should be able to help people outside the class learn about the big ideas we learn about here). The exact format of the presentation is up to the presenters and can include fieldwork and interviews, creative films or photographs that you design, maps, models, etc. A detailed rubric will be given, along with assigned pairs, in November.

Semester grades will be based on the following University scale:

Letter Grade	Description
A+ (970-1000 points), A (930-969 points), A- (900-929 points)	"Denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship."
B+ (870-899 points), B (830-869 points), B- (800-829 points)	"Denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship."
C+ (770-799 points), C (730-769 points), C- (700-729 points)	"Denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and the usual achievement expected."
D+ (670-699 points), D (630-669 points), D- (600-629 points)	"Denotes borderline understanding of the subject. These grades denote marginal performance, and they do not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree."
F (0-599points)	"Denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance."

With hard work and careful attention to the texts, classroom discussion, and the course themes and objectives, every student is capable of above-average work. Work that just 'gets by' on the requirements will be rewarded with a 'C' or less. It takes truly exemplary work to earn an 'A' grade. All assignments are issued well in advance of their well-advertised due date. Because of this, computer problems are not an excuse for late work and late work will not be accepted.

Attendance and Class Contribution
Students are not graded on attendance but on their contribution to the class community. Obviously, non-attendance means you can't contribute in a given class, but so does sleeping in class, moving inappropriately off topic, or hanging out on Facebook the whole time. Different students contribute in different ways, and so the specifics may differ, but a significant and meaningful presence online and off is expected. Per University policy, absences may be excused for religious observances, participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, inclement weather (announced on the University's homepage) and serious medical illness . Absences for reasons of illness must be accompanied by a signed note. Once per semester this note may be self-signed with the honor pledge appended, at all other times it must be accompanied by a doctor's signature. Details of the University's medical absence policy may be found here:
http://www.provost.umd.edu/announcements/StudentMedicalAbsences.cfm Unexcused absences result in a '0' for participation that day. Excused absences mean that day does not count towards your final participation grade (e.g., final attendance is calculated out of *n*-1 days instead of *n* days).

Statement on Diversity, Respect, and Classroom Language
This class will touch many 'hot-button' subjects such as race, gender, and sexuality, and will encourage personal refection to link those issues to contemporary cultural debates and personal experiences. In the discussion of politically complex and charged issues, it is often necessary to explore terminology and concepts that, on occasion, may make us uncomfortable. Please understand that it is necessary to engage in these discussions in order to to come to a critical and comprehensive understanding of our topic so that, subsequently, we can learn how to deconstruct and assuage the themes contained therein. This means that online and in-class spaces are safe ones, where the expression of personal identity is encouraged and respected. Students should afford each other the same respect they desire in turn, and this includes attending to classmates in discussion instead of Facebook. Insults and disrespectful language will not be tolerated. Uncomfortable topics may be broached, but always in relation to course themes and objectives and never for shock value. If you become particularly

distressed about any discussion, please contact the instructor immediately. The instructor will give the class a heads up when any particularly graphic topics are going to be brought into discussion.

Disability Accommodation and Learning Support
Students requiring accommodations for classroom activities or assessments must provide the instructor with the appropriate documentation from Disability Support Services (DSS) in the first two weeks of the semester. Individual solutions will be negotiated from there. DSS can be reached at http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/ or 301-314-7682 Students experiencing serious difficulties adapting to the demands of the college workload are encouraged to make use of the Counseling Center's other resources in the Learning Assistance Service (LAS; for developing effective college learning skills) or Counseling Services (for professional support around personal, interpersonal, and vocational issues). They can be reached at 301-314-7693 and 301-314-7651 respectively.

Digital and Written Communication
Students will recognize that the norms of communication are different in a scholarly community, compared to a social one. You are not going to write and act the same way in class spaces and in communication with the professor as you would on Facebook or through text messages or instant messages to friends. Major course announcements will be emailed. Email is also the best way to contact your instructor with any questions or concerns. All emails should have a subject line with the course title, a greeting, and a signature. To learn more about email norms, and other college how-to's, Michael Leddy's "How to Email a Professor" posts are priceless. I check my email regularly, but I get a lot of it. Between Monday and Friday, I will endeavor to respond to emails within 24 hours. Detailed discussions are best saved for office hours. When composing a blog post, be sure to write at a college level, draw evidence from the texts, and communicate your ideas clearly to your intended audience with the understanding that reading a response is different from hearing it explained in person. Students are expected to improve their writing skills throughout the semester, but will be graded at a college level—so style, structure, readability, and spelling and grammar will factor into grading. For guides on effective writing strategies, check out this MLA-based online guide (http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla/index.shtml) or the classic Strunk & White *Elements of Style*. Students desiring more personalized support are encouraged to make an appointment with the University Writing Center (http://english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter).

Academic Honesty
The University has approved a *Code of Academic Integrity* (http://www.jpo.umd.edu/Info/Faculty/AcadHonPledge.aspx) which prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, facilitating academic dishonesty, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. All quotations taken from other authors, including Web-based sources, must be indicated by quotation marks and referenced. Paraphrasing must be referenced as well. Using any source without a reference constitutes plagiarism in this course. Any intentional plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment and may result in a failing grade for the course. All Research Projects, Twitter Diaries, and Curation Posts should conform to a scholarly citation style (e.g., MLA, Chicago, or APA). If students are even slightly confused about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, review the guidelines at http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/whatisplag.php or contact the instructor. Correctly citing other people's ideas is, of course, a skill with a learning curve. To reflect that, this course distinguishes between the following types of plagiarism:

Category A: Sloppiness. Automatic "0" on paper, with option to rewrite for no better than a "C"
Category B: Ignorance. Automatic "0" on paper, with option to rewrite for no better than a "C"
Category C: Obvious Conscious Cheating. Automatic "0" on paper, with no option for rewriting

Students caught plagiarizing a second time will be asked to leave the class and will receive an automatic "0" in the course. For those of you who are not aware of what constitutes plagiarism, here is

a breakdown of the various types: **1)** Buying papers, borrowing papers, or recycling former papers unrevised and claiming these types of papers as your own for your assignment in this course. (This constitutes a Category C offense) **2)** Cutting and pasting parts of a webpage or borrowing passages from a book for your paper without properly citing these parts and claiming the material as your own for the expressed intent of cheating. (This constitutes a Category C offense) **3)** Failing to use proper citation style for material you borrow, accidentally. (This constitutes either a Category A or B offense)

Course Texts, Copyrights, and Costs:
There is not one good textbook to cover the multiple approaches we'll work with this semester. The instructor also recognizes that college, and college textbooks, are expensive. Therefore, the only assigned text this semester is the first year book, which is free for every student. It will be required reading for a few sessions and included as recommended reading for a few more.

- Gladstone, Brooke and Josh Neufeld. *The Influencing Machine.* WW Norton: 2012. Instructions for procuring the book are here: http://fyb.umd.edu/2012/

The vast majority of readings for the course (scholarly, creative, and journalistic) will be either available on the open Web or uploaded to ELMS as PDFs. Students must have copies of readings available to reference in class so plan on either bringing a laptop or tablet (as long as you feel it won't be a distraction) or print them out ahead of time. In the case of the latter, ink and paper costs are assumed to replace what students would otherwise spend on a textbook. If enough students are interested, it should be possible to turn a substantial portion of the latter two-thirds of the course into a course packet costing between $30 and $50. It is a matter of demand and copyright.

[All course materials *not* produced by the instructor (e.g., readings, films, etc.) are copyrighted under the licenses included within those materials. All course materials produced *by the instructor* (e.g., this syllabus, rubrics, slides, etc.) are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported license, you can feel free to re-use or re-purpose these materials as long as you give due credit and don't get paid for it.]

There are other small costs that students should expect to associate with this course. The second unit may require buying some blank videotapes or DVDs, depending on how you tackle it. The third unit will require you to go to a big event (e.g., a concert, a sporting event, a fashion show, a religious ceremony) that you wouldn't normally go to otherwise. The fourth unit will require regular play of a game (e.g., an intramural sport, a video game, a board game).

Schedule of readings and major assignments:
Students are expected to have read and taken notes on the readings and activities assigned for that day. **The instructor reserves the right to issue pop quizzes and other assignments to encourage reading comprehension. If issued, these may constitute an addition the base 1000-points grading breakdown or be incorporated into other grades.** Students are expected to build off online assignments in class and vice versa, and to reflect on past discussions and readings online and off. This syllabus a working document. The most up to date version is always posted on the course site and on ELMS. Assignments will not change but readings may—depending on the needs of the class.

Week 1: Introductions

August 30:
- Let's get to know each other and the expectations for the semester.

Week 2: What is Popular Culture and Why Should We Study It?

September 4:
- Stuart Hall. Introduction. In S. Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and signifying practices* (1997)
- Stuart Hall. "Notes on Deconstructing the Popular" (1981)

Homework: You'll be assigned a medium (e.g., magazine, TV, Web). Find an interesting advertisement from that medium and bring it to class or upload it to the provided Google Doc. Be prepared to critique your ad like Streeter does his, in class.

September 6:
- Marshall McLuhan "Understanding Media" (1964)
- Focus on 149-161, skim the rest.
- Work through Thomas Streeter's Web exercise on semiotics and advertising http://www.uvm.edu/~tstreete/semiotics_and_ads/index.html

Unit 1: Pop is a text that we read

Week 3: Audience, Message, and Market

September 11:
- Kristyn Gorton. "Emotional Rescue: *The Sopranos* (1999-2007), *ER* (1994-), and *State of Play* (BBC1 2003)." (2009)
- Jonathan Gray. "Coming Up Next: Promos in the Future of Television and Television Studies." (2010)
- **Recommended**: *Influencing Machine* 117-136
- **Recommended**: If you don't know *ER,* watch an episode on ELMS. It's pretty much the blueprint for TV dramas for the past 20 years. Both of the required readings are quite short, so you have time for the recommended.

September 13:
- Cornel Sandvoss "Fans Online: Affective Media Consumption and Production in the Age of Convergence" (2011)
- Christian Christensen "The Everyday War: Iraq, YouTube, and the Banal Spectacle" (2011*)*
- *The Influencing Machine:* "War" (71-96)
- Students must identify on the web page for the unit the hour of TV they're analyzing. First come first serve.

Week 4: The Power to Represent

September 18:
- James Lull. "Hegemony" (1995)
- First half of Stuart Hall "The Spectacle of the Other" (1997)
- Watch *The Boondocks "*Return of the King" (2006): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13eSVr9S7YE

September 20:
- Second half of Stuart Hall "The Spectacle of the Other" (1997)
- Watch Dave Chappelle on *Inside the Actor's Studio* in 2006: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84NjYRTHpfU
- Watch any of the *Chappelle's Show* episodes posted on ELMS, along with the Season 3 pixie skits: http://www.comedycentral.com/search?keywords=chappelle%27s+show+pixie Dave has said in interviews that his discomfort while white crew members laughed at the pixie skits was part of his reason for quitting the show.

Week 5: Good Taste

September 25:
- Pierre Bourdeiu. Introduction to *Distinction.* (1984)
- Mark Grief. "The Hipster in the Mirror" (2010) http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/14/books/review/Greif-t.html?pagewanted=all and "What Was the Hipster?"(2010) http://nymag.com/news/features/69129/

September 27:
- Patrick Grzanka and Justin Maher. "Different Like Everyone Else: *Stuff White People Like* and the Marketplace of Diversity." (2012)
- Spend some time in the archives of http://stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/

Week 6: Stigma, Bad Art, and Bad Audiences

October 2:
- Paul Lopes. "Culture and stigma: Popular Culture and The Case of Comic Books." (2006)
- Check out some of the primary materials from the Comics Scare: http://herocomplex.latimes.com/2010/10/29/the-glory-and-gore-of-1950s-horror-comics/
- Students will be placed into groups and assigned a short news article on recent moral panic.
- They will have to explain the stigma involved to the class.
- **Recommended:** *Influencing Machine* **47-57**

October 4:

- No assigned readings. Students should use the time to complete their assignments and get a head start on next week's readings.
- Live-tweet film: *This Film Is Not Yet Rated* (2006)
- Research Project 1 and Twitter Diary 1 must be posted online and emailed to the instructor before class

Unit 2: Pop is an event that we live

Week 7: Fashioning Bodies

October 9:

- Jo Paoletti. "Pink is for Boys" in Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys from the Girls in America (2012)
- Check out the Smithsonian Museum blog and photo gallery that accompanied Paoletti's book: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/When-Did-Girls-Start-Wearing-Pink.html?c=y&page=1

October 11:
- Robin DG Kelly. "The Riddle of the Zoot: Malcolm Little and Black Cultural Politics During World War II" (1994)
- Virginia L. Blum. "The Patient's Body" (2003)
- If students are completing a fieldwork for this unit, they must identify on the web page for the unit the event they're analyzing. First come first serve.

Week 8: Safe Sex Spaces

October 16:
- Jonathan Lillie. "The Domestication of Online Pornography: How Cyberporn Found a Home in the American Home." (2011)
- Elizabeth Bernstein. "The Meaning of the Purchase: Desire, Demand, and the Commerce of Sex." (2001)

October 18:
- Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner. "Sex in Public" (1998)

Week 9: Mediated Events

October 23
- Students must watch and take notes on the Presidential debate airing 10/22 and at least one hour of network (e.g., FOX, NBC, CBS, ABC) news coverage after it. We're concerned less with what each candidate said and more about how they said it and how the news networks framed it. Ask yourself:
  ○ What is 'common sense' for both candidates, what is absolutely unquestioned? What's not talked about? Hint: Neither guy is going to say America is not the greatest country in the world and both guys will say that's what the other guy thinks.
  ○ What sort of props are there in the debate and in the newsroom?
  ○ What role does the town hall format play in the debate?
  ○ How would you describe what the candidates do as a 'performance' with a certain script, expectations, characters, gestures, etc.? How do the networks contribute to this?
  ○ What role do the news networks play in describing the setting for this performance?
  ○ What sort of conversations are going on on Twitter simultaneous to the event? (This would be a good thing to expand on for a Twitter diary)
- *Influencing Machine*: 35-71 and 96-110

October 25
- Phillip Auslander. "Live Performance in a Mediatized Culture" in *Liveness* (1999)
  ○ *Everyone will read pages 10-11, the rest of the introduction and chapter 2 will be broken up into chunks for the class to tackle in groups.*

Week 10: Performance Circuits

October 30
- Diana Taylor. "Lost in the Field of Vision" in *The Archive and the Repertoire* (2003)
  - Review footage of Princess Diana's funeral (on YouTube in 39 parts, take a look at three or four of them): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWuOJ-qc9cA

November 1

- Joan Morgan. "Fly-girls, Bitches, and Hoes." (1995)
- Live-tweet "Hip-hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes" (2006)
- Research Project 2 and Diary 2 must be posted online and emailed to the instructor before class

Unit 3: Pop is a game that we play

Week 11: The Magic Circle

November 6:
- Johann Huizinga. Part I of *Homo Ludens* (1938)

November 8:
- Bonnie Nardi. *My Life As A Night Elf Priestess: An Anthropological Account of World of Warcraft* (2009) http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.8008655.0001.001
- *Everyone will read the first chapter. Students will then be divided into groups to read and summarize chapters six through nine.*
- If students are completing a fieldwork this unit, they must identify on the web page for the unit the game they're analyzing. First come first serve.

Week 12: Violent and Serious Games

November 13:
- Mark Sample. "Virtual Torture: Videogames and the War on Terror" (2008) http://gamestudies.org/0802/articles/sample
- Students must explore the website for and play at least one hour of either *America's Army* (PC, free), Call of Duty: Black Ops II (PS3, Xbox, Wii), or read and watch Joystick Division's "10 Interrogation Scenes in Videogames"

November 15:
- Mary Flanagan. "Creating Critical Play" (2010)
- Jason Farman. "Hypermediating the Game Interface: The Alienation Effect in Violent Videogames and the Problem of Serious Play" (2010)
- Students must play at least one hour of Persuasive Games' mini-games. Choose from Cow-Clicker, Disaffected, Bacteria Salad, or Jetset

Week 13: Rules for Sports

November 20 :
- Toni Bruce. "Marking the Boundaries of the 'Normal' in Televised Sports: the Play-by-Play of Race" (2004)
- Students will be assigned a live sporting event to watch between 11/15 an 11/20

November 22:
No class for Thanksgiving holiday

Week 14: Gender Play

November 27:

- Selections from Erving Goffman. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959)
- Re-read James Lull. "Hegemony," in *Media, Communication, and Culture.* (2000): 48-52
- Live-tweet *Paris is Burning* (1990)

November 29:
- Judith Butler. "Gender is Burning" (1992)

Final Presentations: 12/4, 12/6, and 12/11

Research Project 3 and Twitter Diary 3 are due on December 4. They must be posted online and emailed to the instructor before class

Three to four groups will present each day. Participation grades for these days will be based on live-tweeting, asking questions, engaging with presenters' activities, and filling out feedback forms for presenters.