SOC 25 – Sociology of Popular Culture
University of California-Davis
Tuesday & Thursday, 4:40pm-6:00pm
Roessler Hall, Room 66

Instructor: Evan W. Lauteria
Email: ewlauteria@ucdavis.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 3:00pm-4:00pm
Office Location: Social Sciences & Humanities 261

Teaching Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sarah Messbauer</th>
<th>Ori Tamir</th>
<th>Joshua Weiss</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A01 (Wed 5:10, Olson 244)</td>
<td>A03 (Fri 1:10, Robbins 146)</td>
<td>A05 (Fri 11:00, Wellman 107)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A02 (Wed 6:10, Olson 244)</td>
<td>A04 (Fri 2:10, Robbins 146)</td>
<td>A06 (Fri 12:10, Wellman 27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:smessbauer@ucdavis.edu">smessbauer@ucdavis.edu</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:otamir@ucdavis.edu">otamir@ucdavis.edu</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jzweiss@ucdavis.edu">jzweiss@ucdavis.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>OH: Wednesday, 4:00pm-5:00pm</td>
<td>OH: Tuesday, 2:00pm-3:00pm</td>
<td>OH: Friday, 1:15pm-2:15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location: Music 116E</td>
<td>Location: SS&amp;H 280</td>
<td>Location: Delta of Venus (B St between 1st and 2nd)</td>
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Course Description & Objectives
SOC 25, The Sociology of Popular Culture, explores the social dimensions of cultural production, consumption, regulation, and representation. We will spend the early parts of the quarter addressing major theories of popular culture in the social sciences, followed by a more in-depth analysis of fan identities and behaviors, the impact of the global economy on cultural production, and the expansion of consumer practices through the internet. The class will cover the sociology of popular culture as it relates to, among other media forms, music, television, films, video games, dance clubs, prom, pornography, and online social network platforms.
Course Structure & Assignments

This course has no assigned textbook, but all readings may be downloaded from the course website on Canvas. Each week’s readings must be completed before the Tuesday meeting time unless otherwise indicated in the syllabus.

You will be evaluated formally based on the following for this class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Thursday, June 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</table>
| Documentary Response Essay              | 60     | 15%     | Option 1: Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>  
                                        |        |         | Option 2: Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup>    
                                        |        |         | Option 3: Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>    |
| Research Interview + Transcript         | 20     | 5%      | Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>  |
| Research Proposal                       | 20     | 5%      | Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>    |
| Research Paper                          | 100    | 25%     | Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> |
| Section Participation                   | 40     | 10%     | --                            |
| **TOTAL**                               | **400**| **100%**|                               |

*Mid-Term and Final Exam*

There are two tests in this class: a mid-term exam administered during our normal class time on **Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>** and a final exam during the allotted course final exam time **Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup> from 3:30pm to 5:30pm**. The mid-term covers the course content from weeks 1 through 4, while the final exam will be cumulative and cover the entirety of the course material. A blue book and scantron are not needed; a test with fill-in spaces for answers will be provided. Exam questions will be a mixture of multiple choice, word-bank vocabulary matching, and true/false. Both exams will draw from course readings, lecture material, and documentaries and videos shown in class.

*Documentary Response Essay*

During class lectures on three different weeks, we will watch documentaries related to the course material addressed on that week. These documentaries will be shown during normal lecture time. While all three documentaries are required viewing, as they will be covered in the course exams, students will choose one to focus on for the purposes of a **3- to 4-page essay** (double-spaced, ASA format). The prompts for these essays, and their respective submission guidelines and due dates, can be found on the “Assignments” tab on Canvas. Papers are due the **Friday of the week following the documentary screening by 11:59pm**.

*Research Interview, Proposal, and Paper*

Your primary writing assignment for this course will be a research project based on data we gather collectively as a class. You will be tasked in the first weeks of the class to interview a random student at the University of California, Davis, who identifies as a fan of (1) Harry Potter; (2) Japanese anime, or (3) Korean popular music. Directions for the interview process are available on the Canvas site. You will submit the recorded audio from your interview and a
written transcript of that audio via Canvas by **Monday, April 24th at 11:59pm**, and you will turn in a copy of your demographic form and interview clearance form (signed by your interviewee) to your teaching assistant in discussion section that same week (**Wednesday, April 26th** or **Friday, April 28th**).

We will then compile the interviews from all students in the class and code each according to the demographic survey information you provided. You will have the opportunity to explore the data online and craft a research proposal using these data on a related topic of your choosing. You will have time in discussion sections to discuss possible topics – ranging from cultural appropriation to online fan communities to cosplay to ... etc. etc. – and will submit a formal **1.5-to 2-page proposal** (double-spaced, ASA format), with at least **two (2) outside scholarly sources** to Canvas by **Friday, May 12th at 11:59pm**. You will have time to finalize your topic idea in your discussion sections earlier that week (**Wednesday, May 10th** or **Friday, May 12th**)

You will, upon approval and feedback from your teaching assistant, write a final **6- to 8-page research paper** (double-spaced, ASA format), due via Canvas on **Wednesday, June 7th by 11:59pm**. The final version of the paper must employ **three (3) outside scholarly sources**, though more are encouraged. As part of your section participation grade (see below), you will need to complete an outline of your paper by Week 8 and an incomplete rough draft by Week 9, as you will be “workshopping” your paper in discussion sections those weeks in preparation to submit the final paper.

**Section Participation**
Your attendance is expected in each week’s discussion sections, where the teaching assistants will provide clarifying information from lectures, educate on the basics of research and paper-writing, and assist you in developing your final paper. Attendance and participation will be evaluated by your respective TA.

**Class Policies**

**Students with Disabilities**
Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs. Also contact the Student Disability Center at (530) 752-3184 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Any arrangements for accommodations or resources should be addressed as early in the quarter as possible. Please approach me with questions or concerns should any arise.

**Academic Integrity**
The University of California-Davis sets strong, yet reasonable, standards for academic integrity. Plagiarism, or using another person’s ideas or work without proper citation of the source, is a particularly egregious matter in the academic world. You cannot use material downloaded (or elements “cut and pasted”) from the Internet in your work without proper citation of the source. You absolutely cannot turn in a paper written by a student who previously took the

Course Etiquette
It is essential that each student be polite and respectful at all times. One of the wonderful things about sociology is that you can find examples of many of the concepts and theories that we discuss in your own lives. If you have a personal experience related to the topic at hand, I encourage you to share it with the class. This will provide all of us with real-life examples of sociological concepts and can give us valuable insight to the lives of others. Since we will be discussing issues that may be “emotionally charged” for some people, it is especially important that we maintain a high level of respect and decorum at all times. If a student is found to be contributing to a negative learning environment for others, they will receive a warning or immediately be dropped from the course at my discretion. If you notice a comment that is offensive, inappropriate, or threatening, please notify me immediately.

Communication
You may contact me with questions about the course, the site, or assignments and tests at your leisure. There are no in-person office hours for this class, so email is your primary means of asking questions of the instructor. When emailing me, please be sure to mention in the email title or body that you are in SOC 25. I will reply as quickly as possible, usually within 48 hours. Please be aware that I do not typically check my email regularly on weekends.

I will also set up a set of discussion board forums on the Canvas course site for your use to communicate with other students. You are encouraged to use this board to foster community and shared resources for studying and writing. The first forum listed on the discussion board, “Q&A”, is there for you to post questions you have about the course or assignments. The instructor, as well as fellow students, can respond to these questions. It is likely that if one student has a question, others do, too, so please ask if you need!

Extra Credit
Extra credit will only be offered sparingly during this course. Students should plan to perform well on the regular course assignments.

Late Assignments
Assignments will be accepted late with a 10% (full letter grade) reduction in grade for each 24-hour period of tardiness. Assignments will not be accepted more than 10 days past the deadline.

Changes to Syllabus
I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus during the quarter. Changes will only be to the students’ benefit, and changes will always be announced well in advance.
Course Schedule

Week 1 – April 4 & 6
“Sociology,” “Popular,” and “Culture”

Week 2 – April 11 & 13
Mass Culture & Media Effects

Thursday Film Screening - Frontline’s The Merchants of Cool [Paper Option #1] (http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/view/) - 58:26

Week 3 – April 18 & 20
Distinction and Status
**Week 4 – April 25 & 27**

**Pop Culture as Social Problem**


Thursday Film Screening - Gaming Historian’s *The Creation of the ESRB* [Paper Option #2] ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv3HDVd22P8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv3HDVd22P8)) - 31:59

~~Tuesday, May 2nd – In-class Mid-Term Exam~~

**Week 5 – May 4 (readings due Thursday)**

**Fandom as Practice and Identity**


**Week 6 – May 9 & 11**

**Fandom as a Field**


Tuesday Film Screening: *AFOL: Adult Fans of Lego* [Paper Option #3]
([https://vimeo.com/9581676](https://vimeo.com/9581676)) - 29:46

**Week 7 – May 16 & 18**

**Globalization**


**Week 8 – May 23 & 25**

**Self-Fashioning and Online Media Culture**


Thursday Film Screening: Frontline’s *Generation Like* [NOT a Paper Option]

**Week 9 – May 30 & June 1**

**Production of Culture**


Week 10 – June 6
Social Change and Resistance


~~No Class on Thursday, June 8~~

~~Thursday, June 15, 3:30pm-5:30pm – Final Exam~~