# EAS274 Popular Culture in East Asia

Instructor: Sara Osenton

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-11, Robarts 14080A

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## Class Meetings

Winter 2018, Thursdays 6-8pm, SS2105

## Instruction Method

Lecture, discussion, presentations, written assignments

## Course Description

This course will explore aspects of 20th and 21st century China, Korea and Japan’s popular culture. By examining art, visual culture, consumer habits, food, advertising and fashion trends we will learn also about the political and historical events of the 20th century. Because of the large time period and variety of societies involved, we will choose certain aspects to look at in depth. This class uses theoretical texts to help understand how to view popular culture in a critical way.

## Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students should:

* Be familiar with Chinese, Korean and Japanese popular culture
* Have a general understanding of modern and postwar Chinese, Korean and Japanese political and social history
* Have knowledge of critical theory appropriate for understanding popular culture
* Have a good understanding of postwar popular culture and contemporary trends in Japanese, Korean and Chinese aesthetics
* Understand multiple perspectives for interrogating history

## Readings

Readings will be posted to Blackboard for download.

#### Reading Objectives:

This course primarily has two kinds of readings: Lenses (theoretical) and Articles/Chapters (analysis/argumentative).

The readings marked “LENS” are meant to provide a different way of looking or thinking about popular culture.

The articles/argumentative readings in most cases form arguments about topics of popular culture. In each case, you should pay attention not just to the topic details, but the argument made by the author from those details. While reading, consider “What does a particular topic say about contemporary China, Korea or Japan?” Conversely, for topics, try to consider “What is this thing?” but also “How was its evolution influenced by the history and politics of China/Korea/Japan?”

What does it tell us about: Contemporary society, politics, history, popular beliefs, the way people see each other, themselves and those outside of their society?

## Assignments and Evaluation

All students will be expected to come to class having read the weekly reading assignments and be prepared to discuss them in class. Electronic submissions are acceptable for reading responses, abstract, and final paper. All other assignments must be in hard copy form.

1. **Attendance and Participation 10%**

Students are expected to have read the class readings and contribute to class discussion.

1. **Response papers 20%**

Responses should be approximately one-page (single spaced) and include your impressions and thoughts on the readings. This is also a place to form questions you have about the material. Responses are due by 10pm the night before the class through Blackboard. Late responses will not be accepted. Responses are worth 5% each.

These are due the night before classes 2, 4, 5 & 7.

1. **Final Paper**

The final paper has 3 components: **Abstract 5%, Mini Conference Presentations 10% and Written Paper 30%.** Students will choose one topic, phenomenon, character, group, show, film, song, food or other narrow topic of popular culture in China, Korea or Japan. Using critical lenses from class, you will write critically about how this topic functions in pop culture.

**Abstracts:** Students will hand in an abstract of their paper which includes the topic, the specific argument, the materials to be examined and anticipated conclusions. Due February 8 through Blackboard.

**Mini Conference Presentations:** In groups of 3, students will give a poster presentation of their topics to the class on March 1. Groups will be formed by students working on similar topics, or ways of approaching their topic. Each student will prepare a poster presentation of their topic, and the text and a photo of the poster will be submitted to blackboard on the day of the mini-conference. Students are expected to give thoughtful and constructive feedback to their peers during the mini-conference.

**Critical Paper:**

Students will develop a paper based on their presentation. Papers should be 6-8 pages in length. Your paper should focus on your own use of critical lenses to analyze your topic. This is not a research paper however you may want to consult academic articles on similar topics, or look up particular aspects of your topic to contribute to your own analysis. Because of the nature of this class, you will be allowed to cite Wikipedia and other internet sources to find background information on their topics while keeping in mind that these sources may be flawed and contain errors.

Late papers will be penalized 5% for every day the paper is late.

The paper should be written independently. It should be typed in a 12-point font, with 1-inch margins, and be double-spaced and formatted according to MLA or Chicago conventions; lack of properly cited work will be dealt with as plagiarism.Assignments with no citations will not be graded. Please do not right justify your work. All pages should be numbered and proof read. You may double side your work if you choose.

This assignment will be evaluated for content (accuracy, relevance, and completeness) and quality (organization, clarity, conciseness, grammaticality).

Please also review and follow the guidelines for avoiding plagiarism as found at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>.

Turn it in

All assignments (reading responses and essay assignments) will be submitted electronically and will go through TurnItIn to confirm originality of student work.

Turnitin.com “Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site”.

1. Final Term Test 25%

March 29 in class will be an in-class test of course material in which you are expected to demonstrate your mastery of class material and theoretical lenses.

## Course Evaluation

You have the opportunity to provide your evaluation of the course during the course. I welcome any comments and feedback at any time; send them via e-mail or leave a note in my mailbox.

## Special Needs

If you have special accessibility needs, please discuss with me during the first week of class and register with accessibility services if necessary.

## Course Outline

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### Class 1 Ways of seeing January 4

What is this class? Introduction to the various texts and media used to explore popular culture in twentieth century China and Japan. Introduction, class mechanics, introduction to the topics to be studied.

Introduction to Popular Culture.

## Class 2 Food January 11

READING RESPONSE DUE JAN 10

* LENS: Althusser, Ideological State Apparatuses
* LENS: Anderson, Imagined Communities
* Anne Allison, “Japanese Mothers and *Obentōs:* The Lunch Box as Ideological State Apparatus.”In Permitted and Prohibited Desires: Mothers, Comics, and Censorship in Japan (Berkeley & LA: California University Press, 2000), 81-104 selections
* Zha, Jianying. "The Whopper." In China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids, and

*Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture*, x, 210 p. New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton, 1995.

## Class 3 Fashion January 18

* LENS: Marcel Mauss, Techniques of the Body
* LENS: Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenolgy of Perception
* Suk-Young Kim. "Dressed to Kill: Women's Fashion and Body Politics in North Korean Visual Media (1960s-1970s)." *positions: east asia cultures critique* 19, no. 1 (2011): 159-191. https://muse.jhu.edu/
* Daniel Black, “Wearing Out Racial Discourse: Tokyo Street Fashion and Race as Style,” The Journal of Popular Culture 42:2 (2009): 239–56.
* Chen, Tina. 2001. "Dressing for the Party: Clothing, Citizenship, and Gender- Formation in Mao's China." *Fashion Theory* 5(2): 143-17.

#### Class 4 Music January 25

READING RESPONSE DUE JAN 24

* LENS: Stuart Hall, Notes on Deconstructing the Popular
* LENS: Soft Power
* Fabienne DARLING-WOLF, “SMAP, Sex, and Masculinity: Constructing the Perfect Female Fantasy in Japanese Popular Music,” Popular Music and Society 27:3 (2004): 357–70.
* Lie, John. “Seoul Calling” & “Postlude” in *K-Pop: popular music, cultural amnesia, and economic innovation in South Korea*. University of California Press, 2014: Selections

#### Class 5 Consumerism February 1 PEER MEETUPS

READING RESPONSE DUE JAN 31

* LENS: Karl Marx, The Fetishism of the Commodity
* Creighton, Millie. "Pre-Industrial Dreaming in Post-Industrial Japan: Department Stores and the Commoditization of Community Traditions." *Japan Forum* 10, no. 2 (1998): 127-49.
* Lin, Yi-Chieh. 2011. Selections from *Fake Stuff: China and the Rise of Counterfeit Goods*. Routledge.
* Yano, Christine Reiko. "Pink Globalization Hello Kitty's Trek across the Pacific." Selections

### Class 6 Advertising February 8 ABSTRACT DUE

* LENS: Marshall McLuhan, The Woman in a Mirror
* Millie R. Creighton, “Imaging the Other in Japanese Advertising Campaigns.” In Occidentalism: Images of the West, ed. by James G. Carrier (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 135–60.
* Perry Johansson, “Consuming the Other: The Fetish of the Western Woman in Chinese Advertising and Popular Culture,” Postcolonial Studies 2:3 (1999): 377–88.

#### Class 7 Art February 15

READING RESPONSE DUE FEB 14

* LENS: Walter Benjamin, Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction
* Dong-Yeon Koh, "Murakami’s ‘Little Boy’ Syndrome: Victim or Aggressor in Contemporary Japanese and American Arts?," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 11, no. 3 (2010).
* Currier, Jennifer. 2008. Art and power in the new China: An exploration of Beijing's 798 district and its implications for contemporary urbanism. *The Town Planning Review* 79, (2): 237-265

#### READING BREAK FEBRUARY 22

#### Class 8 Presentations March 1

#### Class 9 Cartoons March 8

* LENS: Roland Barthes, Rhetoric of the Image
* Rei Okamoto Inouye. "Theorizing Manga: Nationalism and Discourse on the Role of Wartime Manga." *Mechademia* 4, no. 1 (2009): 20-37.
* Shiraishi, Saya “Doraemon goes abroad” in Japan Pop!: Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture
* READING TBD

#### Class 10 Computers, Cellphones and Video Games March 15 PAPERS DUE

* LENS: Ueno Toshiya, Techno-Orientalism
* Leibold, James. 2011. "Blogging Alone: China, the Internet, and the Democratic Illusion?" *The Journal of Asian Studies* 70(4): 1023-1041.
* Mia CONSALVO, “Convergence and Globalization in the Japanese Videogame Industry,” Cinema Journal 48:3 (Spring 2009): 135–41.
* Luqiu, Luwei Rose. 2017. "The Cost of Humour: Political Satire on Social Media and Censorship in China." *Global Media and Communication* 13 (2): 123-138.

#### Class 11 Film March 22

* Lu, Sheldon Hsiao-peng, ed. *Transnational Chinese Cinema: Identity, Nationhood, Gender*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997. Selection
* Cazdyn, Eric “Re-reading: Canon, Body, Geopolitics” in *The Flash of Capital Film and Geopolitics in Japan*, Asia-Pacific. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002
* Chinese Independent Documentary Films: Alternative Media, Public Spheres and the Emergence of the Citizen Activist by Viviani, Margherita

#### Class 12 Term Test March 29