Folklore 255: Folklore and U.S. Popular Culture
Spring Quarter, 2013; Monday & Wednesday, 12:00-1:20; 204 Chapman
Daniel Wojcik, 463 PLC; 346-3946; dwojcik@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: Monday 1:30-3:45 p.m. & Wednesday, 2:15-3:00 p.m., or by appointment

Required Texts:

Course Packet containing photocopied essays (available at the U.O. bookstore, 346-4331).

Online essays on Blackboard, listed under “Course Documents.”

Course Description:

This class introduces students to the theories and methods used in the study of folklore and popular culture. We will examine a diversity of approaches to the description and analysis of "common culture," including topics such as popular narratives, rituals, legends, stereotypes, cultural performances, subcultures, body politics, and the commodification of youth culture. Special focus will be given to the ways that folklore and popular culture reflect and shape dominant ideologies, how folkloric and subcultural expressions are commodified and incorporated into commercial culture, and how people may use mass cultural products to create new, personal, and sometimes subversive meanings.

Requirements:

Reading assignments are to be completed before the date scheduled for class discussion and should be read in the order in which they appear on the syllabus. All students are required to complete a midterm examination (30% of grade) and a final examination (30%). Additional requirements include participation in discussion and the completion of one fieldwork project (10%), and an 9-10 page research paper (30% total) on a topic agreed upon in advance between the student and the instructor and based on a proposal. Details for fulfilling these requirements will be announced in class.
Course Outline and Readings

Mon., April 1: Introduction to the Course.

READING: Oiring, Elliott. On the Concepts of Folklore. [BLACKBOARD]
Wilson, William A. Documenting Folklore. [PACKET]

Mon., April 8: Theories of Popular Culture; Popular Narratives and Contemporary Legends.
READING: Santino, Jack. Popular Culture and Folklore. [PACKET]
Storey, John. Popular Culture. [PACKET]
Fine, Gary Alan. Mercantile Legends and the World Economy: Dangerous Imports from the Third World. [PACKET]
OPTIONAL: Fiske, John. The Jeaning of America. [BLACKBOARD]
Oiring, Elliott. Folk Narratives. [BLACKBOARD]
Brunvand, Jan Harold. New Legends for Old. [BLACKBOARD]

Wed., April 10: Rituals, Magic, and Rites of Passage.
Gmelch, George J. Baseball Magic. [PACKET]
Turner, Victor and Edith. Religious Celebrations. [PACKET]
Metcalf, Peter A. Death Be Not Strange. [PACKET]
Mon., April 15: Children's Culture, Icons, and Popular Lore.

READING: Mechling, Jay. Children's Folklore. [BLACKBOARD]

Motz, Marilyn. "Seen Through Rose-Tinted Glasses": The Barbie Doll in American Society. [PACKET]

Wed., April 17: Subcultures, Fan Cultures, and the Carnivalesque.

READING: Hodkinson, Paul. Four Indicators of (Sub)Cultural Substance. [PACKET]

Jones, Peter. Anarchy in the UK: '70s British Punk as Bakhtinian Carnival. [BLACKBOARD]

Mon., April 22: Textual Poaching; Tattooing, and Body Art.

READING: Jenkins, Henry. Television Fans, Poachers, Nomads. [BLACKBOARD]

Sanders, Clinton R. Memorial Decoration: Women, Tattooing, and the Meanings of Body Alteration. [PACKET]


Wed., April 24: Resistance is Futile: Youth Cultures and the Commodification of Cool.

READING: Gladwell, Malcolm. The Coolhunt. [BLACKBOARD]

VIEWING: Merchants of Cool

Mon., April 29: Monsters, the Living Dead, and Supernatural Assault.

READING: Barber, Paul. The Real Vampire. [PACKET]

Bower, Bruce. Night of the Crusher. [BLACKBOARD]

Shelley Adler. Sudden Unexpected Nocturnal Death Syndrome among Hmong Immigrants: Examining the Role of the Nightmare. [BLACKBOARD]
Wed., May 1: The Living Dead, II; Zombies

Guercio, Gino Del. The Secrets of Haiti’s Living Dead. [PACKET]

**NOTE: RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE.**

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Mon., May 6: Midterm Examination.

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READING: Evans-Pritchard, Deirdre. Vehicles for Expression: Two Decorated Cars in Los Angeles. [PACKET]

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READING: Hickson, Patricia. 2012 “The End of the World As We Know It (Again).” Cascade Magazine. [BLACKBOARD, or find the article online at: http://uoregon.journalgraphicsdigital.com/pubs/ uoregon/Cascade/fall2012/]

Wojcik, Daniel. Apocalyptic and Millenarian Aspects of American UFOism. [PACKET]


Wojcik, Daniel. Approaching Doomsday. In The End of the World As We Know It: Faith, Fatalism, and Apocalypse in America, pp. 1-20. [BLACKBOARD]

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Wed., May 15: Folklore, Popular Culture, and the Internet.


[PACKET]

Guest Lecturer: Robert Glenn Howard

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Mon., May 20: ROM Hacking and Alternative Online Expression.

Authors & Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA). [BLACKBOARD, or find the article online at: http://www.digra.org/dl/db/07311.20061.pdf]

Guest lecturer: David Baker


READING: Austin, Joe. Knowing Their Place: Local Knowledge, Social Prestige, and the Writing Formation in New York City. [BLACKBOARD]


Mon., May 27: No class; Memorial Day Holiday.

Wed., May 29: Hip Hop DJ Culture; College Folklore and UO Traditions.


Guest lecturer: Andre Sirois (DJ Foodstamp)

**NOTE: FIELDWORK PROJECT DUE.**

Mon., June 3: Street Art, I: Banksy.

READING: Lauren Collins. 2007. Banksy Was Here: The Invisible Man of Graffiti Art. *The New Yorker* (May 14); [BLACKBOARD, or find it online at: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/05/14/070514fa_fact_collins]

Wed., June 5: Street Art, II; Course Review.

**NOTE: RESEARCH PAPER DUE.**

Friday, June 14: Final Examination, 10:15 am - 12:15.