

**SYP 4630: The Sociology of Popular Culture**  
Florida Atlantic University Boca Raton Campus Spring 2014  
T R 2-3:20pm in GS103  
Sec 002, CRN 26122  
3.0 units No Prerequisites

Professor: Marissa Jordan  
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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-4:30pm (and by appointment) in CU 259

**REQUIRED BOOKS**

Grazian, David. *Mix It Up: Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Society*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.  
Lafeber, Walter. *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism* (new and expanded edition). W.W. Norton and Company, 2002.  
Levy, Ariel. *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will examine how popular culture is becoming increasingly central to social life in the United States and around the world. We define popular culture as an expanding network of leisure activities, commercial entertainment, media technologies, and subcultural practices. Our class will consider the following forms of media and entertainment as popular culture:

- x Television
- x Film
- x Music
- x Gaming
- x Social media
- x Advertising
- x Fashion

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the course is to provide students with the tools to critically analyze these various forms of popular culture and understand them within a broader social context. Toward this end, students will be challenged to complete the following objectives:

- x Read and review the various social theories that sociologists have employed in an attempt to make sense of popular culture.
- x Write essays of varying length that summarize or synthesize sociological concepts for the study of popular culture.
- x Apply the theories and insights of sociologists in the analysis of some aspect of contemporary popular culture of the student's choosing.
- x Conduct a sociological interview with another person about their tastes in popular culture or their activities in creating music, film, blogs, etc.
- x Participate in class discussions focused on sociological questions raised by the assigned readings or documentaries screened in class.

## EXAMS, PAPERS, AND EVALUATION

Interview assignment=10%

Mid-term exam=35%

Analysis assignment=15%

Final paper=30%

Attendance=10%

The Interview assignment (10 points) is due hardcopy in class Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>. Students will conduct a brief sociological interview with someone of their choosing about his/her contemporary popular culture tastes and activities.

The in-class Midterm exam (35 points) is scheduled for Feb 25<sup>th</sup>. It will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, tr

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Sign-in sheets for attendance will be distributed often during the course. The first missed class does not affect the student's attendance grade, with points deducted for each class missed thereafter. Students are expected to come to class prepared and present both physically and mentally. Therefore, a large portion of the attendance grade is based on the student's completion of the reading and homework assignments and participation in class discussions and reflections. Absences are excused if documentation is provided by the student in accordance with university policy as stated in the Provost memoranda: <http://www.fau.edu/provost/files/religious2011.pdf> and <http://www.fau.edu/provost/files/studentabsences.pdf>

## GRADING SCALE

A	93-100 points
A-	90-92.5
B+	87-89.5
B	83-86.5
B-	80-82.5
C+	77-79.5
C	73-76.5
C-	70-72.5
D+	67-69.5
D	63-66.5
D-	60-62.5
F	is 59.5 or below

## CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations at [http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001\\_Code\\_of\\_Academic\\_Integrity.pdf](http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf)

## DISABILITY POLICY STATEMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 117 (873-3382)—and follow all OSD procedures.

## CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

University policy on the use of electronic devices states: "In order to enhance and maintain a productive atmosphere for education, personal communication devices, such as cellular telephones and pagers, are to be disabled in class sessions." Laptop and handheld computer use is also prohibited in the class unless special considerations are granted to the student based on need upon request.

## PLAGIARISM AND CITATION

Plagiarism is considered an extremely serious case of academic dishonesty and will be reported

- Jan 23: **\*\*Interview assignment due in class\*\***
- IV. Jan 28: The production of culture Grazian, Mix It Up chapter 5  
Jan 30: The media and culture industries Grazian, Mix It Up chapter 6
- V. Feb 4: The production of culture Grazian, Mix It Up chapter 7  
Feb 6: Audiences and meaning in popular culture Grazian, Mix It Up chapter 8
- VI. Feb 11: Style in everyday life Grazian, Mix It Up chapter 9  
Feb 13: The digital age Grazian, Mix It Up chapter 10
- VII. Feb 18, 20: "Digital Nation: Life on the Virtual Frontier"
- VII. Feb 25: **\*\*Mid-term exam taken in class\*\***  
Feb 27: Analysis paper to be discussed
- VIII. March 4, 6: Spring Break **NO CLASS**
- IX. March 11: Raunch culture Levy, Female Chauvinist Pig pp. 145  
March 13: The Feminist Movement and Sexual Revolution- Levy, Female Chauvinist Pig pp. 46-117
- X. March 18: Equal representation of raunch Levy, Female Chauvinist Pig pp. 118-169  
March 20: Consequences of raunch Levy, Female Chauvinist Pig pp. 170-212
- XI. March 25: **\*\*Analysis paper due in class\*\***  
March 27: Final paper to be discussed
- XII. April 1: From athlete to endorser LaFeber, Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism pp. 13-74  
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