

Rath, Jan
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Ethnic Diversity and popular culture

Aims

This course aims to provide an introduction to popular culture and its ethnic diversity nexus and will serve as a basis for further study in the field. It explores various social fields including cuisine, pop music, fashion, sports, nightclubbing, festivals and parades, and, in so doing, addresses a plethora of relevant theoretical issues.

Contents

In the last decades, several migratory processes have fostered new changes and transformations, turning the city into a multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic and culturally heterogeneous space, where new mixtures constantly take place. This demographic complexity is manifesting itself in various domains, including popular culture. In this course, we will use the manifestations of ethnic diversity in such fields as cuisine, story telling, humor, soaps, pop music, fashion, sports, nightclubbing, festivals and parades, etcetera as a way of understanding post-migration dynamics. Its breadth and centrality to daily life makes popular culture an especially useful way of understanding mainstream culture and society. Popular culture reflects larger social inclinations and changing understandings about ethnic diversity. Among the particular topics we shall consider will be how popular culture reflects—and perhaps opposes or promotes—ethnic diversity and pluralism. We shall see that processes of inclusion and exclusion, central to our collective and self-identity, lie at the heart of changing definitions of popular culture.

Code

ISCP64

Time

17:00—20:00

First class Monday September 5, 2005

Last class Monday December 19, 2005

Location

ISHSS, Prins Hendrikkade 189, Room B

Format

Weekly three-hour meeting: a short lecture plus two hours of critical discussion of reading materials. Students, moreover, have to carry out a number of assignments. Students are required to actively participate in the discussions. Class attendance is mandatory.

The course is divided into two blocks. The first block consists of seven sessions and provides a general overview of the academic field of popular culture. Furthermore, the student is introduced to some of the most important theoretical, conceptual and methodological developments. By using readings of international scholars, the field of popular culture will be mapped in an international comparative way. Besides discussing some of the most influential scholars in the field of popular culture, the first block also pays attention to the major sociological movements of Culturalism, Structuralism and Marxism. Finally we will focus on contemporary society by discussing the sociological movements of post modernism and globalization. The second block consists of eight sessions in which the different manifestations of ethnic diversity in the different fields of popular culture such as, television, fashion, sports, cuisine etc will be discussed.

Assessment

Assessment is based on class discussions and oral presentations (20%), assignments (30%), and two take-home exams (50%) on topics related to the course. The first take-home exam must be delivered before October 28, 2005, the second take-home exam must be delivered before January 20, 2006.

Credits

10 ECTS credits

Reader

A master copy of the reader will be made available to the students in Week 1. Students are expected to make their own copies.

Week 2 -- September 12th

Topic: Cultural Studies and Popular Culture: An Introduction

Instructor: Simone de Bruin

Contents: Mass culture or popular culture came developed in the 17th century. Scholars perceived popular culture as a threat to high culture and as a danger to the development of the working class due to its lack of creativity and active participation. In this session the students will get a proper introduction of the academic field of cultural studies and popular culture. Attention will be paid to the development of popular culture. Besides we will discuss the various definitions of culture, the differences between popular culture and high culture and the early paradigms of popular culture.

Required reading:

- * Hall, S. & Whannel, P. The young audience in Storey, Cultural Theory and popular Culture.
- * Barthes, R. Myth Today, in Storey, Cultural Theory and popular Culture.
- * Storey, J. (2003) Cultural Studies and the Study of popular Culture, Introduction and Chapter 7 Consumption in everyday life.

Week 3 -- September 19th

Topic: Popular Culture and Power

Instructor: Simone de Bruin

Contents: Cultural studies assume that capitalist industrial societies are societies divided unequally along, for example, ethnic, gender and class lines. Within the study of popular culture it is argued that culture is one of the principle sites where these divisions are established and contested; culture is a terrain of continual struggle over meanings where relationships of power are created and contested. In this session we will grasp back to the theoretical development of popular culture by exploring some of the "founding fathers" like Gramsci, Hall and Foucault and their work on the relationship between power and culture.

Required reading:

- * Bennett, A. Popular Culture and the 'turn to Gramsci', from Storey (1994) Cultural theory and popular culture.
- * Gramsci, A. Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State, from: Storey (1994) Cultural theory and popular culture.
- * Hall, S. (2003) "Marx's notes on method: A reading of the 1857 introduction", Cultural Studies, 17 (2), 113-149.

Week 4 -- September 26th

Topic: Culture, Class and Taste

Instructor: Simone de Bruin

Contents : Besides power, class and taste are important concepts in the field of popular culture. Both Bourdieu and Gans have made a huge contribution to the study of popular culture with their highly valued work on the relationship between class and taste. In the fourth session we will discuss parts of the work of these two scholars and we will explore whether the relationship between class and taste is still relevant in the contemporary globalized era.

Required reading:

- * Negus, K. (2002) "the work of Cultural intermediaries and the enduring distance between production and consumption", Cultural Studies, 16 (4), 501-515
- * Gans (1999) Popular Culture and high Culture. Chapter 2, A comparative analysis of High and popular culture.

Week 5 -- October 3rd**Topic: Popular Culture and Youth Culture**

Instructor: Simone de Bruin

Contents: Within the study of popular culture, youngsters and adolescents are often the prime research group, therefore the study of youth culture holds an important position within this field. In this session we will dig deeper into the development of the study of youth culture and we will explore the relationship between social identity and youth culture in our contemporary society. Besides, attention will be paid to nightlife and how youngsters negotiate their social identities and lifestyles during a night out.

Required reading:

- * Bennett, A. (1999) "Subcultures or Neo-tribes? Rethinking the relationship between youth, style and musical taste." *Sociology* 33(3): 599-617.
- * Griffin, C. (2001) "Imagining new narratives of Youth research, the 'new Europe' and the global youth culture." *Childhood* 8(2): 147-166.
- * MacRae, R. (2004) "Notions of 'Us and Them': Markers of Stratification in Clubbing Lifestyles." *Journal of Youth Studies* 7: 55-71.

Week 6 -- October 10th**Popular Culture and Globalization**

Instructor: Simone de Bruin

Contents: Due to the international mobility of people and the so-called 'time-space compression' (Harvey 1990: 240) almost all cities over the world have become multi-ethnic and culturally heterogeneous. This not only has an impact on the population of a city but also on popular culture. Many scholars have raised questions about the so-called Americanization and McDonaldization. In this sixth session we will focus on the contemporary changes in popular culture due to the globalization and the growing ethnic diversity. We will critically address issues of globalization, glocalization, Americanization, and multiculturalism and discuss its relevancy.

Required reading:

- * Storey (2003) *Cultural Studies and the study of popular culture*, chapter 8 Globalization and popular culture.
- * Saldanha, (2002) "Music space and identity" *Cultural Studies* 16 (3), 337-350.
- * Kaya, A. (2002) "Aesthetics of diaspora: contemporary minstrels in Turkish Berlin." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28(1): 43-62.

Week 7 -- October 17th**Migration and Integration, the Dutch case**

Instructor: Simone de Bruin

Contents: In this last session of this first part we will focus on the Netherlands. In the second part of the course the student will be given an overview of the different fields of popular culture and the impact of the growing ethnic diversity. The Netherlands will often be taken as an example. Therefore it is for international students important to learn more about the migration waves into the Netherlands and the ethnic minorities living in the Netherlands. This will be done in this session.

Required reading:

- * Doornik, J. (2004), *The State of Multiculturalism in the Netherlands*, *Canadian Diversity*, vol. 4:1, winter, 32-35.
- * Verkuyten, M. (2003) Positive and Negative Self-Esteem Among Ethnic Minority Early Adolescents: Social and Cultural Sources and Threats. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, Vol 32, No4, 267-277 .
- * Vermeulen, H. & Penninx, R. (2000), *Immigrant Integration The Dutch Case*. Introduction.

Week 8 October 24th**Break**

First take home exam

Week 9 -- October 31st

Topic: Music

Instructor: Dr. Jeroen de Kloet

Contents: Music serves as crucial source for youth-identifications worldwide, Chinese musicians use rock music to negotiate their identity in an increasingly globalized world, British Asians employ Bhangra to express a sense of longing and belonging. In this session we will explore the sonic pathways of different youths in the context of cultural globalization.

Required reading:

* De Kloet, J. "Sonic Sturdiness – The Globalization of "Chinese" Rock and Pop," forthcoming in *Critical Studies in Media Communication* (2005).

* Dudrah, R.K. (2002) "Drum'n'dhol: British bhangra music and diasporic South Asian identity formation", *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 5(3): 363-385, London: Sage.

Week 10 -- November 7th

Topic: Popular music and ethnicity

Instructor: Prof Robert Kloosterman

Contents: When the singer Ibrahim Ferrer died at the age of 78 in last August, he was hailed as a truly global star. Only a decade ago, he was still shining shoes in Cuba and could only dream of singing his boleros to a large audience. It took the American musician Ry Cooder and the German filmmaker Wim Wenders to lift him and his particular brand of Caribbean music out of oblivion. Their connections with the global entertainment industry made the huge success of the Buena Vista Social Club possible. Cuban music, frozen in time because of its economic and cultural isolation, suddenly became hot. In this session, we will explore the relationship between ethnicity, place, and popular music and show how "ethnicity" can be used as source of competitive advantage in the arena of global competition.

Required reading:

* Connell, J. and C. Gibson (2003), *Sound Tracks; Popular Music, Identity and Place*. London/New York: Routledge. Chapter 6, 'Music communities; National identity, ethnicity and place': 117-143

* Harrington, H.. (2005), 'Black stars or black holes? Cities as sites for verticality in popular music production', *Built Environment* 31(3)

* Kloosterman, R., and Quispel, C. (1990) "Not just the same old show on my radio"; An analysis of the role of the radio in the diffusion of black music among whites in the south of the United States, 1920-1960, *Popular Music*, 9(2): 151-164.

Week 11 -- November 14th

Topic: Cultural diversity and sportive uniformity.

Instructor: Dr. Ruud Stokvis

Contents: The concept of sport can be defined in many different ways. In the lecture I want to accentuate the relation between organized sports and ethnic diversity. The central proposition is that sports are organized in such a stable framework that new ethnic groups, if they want to participate, have to adapt to this framework. Marges for ethnic self expression do exist, but are very small. The lecture will deal also with the sportive possibilities for those who do not want to adapt themselves.

Required reading:

* "Black Athletes" in: A. Guttmann 1988. *A Whole new ball game. An interpretation of American sports*. Chapel Hill: The university of North Carolina Press, pp. 119 - 138

* "Race and Ethnicity: Are skin color and cultural heritage important in sports?" in: J. Coakley 1998. *Sport in society. Issues and controversies* 6th ed. Boston: Mc Graw-Hill, pp. 248 - 288.

Week 12 -- November 21st**Topic: Festivals**

Instructor: Annemarie Bodaar

Contents: Ethnic festivals, carnivals and parades have increasingly become part of contemporary urban life. These festivals – for example Kwakoe festival in Amsterdam, summer carnival in Rotterdam or Berlin, West-Indian street parades in New York, etc. – increasingly attract a large and diverse public. In this class we will discuss the role of festivals in identity construction of ethnic groups, how these festivals are increasingly commercialized, and how they have come to play strategic roles in urban economic development.

Required reading:

* Gotham, K. F. (2002). "Marketing Mardi Gras: Commodification, Spectacle and the Political Economy of Tourism in New Orleans." *Urban Studies* 39(10): 1735-1756.

* Shaw, S., S. Bagwell, et al. (2004). "Ethnoscapes as spectacle: Reimagining multicultural districts as new destinations for leisure and tourism consumption." *Urban Studies* 41(10): 1983-2000.

* Scher, P. (2005) "Playing Culture: The Caribbean Carnival in New York City". Unpublished Paper presented at the Berlin Conference – May 13-15, 2005.

Week 13 -- November 28th**Topic: Television**

Instructor: Vincent Crone

Contents: The construction and representation of race and nation are formed through discursive practices, like television shows. Based on the concept that race and nationality do not exist outside of representation but are formed in and by it in a process of social and political power struggle, we will try and deconstruct the meaning of specific ethnic and national roles in different television programs. We will do this by using the term 'hybridity' and the theoretical framework that has been presented in the course.

Required reading:

* Barker, Chris. "The Construction of Representation of Race and Nation." *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999: 60-85.

* Papastergiadis, Nikos. "Tracing Hybridity in Theory." *Debating Cultural Hybridity. Multi-Cultural and the Politics of Anti-Racism*. Eds. Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood. London: zed Books, 1997: 257-281.

Week 14 -- December 5th**Topic: Feasts**

Instructor: Jan Rath

Contents: Short discussion about popular feast such as Sinterklaas, Halloween and Thanksgiving as well as their ethnic dimensions.

Thereafter presentation of Gurinder Chadha's 'What's Cooking?'

Week 15 -- December 12th**Topic: Cuisine**

Instructor: Jan Rath

Contents: By exploring the popularity of ethnic cuisines, this class aims at understanding changes in popular culture on the one hand and the dynamics of ethnic minority-mainstream relations on the other.

Required reading:

* Barer-Stein, T. (1999) 'Dutch', pp. 113-117 in T. Barer-Stein, *You Eat What You Are. People, Culture*

and Food Traditions. Willowdale, Ontario: Firefly.

* Pradhan, R. (1990) 'Much ado about food and drinks. Notes towards an ethnography of social exchange in the Netherlands', *Etnofoor*, 3 (2), pp. 48-68.

* Rudolph, H. & F. Hillmann (1998), 'How Turkish is the döner kebab. Turks in Berlin's food sector', *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 114 (3), pp. 138-147.

* Valle, V.M. & R.D. Torres (2000) 'Mexican Cuisine', pp. 67-99 in V.M. Valle & R.D. Torres, *Latino Metropolis*. London/Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Week 16 -- December 19th

Topic: Fashion

Instructor: Linda Duits

Contents: Fashion and clothing are often considered to be a means of self-expression: a way to show your identity. However, it is not always clear what specific clothing means, what it represents and what it tells us about the person wearing it. In this lecture I will focus on fashion as a communication of identity.

Required reading:

* Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: The meaning of style*. London: Methuen. Ch.6, 7, 8 (pp. 90-127).

* Davis, F. (1992) *Fashion, culture and identity*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Ch 1: Do clothes speak? What makes them fashion? pp. 3-18.

* Kiliçbay, B., & Binark, M. (2002) Consumer culture, Islam and the politics of lifestyle. *European journal of communication*, 17(4), 495-511.