

Introduction to Cultural Studies

Theories and Methods

Lecturer: Univ.-Prof. PD Dr. Stefan L. Brandt (Brückenprofessor)

Room and time: Room 4 (Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik), Fridays 14-16 Uhr · **First session:** October 12, 2012

Course description: In this course, we will discuss pivotal approaches from British and American Cultural Studies, ranging from Marxist Theory and Psychoanalytic Analysis to Feminist, Queer, and Ecological Studies. The main idea is to present students with the whole gamut of potential approaches in contemporary cultural theory and open ways how to apply these methods to concrete examples of your choice. One insight that participants of the course can gain is that different epistemological perspectives may lead to different results in terms of interpretation and 'meaning.' In other words, there is not just one truth, but many different truths, depending on the theoretical lens employed by the interpreter. Students may regard this course as a useful overview, since all major theories and methods of Critical Studies will be introduced.

Methods: Presentations by students, based on PowerPoint and 4-page handouts to be distributed in class; close readings and analyses of key theoretical texts; forum discussions on Moodle. All texts are available on Moodle: <https://moodle.univie.ac.at/>.

Aims: It is the aim of this course to support students to explore and apply relevant theoretical approaches from British and American Cultural Studies as part of the process of structuring a Master's or diploma thesis.

Form of control: Regular attendance; active in-class participation; presentation as part of an expert session with 4-page handout to be distributed in class; reading assignments; occasional quizzes; at least 8 elaborate entries in the discussion forum.

Literature: It is highly recommended to purchase Brian L. Ott and Robert L. Mack's *Critical Media Studies: An Introduction* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), since this will be our key text for most sessions.

Syllabus

- Oct. 12** **Introduction – Cultural and Critical Media Studies**
Basic texts (recommended):
Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean, "Introduction," *American Cultural Studies*, 2008, 1-18.
Brian L. Ott and Robert L. Mack, "Introducing Critical Media Studies," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 1-18.
Graeme Turner, "The Idea of Cultural Studies" [1990], *British Cultural Studies*, 1992, 11-37.
- Oct. 19** **Cultural Analysis**
Main text (obligatory):
B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Cultural Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 123-149.
Additional texts (optional):
Homi K. Bhabha, "Introduction" to *The Location of Culture*, 1994, 1-18.
Richard Dyer, "White" [1985], *The Matter of Images*, 1990, 141-63.
Keywords: American Dream, Class, Hegemony, Ideology, Myth, Othering, Race/Ethnicity, Stereotyping.
- Oct. 26** **No class! (Austrian National Holiday)**
Relax and enjoy!
- Nov. 2** **No class! (All Saints Day)**
Relax and enjoy!
- Nov. 9** **Marxist Analysis**
Main text (obligatory):
B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Marxist Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 21-46.
Additional text (optional):
Raymond Williams, "Advertising – The Magic System" [1980], *The Cultural Studies Reader*, 1997, 410-423.
Keywords: Advertising, Base/Superstructure, Cultural Imperialism, Multinationalism, Profit, Spectacle.
- Nov. 16** **Independent Study Unit**
You will receive an assignment to do at home.
- Nov. 23** **Rhetorical Analysis**
Main text (obligatory):
B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Rhetorical Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 99-122.
Additional text (optional):
Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, 1957.
Keywords: Affect and Aesthetics, Form, Genre, Narrative, Sign, Structuralism, Talk-Shows, Texts.

- Nov. 30** **Psychoanalytic Analysis**
 Main text (obligatory):
 B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Psychoanalytic Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 150-176.
 Additional text (optional):
 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 1975, 6-18.
 Keywords: Apparatus, Desire, Fantasy, Film, Male Gaze, Scopophilia, Spectatorship, Symbolic, Unconscious.
- Dec. 7** **Feminist Analysis**
 Main text (obligatory):
 B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Feminist Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 177-195.
 Additional text (optional):
 Judith Butler, "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions," *Gender Trouble*, 1990, 128-41.
 Keywords: Essentialism, Gender, Patriarchy, (Post-)Feminism, Sexism, Stereotyping, Subject/Object.
- Dec. 14** **Queer Analysis**
 Main text (obligatory):
 B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Queer Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 196-218.
 Additional texts (optional):
 Ki Namaste, "The Politics of Inside/Out," *Sociological Theory* (Jan. 1994): 220-31.
 Annamarie Jagose, "Queer," *Queer Theory: An Introduction*, 1996, 72-99.
 Keywords: Heteronormativity, Natural/Deviant, Performativity, Queer, Representation, Sexuality, Visibility.
- Jan. 11** **Reception Analysis**
 Main text (obligatory):
 B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Reception Analysis", *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 221-239.
 Additional texts (optional):
 Stuart Hall, "Encoding, Decoding" [1973], *The Cultural Studies Reader*, 1997, 507-517.
 Wolfgang Iser, "Interaction between Text and Reader" [1980], *Norton Anthology*, 2010, 1524-1532.
 Keywords: Encoding/Decoding, Ethnography, Interpretive Communities, Media Effects, Polysemy.
- Jan. 18** **Erotic Analysis**
 Main text (obligatory):
 B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Erotic Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 240-264.
 Additional texts (optional):
 Vivian Sobchack, "What My Fingers Knew: The Cinesthetic Subject, or Vision in the Flesh," 2000, 1-23.
 Keywords: Abjection, Fandom, Intertextuality, Irony, Jouissance, Liminality, Resistance.
- Jan. 25** **Ecological Analysis**
 Main text (obligatory):
 B.L. Ott & R.L. Mack, "Ecological Analysis," *Critical Media Studies*, 2010, 265-286.
 Additional texts (optional):
 Lawrence Buell, Introduction to *The Environmental Imagination*, 1995, 1-27.
 David Ingram, Chapter 1 from: *Green Screen: Environmentalism and Hollywood Cinema*, 2000, 13-24.
 Keywords: Architecture, Environmental Imagination, Hot/Cool Medium, Media Ecology, Time/Space.