COMM 519: Cultural Studies in Communication
Spring 2015
Mondays 2:00-4:50 pm
ASC G38
4 Units

Contact Information:
Henry Jenkins
Office: ASC 101C
Office hours by appointment. Please contact Amanda Ford (Professor Jenkins’ assistant) at amanda.ford@usc.edu.

Please send all inquiries regarding office hour appointments to Amanda Ford and questions regarding the course to Professor Jenkins.

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the theoretical foundations of and contemporary work in cultural studies, with a particular emphasis on the study of media, popular culture, media audiences and subcultures, consumer culture, and communication. Running across the course is the concept of culture, and a central concern here will be identifying a range of different approaches to cultural analysis, focusing primarily on the key figures in the Birmingham School tradition (especially Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall, but also such contemporaries as Angela McRobbie, Dick Hebdige, E. P. Thompson, and Richard Hoggart), as well as their influences and their disciples. We will consider cultural studies as an academic movement that has had impact across a range of disciplines, national contexts, and research fields, looking for what these various approaches might have in common, as well as some key debates and controversies within the field. We will be reading a broad array of materials. Realize that this cannot possibly be an exhaustive course, given how much work has been produced under the Cultural Studies banner. You should look at this semester, however, as an introductory overview that will help you to map the field and identify materials you may want to spend more time with in the future.

Course Requirements

Contributions to Class Forum on Blackboard (20 Percent)
Students should share short reflections or questions on the materials read for each week's session, which can be used as a springboard for class discussions. These should be posted by 10 a.m. on the day the class is being held. (20 percent)

Class Participation -- Students are expected to come to the class prepared to engage actively in discussion of all of the readings. My approach is very discussion-focused, and students actively help to set the agenda for each of our exchanges. I expect students to be open-minded and generous in responding to their colleagues; our goal is to create a safe space where we can discuss sensitive topics surrounding culture and identity. (10 percent)
Short Paper 1 -- Students should write a 5-7 page essay selecting a key figure from the history of Cultural Studies and looking closely at several of their works to assess their core contributions to the field. How do they fit within the larger tradition of cultural studies? What forms of cultural analysis do they employ? Which other theorists do they engage in their work? What do you see as their key contributions? You should be aware that you will be sharing this report with your classmates. (20 points)

Short Paper 2 -- Students will write a 5-7 page essay examining a key debate in the cultural studies tradition. You should look critically at 3 or more authors who have addressed this question and discuss points of agreement or disagreement between them. Why has this topic been such an important issue in the field? What is at stake in this debate? How would you position your own work in relation to this conflict? You will be asked to share this report with your classmates. (20 points)

Note: These two papers can be done in either order, but the first one is due on Feb. 13 and the second is due on March 27.

Final Paper (40 percent)
Students should write a 20-page essay on a topic of their own interests as they reflect on the core themes and concerns that have run through the class. You should apply some of the theoretical and methodological models we have been studying to look more closely at a concrete case study, ideally one that fits within your own larger research interests. Use this assignment as a chance to think more deeply about how your research might fit within cultural studies. Also, students will give a 10-minute final presentation sharing their project with the class. The final paper will be due on the exam date designated for the class. I recommend doing the in-class presentation while the ideas are still taking shape, so you can get feedback from me and your classmates, and build upon it as you do the final drafts of your paper.

Books:

All other readings can be found on Blackboard.

USC Statement on Academic Integrity:
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own.
All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located at http://scampus.usc.edu/university-governance. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The review process can be found at http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS.

**USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity**
The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism.” All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

**Academic Accommodations/Statement for Students with Disabilities:**
Any students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed.

Please be sure the letter is delivered to the professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. The office is located in the Student Union room 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis:**
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

**Laptop Policy:**
Effective fall 2014, all undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors will be required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg Virtual Commons for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s Information Technology Services website.

**Stress Management:**
Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.

Class Schedule:

**Day 1  Monday, January 12th: The Concept of Culture**

**Day 2  Monday, January 26th: Reading Culture**

**Day 3  Monday, February 2nd: Subcultures and Resistance**
John Clarke, Stuart Hall, Tony Jefferson, & Brian Roberts, “Subcultures, Cultures and...


**Day 4 Monday, February 9th: The Origins of Audience Studies**


**Day 5 Monday, February 23rd: Roots in Marxism**


**Day 6 Monday, March 2nd: Power, Knowledge, and Discourse**


Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other*


**Day 7 Monday, March 9th: Cultural Hierarchies**


**Day 8 Monday, March 23rd: Pleasure and Transgression**


**Day 9 Monday, March 30th: Identity and Difference**


Issac Julian and Kobena Mercer, “De Margin and De Center,” in *Stuart Hall: Critical
Dialogues in Cultural Studies, pp. 452-467.

Day 10 Monday, April 6th: Globalization

Day 11 Monday, April 13th: The Pleasures and Politics of Popular Culture
Robert Drew, “‘Anyone Can Do It’: Forging a Participatory Culture in Karaoke Bars,” pp. 254-269.

Day 12 Monday, April 20th: Contemporary Debates in Cultural Studies
Nicholas Garnham, “Political Economy and Cultural Studies: Reconciliation or Divorce?.” in Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader, 618-629.


**Day 13 Monday, April 27th (LAST DAY OF CLASS)**

**Student Presentations**