



## **FA 49Y - POPULAR CULTURE, FILM AND MEDIA**

**Bogaziçi University  
Summer 2020**

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**Office Hours:** After/before the class or by appointment

### **I. COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course is designed to analyze the basic patterns and pillars of popular culture as they are used and revealed across the media to present the basic patterns and interpretations of popular culture. In method, it is essentially a media and culture course. It meets the requirement for Cinema Studies certificate program. There are several learning outcomes of the course. Upon completion of FA 49Y, students should be able to:

- Develop understanding of patterns and processes in popular culture and their interaction with local and global cultures.
- Devise analytical, practical, or creative responses to the issues in popular culture.

## II. COURSE POLICIES

**Course Updates:** All correspondence for this class will be through your registered BU email. It is your responsibility to check your emails on a regular basis for announcements, information on class discussions, presentations and assignments, and/or changes to the schedule (if changes are required).

### **Electronic Devices:**

- The use of laptops and/or tablets is prohibited. Requests to use laptop computers for note-taking purposes must be accompanied by a letter of approval from the Students with Disabilities Unit. Understand that taking notes by hand is a very useful mnemonic device.
- The use of smartphones is prohibited. If you are caught texting during class, you will be asked to leave. Phones may be kept on, but they must be on silent mode and kept out of sight during class.

## III. ASSESSMENT

GRADING	GRADING SCALE
Attendance & class participation: 30%	A : 90 to 100
Presentation: 25%	BA: 85 to 89
Final paper: 45%	BB : 80 to 84
Total: 100%	CB : 75 to 79
	CC: 70 to 74
	DC : 65 to 69
	DD : 60 to 64
	F : ≤ 59

**Attendance & class participation:** Attendance and participation means having arrived at class with annotated copies of the readings. You are expected to attend all class sessions, which will all be graded. If you have to miss more than three classes, you must see me as soon as possible.

**Presentation:** You will be responsible for presenting a material. Your presentations must utilize the material we cover in class. It will be based on the topics listed in the course schedule below. There is an option of a midterm paper only for those who have an excuse proven by a doctor's note or a letter of approval from the Students with Disabilities Unit.

**Final Paper:** This is a take-home paper assignment. You will have a pool of questions to answer in an essay-format, which engages the course readings and class discussions, and incorporates additional material if needed.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Act	Week 1 Introduction
I	Introduction to the course
II	What is Popular Culture? <b>Readings:</b> Storey, John. Ch. 1 in <i>Cultural Theory and Popular Culture</i> (Longman, 2008).
III	Cognitive Culture: Ideology and Psychoanalysis <b>Readings:</b> Storey, J. Chs. 4-5 Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" and "Freud and Lacan" in <i>Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays</i> (London: Monthly Review Press, 1971). <b>Excerpts from</b> <i>The Pervert's Guide to Ideology</i> (2012)

Act	Week 2 Mythologies
I	<i>Myth Today</i> <b>Reading:</b> Barthes, Roland. <i>Mythologies</i> . (New York: Hill & Wang, 2012[1957]) Storey, J. Ch. 6 <b>Task:</b> One-page summary of <u>five chapters</u> from <i>Mythologies</i>
II	No Class. Graduation Ceremony.
III	No Class. Graduation Ceremony.

Act	Week 3 Globalization and Myths of Our Times
I	<b>Case:</b> <i>Star Wars</i> (1977 - ) as a mythology of our times <b>Readings:</b> Peters, Timothy D. "'The Force' as Law: Mythology, Ideology and Order in George Lucas' Star Wars," <i>Australian Feminist Law Journal</i> 36.1 (2012): 125-143.
II	<b>Screening:</b> <i>The Truman Show</i> (1998)
	<b>Presentation and Discussion*:</b> <i>The Truman Show</i> as a mythology of digitalia, other

III	discussion options include <i>Westworld</i> (TV Series 2016 - ), <i>Black Mirror</i> (TV 2011 - ) <b>Reading:</b> Bishop, Ronald. "Good Afternoon, Good Evening, and Good Night: <i>The Truman Show</i> as Media Criticism," <i>Journal of Communication Inquiry</i> (2000) 24: 6.
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Act	Week 4 <b>Digitalia and the Politics of the Popular</b>
I	<b>Cases:</b> Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Snapchat etc.) <b>Presentation and Discussion*:</b> Zajc, Melita. "Social media, prosumption, and dispositives: New mechanisms of the construction of subjectivity", <i>Journal of Consumer Culture</i> (2015), Vol. 15(1): 28–47. Excerpts from Gilroy-Ware, Marcus. <i>Filling the Void: Emotion, Capitalism and Social Media</i> . (Duncan Baird Publishers, 2017). Wark, McKenzie. " <a href="#">Benjamedia.</a> " <i>Public Seminar</i> (August 27, 2015).
II	<i>Algorithms, Interfaces, Distraction and Data</i> <b>Cases:</b> Netflix, Social Media Apps, Amazon, Google, Gaming, Cryptocurrencies <b>Reading:</b> Pettman, Dominic. <i>Infinite Distraction</i> . (John Wiley & Sons, 2016). Galloway, A. R. <i>Gaming: Essays on algorithmic culture</i> . (U of Minnesota Press, 2006).
III	<b>Reading and Group Study:</b> Barthes, R. <i>Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography</i> (Macmillan, 1981). <b>Presentation Options:</b> Memes, Caps, Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr

Act	Week 5
I	<b>Popular vs. High Music</b> <b>Reading:</b> Adorno, Theodor W., and George Simpson. "On popular music." <i>Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung</i> 9.1 (1941): 17-48. <b>Presentation Options:</b> Jazz / Turkish Pop, Hip-hop or Reggae / American Hip-hop, Rap or Reggae / Vogue, dance cultures / Goths, Emos, Hipsters / Apaçi subculture in Turkey Music Apps (Spotify, Youtube etc.) <b>What makes things Cult, Cliché, Kitsch, Cheesy and Camp</b>
II	<b>Special screening:</b> <i>Remake, Remix, Rip-Off: About Copy Culture &amp; Turkish Pop Cinema</i> (2014)
	<b>Yeşilçam:</b> Yeşilçam films and genres, and recurring characters like Omer the Tourist, Sezercik, Ayşecik, Ömercik, Yumurcak etc.

III	<b>Contemporary Turkish Soap Operas, Celebrities</b>
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Act	Week 6
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	<b>Gender, Class, and "Race"</b>
I	<p><b>Reading:</b> Storey, J. Chs. 7,8,9.</p> <p><b>Presentation Options:</b> Agnès Varda; the new wave of women directors in Turkey, LGBTIQ films and series, <b>Women Superheroes:</b> <i>Hunger Games</i> (2012-15), <i>Wonder Woman</i> (2017), <i>Star Wars: The Last Jedi</i> (2017); <b>Series:</b> <i>Fleabag</i> (2016-19), <i>Gilmore Girls</i> (2000-7), <i>Orange is the New Black</i> (2013-)</p> <p>Race and ethnicity in Turkey's Popular Culture</p>
II	<p><b>Popular sports:</b> Tennis, Football, Basketball, World Cup, FIFA, Stardom, Fandom, and Money</p> <p><b>Breaking the Law:</b> <i>La Casa de Papel</i> (TV Series 2017 - ), <i>Şahsiyet</i> (TV 2018), <i>Breaking Bad</i> (TV 2008 - 2013), <i>Prison Break</i> (TV 2005–2017), <i>Mr. Robot</i> (TV 2015-), <i>Fight Club</i> (1999), Wikileaks, Anonymous, RedHack</p> <p><b>Netflix Special</b></p> <p><b>Sitcoms:</b> <i>Friends</i>, <i>Seinfeld</i>, <i>Simpsons</i>, <i>The Big Bang Theory</i>, <i>Community</i>, <i>South Park</i></p> <p><b>TV Series:</b> <i>Chernobyl</i> (TV 2019), <i>Dark</i> (TV 2017 -)</p>
III	<p><b>Superheroes:</b> <i>The Avengers</i> (2012-2019), Marvel Comics, Batman, Superman, <i>Harry Potter</i> (2001 - 2011), <i>Lord of the Rings</i> (2001 - 2003), <i>Game of Thrones</i> (2011 - 19), <i>The Matrix</i> (1999), <i>Hunger Games</i> (2012 - 2015)</p> <p><b>Drugs and family:</b> <i>Breaking Bad</i> (2008-13), <i>Requiem for a Dream</i> (1998), <i>American Beauty</i> (1999)</p> <p><b>Homo Robot and A.I.:</b> <i>Love, Death &amp; Robots</i> (2019 - ), <i>Westworld</i> (TV 2016 - ), <i>Black Mirror</i> (TV 2011 - ), <i>Ex Machina</i> (2015), <i>Her</i> (2013), <i>I, Robot</i> (2004), <i>A.I. Artificial Intelligence</i> (2001), <i>Black Mirror</i> (TV 2011 - ), <i>Humans</i> (TV 2015 - ), <i>Mr. Robot</i> (TV 2015 - ), <i>Blade Runner</i> (1982 - )</p> <p><b>Applications:</b> Music Apps (Spotify, Youtube etc.), Microblogs (Twitter, Tumblr etc), Dating Apps (Tinder, Okcupid etc.), Online Shopping (Amazon, Google, Alibaba.com, Hepsiburada.com, Sahibinden.com), Hospitality Service (Airbnb etc.), Car-sharing (Uber, Lyft etc), Selfie Culture, Advertisements, Online Games, Animals.</p>

	Week 7 <b>Wrap up and preparation for final papers</b>
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\*Your presentations must utilize the class material, i.e., readings and discussions.