

# SYA 4930 – Sociology of Popular Culture (Sect #29467)

Fall 2024 • University of Florida • 3 Credits

Leigh Hall 207  
MWF, Period 8 (3:00pm-3:50pm)



"Women Having Fun Playing Video Game" by Yan Krukov  
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Instructor: **Dr. Evan W. Lauteria** (he/him)

Email: [elauteria@ufl.edu](mailto:elauteria@ufl.edu)

Instructor Office Hours

Office Location: Turlington 3361A

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By Appointment: Mondays & Fridays  
Time: 11:30am-12:30pm; 2:00pm-2:30pm  
<http://calendly.com/evanlauteria/oh15>

Walk-ins: Thursdays  
Time: 10:00am-12:00pm  
[no appointment needed]

## **Course Description**

The “Sociology of Popular Culture” explores the social dimensions of cultural production and consumption, media regulation, and representation. Core topics include culture industries, censorship, status and distinction, fandom, and globalization. We will draw examples from television, film, music, games, food, and social media, and students are invited to incorporate their own popular culture knowledge and fan experiences into class discussions.

## **Course Readings**

There is no textbook for this course. All course readings will be available on Canvas for download under “Files.” Links to additional assigned materials, such as films to watch at home, are provided in the syllabus and/or on the Canvas course site.

### Course Structure & Assignments

Students in this class will be assessed across course content based on their performance on the assessments outlined below. Assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date listed unless otherwise specified.

| Assignment                                               | Points     | Percent     | Due Date                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-Discussion Worksheets<br>[lowest two scores dropped] | 10 x 15    | 30%         | Each Friday <i>during class</i><br>[Except August 23 <sup>rd</sup> and October 18 <sup>th</sup> ]                                                   |
| Film Response Papers<br>[lowest score dropped]           | 3 x 50     | 30%         | Tuesday, September 17 <sup>th</sup><br>Tuesday, October 15 <sup>th</sup><br>Tuesday, November 12 <sup>th</sup><br>Tuesday, December 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| Mid-term Exam<br>[at-home via Canvas]                    | 100        | 20%         | Tuesday, October 8 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                                                    |
| Final Exam<br>[at-home via Canvas]                       | 100        | 20%         | Friday, December 13 <sup>th</sup>                                                                                                                   |
| Attendance                                               | 0          | --          | --<br>[see "Attendance" below for details]                                                                                                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                             | <b>500</b> | <b>100%</b> |                                                                                                                                                     |

#### Pre-Discussion Worksheets

In conjunction with completing assigned readings and viewing related media, you will be asked to complete worksheets at home in preparation for our Friday in-class discussions. On days with films assigned, worksheets will address film content in relation to readings and class lectures; additional questions may ask for self-reflection or responses to online materials. Worksheets responses can be handwritten or drafted digitally in Word, GoogleDocs, or a PDF reader, but **students must bring a printed copy to class**. These tasks should take approximately 1 hour to complete. The lowest two scores among your 12 homework worksheets (including 0's for non-submissions) will be dropped.

#### Film Response Essays

Part of your assigned "readings" on six weeks are films and documentaries related to the course content and topics. For each pair of films, you will be asked to write a **3- to 5-page essay** (double-spaced, citations in ASA or APA format) addressing one of the films. The prompts for these essays, and their respective submission guidelines, can be found on the "Assignments" tab on Canvas. Prompts will, generally, ask you to connect the theoretical or analytical claims from related readings to analyze the content of the film, whether affirmatively or critically.

|          | Films                                                            | Deadline (by 11:59pm)               |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Paper #1 | <i>WALL-E</i> or <i>Merchants of Cool</i>                        | Tuesday, September 16 <sup>th</sup> |
| Paper #2 | <i>Subjects of Desire</i> or <i>Shirobako</i> , Episodes 1-3     | Tuesday, October 15 <sup>th</sup>   |
| Paper #3 | <i>Trekkies</i> or <i>Generation Like</i>                        | Tuesday, November 12 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Paper #4 | <i>Cola Conquest, Part III</i> or <i>Superfans, Global K POP</i> | Tuesday, December 3 <sup>rd</sup>   |

Papers are due on the Tuesday a week-and-a-half following the second film assigned; for this reason, you should consider coming to office hours with questions as you develop your paper outlines and thoughts.

### Midterm and Final Exams

Twice during the semester, you will need to complete an online exam covering material addressed in course lecture. Exams are *not* cumulative. The midterm exam covers material from weeks 1 through 7; the final exam covers material from weeks 8 to 16. These exams are open-note; you are encouraged to rely on readings, your own notes, feedback on papers and worksheets, and relevant supporting materials. Questions will primarily be multiple choice, with one short-response question at the end. Exams are to be completed at home, in one 90-minute session, and are made available for four days.

|                     | <b>Opening Date</b> (at 12:01am)   | <b>Closing Date</b> (by 11:59pm)  |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Midterm Exam</i> | Saturday, October 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Tuesday, October 8 <sup>th</sup>  |
| <i>Final Exam</i>   | Tuesday, December 10 <sup>th</sup> | Friday, December 13 <sup>th</sup> |

### Attendance

Attendance will be taken in-class. Students may miss up to nine 50-minute class meetings (equal to three weeks of class) without grade penalty. Further absences will result in a 5-point reduction to a student's attendance grade, resulting in a negative attendance score included in final calculation of grades. Tardiness is permitted (please come to lecture even if you are late!), but if a student arrives after attendance has been taken, the student will be marked as absent for that day.

In accordance with University Attendance Policies (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>), students may miss class for "acceptable reasons" without penalty, but appropriate documentation is required. Planned absences must be addressed with the instructor ahead of time; unplanned absences should be address as soon as possible. Acceptable absences will not impact a student's attendance grade if documentation is provided within an appropriate time frame.

### **Course Policies**

**Communication:** You may contact me with questions about the course, the site, or assignments and assessments at your leisure. When emailing me, I ask that you mention in the email title or body that you are a student enrolled in SYA 4930 or "Sociology of Popular Culture." I will endeavor to reply as quickly as possible, usually within 48 hours. Please be aware that I do not typically check my email regularly on weekends. Please use your UFL email account; I cannot guarantee messages sent through the Canvas messaging system will receive timely responses.

**Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period

opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Course Grading Policy: This course's grading scale for final scores, based on the assignment descriptions provided earlier in this syllabus, is as follows:

| A              | A-              | B+              | B               | B-              | C+              | C               | C-              | D+              | D               | F              |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 100%<br>to 94% | < 94%<br>to 90% | < 90%<br>to 87% | < 87%<br>to 84% | < 84%<br>to 80% | < 80%<br>to 77% | < 77%<br>to 74% | < 74%<br>to 70% | < 70%<br>to 67% | < 67%<br>to 64% | < 64%<br>to 0% |

A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.

Further information on university grades and grading policies at the University of Florida can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Extra Credit: Students can earn up to 2% extra credit on their final class score for active participation in class. Only students who contribute regularly, who draw from course readings and concepts, and who foster meaningful conversation and inquiry in class can receive the full 2% bonus. Beyond this extra credit opportunity, I do not generally provide extra credit opportunities during the semester. As such, students should plan to perform well on the regular course assignments and assessments.

Late Assignments: Written assignments and homework worksheets may be submitted up to 72 hours (3 days) late, at a 15% score penalty. Online exams cannot be submitted late. Extensions beyond this policy will only be provided in *extreme* extenuating circumstances, usually requiring documentation and/or discussion with the instructor. Such instances will be handled on a case-by-case basis (that is, just asking for an extension is not a guarantee!).

Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Students with disabilities who experience barriers to learning should request academic accommodations through the Disability Resource Center. Visit <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/> to begin this process. Part of the process will involve the generation of an accommodation letter; please share this letter with the instructor as early as possible in the semester. You are invited, but not required, to discuss your needs with the instructor, as well.

UF Student Honor and Conduct Code: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either

required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment'. The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [See the UF Conduct Code website for more information](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Changes to Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus during the semester. Changes will only be to the students' benefit, and changes will always be announced well in advance. All changes will be reflected in the syllabus with appropriate notation, and changes will be announced with sufficient advanced notice on Canvas.

### Course Schedule

**Week 1 – August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**[Introduction]**

**Friday**

Storey, John. 2009. "What is Popular Culture?" Pp. 1-15 in *Cultural Theory & Popular Culture: An Introduction*, 5th ed. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

**Week 2 – August 26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>**

**[Mass Media]**


**Monday**

Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor Adorno. [1944] 2006. Excerpt from "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception." Pp. 41-72 in *Media and Cultural Studies*, Revised Edition, edited by M.G. Durham and D.M. Kellner. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

**Wednesday**

Benjamin, Walter. [1935] 2006. Excerpt from "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Pp. 18-40 in *Media and Cultural Studies*, Revised Edition, edited by M.G. Durham and D.M. Kellner. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

**Friday**

 Stanton, Andrew, et. al. 2008. *WALL-E*. USA: Pixar Animation Studios & Walt Disney Pictures. [Access Online through Swank Digital Campus](#). (Requires log-in and/or campus Wi-Fi or VPN)

**Week 3 – September 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>**

**[Consumerism and Consumption]**

**Monday – No Class (Labor Day)**

**Wednesday**

Bauman, Zygmunt. 2007. "Consumerism versus Consumption." Pp. 25-51 in *Consuming Life*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

### Friday

- Goodman, Barak. 2001. "Merchants of Cool." *Frontline*, 2001 Season, Episode 5. Boston, MA: PBS Video & WGHB Boston. Access Online at <https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-merchants-cool/>.

### Week 4 – September 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>

### [Distinction and Status]

#### Monday

- Bourdieu, Pierre. [1987] 2009. "Distinction and the Aristocracy of Culture." Pp. 498-507 in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, edited by J. Storey. New York, NY: Pearson.
- Lamont, Michèle, and Virág Molnár. 2002. Excerpt from "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28(1): 167-195.

#### Wednesday

- Chauncey, George. 1994. Excerpt from "Building Gay Enclaves: The Village and Harlem." Pp. 227-268 in *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*. New York, NY: BasicBooks.

#### Friday

- Peterson, Richard A., and Roger M. Kern. 1996. "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore." *American Sociological Review* 61(5): 900-907.
- Lizardo, Omar. 2013. "Variety in Cultural Choice and the Activation of Social Ties." *Social Science Research* 42: 321-330.

### Week 5 – September 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>

### [Culture and Cognition]

#### Monday

- Boutyline, Andrei, and Laura K. Soter. 2021. "Cultural Schemas: What They Are, How to Find Them, and What to Do Once You've Caught One." *American Sociological Review* 86(4): 728-758.

#### Wednesday

- Jacobs, Susan, and Joseph Quinn. 2022. "Cultural Reproduction of Mental Illness Stigma and Stereotypes." *Social Science & Medicine* 292: 114552.

#### Friday

- Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51: 273-86.

### Week 6 – September 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>

### [Representation and Signification]

#### Monday


- du Gay, Paul, et al. 1997. Excerpt from "Making Sense of the Walkman." Pp. 1-40 in *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*. London, UK: Sage Publications.

Castleberry, Garret. 2016. "Understanding Stuart Hall's 'Encoding/Decoding' Model through TV's *Breaking Bad*." Pp 84-94 in *Communication Theory and Millennial Popular Culture*, edited by K.G. Roberts. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

### Wednesday

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images." Pp. 69-96 in *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Politics, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman.

### Friday

 Holness, Jennifer. 2021. *Subjects of Desire*. USA: Hungry Eyes Media. [Access Online via Kanopy](#). (Requires campus Wi-Fi or VPN)

**Week 7** – September 30<sup>th</sup> – October 4<sup>th</sup>

**[Production of Culture]**

### Monday

Becker, Howard S. 1974. "Art as Collective Action." *American Sociological Review* 39(6): 767-776.

Patriotta, Gerardo, and Paul M. Hirsch. 2016. "Mainstreaming Innovation in Art Worlds: Cooperative Links, Conventions and Amphibious Artists." *Organization Studies* 37(6): 867-887.


### Wednesday

Dominguez Rubio, Fernando, and Elizabeth B. Silva. 2013. "Materials in the Field: Object-trajectories and Object-positions in the Field of Contemporary Art." *Cultural Sociology* 7(2): 161-178.

Wagner-Pacifici, Robin. 2010. "The Cultural Sociological Experience of Cultural Objects." Pp. 110-118 in *Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, edited by J. R. Hall, L. Grindstaff, & M. Lo. New York, NY: Routledge.

### Friday

Peterson, Richard A. 1990. "Why 1955? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music" *Popular Music* 9(1): 97-116.

 Mizushima, Tsutomu. 2014. *Shirobako*, Episodes 1-3. Japan: P.A. Works. Access Online via Canvas.

**Week 8** – October 7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>

**[Regulation and Censorship]**

**Monday** – No Class (Complete At-Home Exam)

### Wednesday

Sternheimer, Karen. 2015. "Pop Culture Crusaders: Constructing Meanings of Deviancy and Delinquency." Pp. 1-22 in *Pop Culture Panics: How Moral Crusaders Construct Meanings of Deviance and Delinquency*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gray, Herman. 1989. "Popular Music as a Social Problem." Pp. 143-158 in *Images of Issues: Typifying Contemporary Social Problems*, edited by J. Best. New York, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

**Friday**

Fang, Jun. 2024. "The Culture of Censorship: State Intervention and Complicit Creativity in Global Film Production." *American Sociological Review* 89(3): 488-517.

**Week 9 – October 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>****[Fandom I]****Monday**

Jenkins, Henry. 1988. "Star Trek Rerun, Reread, Rewritten: Fan Writing as Textual Poaching." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5(2): 85–107.

**Wednesday**

Fiske, John. 1992. "The Cultural Economy of Fandom." Pp. 30-49 in *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*, edited by L.A. Lewis. New York, NY: Routledge.

Turk, Tisha. 2014. "Fan Work: Labor, Worth, and Participation in Fandom's Gift Economy." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 15.

**Friday – No Class (Homecoming)****Week 10 – October 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>****[Fandom II]****Monday**

Sunder, Madhavi. 2012. "Everyone's a Superhero." Pp. 105-125 in *From Goods to a Good Life: Intellectual Property and Global Justice*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

**Wednesday**

Jenkins, Bryan. 2020. "Marginalization within Nerd Culture: Racism and Sexism within Cosplay." *Popular Culture Studies Journal* 8(1): 157-174.

**Friday**

Harrington, C. Lee, and Denise Bielby. 2010. "A Life Course Perspective on Fandom." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13(5): 429-450.

🎬 Nygard, Roger. 1997. *Trekkies*. United States: Paramount Classics. Access Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tslLzNjvYn0>.

**Week 11 – October 28<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>****[Ordinary Celebrity and Economy of Attention]****Monday**

Gamson, Josh. 2011. "The Unwatched Life is Not Worth Living: The Elevation of the Ordinary in Celebrity Culture." *PMLA* 26(4): 1061-1069.

Grindstaff, Laura. 2012. "Reality TV and the Production of 'Ordinary Celebrity': Notes from the Field." *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 56: 22-40.



### Wednesday

van Krieken, Robert. 2018. "Celebrity's Secret: The Economy of Attention." Pp. 55-76 in *Celebrity Society: The Struggle for Attention*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York, NY: Routledge.

~ Please bring a mobile phone, tablet, or laptop with WiFi access to class today! ~

### Friday

Bucher, Taina. 2012. "Want to be on the Top? Algorithmic Power and the Threat of Invisibility on Facebook." *New Media & Society* 14(7): 1164–1180.

📺 Goodman, Barak. 2014. "Generation Like." *Frontline*, Season 2014, Episode 7. Boston, MA: PBS Video & WGHB Boston. Access Online at <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/generation-like/>.

Week 12 – November 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

[Imperialism vs. Hybridity I]

### Monday

Crane, Diana. 2002. Excerpt from "Culture and Globalization: Theoretical Models and Emerging Trends." Pp. 1-25 in *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy, and Globalization*, edited by D. Crane, N. Kawashima, and K. Kawasaki. New York, NY: Routledge.

Anderson, Benedict. [1992] 2006. "Census, Map, Museum." Pp. 163-185 in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York, NY: Verso Books.

Wednesday – No Class (Election Results Day; not a campus holiday)

### Friday

Lipsitz, George. 2007. Excerpt from "Salsa: The Hidden History of Colonialism." Pp. 211-237 in *Footsteps in the Dark: The Hidden Histories of Popular Music*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Joseph, Janelle. 2014. "Culture, Community, Consciousness: The Caribbean Sporting Diaspora." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 49(6): 669-687.

Week 13 – November 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>

[Imperialism vs. Hybridity II]

Monday – No Class (Veteran's Day)

### Wednesday

Grazian, David. 2010. "Demystifying Authenticity in the Sociology of Culture." Pp. 191-200 in *Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, edited by J. Hall, L. Grindstaff, and M. Lo. New York, NY: Routledge.

McKevitt, Andrew C. 2017. "Authenticity in a Hybrid World: Sushi at the Crossroads of Cultural Globalization." Pp. 154-176 in *Consuming Japan: Popular Culture and the Globalizing of 1980s America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

## Friday

- 🎬 Angelico, Irene. 1998. *Cola Conquest, Part III: Coca Colonization*. Canada: DLI Productions. [Access Online via Kanopy](#). (campus Wi-Fi or VPN required)

Week 14 – November 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>

[Localization and Strategic Hybridism]

## Monday

- Hamilton, Gary G., and Donald Fels. 2012. "Consumerism and Self-Representation in an Era of Global Capitalism." Pp. 559-568 in *Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, edited by J.R. Hall, L. Grindstaff, and M. Lo. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Iwabuchi, Koichi. 2002. Excerpt from "Trans/nationalism: Discourses on Japan in the Global Cultural Flow." Pp. 51-84 in *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

## Wednesday

- Carlson, Rebecca, and Jonathan Corliss. 2011. "Imagined Commodities: Video Game Localization and Mythologies of Cultural Difference." *Games and Culture* 6(1): 61-82.
- 🎬 No Clip – Video Game Documentaries. 2017. "Translating & Adapting *The Witcher III*." Access Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gxg5INjNopo>.

## Friday

- 🎬 KBS World Official. 2018. *Superfans, Global K POP*. Access Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UE86tQ-FDAA>.

Week 15 – No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 16 – December 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>

[Participatory Culture and Politics]

## Monday

- Jenkins, Henry, Gabriel Peters-Lazaro and Sangita Shresthova. 2020. Excerpt from "Popular Culture and the Civic Imagination: Foundations." Pp. 1-30 in *Popular Culture and the Civic Imagination: Case Studies of Creative Social Change*, edited by H. Jenkins, G. Peters-Lazaro and S. Shresthova. New York, NY: New York University Press
- Xanthoudakis, Alex. 2020. "Mobilizing Minions: Fanactivism Efficacy of Misha Collins Fans in Supernatural Fandom." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 32.

Wednesday – Course Conclusion and Exam Review Day