

**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY OF LETTERS**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**

**Title of the Course:** IED 258 (02) British Popular Culture

**Semester:** Spring 2020

**Class Hours and Classroom:** Monday 13:00-15:50 B2/205

**Instructor:** Assist. Prof. Dr. Aslı Değirmenci

**E-Mail:** aslidegirmenci01@gmail.com

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 09:00-11:00

**Google Drive Folder:**

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1OYaBMC5bLE3N8T0ZRO9J7R0SY7se6Wiq>

**Aim of the Course:** This course aims to familiarize the students with contemporary British popular culture along with key theoretical concepts. For this purpose, the course focuses on a detailed study of British Popular Culture through the discussions of articles and selected texts, both literary and cultural.

**Fiction:**

- *Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch* (1990) by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett
- *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) by Arthur Conan Doyle

**Films:**

- *Pride*
- *Green Street Hooligans*
- *This is England*

**Documentaries:**

“Mods, Rockers and Bank Holiday Mayhem”, BBC *Timeshift*

*Let Us Entertain You*, Four Episodes, BBC

**TV Series:**

“A Study in Pink” Season 1 episode 1 of BBC series *Sherlock* (2010)

*The Great British Bake Off*, Series 9, episode 6

*Years and Years*, Season 1, six episodes

**Course Outline:**

**Week 1 (Feb 24<sup>th</sup>):** Overview of the syllabus. General Introduction.

In class viewing: Dominic Sandbrook: Let Us Entertain You Episode 1/4

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6l312m>

**Week 2 & 3 (March 2<sup>nd</sup> -9<sup>th</sup>):** Definitions of ‘Culture,’ ‘High Culture,’ ‘Mass Culture’ and ‘Popular Culture.’ Production/Consumption and the Popular; History of Popular Culture

- “Understanding the Popular” by John Fiske in *Reading the Popular*.
- *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture* by Dominic Strinati (2004, Routledge)- pages 1-46
- Chapter 1: “Introducing Popular Culture” and Chapter 2: “The History of Popular Culture” from *A User's Guide to Popular Culture* by Imre Szeman, Susie O'Brien, 2017, John Wiley & Sons.
- Watch: Dominic Sandbrook: Let Us Entertain You Episode 2/4  
<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6rjc5h>

**Week 4 (March 16<sup>th</sup>):** Consumer Culture and Advertising

- Chapter 5: “Consuming Life: Back to Normal” from *A User's Guide to Popular Culture* by Imre Szeman, Susie O'Brien, 2017, John Wiley & Sons.
- “Shopping For Pleasure” by John Fiske in *Reading the Popular*
- “Materiality and Popular Culture” by John Storey

**Week 5 (March 23<sup>rd</sup>):** Convergence Culture: Example of *Harry Potter*

- “Worship at the Altar of Convergence: A New Paradigm for Understanding Media Change” (2006) in *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* by Henry Jenkins.
- “The Magic System of Advertising” in *Re-Reading Harry Potter*
- “Wizards Whirled: An Introduction” in *Harry Potter and Convergence Culture: Essays on Fandom and the Expanding Potterverse*
- “Pottermania: Good Clean Fun or Cultural Hegemony?” from *Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter*

**Week 6 (March 30<sup>th</sup>):** Adaptation Studies: The example of *Sherlock*

- *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) by Arthur Conan Doyle
- **Watch before class:** “A Study in Pink” Season 1 episode 1 of BBC series *Sherlock* (2010)
- Articles in google drive folder

**Week 7 (April 6<sup>th</sup>):** Subcultures in Britain, Fashion

- <https://www.sutori.com/story/the-story-of-british-youth-subcultures--NawTrcZauCD8NU5x93Wa1DJu>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/gallery/2011/jul/10/10-best-british-youth-cultures>
- “The Function of Subculture” by Dick Hebdige in *The Cultural Studies Reader*.
- “Reggae, Rastafarians and Revolution” by James A. Winders.
- Fashion in Popular Culture from “A Companion to Popular Culture”
- **Watch before class:** “Mods, Rockers and Bank Holiday Mayhem”, BBC *Timeshift*
- **Watch before class:** *This is England*
- **Prepare 5 questions for each of the texts and the document**

**Week 8 (April 13<sup>th</sup>):** MIDTERM**Week 9 (April 20<sup>th</sup>):** Popular Fiction, Bestsellers, Genre Fiction

- *Good Omens*
- Articles in google drive folder

**Week 10 (April 27<sup>th</sup>):** Fan Culture and Celebrity Culture

- Watch: Dominic Sandbrook: Let Us Entertain You Episode 3/4
- Watch: Dominic Sandbrook: Let Us Entertain You Episode 4/4
- The Appeal of Royal Family
- Guest Lecturer: Ece Çakır

**Week 11 (May 4<sup>th</sup>):** Hegemony and the Carnavalesque

- Articles in google drive folder
- **Watch before class:** *Pride*

**Week: 12 (May 11<sup>th</sup>):** British Food and Drink Culture.

- Articles in google drive folder
- *The Great British Bake Off*, Series 9, episode 6
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/21/magazine/the-great-british-baking-show-is-the-key-to-understanding-todays-britain.html>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/21/arts/television/the-great-british-baking-show-guide.html>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-46846771>

**Week 13 (May 18<sup>th</sup>):** Popular Music and Sports

- Brit Awards
- Articles in google drive folder
- **Watch before class:** *Green Street Hooligans*
- **TERM PAPER DUE (to be uploaded to Turnitin)**

**Week 14 (May 25<sup>th</sup>):** No Class. National Holiday (Ramazan Bayramı)

**Method of Instruction:** Class meetings will consist of the discussion of the assigned material. Students are expected to participate in the class discussions, which is a major requirement and will affect the end-of-term evaluation.

**Requirements:** The students are expected to attend the classes having read the assigned material. Attendance is obligatory. More than 11 (eleven) hours of absence will result in F1.

**Term Paper:** The students are also expected to write a term paper that analyses a popular culture element in Britain. They can choose their subject from one of the many elements of popular culture Dominic Sandbrook talks about in his documentary series *Let Us Entertain You*. The paper needs to be between 1000-1500 words and written in MLA style. **The paper is due on May 18<sup>th</sup>**. Term paper is required to be uploaded to the turnitin.com. The class id and the enrolment key for this class is as follows:

Class ID: **24022925**

Enrollment Key: **123456**

**Assessment:** Assessment will be as the following:

Mid-Term Examination: 25 %

Paper Assignment: 20 %

Class Participation: 5 %

Final Examination: 50%

In the grading of the exam papers, up to 25% of the total mark might be taken off for grammatical and writing mistakes. Marks below 50 (out of 100) in the Final Exam will be regarded as failure.

**Suggested Reading List:**

Barker, Chris. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage, 2008.

Brottman, Nikita. *High Theory, Low Culture*. New York: Palgrave, 2005.

Fiske, John. *Understanding Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1989.

Hall, Stuart and Tony Jefferson, eds. *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain*. Birmingham: Routledge, 1976.

Hermes, Joke. *Re-reading Popular Culture*. Malden: Blackwell, 2005.

Storey, John. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2009.