

CULTURAL STUDIES IN COMMUNICATION

COMM 519 | PROFESSOR JOSH KUN

TUESDAYS 9:30-12:20

This seminar 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, race, sexuality, music, and cultural industries. The concept of culture—and all of the debates and politics that surround it, from “mass culture” to “creative industries”—will serve as both an anchor and a foil in the course, and we will survey how studying culture changes across a range of different approaches and across a range of generations and geographies. We will begin by examining 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, but then track how cultural studies expanded and changed shape in the U.S., across the Black diaspora, within feminist and queer scholarship, in the US-Mexico borderlands, and across postcolonial spaces globally. While the course is being offered within the School of Communication and as such is tailored to doctoral students being trained in the fields of communication and media, it is by no means limited to those fields or interests and is open

to all students interested in the study of culture and its productions and industries. While we will be primarily studying *the study of culture*, we will also consider *culture as a practice*—how as critics, writers, and scholars we are also making and producing culture.

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Office Hours: Thursdays 10-1 and by appointment

[Faculty page](#)

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Required Readings: Many readings will be available online or via Blackboard. The rest will come from the following books you should acquire: Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*; John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*; Angela McRobbie, *Be Creative: Making a Living in the New Culture Industries*; Kuan-Hsing Chen, David Morley eds, *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*; Simon During, *The Cultural Studies Reader*

You should familiarize yourself with this chronology:

A Cultural Studies Timeline

<http://vtgrrlscake.blogspot.com/2007/04/timeline-of-cultural-studies.html>

The work you will do: 1) Each student must be prepared to discuss and comment on the week's readings for every seminar, and to consider how the week's theories could be applied to their own work and their own thinking. This is not a lecture course and active participation in seminar is required. 2) Each student will be responsible for making a brief, weekly post on Blackboard reacting to the week's readings in advance of seminar 3) There will be weekly student

presentations on the readings designed to activate discussion and collective thinking 3) Each student will develop a final project and propose it by Spring Break (guidelines to be provided) and complete it by the end of the term. Projects may be research papers or multi-media projects, or a combination of both. On the last day of our seminar, each student will share a brief presentation of what they are working on.

Annenberg School for Communication Academic Integrity Policy: The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and may be dismissed as a major.

It is vital that you always bring a notebook/notepad, paper and pen to every class. We will frequently spend small segments of class time working on in-class writing assignments and you will have to periodically hand in these documents.

Plagiarism: 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, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as Communication 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.

Students with Disabilities: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740- 0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

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.

Sexual Assault Resource Center: The Center for Women & Men and the Sexual Assault Resource Center are one and the same. Student Counseling Services is a separate place that also offers confidential counseling and support groups on a variety of other topics. To schedule an appointment with Student Counseling Services, call (213) 740-7711 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays or visit the Engemann Student Health Center on the University Park Campus.

Schedule of Readings:

8.23 Setting the Stage

Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*

8.30 The 'Culture' of Cultural Studies

Richard Johnson, "What Is Cultural Studies Anyway?"

Matthew Arnold, "Culture and Anarchy," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 6-11.

F.R. Leavis, "Mass Civilization and Minority Culture" in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 12-20.

Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary"

Raymond Williams, "Culture", "Dominant, Residual and Emergent" "Structures of Feelings," *Marxism and Literature*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 11-20, 121-135.

Raymond Williams, "The Analysis of Culture," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 32-40.

9.6 Birmingham Roots

Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular'" in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 508-518.

Stuart Hall, "Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies", *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, pp. 261-274.

Stuart Hall, "Richard Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy and The Cultural Turn," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 10, March 2007, pp. 39-49.

Richard Hoggart, "The Full Rich Life & The Newer Mass Art: Sex in Shiny Packets," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 26-31.

E.P. Thompson, "Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* No. 50 (Feb., 1971), pp. 76-136.

Carolyn Steedman, "Culture, Cultural Studies, and the Historians"

Charlotte Brunson, "A Thief in the Night: Stories of Feminism in the 1970s at CCCS," *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, pp. 275-285.

9.13 Marxist Roots

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Ruling Class and Ruling Ideas," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, 58-59.

Karl Marx, "Base and Superstructure," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp.60-61.

Antonio Gramsci, "Hegemony, Intellectuals, and the State," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 75-80.

Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology: Marxism Without Guarantees" and "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, pp. 24-45, 411-441.

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," <https://analepsis.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/cultureindustry.pdf>

9.20 Communication and Cultural Studies

James Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication"
Douglas Kellner, "Communication and Cultural Studies: Overcoming the Divide"
Lawrence Grossberg, "Toward a Genealogy of the State of Cultural Studies"
Susan Douglas, "Popular Culture and Populist Technology: The Amateur Operators, 1906-1912," in *Inventing American Broadcasting, 1899-1922* (Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press) pp. 187-215.
Raka Shome & Radha Hegde, "Culture, Communication, and the Challenge of Globalization"

9.27 Subcultures

Dick Hebdige, from *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*
Sarah Thornton, "The Social Logic of Subcultural Capital"
John Clarke, Stuart Hall, Tony Jefferson, & Brian Roberts, "Subcultures, Cultures and Class: A Theoretical Overview," in Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton (eds.) *The Subcultures Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 100-111.

10.4 Cultural Studies: Feminist and Queer Approaches

Angela McRobbie, "Shut Up and Dance: Youth Culture and Changing Modes of Femininity," *Postmodernism and Popular Culture* (London; Routledge, 1994), pp.135-176.
Ann Balsamo, "Feminism and Cultural Studies"
Michele Wallace, "Boyz n the Hood and Jungle Fever"
Douglas Crimp, "AIDS: Cultural Analysis/Cultural Activism"
Judith Butler, "Subjects of sex/gender/desire"
Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto"

10.11 Studying Audiences

Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," in Simon During (ed.), *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 90-103.
Tony Bennett, "Texts, Readers, Reading Formations," *The Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 16(1), Spring 1983, pp. 3-17.
Ien Ang, "Dallas and the Ideology of Mass Culture" in Storey
Janice Radway, "Reading the Romance" in Storey
David Morley, "Introduction," *Television, Audiences, and Cultural Studies* (London:

Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-42.

Virginia Nightingale, "The 'New Phase' In Audience Research," *Studying Audiences: The Shock of the Real* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 59-93.

Michael Warner, ["Publics and Counterpublics"](#)

10.18 Black Cultural Studies

Cornel West, "The New Cultural Politics of Difference," October, Summer 1990, pp. 93-109.

Stuart Hall, "What Is This 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?" and "New Ethnicities," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, pp. 442-452, 468-478.

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

bell hooks, "Postmodern Blackness," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, pp. 388-394.

Elizabeth Alexander, "Can You Be Black and Look at This?: reading the Rodney King Videos," *Public Culture*

Paul Gilroy, "It Ain't Where You From It's Where You're At: The Dialectics of Diasporic Identification," *Third Text*

10.25 Chicana/o and Border Cultural Studies

Rosa Linda Fregoso and Angie Chabram, "Chicana/o Cultural Representations: Reframing Alternative Critical Discourses"

José David Saldívar, "Remapping American Cultural Studies"

Gloria Anzaldúa, "Border Arte: Nèpantla, El Lugar de la Frontera"

Deborah Paredez, "Remembering Selena, Re-membering Latinidad"

Christina Beltrán, "No Papers No Fear: Dream Activism, New Social Media, and the Queering of Immigrant Rights"

Angie Chabram-Dernersesian, "I Throw Punches for My Race But I Don't Want to Be a Man"

11.1 Postcolonial Cultural Studies

Edward Said, "Orientalism Revisited"

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" and "Scattered Speculation on the Question of Cultural Studies"

Homi K. Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency"

Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy"
Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference"
Some and Hegde, "Postcolonial Approaches to Communication: Charting the Terrain, Engaging the Intersections"

11.8 Cultural Studies and Music

Simon Frith, "Towards an Aesthetic of Popular Music"
Josh Kun, "What is an MC if He Can't Rap to Banda?"
George Lipsitz, "Cruising Around the Historical Bloc"
Tia DeNora, "Music as a Technology of the Self"
Karen Tongson, "Empty Orchestra: The Karaoke Standard and Pop Celebrity"

11.15 Cultural Postproduction

Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as a Screenplay*
Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer"
Umberto Eco, from "Poetics of the Open Work"

11.22 Creative Economies

Angela McRobbie, chapters from *Be Creative*

11.29 Final Presentations