



## **Boston University Study Abroad**

London

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**British Youth Culture from 1950 to the Present**

**CAS HI 250 (*Elective B*)**

**Spring 2016**

### **Instructor Information**

A. Name	Dr. Richard Weight
B. Day and Time	Mondays and Tuesdays (12 & 19 April) 1.30-5.30pm, in addition to Film Viewings
C. Location	43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D. Telephone	07939 251 663
E. Email	<a href="mailto:richardweight@hotmail.com">richardweight@hotmail.com</a>
F. Webpage	<a href="http://www.bu.edu/london/virtual-library/hi250">http://www.bu.edu/london/virtual-library/hi250</a>
G. Office hours	By appointment

*Never let the music get in the way of the act.*

Kit Lambert, manager of The Who, to the group before every performance.

*There was a time when pop music wouldn't have been able to define what being English was all about, but that's changed now. If you draw a line from the Beatles and Kinks in the Sixties, through the Jam and the Smiths in the Seventies and Eighties, to Blur in the Nineties, it would define this thing called Englishness as well as anything.*

Damon Albarn of Blur, 1994

### **Course Outline**

Britain has one of the most innovative and vibrant youth cultures in the world. It has come to define post-colonial British identity and it has helped to make London the cultural and commercial capital of Europe. This course will examine the history, sociology, aesthetics and economics of British youth culture, from the early days of jazz and rock 'n' roll, through to Beatlemania, Punk, Britpop, Rave and the latest contemporary developments.

How was British youth culture formed, to what extent is it different from America's and what effect has it had on the wider world? To answer these questions, the course looks at the impact which the black and white cultures of America have had on Britain, as well as charting the influence of Europe, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and indigenous British folk traditions. The unique fusion created from these elements is set in the context of social change in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, primarily: class mobility, female independence, black migration, technological progress and the birth of the consumer society.

As well as amplifying the creative relationship between music, fashion, cinema, art and design, the course will assess their links with business and the media, showing how underground cults become mainstream culture and how moral panics are turned into material profits. Taught through lectures, film screenings, audio sessions and group discussion, this course will not only benefit students majoring in the arts and social sciences but also those in business and communications.

## Course Objectives

Students will become familiar with the key historical developments and sociological themes within British youth culture. In addition they should:

- Grasp the commercial and social patterns that turn 'street' styles into mass phenomena.
- Understand the economic value of the creative industries and strategies for developing them in the global market.
- Reach a deeper understanding of British culture and identity, and its close relationship with that of the United States.

## Learning and Teaching Methods

A combination of lectures, discussion, screenings, individual reading, a field trip and everyday experience of London life. THROUGHOUT THE COURSE YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING THEMES/QUESTIONS IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND HOW COMMERCE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY INTERACT:

- The tension between individual persona and collective identity in the membership of youth cults. Can the 'tribe' be a path to self-realisation?
- The extent to which advertisers and the media shape/create youth cults in order to stimulate demand.
- Does youth culture challenge social divisions of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and nationality and, if so, does commercialisation neutralise that challenge?
- How do new technologies affect the relationship between producers and consumers in the music and fashion industries?
- The extent to which the generation gap is narrowing now that youth culture has been experienced in some form by most people.
- What are the differences and similarities between British and American youth culture?

## Course Chronology

Lectures are designed to illuminate facts, themes and concepts and to generate discussion. They are NOT a substitute for reading set texts or any other material handed out in class. It is therefore essential that you do the required reading AND that you take notes during lectures. Should you wish to discuss anything with Richard in person, he will usually be available for twenty minutes at the end of each class. Alternatively, please feel free to e-mail him at any time.

**Monday 22 February**

### **Class 1a The Origins of British Youth Culture**

'What Do You Want If You Don't Want Money?': Affluence, mass media, the 'consumer society' and the invention of the teenager. Jazz, rock 'n' roll, rhythm and blues and the American influence on Britain in the 1950s. Early moral panics about juvenile delinquency and the generation gap; plus an introduction to themes in the study of modern youth.

### **Class 1b Beatlemania, Mod and 'Swinging London'**

From Graceland to Carnaby Street: The fusion of styles and attitudes that created a distinctive British youth culture in the 1960s, with two case studies: The Mod movement – patriotism, class mobility, the reformation of male fashion and the birth of club culture; The Hippy movement – political activism, sexual freedom, drug use and the birth of festival culture.

READING: *MOD*, Introduction; chapters 1, 2 & 3

Viewing: *Quadrophenia* (1979)

**Monday 29 February**

**Class 2 The Fashion Industry, Glam Rock and sexual politics**

From Catwalk to Shopping Mall: The 'boutique revolution' and the challenge to 'haute couture' fashion houses; The rise of female designers from Mary Quant to Stella McCartney; The iconography of youth: 'Supermodels' and the cult of celebrity. Designer labels and global branding: the commodification of 'street style' or a new internationalism? Plus: David Bowie, Glam Rock and the reformation of masculinity and sexuality in the 1970s & 80s.

READING: *MOD*, chapters 4, 5 & 6

Viewing: *Inbetweeners* (2010)

**Monday 7 March**

**Class 3 Punk Rock, Feminism and the Reaction to Commercial Incorporation**

The Punk Movement: Radical entrepreneurs from Maclaren to Branson and the revival of 'pirate' radio, independent labels and music journalism; plus the rise of female artists and their impact on perceptions of women from Siouxsie & the Banshees to the Spice Girls and Lady Gaga. The Skinhead movement: macho working-class style, racist politics and football hooliganism.

READING: *MOD*, chapter 7 and Bill Osgerby, *Youth Media* (Routledge, 2004)

'Bedroom Culture to Girrl Power', 6 pages

Viewing: *This Is England* (2007)

**Monday 21 March**

**Class 4 Reggae and the Rise of Black and Asian British Youth Cultures**

From Consumption to Integration: the emergence of a distinctive black British youth culture in the 1970s and its effect on racial integration in the UK. Reggae, Ska and the Caribbean influence, including the Two Tone movement; Bhangra and the beginning of Asian British youth culture; 'Minority' entrepreneurs and the marketing of black music and style.

READING: *MOD*, chapter 8

Viewing: *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002)

**Monday 28 March**

**Class 5 The Triumph of Dance Culture**

'God Is A DJ': The rise of Techno-based 'EDM' – from House to Grime and Dubstep - and more liberal attitudes to recreational drug use in Britain. The creation of 'Superfestivals', 'Superclubs,' and the DJ - a post-modern star? Media/State attempts to control 'Rave' culture and the 'Freedom to Party' movement; 'Balearic Beat' and the European 'Easyjet' rave scene.

READING: *MOD*, chapter 10

Viewing: *Human Traffic* (1999)

**Monday 4 April**

**Class 6a CLASS PRESENTATIONS AND SUBMISSION OF MIDTERM PROJECT.  
For details see below**

**Class 6b Trends in Contemporary Youth Culture 1: The 'Greying of Youth, Part 1'**

Mind the Gap: the promotion of a 'late youth' market by corporations and advertisers, and the colonisation of youth culture by middle-aged consumers due to societal trends.

READING: Bill Osgerby, *Youth Media* (Routledge, 2004), 'Greying Youth', 3 pages and *MOD*, Conclusion

**Monday 11 April**  
**Class 7a FIELD VISIT: 100 Years of Vogue at National Portrait Gallery**

**Class 7b Trends in Contemporary Youth Culture 2: The Political Incorporation of Youth Culture**

The use and abuse of pop music by political parties and pressure groups from the 1960s to the 2012 London Olympics. Youth culture as patriotism & ‘national heritage’.

READING: *MOD*, chapter 9

Viewing: *24 Hour Party People* (2002)

**Monday 18 April**

**Class 8a Trends in Contemporary Youth Culture 3: The ‘Greying of Youth’, Part 2**

The familial transmission of youth culture and teenage strategies to maintain the generation gap, from social media to gang culture; the 2011 ‘youth riots’ in England.

**Class 8b 18 April**

**Trends in Contemporary Youth Culture 4: Technology**

The impact of social media on patterns of socialising and consumption; globalisation versus ‘glocalisation’ in the worldwide transmission of youth culture; ‘flashmobbing’ in Britain and the US. Plus, ‘mashed up’: the detribalisation of youth cultures since the 1990s.

READING: Bill Osgerby, *Youth Media* (Routledge, 2004), ‘Working for the Yankee Dollar’, 13 pages

Viewing: *The Boat That Rocked* (2009)

**Class 9 Tuesday 19 April: FIELD VISIT: Soho and Abbey Road** Details to be announced. **PLUS SUBMISSION OF FINAL PAPER. For details see below**

**\*Contingency Class Date: Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April.** Students are obligated to keep these dates free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled.

**Film Viewings**

It is up to you to organise yourselves into one or a few groups to view the films for this course, either online or the Library Assistant will be able to provide you with the DVDs you require and assist you in setting up the A/V in a classroom. Please remember to return the DVDs to the Library directly after viewing, as your classmates may need to have access to them on subsequent evenings.

PLEASE NOTE: ATTENDANCE AT FILM SCREENINGS AS WELL AS LECTURES IS MANDATORY. A REGISTER WILL BE TAKEN AND THE SAME PROCEDURES AND PENALTIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE APPLY.

**Course Requirements and Assessment**

There are FOUR components. More information on what is required for each one is contained in the Study Guide below.

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|--|-----|
| 1) Class participation   | 15% |
| 2) Midterm paper (minimum 2000 words)                            | 30% |
| 3) Oral presentation based on project (approximately 10 minutes) | 15% |
| 4) Final paper (minimum 2500 words)                              | 40% |

## Attendance Policy

### **Classes**

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme. This may result in the student having to take a medical leave of absence from the programme or withdraw from the programme.

#### *Authorised Absence:*

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness for more than one day. In this situation students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor's note as soon as possible). **Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- Illness (first day of sickness): If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student's lecturer).
- Illness (multiple days): If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into to the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

**The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.**

#### *Unauthorised Absence:*

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a 'Fail' in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

#### *Lateness*

Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

## **Grading**

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

*\* Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.*

Additional reading may be found on Blackboard: <http://learn.bu.edu>

## **Assessment**

### **1) Attendance and participation in class**

**15%**

Please note that TWO UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES FROM ANY CLASS OR FIELD TRIP WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESULT IN AN ENTIRE GRADE REDUCTION (e.g. if you have earned an 'A' grade for the course it will become a 'B'). Three or more will result in a further reduction and a possible fail. Persistent lateness will also be penalised. If you have good reason to be late or absent (ie. illness) you MUST report it to BU prior to class in order for your lecturer to be informed in good time.

Contribution to discussion is one of the best methods of learning and it is an important part of your overall grade. While sympathetic account is taken of personality differences, YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE AN ENQUIRING APPROACH TO THE TOPIC UNDER DISCUSSION IN EACH CLASS.

This may take the form of simply asking a question about something you want to know or do not understand. You may also have a comment to make based on your own knowledge and experience. Or, you may disagree with what your fellow students or lecturer is saying. Feel free at all times to question what is being said in class. But remember! You will be in a better position to contribute if you have prepared properly. It is therefore essential that you do the required reading and viewing set out in the list above.

### **2) Midterm paper (Analytic paper, minimum 2000 words)**

**30%**

Choose a sociological theme e.g gender) and then select one or more case studies (e.g. a genre of music/style of fashion) to analyse British youth culture thematically, focusing on the contemporary period (i.e. last 20 years) and its relationship to the United States.

The mid-term project will assess how you are grasping the central themes of the course so that any problems can be addressed prior to sitting the final exam. This is an exercise designed for you to demonstrate your historical/sociological understanding of the differences and similarities between British and American youth culture.

**Deadline: MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

### **3) Oral presentation (approximately 10 minutes)**

**15%**

'Invent an American group or solo artist, outlining their music, dress and graphic style plus their human profile (i.e. personal histories and creative influences). Utilising a budget of \$150,000, devise a 12-month strategy and business plan for selling your act in the UK, in the process analysing what you think is different about British and American youth culture'. Illustrative material could include PowerPoint slides, graphs, statistics and original artwork. Your lecturer is available to advise you on how to approach it.

The aim of the presentation is twofold: to test your ability to crystallise large amounts of information and complex ideas into a form that engages and informs an audience who do not necessarily possess your knowledge. It is also designed to generate class discussion. If you are listening to a presentation, you may politely interrupt to comment on or question what your fellow student is saying. This or and/or a contribution to any discussion that ensues will

substantially improve your grade for this part of the course. You should use visual material as part of your presentation, the quality of which will affect your grade. Read the guidelines below: *'Giving A Presentation'*.

#### **4) Final paper (Analytic paper, minimum 2500 words)**

Answer the following question using internet and print research, following the relevant classes on this subject: 'To what extent has the generation gap narrowed in Britain and America since the 1960s?'

**Deadline: TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

#### **Giving a Presentation**

A presentation is NOT a hurried read-through of your paper. It is a summary of your knowledge, ideas and conclusions about your chosen subject, which should generate discussion. Follow these basic points:

1. Decide what your main points are and make a list of them (in the time you have available, four is usually sufficient).
2. Provide an example and/or a quote that illuminates each one.
3. Mention a public debate about at least one area of your subject and say which view you take and why.
4. Be prepared to answer comments/questions from your fellow students and lecturer and join in any discussion that follows. But don't be afraid to move your presentation on once you think an intervention has run its natural course. **YOU ARE IN CHARGE!**
5. In the conclusion of your talk, relate your research to the wider themes that have been discussed on the course.
6. Speak clearly and don't rush your talk. We are interested in what you have to say!

#### **Writing An Essay/Examination Answer**

Depending on the subject of your major, you may not be used to writing a discursive analytical essay. This should not adversely affect your grade, but ignoring the points below will do so. You are expected to write grammatically correct prose that employs accurate spelling. Please write your essay in 1.5 spacing and leave sufficient margins for my comments.

#### **Preparation**

1. Select a topic that really interests you. The more you are personally engaged in it, the more you will enjoy doing it.
2. Take accurate notes during your reading/internet research, including page numbers and URLs as you **MUST** cite references properly in your essay.
3. Write down the broad themes which you think are relevant to the question.
4. **Define your argument briefly.**
5. List the points you will use to develop your argument, and examples that you want to substantiate them with.

## Writing

1. Your introduction should state the central argument clearly and concisely. It can be up to three or four sentences. Do not generalise and develop chatty comments to lead up to your thesis. **Get to the point immediately.**
2. Give each of the subsequent paragraphs an initial introductory sentence, followed by a development and expansion of the point in a way that is directly relevant to the question. Paragraphs should lead on to each other through a logical argument. **Repetition of your points should be avoided.**
3. Avoid a descriptive essay/examination answer which simply lists points asked for by the question. Write an **argumentative** essay/examination answer which debates the problems raised by the question. This means **analysing** something with a view to offering an **interpretation** of its meaning. Therefore, avoid writing 'this was good/successful/wrong/a failure.' Instead, argue **why and how** something is positive or not.
4. Your conclusion should say how your argument has developed, i.e. whether it has been modified or affirmed. It should not simply re-state the introduction. It is also your final chance to **stamp your personal outlook on the essay**, with an original, apposite point and/or turn of phrase.

## Style

1. NEVER use the first person 'I' to convey your views.
2. Whenever possible, use an example and/or an authoritative quote in order to illustrate a point. Do not simply re-state it. The quotation must be grammatically continuous with your essay, transcribed accurately with the source cited in full.
3. Make sure you transcribe names, dates and statistics accurately.
4. Use past, present and future tenses accurately and consistently.
5. Avoid abbreviations.
6. Employ the formal language of debate. Do not write in a conversational style and therefore avoid anecdote and slang vocabulary and phrases.
7. Avoid rhetorical questions.
8. Avoid qualifying phrases such as 'it is almost as if' or 'it would seem that'.
9. Note the difference between 'its' which is the possessive and 'it's' which is the abbreviation for 'it is'.
10. Avoid cliché such as 'fashion is another kind of uniform'.

## Required Reading

This book MUST be read in order to gain a basic understanding of the course.

Richard Weight, *Mod: From Bebop to Britpop, Britain's Biggest Youth Movement* (Random House/Vintage, 2015)

AND: Selections from Bill Osgerby, *Youth Media* (Routledge, 2004) and Andy Bennet (ed.), *Ageing and Youth Cultures: Music, Style and Identity* (Routledge, 2012) available on the course webpage. Additional readings may also be posted on the course webpage:

<http://www.bu.edu/london/virtual-library/hi250> (you must be logged in to view materials).

## **Supplementary Reading**

Referring to a selection of these books will deepen your understanding and enjoyment of the course. Always look at the bibliographies of any books you refer to; you will discover many useful texts and links that are not, for reasons of space, listed here.

### **General**

Bennett, Andy, *Cultures of Popular Music* (OUP, 2001). Useful collection of sociological essays on different aspects of British youth culture.

Melly, George, *Revolt Into Style: The Pop Arts in Britain* (1970). Seminal history by a jazz musician of the origins of British youth culture.

Bill Osgerby, *Youth in Britain since 1945* (Blackwell, 1998) Excellent historical/sociological overview of the subject, companion volume to the set text

Shapiro, Harry, *Waiting for the Man: The Influence of Drugs and Popular Music* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Helter Skelter, 1999)

### **Themes**

#### **Class**

Davis, John, *Youth and the Condition of Britain: Images of Adolescent Conflict* (Continuum, 1990)

Hall, Stuart and Jefferson, Tony, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Postwar Britain* (Routledge, 1993)

Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (Routledge, 1979)

#### **Gender & Sexuality**

MacRobbie, Angela, *Feminism and Youth Culture* (Routledge, 1998)

Padel, Ruth, *I'm A Man: Sex, Gods and Rock 'n' Roll* (Faber, 2000)

Reynolds, Simon, *The Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion and Rock 'n' Roll* (Serpent's Tail, 1995)

Savage, Jon, *Time Travel: Pop, Media and Sexuality from the Sex Pistols to Nirvana, 1977-96* (Vintage, 1997)

#### **Race**

Tulloch, Carol, 'Black Style in Britain', in Carol Tulloch (ed.) *Black Style* (V&A, 2004)

Hebdige, Dick, *Cut 'N' Mix : Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music* (Routledge, 1987)

Hyder, Rehan, *Brimful of Asia: Negotiating Ethnicity on the UK Music Scene* (Ashgate, 2004)

Jones, Simon, *Black Culture, White Youth: The Reggae Tradition from JA to UK* (Macmillan, 1988)

#### **Fashion**

Breward, Christopher, *Fashion* (Oxford, 2003)

MacRobbie, Angela, *In The Culture Society: Art, Fashion and Popular Music* (Routledge, 1999)

MacRobbie, Angela, *British Fashion Design: Rag Trade or Image Industry?* (Routledge, 1998)

Tungate, Mark, *Fashion Brands: Branding Style From Armani to Zara* (Kogan Page, 2004)

#### **Music & Other Media**

Bugge, Christian, 'Selling Youth in the Age of Affluence: Marketing to Youth in Britain since 1959,' in Black and Pemberton, *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War 'Golden Age' Revisited* (Ashgate, 2004)

Donnelly, K.J., *Pop Music in British Cinema* (BFI, 2001)

Mundy, John, *Popular Music on Screen* (Manchester University Press, 1999)

Napier-Bell, Simon, *Black Vinyl, White Powder:* (Ebury, 2002). A manager's inside account of the British music industry

Passman, Donald S., *All You Need to Know About the Music Business* (4<sup>th</sup> UK Ed., Penguin, 2004)

## Genres

### **Mod**

Barnes, Richard, *Mods!* (Plexus, 1991)

Hewitt, Paolo, *The Soul Stylists: Six Decades of Modernism from Mods to Casuals* (Mainstream, 2003)

Rawlings, Terry, *Mod: A Very British Phenomenon* (Omnibus, 2000)

### **Punk**

Savage, Jon, *England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond* (Faber, 1992)

### **Reggae and Ska**

Bradley, Lloyd, *Bass Culture: When Reggae Was King* (Penguin, 2001)

Thompson, Dave, *Wheels out of Gear: 2 Tone, The Specials and a world in flame* (Helter Skelter, 2004)

### **New Wave**

Reynolds, Simon, *Rip It Up and Start Again: Postpunk 1978-84* (Faber, 2005)

### **Britpop**

Harris, John, *The Last Party: Britpop, Blair and the Demise of English Rock* (Fourth Estate, 2003)

### **Hip-Hop**

Chang, Jeff, *Can't Stop, Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation* (Ebury, 2005)

### **Rave**

Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton, *Last Night A DJ Saved My Life* (Headline, 1999)

Garratt, Sheryl, *Adventures In Wonderland: A Decade of Club Culture* (Headline, 1998)

Collin, Matthew, *Altered State: The Story of Ecstasy Culture and Acid House* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Serpent's Tail, 1998)

Reynolds, Simon, *Energy Flash: Journey Through Rave Music and Dance Culture* (Picador, 1998)

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS SYLLABUS PROPERLY. ENJOY THE COURSE AND THE REST OF YOUR STAY IN LONDON.

Richard Weight