

AMERICAN STUDIES 300-07 & 08

Introduction to American Popular Culture

Fall 2020

07: Thursday, 8:30-9:45 AM

08: Thursday, 10:00-11:15 AM

Professor: Dustin Abnet

Email: dabnet@fullerton.edu

Phone: 657-278-3225

Office: My house. Please don't visit.

Office Hours: T 8:30-10:30 AM and 1:00-2:00 PM and by appointment. Generally, I am always at my computer so just email me and we can schedule a time to chat.

TA:

Email:

Course Description

In this course, we will analyze the historical development of American popular culture from the folk culture of early America to the digital culture of today. Concentrating on the relationship among producers, audiences, and critics, we will explore how pop culture has both shaped and been shaped by wider historical developments. Moving chronologically, we will explore how popular entertainments—including spectator sports, circuses, novels, music, film, comic books, television, video games and other digital sources—have transformed America and its peoples. To guide our analysis of such sources, we will consider several larger questions: Why is popular culture important? How does it shape larger people, values, and institutions? Who controls the meaning of popular culture? How does it both unite and divide Americans?

General Education Learning Goals

WHAT GE REQUIREMENT DOES THIS CLASS FULFILL?

All CSUF students are assigned a "Catalog Year" that determines the requirements for their degree program, including requirements in their major(s) and in General Education. You can find your catalog year on your TDA. For more information please visit http://www.fullerton.edu/undergraduate/general_education/catalog-rights.php

For students with a Catalog year of Spring 2018 or earlier (e.g. Fall 2017), this course fulfills the following GE Requirement: GE AREA D.5

For students with a Catalog Year of Fall 2018 or Spring 2019, this course fulfills the following GE Requirement: GE AREA D.4

In line with CSUF's "Goals of General Education," this course will encourage students to:

- a. Examine problems, issues, and themes in the social sciences in greater depth; in a variety of cultural, historical, and geographical contexts; and from different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives
- b. Analyze and critically evaluate the application of social science concepts and theories to particular historical, contemporary, and future problems or themes, such as economic and environmental sustainability, globalization, poverty, and social justice.
- c. Analyze and critically evaluate constructs of cultural differentiation, including ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, and their effects on the individual and society.
- d. Apply theories and concepts from the social sciences to address historical, contemporary and future problems confronting communities at different geographical scales, from local to global.

The GE writing requirement is met and assessed by multiple writing assignments that receive timely feedback so that students have a chance to improve their writing skills.

Course Format

Normally, this course would meet twice a week for an hour and 15 minutes for 15 weeks and we would fully integrate lecture and discussion. However, due to the pandemic this course will instead employ a combination of asynchronous lectures that you can watch at any time and synchronous Zoom discussions that are designed to allow us as a class to work through some of the assigned reading and viewing material together.

Asynchronous Lectures

In the first few weeks of a Unit, I will upload all the lectures for that portion of the course to Canvas. These will typically be between 45 minutes and a little over an hour. Typically, this will be one per week but on some weeks, I might give you two shorter lectures instead of one longer one. You can watch these whenever you wish but I recommend doing so before the Zoom sessions for that week. These will normally just be me talking over a PowerPoint presentation along with any linked sources. This is to keep the file size small to help the Canvas site function better. It also will allow you to easily find where in a lecture the video is in case you need to return to a portion of it as you write your essays and forum posts. Your essays and forums must include material from these lectures.

Synchronous Zoom Sessions

During our scheduled class time (Th 8:30-9:45 or Th 10:00-11:15), I will host Zoom sessions where we can discuss various sources and you can ask any questions you have about the material. These are designed to help you figure out how to use materials to answer the essay prompts and as an opportunity for us to go more in depth. These are a critical component of the class because it is your chance to work through the ideas with guidance from me and Laura.

To prepare for these, you should do your best to watch the lecture for the week and read/watch any sources I have assigned for that day. This will make things go much faster.

Typically, these Zoom sessions will be whole class discussions, but I also might break you up into small groups for specific conversations. Occasionally, I might have you work together on a shared Google Doc and share it with me.

I will be taking attendance at these conversations just to have a good idea of who is attending and who is not (be sure your Zoom name is accurate), but, there is no penalty if you are unable to attend. Ideally, you would have the camera turned on for the entire session and we would use our voices rather than the chat for most of the conversation. This is because it helps the conversation flow better and build a stronger sense of community. Generally, I run pretty relaxed conversations so feel free to unmute yourself and talk if you have a response. Raising your hand either on camera or through use of the Zoom function is also fine. You can also respond in the chat if you wish but that generally makes it more difficult. However, you should keep the chat function open to make sure you see any responses from your peers.

You can find links to the Zoom sessions by clicking on “Zoom” on the Course Canvas Site. Since this is your classroom, I will not be employing a waiting room function. Feel free to arrive early and converse with each other if you wish. I will probably get there about 10 minutes ahead of time and, if anyone wishes, we can chat about or watch/listen to any recent pop culture that we are encountering.

My plan is to upload recordings of these zoom sessions to Canvas near the end of each Unit of the course but that will depend on attendance. Note that while there is a log of the chat, Zoom does not allow me to sync it with the video, so it is difficult to figure things out if most people rely on the chat to comment.

Required Texts

Readings

Due to the ongoing pandemic and collapse of the global economy, I have not asked you to purchase any books for this course. Instead, you will be looking at secondary and primary sources that can be found on Canvas. These should be completed prior to the day we are scheduled to discuss them on Zoom. In general, longer readings should be skimmed for their main ideas but short ones should be read closely since we will be talking about them in depth by analyzing language and the logic of the arguments. Please do not post any of the sources I have uploaded to Canvas outside of the course. Longer PDFs will be Password Protected for copyright purposes. The password for all of these PDFs is: AMST300.

Primary Sources

Primary sources are first-hand writings, images, sounds, etc. that give us direct and contemporaneous insight into the time period we are studying. In this course, we will be analyzing a wide range of these kinds of sources to try to understand the underlying cultural ideas and values that shape American popular culture. We will spend our Zoom sessions analyzing these kinds of sources. Usually, I will ask you to read or watch a source in advance. At

other times, I will share images and videos with you that we will discuss live. Remember that in your essays, you are required to draw on these sources as evidence and examples of your claims.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are sources written after the time period being discussed that attempt to analyze and interpret that time period. In the class, these are mostly book chapters and articles written by historians and other scholars that will give us a deeper insight into popular culture than what we can develop in discussion or lectures. I would like you to try to read at least 1 of these every other week (so around 8 total). You are required to use them in your essays and to draw on them in your forum responses when appropriate.

These are frequently challenging but even trying to read them is a good way to challenge yourself to learn more. If you find yourself really struggling with a piece, it is okay to put it down, try a different one, or email me or Laura for help with it. It is also okay if you don't understand everything in a piece. That is what Laura, I and the Forums are here for. In your assignments, I am mostly just looking for evidence that you got the main point, can give some evidence, and tried to get through the reading.

Films

In addition to regular clips, you are also required to view five entire films and one television episode in this course. There are all accessible for free through Canvas except as noted. You are required to talk about these in either your forum posts or essays. These will frequently serve as the primary source for a Zoom session.

Crazy Rich Asians

The Jazz Singer

A Face in the Crowd

Saturday Night Fever

The Lego Movie

Cowboy Bebop, Episode 1 (Available on Hulu or Amazon for 2.99)

YouTube

I have also put together a few YouTube playlists for the various music sections in the course. You can find links to these playlists on Canvas. Note that you will need to follow the link as Canvas will only play the first song on a playlist.

Grading

Formula

Assignment	Points
Essay 1	200

Assignment	Points
Essay 2	300
Final Exam	300
Forum Responses (25 pts * 6)	150
Engagement/Discussion	50
Total	1000

Graded Exercises

- Forum Responses.** I am asking you to complete 6 forum responses over the semester. The purpose of these forums is to help manage the workload and enable you to develop the ideas necessary for the essays. Your first forum post is simple: introduce yourself to the class. Your next 5, however, will require you to respond to both the asynchronous lectures and any primary and secondary sources. At the end of Week 1, I will divide the class in half and assign each group (1 or 2) to particular weeks. You are responsible for responding to the forum prompt for that week BEFORE THE START OF OUR ZOOM CLASS. These responses should be around 200 words each and include direct evidence from either the lecture or readings (give page citations where possible). Some, especially at the beginning and end of the semester, will ask you to either pose a question or respond to another student. If your post is late or does not show much engagement with the source, the grade may be cut by 50% or result in a 0. Note that each group has 8 Forum opportunities and you are required to do 5 beyond the Introductory one in Week 1. Doing an additional forum post will not result in extra credit but may make up for a low grade in an earlier forum.
- Essay 1: Pop Culture Analysis.** In this paper due at the end of Week 4, you should analyze an example of popular culture of your choice. To do so, you must find at least one article (academic, news, or fan site) that analyzes (rather than just summarizing) the source as well as provide examples of how consumers (fans or otherwise) have responded to the source. The main focus, however, will be on what the source means to you. I estimate that the paper should take between 3 and 5 double-spaced pages to complete. I will have the prompt uploaded for this assignment before the start of the semester.
- Essay 2: History of Pop Culture.** In this slightly longer essay due at the end of Week 11, you will be required to evaluate the transformation of American popular culture as chronicled in Unit 2 of the course. The essay must synthesize materials from lectures, secondary readings, and primary sources to answer 1 of 3 question sets provided to you at the beginning of the Unit. The paper should take between 4 and 6 double spaced pages and rely only on course materials.
- Final Exam:** Your Final will consist of two parts, an essay component and a short answer component. In the essay component, you have two choices. 1) Return to the topic of your first paper and revise your analysis in light of what you have learned over the semester. This means that you will need to both add analytical depth and place the source in historical context. 2) Write an essay in response to a prompt posted at the beginning of Unit 3 that relies exclusively on course materials. In the short answer portion, you will answer questions about the readings/films/lectures in no more than one paragraph per question.

- **Engagement/Discussion:** Though there are a lot of lectures in this course, much of the learning that takes place will occur in conversations over Forums and Zoom. I want to reward you for participating and engaging with the course materials and your peers as much as I can. The most straightforward way to do well here is to attend Zoom discussions and actively participate either by speaking or over Chat. You can also, however, show your engagement/participation through active use in the Forums (doing an extra one, responding to people's questions, writing very good responses, etc.), asking questions over email/zoom, etc. Basically, just do your best to show me you are engaging with the material. Normally, this grade only boosts your overall course grade so don't worry about it too much.

Points/Grade Breakdown

925-1000	A	725-774	C
895-924	A-	695-724	C-
875-894	B+	675-694	D+
825-874	B	625-674	D
795-824	B-	595-624	D-
775-794	C+	594↓	F

Obviously, this course uses a +/- system. No extra credit will be offered.

Policies

It is crucial for your performance that you complete assignments on time. Accordingly, late assignments will be accepted at my discretion and may result in a penalty. Be sure to notify me as soon as possible if you must turn in an assignment late so that proper accommodations can be made. Because they are designed to facilitate discussion, LATE FORUM POSTS WILL BE ASSESSED A 50% PENALTY. However, you can attempt to make up that grade by completing a another forum.

It is your responsibility to contact me if you must miss a Zoom session. Though there is no penalty for missing a Zoom session, it is helpful for me to know so I can work with you on what you missed.

You will have the opportunity to revise/rewrite your second essay for a better grade that will replace the original grade. You may NOT rewrite the assignment if it was turned in late or was failed because of plagiarism.

Extra Credit will not be offered in this course.

Expectations

These are pretty unprecedented times and I would like you to do the best that you can do. The material can be challenging, but I will work with you as much as I can to ensure that you learn it. The main things I need from you are: 1) to try as much as you can, 2) to communicate with

me if there is anything at all preventing you doing your best. If you ever need anything at all, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In the virtual classroom and forums, you should feel free to ask questions and fully participate. Because participation is so critical to this class, we must work together to establish an atmosphere of tolerance and respect when engaging with others. While we are free to disagree, we should not deride or condemn each other.

American Studies at Fullerton

I am always happy to talk with students about the possibility of majoring, double majoring, or minoring in American Studies. Please drop by my office hours or schedule an appointment if you would like to learn more about the department or the discipline. For more information on the American Studies Department, visit our website: <http://amst.fullerton.edu>.

Student Accommodations

CSUF complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing a process for disclosing disabilities and arranging for reasonable accommodations. On the CSUF campus, the Office of Disability Support Services has been delegated the authority to certify disabilities and to prescribe specific accommodations for students with documented disabilities. DSS provides support services for students with mobility limitations, learning disabilities, hearing or visual impairments, and other disabilities. Counselors are available to help students plan a CSUF experience to meet their individual needs. Prior to receiving this assistance, documentation from a qualified professional source must be submitted to DSS. For more information, please contact DSS in UH 101; phone 657-278-3117; website: <http://www.fullerton.edu/dss/>.

Academic Integrity

Integrity is an essential component of all students' academic experience. Students who violate university standards of academic integrity are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including failure in the course and suspension from the university. Since dishonesty in any form harms the individual, other students, and the university, policies on academic integrity are strictly enforced. I expect that you will familiarize yourself with the academic integrity guidelines found in the current student handbook. [<http://www.fullerton.edu/handbook/>]. Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive, fraudulent, or unauthorized means, or helping someone commit an act of academic dishonesty. (UPS 300.021). Examples include, but are not limited to:

Unacceptable examination behavior: communicating with fellow students, copying material from another student's exam or allowing another student to copy from an exam, possessing or using unauthorized materials, or any behavior that defeats the intent of an exam.

Plagiarism: taking the work of another and offering it as one's own without giving credit to that source, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.

Unauthorized collaboration on a project, homework or other assignment where an instructor expressly forbids such collaboration.

Documentary falsification, including forgery, altering of campus documents or records, tampering with grading procedures, fabricating lab assignments, or altering medical excuses.

If you have any questions about Academic Integrity please consult the following CSUF websites:

<http://www.fullerton.edu/senate/documents/pdf/300/ups300-021.pdf>

<http://www.fullerton.edu/integrity/>

Campus Emergency Procedures

Students should be familiar with campus emergency procedures: <http://prepare.fullerton.edu/>

Enroll

Course Schedule by Week

Course Schedule is Subject to Change. For most up-to-date schedule, see Canvas.

Unit I

Power, Pop Culture, and Identity

Week 1

Course Introduction

Asynchronous

Course Introduction: Studying Pop Culture

Asynchronous

Who Controls Meaning? Fans and Fan Culture

8/27 Zoom

Course Introductions and Fandom

READ:

Vox article on Fandoms

WATCH:

Fan Films from Early Fan Culture (YouTube Links on Canvas)

FORUM

Everyone

Week 2

Expressive Identities

Asynchronous

The Normal and the Abnormal: Regulation and Resistance in Pop Culture

READ:

One of the Secondary Articles

9/3 Zoom

Music and Identity

LISTEN

To Pimp a Butterfly by Kendrick Lamar and *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* by Against Me!

READ:

Linked Articles on the Albums

FORUM

Group 1

Week 3

The Politics of Representation

Asynchronous

Nothing (Watch *Crazy Rich Asians* or Read *Ms. Marvel* Instead)

9/10 Zoom
READ
WATCH

The Significance of Representation
Ms. Marvel, Volume 1: No Normal
Crazy Rich Asians

FORUM

Group 2

Unit II

Battles of Pop Culture

Week 4

Power and Control

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

The New Israel vs. the New Canaan: Work, Leisure and American Identity
Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*, Chapter 1

9/17 Zoom:

The Battleground of Popular Culture

FORUM

Group 1

9/20

Essay 1 Due at 11:59 PM on Canvas

Week 5

The Pursuit of Order

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

The Battle for Order: Social Class and the Birth of American Pop Culture
Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*, Chapter 2 or 3

9/24 Zoom

Cultures of Freedom and Control

FORUM

Group 2

Week 6

Commercializing Culture

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

A Nation of Humbug: P.T. Barnum and American Capitalism
Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*, Chapter 4

10/1 Zoom

Class and the Politics of Culture

FORUM

Group 1

Week 7

Class and Race

Asynchronous

Power, Sympathy, and Disdain: The Politics of Race and Class

10/8 Zoom

Blackface Minstrelsy in American Culture

SECONDARY

Eric Lott, *Love and Theft*, Chapter 6

FORUM

Group 2

Week 8

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

Mechanizing Music

Canned Fun? The Battle over Recorded Music
Megan Pugh, *American Dancing: From the Cake-Walk to the Moon-Walk*, Chapter 1; Gena Caponi-Tabery, *Jump For Joy*, Chapter 1

10/15 Zoom

LISTEN
READ

The Transformation of Music and Dance

Ragtime, March, and Tin Pan Alley Playlist
John Philip Sousa, "The Menace of Mechanical Music"

FORUM

Group 1

Week 9

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

Film and the Meaning of Americanization

From Science to Pleasure to Art: The Victorian Transformation of Film
Radha Vatsal, "The Forgotten Female Action Stars of the 1910s" in *The Atlantic*
Birth of a Nation (30 Minutes or so)

WATCH

10/22 Zoom

WATCH

Race and Americanization

The Jazz Singer

FORUM

Group 2

Week 10

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

The Politics of Cool

The Birth of the Cool: African and Mexican Americans and the Politics of Fun
Jump for Joy, Chapter 1; Joel Dinerstein, The Origins of Cool; Jose Alamillo, *Making Lemonade out of Lemons*, Chapter 3-5 (Choose 1)

10/29 Zoom

LISTEN
VIEW

Cool and the Power of Expression

Jazz and Swing Playlist
Smithsonian Digital Exhibit on American Cool

FORUM

Group 1

Week 11

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

Escaping Normative America

Leaving Today, Entering Reality: The Wonderful, (White) World of Walt Disney
Mike Steiner, "Frontierland as Tomorrowland"

11/5 Zoom

WATCH

Controlling Audiences?

A Face in the Crowd

FORUM

Group 2

11/8

Essay 2 Due at 11:59 PM on Canvas

Unit III

Pop Culture World

Week 12

Music and Authenticity

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

The Battle of Authenticity: Rock and Soul in the 1960s
Jack Hamilton, *Just Around Midnight* (selection)

11/12 Zoom

The Politics of Music and Authenticity

WATCH
READ

Saturday Night Fever
Susan Hiwatt, "Cock Rock"

FORUM

Group 1

Week 13

Appropriation and Exchange

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

"Disco Sucks!" Race, Gender, Sexuality, and the Battle between Cool and Camp
Gillian Frank, "Discophobia"

11/19 Zoom

Pop Culture in a Global World

WATCH
LISTEN

Cowboy Bebop, Episode 1 (Available on Hulu, and \$2.99 on Amazon)
Modern Music Playlist

FORUM

Group 2

Week 14

Camp vs. Grimdark

Asynchronous

Camp vs Grimdark in American Comics

FORUM

Group 1 or 2

12/3 Zoom

Camp and Grimdark in American Culture

READ:

The Dark Knight Returns

Week 15

The Power of Participatory Culture

Asynchronous
SECONDARY

The Player with a Thousand Faces: *Star Wars*, Video Games, and Narrative Empowerment
John Wills, *Gamer Nation: Video Games and American Culture*, Chapter 7

12/10 Zoom

Cancel Culture?

WATCH
READ

The Lego Movie
Recent Linked Articles on Cancel Culture

FORUM:

Group 1 or 2

Week 16

Finals Week

12/18

Final Exam Due on Canvas at 11:59 PM

Class Schedule by Unit

Course Schedule is Subject to Change. For most up-to-date schedule, see Canvas.

This is the same schedule as above just organized by unit rather than date so you can see all the materials for the unit laid out together.

Unit I Power, Pop Culture, and Identity

In this first portion of the course, we will be examining some of the key ideas that we will use to analyze popular culture over the semester. Our particular focus will be on the relationship between fans and creators as we look at popular culture as a dialog between the two, especially over issues of representation.

Asynchronous Lectures

Course Introduction

Who Controls Meaning? Fans and Fan Culture

The Normal and the Abnormal: Regulation and Resistance in Pop Culture

Zoom Sessions

August 27 Course Introduction and Fandom

September 3 Music and Identity

September 10 The Significance of Representation

Secondary Sources (Read One)

Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, Chapter 1, "'Get a Life': Fans, Poachers, Nomads

Rukmini Pande, *Squee from the Margins: Fandom and Race*, Chapter 3 "Aang Still Ain't White: Postcolonial Praxis"

Sara Gwenllian Jones, "The Sex Lives of Cult Television Characters," in K Hellekson and K Busse, eds, *The Fan Fiction Studies Reader*

Michael P. Jeffries, *Thug Life: Race, Gender, and the Meaning of Hip-Hop*, Chapter 1, "The Meaning of Hip Hop"

Albums

To Pimp a Butterfly

Transgender Dysphoria Blues

Films

Crazy Rich Asians

Ms. Marvel: No Normal

Assignments

Forum Opportunities 1 & 2

Essay 1: Pop Culture Analysis due on 9/20 at 11:59 PM on Canvas

Unit II Battles of Popular Culture

Concentrating on the historical development of American popular culture, Unit II is the longest section of the course, but is also where we will most extensively examine the impact of popular culture on society. The central metaphor for this part of the course comes from Nissenbaum's *The Battle for Christmas*. Popular culture is, the material suggests, a battleground in which Americans fought over identities, values, and power. We will explore how this battle unfolded across multiple forms of popular culture, including Christmas celebrations, music and dance, theater and film, etc. Throughout we will explore both how larger social transformations and processes (such as emancipation, industrialization, immigration, commercialization, etc) changed popular culture and how popular culture played a role in those and other processes. As you listen to lectures, read the secondary materials, and participate on Zoom, think about how popular culture practices have served as both a means of control and a means of resistance and how new technologies of mass media have both standardized and diversified American culture.

Asynchronous Lectures

The New Israel vs. the New Canaan: Work, Leisure, and American Identity

The Battle for Order: Social Class and the Birth of American Pop Culture

A Nation of Humbug: P.T. Barnum and American Capitalism

Power, Sympathy, and Disdain: The Politics of Race and Class in Antebellum America

Canned Fun? The Battle over Recorded Music

From Science to Pleasure to Art: The Victorian Transformation of Film

The Birth of the Cool: African and Mexican Americans and the Politics of Fun

Leaving Today, Entering Reality: The Wonderful, (White) World of Walt Disney

Zoom Sessions

September 17	The Battleground of Popular Culture
September 24	Cultures of Freedom and Control
October 1	Class and the Politics of Culture
October 8	Blackface Minstrelsy
October 15	The Transformation of Music and Dance
October 22	Film and Americanization
October 29	Cool and the Power of Expression
November 5	Controlling Audiences

Secondary Sources (Read Four)

Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas*, Chapters 1-4 (Read at least 1)

Jose Alamillo, *Making Lemonade out of Lemons*, Chapters 3-5 (Read at least 1)

Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*, Chapter 6,
“Genuine Negro Fun” Racial Pleasure and Class Formation in the 1840s

Megan Pugh, *American Dancing: From the Cake-Walk to the Moon-Walk*, Chapter 1, “The
Cakewalk, America’s First National Dance”

Gena Caponi-Tabery, *Jump for Joy: Jazz, Basketball, and Black Culture in 1930s America*,
Chapter 1, “Sneakers and Tuxes”

Mike Steiner, “Frontierland as Tomorrowland: Walt Disney and the Architectural Packing of the
Mythic West,” in *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Spring 1998

Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America*, Chapter 4,
“The Home Theater”

Films

The Jazz Singer

A Face in the Crowd

Assignments

Forum Opportunities 3-6

Essay 1: History of Popular Culture: Due 11/8 at 11:59 PM on Canvas

Unit III Living in a Pop Culture World

Unit III examines American popular culture in a “post-modern” world in which popular culture has come to dominate nearly all aspects of our lives. Building on the material from Unit II, it explores how popular culture has helped to create a “hyperreal” society in which the boundaries between what is fictional and what is real are increasingly blurred. To that end, we will explore issues of “authenticity” in music, conflicts between a grim and dark view of the world often labeled as “more realistic” with a campier, more fun view of the world, and finally the rise of a pop culture that emphasizes the active participation of consumers in the forms of fandom and digital culture.

Asynchronous Lectures

The Battle of Authenticity: Rock and Soul in the 1960s

“Disco Sucks!” Race, Gender, Sexuality, and the Battle between Cool and Camp

Camp vs Grimdark in American Culture

The Player with a Thousand Faces: *Star Wars*, Video Games, and Narrative Empowerment

Zoom Sessions

November 12 Music and the Meaning of Authenticity

November 19 Pop Culture in a Global World

December 3 Camp and Grimdark in American Culture
December 10 Cancel Culture?

Secondary Sources (Read 2 of these)

Jack Hamilton, *Just Around Midnight: Rock and Roll and the Racial Imagination*, Chapter 4, "Being Good Isn't Always Easy"

Gillian Frank, "Discophobia: Antigay Prejudice and the 1979 Backlash against Disco" in *Journal of the History of Sexuality*. May 2007

John Wills, *Gamer Nation: Video Games and American Culture*, Chapter 6, "Grand Theft Los Angeles"

Andrew C. McKeivitt, *Consuming Japan: Popular Culture and the Globalizing of 1980s America*, Chapter 7, "You are Not Alone! Anime and the Globalizing of America"

Films

Saturday Night Fever

The Lego Movie

Assignments

Forum Opportunities 7-9

Final Exam (2 Parts): DUE 12/18 at 11:59 PM on Canvas