

# Graduate Seminar: Popular Culture

Department of History

## College of Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences

# HIST 6003-201

M: 5:30-8:20 P.M.

# Spring 2020

## Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Whitney Snow

Office: OD 223

Office hours: TR: 8:00-11:00 A.M.; 12:00-2:00 P.M.; and by appointment

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## Course Description

This is a course about the images, ideas, practices, games, slang, clubs, drinks, sounds, sights, entertainments and arguments that made up the American experience. As that description probably suggests, one of the main tasks we will set ourselves in this course is defining what popular culture is and how it can inform our understanding of American history. This course is mostly concerned with the post-Civil War era in U.S. history, mainly because it is only towards the end of the nineteenth century that a legitimate mass culture arose in place of very distinct regional experiences. Throughout the course we will examine debates about popular culture and its relationship to American race, class, and gender.

## Required Books

\*Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture*

\*Kathleen Franz and Susan Smulyan, ed., *Major Problems in American Popular Culture*, 1st ed.

\*Mitchell Hall, *The Emergence of Rock and Roll: Music and the Rise of American Youth Culture*

\*Lary May, *Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry*

\*Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America’s Beauty Culture*

\*Nicholas Sammond, *Babes in Tomorrowland: Walt Disney and the Making of the American Child, 1930-1960*

## Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook 2017-18](https://mwsu.edu/Assets/documents/student-life/student-handbook-2017-18.pdf)

## Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual’s to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

## Grading

| Assignments | Points |
| --- | --- |
| Book Review #1 | 10% |
| Book Review #2 | 10% |
| Book Review #3 | 10% |
| Film Critique | 10% |
| Paper | 15% |
| Midterm | 20% |
| Final | 25% |

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

| Grade | Points |
| --- | --- |
| A | 90-100 |
| B | 80-89 |
| C | 70-79 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | 0-59 |

## Exams

\*This course includes two exams (a midterm and a final) which will consist of six identification terms and one essay.

\*Students are expected to bring a bluebook for each exam.

\*Students must use a blue or black pen. Using a pencil will result in a letter grade off.

\*Students will be given the entire 50 minutes for each exam. If a student leaves the classroom during testing, he/she must turn in his/her exam and forfeits the remainder of time.

## Book Reviews

\*Students will be expected to select three books from a list of approved options (posted on D2L) and writing a book review on each.

\*The book review must be typed, in 12-point font, Times New Roman, and double spaced. The margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1.25 inches on the left and right. Print and staple before turning in. Failure to staple will result in a deduction of 5 points.

\*Four sample book reviews are posted on D2L.

## Movie Critiques

\*Students are expected to write one critique of a movie chosen from an instructor-approved list provided on D2L.

\*The movie critique must be typed, in 12-point font, Times New Roman and double spaced. The margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1.25 on the left and right. Print and staple before turning in. Failure to staple will result in a deduction of 5 points.

**Term Paper**

\*Students will be expected to write a 10-15-page research paper based on primary sources. Your paper should be based on primary and secondary sources and must include a thesis (argument). Primary sources are original documents that appeared during the period of time you are exploring. Examples include but are not limited to newspapers, diaries, journals, letters, oral interviews, and recordings. Secondary sources are documents written after the fact and include but are not limited to books, journal articles, and magazine articles. Select a topic you will enjoy learning about. Once you pick your topic, you need to think about potential ideas or arguments you want to address. Then narrow your focus. Use primary sources to better delve into your topic’s significance, how it was perceived, and how it shaped culture. As to secondary sources, try to pick which books have been most influential in defining the prevailing understanding of your topic. Before you even start writing, brainstorm about the agreements/disagreements in your secondary sources. Which authors do you agree with? Which authors do you disagree with? Is your argument new or does it fall into line with a known position/stance?

Use at least 10 secondary sources. Use at least 4 peer-reviewed journal articles or book chapters. These can be found either in Moffett Library or in its online databases. Use footnotes (use Chicago Manual of Style). Please include a bibliography at the end of your paper. Papers should be 10-15 pages, typed, double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font. The paper is due on April 27. Please print, staple, and bring to class.

## Extra Credit

\*No extra credit assignments will be accepted, but bonus points may be offered for attending instructor-specified events on campus.

## Make Up Work/Tests

Students who miss class due to university-related activities will be able to make up exams and writing assignments. In cases of a doctor’s excuse and/or a family death, students will be able to make up exams and writing assignments.

**Midterm Progress Report**

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, the instructor for this class will provide a Midterm Progress Report through each student’s WebWorld account. All students will receive this midterm progress report. Midterm grades will not be reported on the students’ transcript, nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They simply give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester. Students earning below a C at the midway point should schedule a meeting with the instructor.

**Office Hours**

If the door is closed during the instructor’s appointed office hours, it doesn’t mean she is not there. ***Just knock!*** If the instructor steps out for any reason, she will place a post-it note on the door. It will indicate an estimated time of return.

**Email**

\*Please send all emails to this email address: [whitney.snow@msutexas.edu](mailto:whitney.snow@msutexas.edu); emails sent to this address will be answered

\*Do ***NOT*** send emails through D2L; they will not be answered

## Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes:January 21-23

Deadline to file for graduation: February 17

Last Day to drop with a grade of “W:” March 30

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](https://mwsu.edu/student-life/development/learning/index)

## Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](https://d2l.mwsu.edu/) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

## Attendance

\*While attendance is not part of your grade, it is nevertheless expected and will be taken into consideration if a student is close between letter grades. Official university absences will be excused. A student with excessive unexcused absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor.

\*The instructor will not give out notes under any circumstances. Students are responsible for all missed information.

## Instructor Class Policies

\*Attendance requires more than being present in class. It means showing up prepared; contributing to class discussions; and exhibiting respect for classmates and the instructor.

\*Cell phones should be on silent and put away during class. During exams, a student with a cell phone in their hand or on their desk will be asked to leave.

\*Smart watches are not allowed in class on days of exams. If a student is seen looking at his/her smartwatch during the midterm or final, they will be asked to leave.

\*Earbuds and headphones are not allowed during class.

\*Laptops are a privilege and not a right. Students are welcome to use laptops to take notes. However, if they are seen using the laptop for a non-class-related purpose, students will be given a verbal warning. Repeat offenders will no longer welcome to bring a laptop to class.

## Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classeseach semester.

## Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

## Services for Students With Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](http://www.mwsu.edu/student-life/disability).

## College Policies

### Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](https://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies)

## Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

## Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

## Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

## Course Schedule:

| Week or Module | Readings and other Assignments |
| --- | --- |
| **Week 1**  January 27 | Franz, Chapter 1 |
| **Week 2**  February 3 | Franz, Chapter 2  May, Intro and Chapters 1-4; **Paper Approval Deadline** |
| **Week 3**  February 10 | Franz, Chapter 3; **Book Review #1 Due**  May, Chapters 5-8 |
| **Week 4**  February 17 | Franz, Chapter 4;  Peiss, Chapters 1-4 |
| **Week 5**  February 24 | Franz, Chapter 5; **Book Review #2 Due**  Peiss, Chapters 5-8 |
| **Week 6**  March 2 | Franz, Chapter 6  Doherty, Chapters 1-4 |
| **Week 7**  March 9 | Franz, Chapter 7; **Midterm**  Doherty, Chapters 5-8 |
| **Week 8**  March 16 | **Spring Break** |
| **Week 9**  March 23 | Franz, Chapter 8  Doherty, Chapters 9-12 |
| **Week 10**  March 30 | Franz, Chapter 9; **Book Review #3 Due**  Hall, Chapters 1-2 |
| **Week 11**  April 6 | Franz, Chapter 10  Hall, Chapters 3-5 |
| **Week 12**  April 13 | Franz, Chapter 11; **Film Critique Due**  Sammond, Chapters 1-2 |
| **Week 13**  April 20 | Franz, Chapter 12  Sammond, Chapters 3-4 |
| **Week 14**  April 27 | Franz, Chapter 13  Sammond, Chapters 5-6; **Term Papers Due** |
| **Week 15**  May 4 | Franz, Chapter 14 |

**Final Exam**: May 13 (Wednesday), 8:00-10:00 P.M.