

ANTH 390B: ANTHROPOLOGY OF POPULAR MUSIC

SPRING 2013 | Thursday 7:00-9:50PM | Julian 161

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Office: Asbury 205E

Office Hours: MW 1:00-3:00PM, or by appointment

OVERVIEW

This course is designed to examine various theoretical issues and practical approaches associated with the anthropological study of popular music as a form of expressive culture. Along with key concepts such as ‘taste cultures’ and class-based ‘distinction’, we will consider questions of how social scientists might deal with music as a social process itself. What is the place of subjective evaluative judgment in anthropological analysis? How can and should social scientists evaluate and analyze popular music? How can such questions and analyses contribute to our understanding of other forms of expressive culture? We will engage these topics through reading selections, and through a number of musical recordings to which we will listen in class as a group.

COURSE MATERIALS

You are expected to read all assignments in timely fashion; assignments are listed on the syllabus on the day by which they should be read. We will be reading seven books, which we will supplement with a number of articles and excerpted readings. The major texts are:

Fox, Aaron A. 2004. *Real country: Music and language in working-class culture*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Gans, Herbert J. 1999. *Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste*. Rev. ed. New York: Basic Books.

Manuel, Peter. 1993. *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Middleton, Richard. 1990. *Studying popular music*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Racy, Ali Jihad. 2003. *Making music in the Arab world: The culture and artistry of tarab*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shannon, Jonathan H. 2006. *Among the Jasmine Trees: Music and Modernity in Contemporary Syria*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Yano, Christine R. 2002. *Tears of Longing: Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

The books may be purchased at the bookstore, and will also be on reserve at ROW. All other readings will be placed on digital reserve at ROW, so that you may download and print them at your convenience.

EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend all class sessions; since the course is discussion-based and meets only once a week, it is imperative that students not miss class. We will present material only once, and I will not send discussion notes or other materials on an individual basis. Those students who miss a class session are still responsible for keeping up with the material presented. Absences will not be excused. I am sympathetic to the reality that sometimes life intrudes upon one’s studies, but our limited time in class makes clemency in this regard impractical. Any student who misses more than one class session will automatically fail the course.

Participation is also a component of the course. I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings knowledgeably, and those who demonstrate that they have come to class unprepared will lose points. (Coming to class with all of your readings in hand is part of being prepared.) I may sometimes call on you to hear your thoughts; please do not be afraid to speak, nor think I am trying to single you out or embarrass you if I call on you.

Students often find that they are unused to both anthropological thinking and my grading standards. Accordingly, the first reaction paper (due February 17) will be worth very little of the final grade, but will give you a taste of the level of work that I expect to see on all subsequent work. The latter two reaction papers (due March 10 and April 14, respectively) will count for a larger portion of the final grade. All reaction papers should be three to four pages in length, and will be on prompts that I will give you.

Rather than exams at the midterm and final points, students will write a 12- to 15-page term paper, on a prompt to be given on April 22. You must submit a complete first draft of the paper by Friday, May 3 at 8:00PM EDT. I will review and critique this draft thoroughly, and return it to you with both required and suggested revisions. You must submit a revised second full draft of the paper in lieu of a final exam by Wednesday, May 15 at 12:00PM EDT. I strongly recommend that you treat the revision process seriously, since, as you can see below, you will receive more credit for the revised finished product than for the first draft. Do your work carefully and in timely fashion, and you will have a good paper (and grade!) to show for it.

Structure of the final grade:

First reaction paper	5%
Subsequent reaction papers (2 x 15%)	30%
First draft of term paper	20%
Revised final draft of term paper	35%
Participation	10%

LATENESS POLICY

Turning in written work late will drag you down very fast. Since you must submit all written work through Moodle, you will be unable to slide on deadlines. I do not accept any excuses for late work. If you are forced to turn in a paper copy of work to me past the stated deadline, I will deduct a full letter grade for every day of tardiness. This policy does not apply to the final draft of the term paper, which will not be accepted late at all, and will be marked as receiving no credit.

CITATIONS, PLAGIARISM, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a matter of academic integrity, no plagiarism will be tolerated. Plagiarism is not merely a violation of university policy, but is also fundamentally a form of cheating that circumvents the learning process. Proper citation practices are key to demonstrating that you can engage with other people's ideas as you build your own. All written work should follow the citation formats detailed on the style sheet that I will distribute to the class. If you have any citation questions not addressed on the style sheet, you should consult the 16th edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, which sits on the reference librarian's desk in ROW.

Academic integrity also requires that students do not attempt to gain unfair advantages over their peers, such as giving a false excuse for an extension. Any such behavior will carry severe consequences, reflected in your grade or in recommendations to be suspended or expelled from the university. Please consult the long (if incomplete) list of questionable practices to avoid at: <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/academic/policies/integrity/>

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICA

The use of personal computers is completely forbidden in class, since they generally prove highly distracting to others. I recommend that students who wish to take notes bring blank paper and pencils and/or pens to class. The use of mobile phones, PDAs, mp3 players, and any similar device is frowned upon during class, as a matter of respect to your classmates and to me. Please silence such devices and put them away.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability that will require special arrangements to be made for note-taking, technology, etc., please let the university know as soon as possible so that there is sufficient time to coordinate all reasonable accommodation. In keeping with university policy, students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Student Disability Services before contacting me, so that all such situations are properly documented and accounted for. Accommodations will not be implemented until I have received the official letter. Such accommodations are not retroactive.

See: <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student-html/resources/disabilities/>

COURSE CALENDAR

January 31

Syllabus review; class expectations. Review of anthropological concepts. Definitions of 'popular' and their agendas.

UNIT 1: MECHANICS AND THEORETICAL FOUNDINGS

February 7

Adorno, T.W. 1941. On popular music. *Studies in Philosophy and Social Sciences* 9: 17-48. (Reserves)

Benjamin, Walter. 1968. The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. In *Illuminations*, ed. H. Arendt, 217-251. New York: Schocken Books. (Reserves)

February 14

First reaction prompt released

Gans, Herbert J. 1999. *Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste*. Rev. ed. New York: Basic Books.

***Sunday, February 17, 8:00PM - First reaction paper due**

February 21

Middleton, Richard. 1990. *Studying popular music*. Philadelphia: Open University Press. Pp. 1-99, 101-171, 247-293.

UNIT 2: PRODUCTION

February 28

Racy, Ali Jihad. 2003. *Making music in the Arab world: The culture and artistry of tarab*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 1-119.

March 7

Second reaction prompt released

Racy pp. 120-225.

***Sunday, March 10, 8:00PM – Second reaction paper due**

March 14

Shannon, Jonathan H. 2006. *Among the Jasmine Trees: Music and Modernity in Contemporary Syria*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. Pp. xv-105.

March 21

Shannon pp. 106-201.

March 23-31 – Spring Recess

UNIT 2.5: TRANSITIONING FROM PRODUCTION TO RECEPTION

April 4

Fox, Aaron A. 2004. *Real country: Music and language in working-class culture*. Durham: Duke University Press. Pp. ix-73, 145-151.

April 11

Third reaction prompt released

Fox pp. 152-263, 272-322.

***Sunday, April 14, 8:00PM – Third reaction paper due**

UNIT 3: RECEPTION

April 18

Fox, Aaron A. 2004. White trash alchemies of the abject sublime. In *Bad music: The music we love to hate*, ed. C. Washburne and M. Derno, 39-61. New York: Routledge. (Reserves)

Stokes, Martin. 1992. "Islam, the Turkish State, and Arabesk." *Popular Music* 11 (2): 213-227. (Reserves)

Washburne, Chris. 2004. Does Kenny G play bad jazz?: a case study. In *Bad music: The music we love to hate*, ed. C. Washburne and M. Derno, 123-147. New York: Routledge. (Reserves)

***Monday, April 22, 9:00AM – Term paper prompt released today**

April 25

Manuel, Peter. 1993. *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in North India*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Pp. xiii-59, 89-104, 153-195.

May 2

Yano, Christine R. 2002. *Tears of Longing: Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Pp. 1-89.

***Friday, May 3, 8:00PM – First draft of term paper due**

May 9

Yano pp. 90-185.

***Wednesday, May 15, 12:00PM – Final draft of term paper due**