



Boston University Study Abroad
London

Cultural Capital: The History of Popular Culture in London
CAS HI 251 (Elective B)
Spring 2016

Instructor Information

A. Name	Dr Michael Peplar and Dr Ben Mechen
B. Day and Time	Mondays, 1.15pm-5.15pm (times may vary – see weekly schedule)
C. Location	Kensington Room, 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D. Telephone	020 7244 6255
E. Email	mpeplar@bu.edu benmechen@gmail.com
F. Office hours	By appointment

Course Description

This course will trace the development of popular culture in London from the late sixteenth century to the present day. The course will be concerned with popular cultural ‘texts’ (books, songs, films, television programmes etc.) as well as popular cultural sites – the spaces in which cultural texts are shown or produced (cinemas, music halls, football stadia etc.). After some discussion of cultural theory, the course is organised chronologically, beginning with the precursors and early origins of modern popular culture and progressing towards the present day.

Course Objectives

- The course aims to give students an introduction to the history of popular culture in London.
- Students will be introduced to ways of thinking about popular culture through consideration of relevant theories and debates.
- Students will also be introduced to the wider context of the social, economic and cultural history of Britain in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Methodology (Teaching Pattern)

There will be a mixture of lectures, seminar discussions, field visits and student presentations.

Attendance

Important note for students on the Internship Programme:

The rules governing Internship Programme students’ UK visas are strict and require, as a condition of the student’s presence in the United Kingdom, that the student participates fully in all classes and in the placement. If a student does not attend classes or his/her placement as required the student will be considered to be in breach of the visa and can be deported. As the sponsor of our students’ visas, Boston University has the legal obligation to ensure that each student complies with visa requirements.

For that reason Boston University Study Abroad London Programmes requires full attendance in classes and placements. Any student who does not comply with this policy may be sent home from the program at the discretion of the programme directors, and will result in a forfeit of credit and program costs for part or all of the semester.

Classes

All Boston University Study Abroad London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, 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.

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 which 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, supported by a local London doctor's note (submitted with Authorised Absence Approval Form).
- 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.

Reading

Set text: Stephen Inwood, *A History of London*, Macmillan, London, 1998 (available at BU London Library).

Required reading is noted below in the Course Chronology. It is essential that all students read and reflect upon the relevant Preparatory Reading *before* each class. Follow-up Reading should be completed before the next class.

Additional reading may be found on Blackboard: <https://lms.bu.edu>

Supplementary and Secondary Reading:

The following texts are useful for expanding upon the required reading, for researching seminar papers and for preparing for the final examination.

All books are available in the BU London Library at 43 Harrington Gardens.

Section 1

On Popular Culture generally:

Iain Chambers, *Popular Culture: The Metropolitan Experience*, Routledge, London, 1986

John Docker, *Postmodernism and Popular Culture: A Cultural History*, Cambridge University Press, 1994

John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, Routledge, London and New York, 1990

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

JM Golby and AW Purdue, *The Civilisation of the Crowd: Popular Culture in England 1750-1900*, 2nd edition, Sutton, Stroud, 1999

Joanne Hollows, *Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture*, Manchester University Press, 2000

Angela McRobbie, *Postmodernism and Popular Culture*, Routledge, London, 1994

Angela McRobbie, *In the Culture Society: Art Fashion and Popular Music*, Routledge, London 1999

John Storey, *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*, 2nd edition, Edinburgh University Press, 2003

John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*, 4th edition, Pearson, Harlow, 2006

Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, 2nd edition, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2004

Section 2

On London:

Peter Ackroyd, *London: The Biography*, Vintage, London, 2001

John Horrell, *Popular Culture in London c. 1890-1918*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2001

Stephen Inwood, *City of Cities*, Macmillan, London, 2005

Joe Kerr & Andrew Gibson (eds), *London: From Punk to Blair*, Reaktion Books, London, 2003

Jon E. Lewis, *London: The Autobiography – 2,000 Years of the Capital's History by Those Who Saw it Happen*, Constable & Robinson, London, 2008

Roy Porter, *London: A Social History*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1994

Jerry White, *London in the Nineteenth Century*, Vintage, London, 2008

Jerry White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, Vintage, London, 2008

Section 3

On particular areas of (Popular) Culture:

Peter Ackroyd, *Dickens' London – An Imaginative Vision*, Headline Books, London, 1987

Peter Bailey, *Music Hall – The Business of Pleasure*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1986

Andy Bennett, *Cultures of Popular Music*, Open University Press, 2001

Barry J. Faulk, *Music Hall and Modernity – The Late Victorian Discovery of Modernity*, Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, 2004

Susie Gilbert, *Opera for Everybody – The Story of English National Opera*

Richard Giulianotti, *Football – A Sociology of the Global Game*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1999

Jeffrey Hill, *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2002

John Hill, *Sex, Class and Realism: British Cinema 1956-63*, BFI, London, 1986

Brian Longhurst, *Popular Music and Society*, Polity press, Cambridge, 2007

Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2nd edition, 2010

Roger Sabin (ed), *Punk Rock or What? The Cultural Legacy of Punk*, Routledge, London and New York, 1999

Jon Savage, *England's Dreaming – Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond*, Faber and Faber, London 2001

Brian Southall, *Sex Pistols, 90 Days at EMI*, Bobcat Books, London, 2007

John Springhall. *Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panic: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta Rap, 1830-1996*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1998

Ben Thompson, *Sunshine on Putt: The Golden Age of British Comedy from Vic Reeves to The Office*, Fourth Estate, London, 2004

Students will benefit from reading a general introduction to nineteenth century British history, for example, Michael Lynch, *An Introduction to Nineteenth Century British History 1800-1914*.

Course Assessment

Mid-term Quiz	20%
Final Examination	40%
Seminar Presentation	30%
Attendance and Participation	10%

1. The Mid-term Quiz will test your factual knowledge. It will be a one-hour class exercise with c. 20 questions requiring short answers (e.g. multiple choice; some one-word answers; some short paragraphs).

2. There will be an end-of-course 2-hour final examination worth 40% of your final grade. You will need to answer one required general question on popular culture and one further question (from a selection) on specific popular cultural forms or topics. The grade you receive for the final examination will be based upon:

- The relevance of your answer to the question/topic set
- Clarity of expression and continuity
- Evidence of reading and thought related to the question/topic
- Quality of the arguments presented
- Merit will be given for evidence of reading from the Supplementary and Secondary Reading list.

3. You will also be required, as part of a pair, to make a seminar presentation in which you introduce, comment on and contextualize at least one specific popular cultural text. Presentations will take place in Session 9. Topics for seminar presentations should be agreed with the tutors by Session 6. Presentations should last between 15 and 20 minutes, including time for questions. Both content and presentation skills will be assessed. You should submit slides and notes from your presentation to the tutors at Session 9.

4. Class attendance and participation will form part of the final grade. Evidence of having read and reflected upon the course texts will be rewarded.

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.*

Course Chronology

22 February Session One: Introduction to London's Popular Culture

Introduction to course syllabus and assessment (MP/BM)

Seminar Discussion: What do you already know about London's Popular Culture? (MP/BM)

Seminar discussion: Storey reading (BM)

Lecture 1: London - 'First City of Modern Popular Culture'? (MP)

Primary Source Seminar: 'Bartholomew Fair' (MP/BM)

Preparatory Reading:

1. John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*, Chapter 1
 2. 'Bartholomew Fair', description, from *The Gentlemen's Magazine*, 1764
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29 February Session Two: Towards Victorian Popular Culture (1) Theatre & Music Hall

Lecture 2: Origins of Public Theatre in London (guest lecture, Dr Aleks Sierz)

Lecture 3: Introduction to Music Hall (MP)

Screening: BBC TV *The Story of Music Hall* extract. Followed by discussion (BM)

Primary Source Seminar: *Following In Father's Footsteps* (MP/BM)

Screening: BBC TV *Tipping the Velvet* extract

Preparatory Reading:

1. Stephen Inwood, *City of Cities*, Chapter 21 'A City of Showmen', particularly sections on Music Hall
 2. *Following in Father's Footsteps*, Music Hall song lyrics, 1892
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7 March Session Three: Towards Victorian Popular Culture (2): Popular Literature

Lecture 4: Popular Literature in Victorian London (MP)

Seminar discussion: Dickens chapters and Inwood 'Ragged London' (BM)

Screening: *Oliver!*, director Carol Reed, 1968, extracts

Seminar discussion: Adaptations of *Oliver Twist* (MP/BM)

Preparatory Reading: 1) Inwood, *A History of London* Chapter 17, 'Ragged London'

2) Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* extracts from *Bentley's Miscellany* Vol 1 (1837) pp. 105-115; 218-230; 326-338; 430-441

Preparatory work: Research and be prepared to answer questions on an adaptation of *Oliver Twist*

14 March Session Four: Popular Culture and Mass Society (1): Cinema

In pairs, please view a London-based feature film before this class and prepare a 7-10 minute review to be delivered in class.

Lecture 5: Introduction to London and Cinema (MP)

Student Presentations

Seminar: Murphy reading

Preparatory Reading: Robert Murphy, "Postscript: A Short History of British Cinema," in *The British Cinema Book*, 3rd ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, repr, 2013), pp. 417-425.

21 March Session Five: Popular Culture and Mass Society (2): Organised Sport

Field trip: Visit to a Premier League football club (BM)

Lecture 6: The Development of Organized Sports in Britain (MP)

Seminar Discussion: McKibbin Chapter 9 and Inwood Chapter 21 (BM)

Preparatory Reading:

1. Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Culture: England 1918-51*, Chapter 9
 2. Inwood, *A History of London*, Chapter 21
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4 April Session Six:

MID-TERM QUIZ (1 hour in class)

Seminar Discussion: Inwood, *A History of London*, Chapters 23 & 24 (BM)

Preparatory Reading: Stephen Inwood, Chapter 23 (esp. pp 708-721 and 762-773) & Chapter 24

Seminar Presentation subjects should be agreed with Ben by today.

11 April Session Seven: 1960s ‘Swinging London’ and after

***** Morning Field trip:** Walking tour of Soho including Carnaby Street (RW and BM)***

Lecture 7: ‘Swinging London’ and Popular Culture (MP)

Screening: Extracts from *Look At Life: Swingin’ London* (MP)

Seminar Discussion: Discuss Soho Walk, Inwood Chapter 25 and Weight ‘Swingers’ extract (BM/MP)

Lecture 8: From Punk to Britpop (guest lecturer, Dr Christopher Daley)

Preparatory Reading:

1. Inwood, Chapter 25 ‘Postwar London’
 2. Richard Weight, *Patriots*, Part 5 ‘Swingers’, pp 357-399
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12 April Session Eight: London and Television

Preparation: Watch and be prepared to comment on at least one London-based TV programme

Seminar Discussion: 1) London-based TV programmes 2) Inwood, Chapter 26 (BM)

Lecture 9: London on Television (MP)

Preparatory Reading: Inwood. Chapter 26 ‘A Divided City’

18 April Session Nine: Review

Student Presentations

Seminar discussion: Re-reading John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, Chapter 1 (BM). Applying Storey to examples (MP)

Course Review and Exam Preparation

Preparatory Reading: Please re-read John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction*, Chapter 1

* **Contingency Class Date: 20 April.** Students are obligated to keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled.

Final Exam **21 April** Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.

Terms and Conditions

If you have problems with the availability of reading materials (all of which should be in the library) please contact me either through the Academic Affairs Office or via e-mail.