Popular Culture and American Politics

American Studies 312  Section #10790 ◆ Cinema Studies 312  Section #16767 ◆ Political Science 312  Section #30890

Summer 2004
Monday through Friday @ 8:00 – 9:30 am – Hodges Library 253

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Course Overview: This is a course for serious students of Political Science, American Studies, and Cinema Studies. It requires precise systematic analysis (critical thinking) in extended oral and written discourse. The subject of our critical thinking is American political culture as it is affected by our popular culture. This semester we explore the implications of the emergence of the electronic mass media upon public discourse in American culture. We will focus on political socialization in contemporary American culture through the analysis of films targeted for adolescents. Of particular concern is how individualism, community, conflict (especially violence), conformity, authority, and institutions are portrayed in films featuring teenagers in high school. This course carries a heavy film viewing load, including weekend screenings of assigned films. It is an Arts and Sciences writing emphasis course. Students are advised to take this into account when enrolling and planning their semester workload.

Policy: Class attendance is required and will be taken. It is expected that students will attend class every day, prepared and ready to participate in class discussions. Excessive absences inevitably will affect your grade. Final grades are assigned based on a class curve. Grades depend on student performance on a midterm (100-points) and a two part final examination (200-points). There may be additional unannounced quizzes that are designed to reward students for faithful class attendance and close attention to lectures and assignments. No make-up quizzes will be given. Extra credit will be available. Students are required to check the course webpage between class sessions, especially on weekends, for announcements, new material, and on-line quizzes.

Important Dates (subject to change with notice)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 1</td>
<td>First class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, June 11</td>
<td>Midterm examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, June 25</td>
<td>Final Part I distributed and extra credit paper due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, July 2</td>
<td>Final Part II in class</td>
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Assigned Books (in the order to be read)

Kolker, *Film, form, and Culture* (2nd edition, 2002)