

MAKING CULTURE

introduction to ethnic studies Spring 2014

ethn 3

Coffee hrs:
Cross Cultural Center M 2-4p

K Wayne Yang
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Office hrs:
SSB 222 W 2-3p

A01	M 2p	HSS 2152	Christina Green	A02	M 3p	HSS 2152
A03	M 4p	YORK 4050A	Lisa Ho	A04	M 5p	YORK 4050A
A05	M 3p	WLH 2110	Mohamed Abumaye	A06	M 4p	WLH 2110
A07	M 4p	HSS 2152	Amrah Salomon Johnson	A08	M 5p	HSS 2152
A09	W 10a	HSS 2152	Lea Johnson	A10	W 11a	HSS 2152
A11	W 12p	SOLIS 109	Maisam Alomar	A12	W 2p	SOLIS 111
A13	F 10a	TM102-1	Malathi Iyengar	A14	F 11a	TM102-1
A15	F 11a	HSS 2152	Lekeisha Hughes	A16	F 12p	HSS 2152
A17	F 12p	SOLIS 109	Alborz Ghandehari	A18	F 2p	SOLIS 109
A19	M 4p	CENTR 224A	Kai Small (Senior TA)	A20	M 5p	CENTR 202

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of analyzing present-day structures, histories, and futures of racial systems through the lens of cultural production – including but not limited to film & video, music, literature, poetry, songs, dress, and performances. As a starting point, it is imperative to understand that there is nothing in the social world that is not rooted in raciality – a shorthand term we will use for the complex knitting together of race-gender-sexuality-humanity-monstrosity. Raciality is like gravity, there’s no avoiding it.

Making culture evokes the idea that culture is not static, it is not complete, it is always in the process of being made. “Making” also evokes *craft* as compared with industrial *production* (think about hand-sewing in relation to textile manufacturing). “Culture industries” is the term the [Frankfurt School](#) theorists used to describe the overwhelming influence of the corporate media on popular culture (think Hollywood and Clear Channel). Craft implies that people who are presumably dominated by culture, are also makers of culture.

GOALS

- First, students will be able to analyze narrative-based popular cultural texts, using specific tools to decode race-gender-sexuality-nation-in/humanity in popular films, music, and literature.
- Second, students will engage as producers, not just consumers of culture, by attempting to create alternatives to dominant narratives.

SKILLS

Students should be able to decode popular films, music, literature, fashion, etc. for the “master codes” they are producing and more particularly, reproducing. Furthermore, students should be able to relate the **representational** power of master codes to concrete **material** and **legal** structures, and trace their **historical** impact on present and future structure. Finally, students should be able to recognize and experiment with alternative cultural productions that attempt to unsettle these master codes.

Course Materials

Available at UCSD bookstore & on reserve at Geisel:

1. *Charisma and the Fictions of Black Leadership*. (2012) By Erica R. Edwards
2. *Youth Resistance Research and Theories of Change*. (2014). Edited by Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang

It is your responsibility to access to these books by Monday, April 21 (beginning of week 4)

Electronically available on [TED](#) or Library Reserves

3. Readings for the first 3 weeks, and most other course materials are digital.

If you are unable to access TED, please contact [ACMS](#), and get the readings from a colleague. Your TA may require you to print the readings and bring them to section.

Now playing in theaters:

4. *Cesar Chavez*. (2014). Directed by Diego Luna

Please watch this film by Sunday, April 13 (end of week 2, beginning of week 3).

Evaluation

Weekly Reading Responses (P/NP due by Sunday midnight)	20%
Discussion Sections (TA discretion)	20%
Project 1 (counter-narrative)	10%
Midterm (open note, in class)	10%
Project 2 (karaoke video)	20%
Final (take home)	20%

Summary of Assignments

Please note that these are just rough descriptions of the major assignments, and are subject to change. Complete instructions and due dates on will be updated on TED.

Weekly Reading Responses. 20%

Each week, approximately 1-2 page response to the readings will be due on TED on Sunday evening by midnight. Attachments are not allowed. Responses are graded pass/fail and you will not receive written comments.

Discussion Sections. 20%

Your TA has the discretion to design unique requirements for your section, such as participation, attendance, quizzes, presentations, etc. Please note: we do not have control over section enrollments. **You will not pass the class if you do not attend your officially enrolled section.**

Project 1: Counter-narrative. 10%

This is a creative storytelling project, which requires you to apply one of the analytical frameworks of the course. You will write a “counter-narrative” that disrupts the underlying code of a “master narrative”. In other words, you will be retelling a story in a way that critiques and makes visible the dominant code of an existing story. Think of this as an exercise in applying theory without using long, multisyllabic, theoretical terms. Course instructors will provide a list of master narratives and analytical frameworks to choose from, but you may propose your own narrative in office hours with your TA.

Students are encouraged to propose creative ways to “write” the counter-narrative, including poetry, comic strips, artwork, lyrics, etc. – also in TA office hours.

You will also include a short explanation / abstract with your project.

Midterm. 10%

There will be one open-note, in-class midterm that tests your understanding of lecture materials, and to a lesser extent, readings. You must identify terms, supply references, and provide examples. It will be STRINGENTLY graded. No partial credit.

Project 2: Karaoke Video. 20%

This is a creative visual narrative project. You will create a low budget karaoke video to accompany a popular song. This video should have a narrative format, actually a counter-narrative format, in which the meaning of the song is altered through your visual counter-narrative. You will be required to apply one of the course analytical frameworks. Course instructors will provide a list of songs and analytical frameworks to choose from, but you may propose your own song in office hours with your TA.

There will be an option to work in groups for this project. Groups must be proposed to your TA in office hours, and with very few exceptions, should be composed of people from the same section or TA.

You will also include a short explanation / abstract with your project.

Final. 20%

The final is an essay-based, take home exam. It will feel like a culmination of your writing responses. Therefore, the more attention you put into the weekly writing responses, the better prepared you will be for the final. The essays will likely involve analyzing a contemporary film, song, image, dress, etc., as well as analyzing an alternative cultural text.

The final must be submitted via Turn-it-in feature on TED. However, your TA may require a paper copy as well.

The Fine Print

Extra credit. Up to +4%: There will be frequent extra credit opportunities, which usually require (1) attending an event, (2) taking a photograph and (3) writing a short reflection. Each extra credit opportunity is worth +1% for a maximum total increase of +1/3 of a letter grade. Extra credit does NOT count as make up assignments.

P/NP grading option: In order to earn a passing grade for the course, you must receive a passing grade in section (C- or higher), and complete all course requirements.

Policy on Late Papers and Make-up Assignments: Excepting emergencies, I do not allow late papers and do not allow make-up assignments. Please bring any exceptional circumstances to the attention of your TA.

ADA Statement: If you have a disability or condition that compromises your ability to complete the requirements of this course, you should inform me as soon as possible of your needs. I will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate you. If, as a result of a disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you need to notify me in writing within one week of receiving it.

Ground Rules: The number one ground rule to which we will all adhere is to engage in respectful and considerate debate and discussion in the classroom. Abusive and harsh language will not be tolerated. These ground rules are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community, which we are all expected to follow (see <http://wwwvcba.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>).

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating and/or plagiarism are not tolerated behaviors at UCSD. If you are caught cheating on an exam or quiz, it will result in a failing grade and your infraction will be referred to your college for disciplinary action. If there is any suspicion that your paper or assignments have been plagiarized, the case will be forwarded to the dean of your college for further investigation and appropriate disciplinary action.

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of interest yet do not realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, journalism, government and politics, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact:

Daisy Rodríguez, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor
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