

SPRING 2023
FMS 394: SPECIAL TOPICS

PARTICIPATORY CULTURE

MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS
4:30 - 5:45 PM
TEMPE DH 102

INSTRUCTOR

CONTACT INFO



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Zoom Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays from
2:00 - 3:00 pm [or email for appointment].

SYLLABUS CONTENTS

Click the link to jump to each section:

1. [Course Information](#)
2. [Assignments & Grading](#)
3. [Class Policies](#)
[Attendance, Late-work, Email, Canvas]
4. [Steps for Success](#)
[What to do if you miss class, have questions, have tech issues, our schedule etc.]
5. [ASU Resources & Policies](#)
[Academic & Tech Support, Help with Basic Needs, Coronavirus, Student Disclosures]
6. [Course Calendar](#)
[Overview of all assignment deadlines.]

01 // COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION //

From audiences sitting in dark movie theaters to fans attending conventions, there are many ways for us to engage with media. Popular culture inspires our passion, participation, and conversation. This class explores classic and emerging theories about spectators, fans, and audiences. We'll use these to do our own analyses of media and participatory culture.

This class considers audiences, fandoms, and fan practices that have developed around a range of media. We will check out what's happening on YouTube, consider digital games, and look at remix, fan, and transformative works projects. Students take an active role by reflecting on their own experiences as viewers, audiences, and fans.

We will make digital/videographic essays, zines, and remix projects. You do not need experience with graphic/web design or video editing to participate, the class is designed for everyone from beginners to experts.

REQUIRED MATERIALS //

Readings will be available as pdfs on Canvas.

Feel free to save, print, or read these materials online. Expect to spend portions of class time working with these readings. Consider how you want to access these materials in class and choose an option that allows you to take notes, annotate, etc.

Screenings (of films, TV shows, digital media, etc.) are a regular part of this course. **Links to screenings will be available on Canvas.**

Typically, you will pay a small fee to rent or purchase this content. Costs usually range \$3-\$10 per screening. You will also need access to screening materials for major projects.

Software Alert! In this class we will be working on digital projects. If you do not already have access to video editing software and you don't want to utilize an ASU computer lab you may need to pay \$30 (estimated) for software.

CONTENT WARNING //

The materials for this course may contain adult, controversial or problematic materials. This may include harsh language, adult content, and examples of online trolling and bullying. We need to approach these materials with maturity and in ways that respect each other's views and experiences. Equally important, we need to respect each other's limits/comfort with these materials and understand that not everyone will experience these materials in the same way.

If you have any reservations, for whatever reason, about watching, reading, or discussing certain types of content, make sure you contact me during the first week of class.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES //

1. Students will be able to identify **core media studies concepts/theories related to spectators, audiences, and fans**. Students will use these concepts to analyze how different media organize audiences and structure media engagement.
2. Students will be able to utilize **formal and cultural analysis** to develop their own **media criticism**. This entails developing arguments, identifying evidence, and critiquing media objects.
3. Students will be able to produce forms of **individual and collaborative research, writing, and analysis common to media studies**. This includes emerging and alternative forms of media criticism. Students will articulate why their lines of inquiry matter and how their work is relevant to media studies.
4. Students will be able to **write reflections** on their own relationship with media, how media positions them as a user/player/viewer and the kinds of responses popular media elicit from them.
5. Students will **develop and utilize active viewing and reading practices** for engaging theory, screening media, and developing analyses of media/media culture.

TEACHING METHODS //

I use the following methods to help you meet learning outcomes:

- Class time consists of **lectures, discussion, small group activities**, and individual **in-class assignments** to synthesize the readings and screenings.
- Classes are **discussion and participation heavy**. You learn best by asking questions when you are confused, testing your knowledge, and getting feedback from others.
- **Weekly readings and screenings** require you to develop careful reading/screening practices. Prior to class, you will be asked to read media theory, screen relevant media, research relevant concepts, and identify areas for discussion.
- **Class projects** help you evaluate your mastery of important concepts and your comfort using formal analysis to develop and communicate your own media criticism.

Given the breadth of audience/fan studies, it is impossible to exhaustively cover it in this course. Instead, the course is selectively organized into units focusing our attention on three key stages in audience/fan research and some of their current applications. These units offer you a starting point for developing your own research on course themes.

02 // ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

% GRADE BREAK DOWN

CLASS PREPARATION & ENGAGEMENT

Pre-Class Check-ins	15%
Reflective Essays	5%

MEDIA ANALYSIS PROJECTS

Essay Project	20%
Video Essay	20%
Zine (Group Project)	20%
Remix Project	20%

TOTAL 100%

CLASS PREPARATION & ENGAGEMENT //

Check-ins (15%) help you share questions and ideas regarding the week's materials. I use them to shape the day's discussion. Expect material from your posts to be used in class. Check-ins are due on Canvas at 12 pm the day of class. Your lowest 5 check-in grades will be dropped.

During the semester you will be asked to write three **reflective essays (5%)** on your experiences as an audience member/media consumer and on the work we've done this semester. These essays are graded pass/fail and are typically 250-350 words.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS //

In this class you will practice communicating using different media forms. Overall, you will produce four media analysis projects:

- **Project 1: Essay** (A 2-3 page paper).
- **Project 2: Videographic Essay** (A 3-5 min video essay adapted from project 1).
- **Project 3: Zine Project** (A DIY magazine, group project).
- **Project 4: Remix Project** (A digital project that remixes other media texts).

Projects 2-4 will each be accompanied by short concept papers. Project assignments will be discussed in more detail during the semester. See the individual assignment handouts for full details/requirements.

Not tech savvy? Don't panic! Each digital assignment is designed to accommodate different levels of technical skill, from the first-timer to the more tech-savvy.

GRADING & ASSESSMENT //

This class uses **qualitative assessment practices**. In some college classes, your grades are tested and calculated quantitatively (mathematically) by awarding points for correct answers. In other classes, grades are qualitative. That means you're assessed based on the quality of your work rather than a quantity of correct answers.

In this class, you don't "lose points" for doing something wrong in a project. Instead, your work is evaluated based on how well it meets or exceeds assignment requirements.

All assignment grades and feedback are posted on Canvas.

Here is how complete/incomplete grades are assigned:

Complete Student adequately addressed all components of assignment. Work meets minimum requirements.

Incomplete Student has not adequately addressed all components of assignment. Work does not meet minimum requirements.

Here is how letter grades are assigned:

A Excellent work. Student goes well beyond minimum assignment and class participation requirements. Student makes strong and useful contributions to class discussions. Work uses clear and original arguments that are supported by strong evidence and analysis. Work is well organized, clearly written, and communicates ideas in effective and compelling ways.

B Above average work. Student exceeds minimum assignment and class participation requirements. Student makes regular contributions to class discussions. Work is organized, communicates ideas effectively, and uses arguments that are supported by evidence and analysis.

C Average work. Student meets minimum assignment and class participation requirements. Student's work is relatively organized and coherent.

D Below average work. Student work does not meet or only meets a few of the minimum assignment and class participation requirements. Student's work may struggle with organization and coherency issues.

E Unsatisfactory work. Student work does not meet minimum assignment and class participation requirements. Student's work may struggle with significant organization and coherency issues.

Here is how letter grades are quantified:

Grade	Range
A+	100 % to 97.0%
A	< 97.0 % to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 % to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 % to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 % to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 % to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 % to 76.0%
C	< 76.0 % to 70.0%
D	< 70.0 % to 60.0%
E	< 60.0 % to 0.0%

Real talk: You can't get an A in this course for doing the bare minimum. If you want an A, you need to be a dedicated student doing strong work. Think about your personal goals for this class and plan accordingly.

03 // CLASS POLICIES

ATTENDANCE //

This class is designed to reward sustained participation while not penalizing you for illnesses or emergencies you encounter on the way. If you miss class you are responsible for accessing class materials on Canvas and reaching during office hours with questions.

Assignments are how I track and enforce attendance/participation. They are designed to allow for flexibility in emergencies and so you can work remotely should you need to do so. If you have a serious and compelling reason for missing a deadline, you can request an extension. In these circumstances, contact me ahead of time to discuss the situation. If you are unable to contact me in advance, you have 10 days after the deadline to get in touch.

Students will not be penalized for time taken for [university sanctioned events \[ACD 304-02\]](#) and [religious observances \[ACD 304-04\]](#). In accordance with ASU policies (see links), accommodation will be provided for attendance and assignments that fall on these days.

LATE WORK //

I assign deadlines to keep us on track and to help you succeed. However, life happens. I have programmed in some wiggle room to help:

- The **projects & reflections** have a 3-day window for unexcused late submissions. Every 24 hours, the grade drops 5 additional points.
- Given the nature of the **pre-class check-ins** it is not possible to turn them in late without a serious and compelling reason. **Your lowest 5 check-in grades will be dropped.**

If you have a serious and compelling reason for missing a deadline, I will work with you to manage the effect on your grade. However, this needs to be determined on a case-by-case basis. If you are unable to contact me in advance, you have 10 days after the deadline to get in touch.

EMAIL & CANVAS //

Part of my job is to help students prepare for professional careers. As such, our relationship needs to be a professional one. When you email me, please format your emails accordingly. If you have not written more formal or professional-style emails before, here's a handy guide: www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor.

I generally respond to emails during standard working hours (M - F, 9-5). Expect a response within 1-2 working days. If you email on weeknights or weekends my reply may take longer. If you do not receive a reply in 1-2 working days, email me again. Occasionally an email gets lost or stuck in a junk filter.

Check your ASU email & Canvas regularly so that you do not miss important messages.

ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY //

Screenings. If you prefer captioned media, for any reason, please contact me. When we look at digital media, some of these materials may be more accessible than others. Talk with me about arranging supplementary materials/support for anything that isn't automatically captioned.

Readings. Course materials are typically made available on Canvas in ways that should allow you to enlarge their display or view in high-contrast. However, I'm always testing new tools. Let me know if you're having issues and I'll do my best to accommodate you.

Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services office should contact SAILS immediately. The SAILS Tempe office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. SAILS staff can also be reached at (480) 965-1234 (V) or (480) 965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc.

CLASS CONDUCT //

We need to work together to create a supportive, respectful, and constructive learning environment. Everyone in class is expected to work towards these goals. If something related to our class is making it challenging for you to learn, feel safe, or comfortable participating let me know as soon as you can.

CLASS RECORDINGS //

Classes may be recorded and posted in Canvas for all students to access. If you have concerns about being recorded, please contact the course instructor.

04 // STEPS FOR SUCCESS

QUESTIONS?

Always check Canvas & the Class Forum! All class materials are in the [Canvas Modules](#). We use a discussion topic called [Class Forum](#) for general questions and comments about the course. Prior to posting a question or comment, check the syllabus, announcements, and existing posts to ensure it's not redundant. Feel free to respond to your classmates' posts!

DEALING WITH TECHNOLOGY:

- You are responsible for planning ahead, testing files/links, and ensuring you have access to the materials you need in order to complete work on time. **Leave yourself time** to export/upload files. Doing this last minute leaves you open to problems and missed deadlines.
- If you run into problems with Canvas, **get tech support** from the [ASU Help Desk](#) ASAP.
- If you run into serious and unavoidable issues, contact me ASAP. Depending on the circumstances, I may be able to work with you on an extension.

IF YOU NEED TO MEET REGARDING GRADES/DRAFTS:

I would love to meet to discuss your work. Before we meet, please do the following:

1. **Review the relevant assignment(s)** before you arrive. This way the particulars will be fresh in your brain.
2. **Review the work you want to discuss, the grading rubric, and (if available) the feedback.** Try to get a sense of what you do and don't already know, this will help guide your questions.
3. When possible, **bring a copy of your work/notes.** Then, when I give you feedback, I'll be building on what you know, instead of repeating things you've already figured out.
4. **Bring a list of questions** about the work and/or your plans to revise it.

Our meetings won't be productive if you don't prepare. Make sure you take the time to do this. Otherwise we may need to reschedule.

Keep in mind, **grades are not negotiable.** To be fair to everyone, grades are determined based on how well you've met/exceeded requirements. Typically, grades can only be adjusted if an error has occurred. For more information about grades, review the [Grading and Assessment Information](#).

IF YOU NEED TO MISS A CLASS:

- **Make sure you still turn in all your work.** You don't want to lose assignment credit!
- All assignments and class materials are posted on Canvas. Look them up and **make sure you're prepared for the next class.**
- **Speak with classmates** to collect class notes and check on announcements.
- **Consider coming to my Zoom office hours** to review missed material and ask questions.

OUR WEEKLY SCHEDULE //

I try to keep a steady rhythm to our semester. Use our typical weekly schedule to help you manage your time. [Keep in mind, if class is canceled or moves online, this structure may need to be adjusted.]

MONDAY*	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY*	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p>Before class meets:</p> <p>Complete the reading/screening(s).</p> <p>Check-in due by 12pm.</p>		<p>Before class meets:</p> <p>Complete the reading/screening(s).</p> <p>Check-in due by 12pm.</p>			<p>Project Assignments are generally due on Saturdays.</p>	
Class Meets	Prep Day	Class Meets	Prep Days			

My Zoom office hours are Mondays and Wednesday 2:00 - 3:00 pm. Use these times to meet with me, check on course materials and/or assignments, bring drafts, ask for feedback, etc

05 // ASU RESOURCES & POLICIES

ACADEMIC SUPPORT //

University Academic Success Programs (UASP) provides free services to help you succeed academically at ASU. Students who take advantage of these services tend to perform better academically. Their tutors can help you develop your academic skills in writing and analysis, develop customized work and study habits, figure out what you know, and what you still need to learn.

<https://tutoring.asu.edu/>

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT //

If you are having issues with Canvas or anything technology you use for school, contact the ASU Help Desk:

<https://myasu.force.com/>.

BASIC NEEDS //

It is difficult to learn when you are hungry, unsafe, or insecure about your well being. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, who lacks a safe and stable place to live, or who is grappling with concerns such as mental or physical health, loss and grief, justice system involvement, immigration status, or persistent discrimination, violence, or trauma, including [sexual violence](#), and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact one or more of the following for support:

- ASU [Dean of Students](#) - Student Advocacy and Assistance (480-965-6547)
- ASU [Counseling Services](#) (480-965-6146 or after business hours, 480-921-1006)
- ASU [Campus Safety](#)

If you are comfortable doing so, please notify me or any relevant instructors. This allows us to provide any resources we have available.

CORONAVIRUS //

Each of you is living with the realities of Coronavirus in your own ways. You may be grieving a loss, or be disturbed by the conditions in which you now live, learn, work, etc. You may have health concerns, new or more intense responsibilities, food insecurity, housing instability, employment or financial pressures, etc. Some of you are living in town and others are located elsewhere, so the impact of the pandemic will vary.

ASU has its plan and resources (see, for example: [Managing COVID-19 at ASU](#), the [ASU Coronavirus FAQs](#), [ASU Health Services](#), [ASU Counseling Services](#), and [ASU testing information](#)), and you have your own priorities and needs to consider. If you become ill or your circumstances change, please let me know so that I can work with you to help you adjust or achieve your goals.

IMPORTANT ASU POLICIES //

Policy on Discrimination. Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of [discrimination](#), [harassment](#), or [retaliation](#) for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information.

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, and laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see ASU's [Academic Integrity Policy and Student Honor Code](#).

Policy against threatening behavior. In accordance with the ASU Student Services Manual 104-2, all incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on- or off campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances.

Copyrighted materials. Unless you comply with applicable copyright laws and/or are within the boundaries of fair use, please refrain from uploading material that is not your original work to any course shell, discussion board, or website used in our class. I reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement.

Student disclosures of sexual violence. Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

Please remember: This syllabus and the course calendar are subject to some change over the course of the semester. Always defer to the most recent version of each. These are kept current on our Canvas site.

FMS 394 // SPRING 2023 // CALENDAR

TOPIC	DATE	READINGS & SCREENINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
	1/09	[Introduction to the Class]	
Media Effects & Mass Culture (W1-W2)			
W1	1/11	READ: Barker, The Newson Report (74-90); BFI, The Newson Report (1) & 1994 Criminal Justice Act (1) OPTIONAL: Tilley, Seducing the Innocent...	1/11 Check-in
	1/16	MLK Jr. Holiday	
W2	1/18	READ: Storey, Frankfurt School (64-70); Adorno, On Popular Music (63-74)	1/18 Check-In
	1/21	Reflection 1 Due	
Spectators & Audiences (W3 - W5)			
W3	1/23	READ: Ott & Mack, Psychoanalytic Studies of Media (171-181); Mulvey, Visual Pleasure... (10, 11, 12-14); Neale, Masculinity as Spectacle (253-264)	1/23 Check-in
	1/25	WATCH: <i>Gentlemen Prefer Blondes</i> (1953, 1:30) READ: Doty, There's Something Queer Here (610-618) OPTIONAL: Doty, Everyone's Here...	1/25 Check-in
W4	1/30	READ: Columpar, The Gaze as Theoretical Touchstone (25-41)	1/30 Check-in
	2/1	WATCH: <i>Nanook of the North</i> (1922, 1:18) & <i>Cairo Time</i> (2009, 1:30)	2/1 Check-in
	2/4	Reflection 2 Due	
W5	2/6	READ: Ott & Mack, Encoding/Decoding (248-251); Hall, Encoding/Decoding (171-173); Bobo, The Color Purple (304-314) OPTIONAL: hooks, The Oppositional Gaze Chatman, Black Twitter and the Politics of Viewing Scandal	2/6 Check-in
	2/8	WATCH: <i>The Color Purple</i> (1985, 2:34)	2/8 Check-in
	2/11	Project 1 (Essay) Due	
Fans & Fan Practices (W6 - W10)			
W6	2/13	READ: Jenson, Fandom as Pathology (9-27) & Duffett, I Scream Therefore I Fan? (143-153)	2/13 Check-in
	2/15	WATCH: Fan documentaries (TBA).	2/15 Check-in 2/18 P2 Plan
W7	2/20	READ: Jenkins, Get a Life! (9-27) & Benshoff, Audiences & Fandoms (220-233)	2/20 Check-in
	2/22	READ: Stein & Busse, Limit Play (192-205); Obsession_inc, Affirmational fandom... (1-2); Scott, Affirmational/Transformative (36-40)	2/22 Check-in 2/24 P2 Media

	2/25	Reflection 3 Due	
W8	2/27	READ: Duncombe, Zines (6-21) & Consumption (111-136) OPTIONAL: Radway, Zines then and Now	2/27 Check-in & Zine Prep
	3/1	READ: Licona, Borderlands Rhetorics... (11-16) & Ramdarshan Bold, Why Diverse Zines Matter (215-226)	3/1 Check-in & Zine Prep
	3/4	Project 2 (Video Essay) Due	
W9	3/6 - 3/10	Spring Break	
W10	3/13	READ: Coppa, Introduction (1-16) & Stanfill, The Fan Fiction Gold Rush (77-83) OPTIONAL: See additional readings on various fan practices.	3/13 Check-in & Zine Proposals
	3/15	READ: Geraghty, Class, Capital, and Collecting (212-219) & Santo, Fans and Merchandise (329-335) OPTIONAL: See additional readings on various fan practices.	3/15 Check-in & Zine Groups 3/18 P3 Plan
Convergence & Participatory Culture (W11 - W15)			
W11	3/20	READ: Jenkins, The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence (33-42) & Transmedia Storytelling (1-3) OPTIONAL: Jenkins, Introduction	3/20 Check-in
	3/22	READ: Johnson, Inviting Audiences In (61-78) & Kohen, Fannish Affect... (337-345) OPTIONAL: Johnson, Fantagonism, Franchising, and Industry Management	3/22 Check-in 3/25 P3 Check-In
W12	3/27	READ: Lessig, RW, Revived (51-82); McIntosh, A History of Subversive Remix... (3pp + vids)	3/27 Check-in
	3/29	READ: Derecho, Introduction (6-10, 13-26) & Tushnet, Remix Nation (22-24); Stanford Libraries, Copyright FAQs & Fair Use OPTIONAL: Tushnet, Scary Monsters & Copyright Law...	3/29 Check-in
	4/1	Project 3 (Zines) Due	
W13	4/3	READ: Jenkins, Pop Cosmopolitanism (152-172) & de Luna, The Joy and Rage... OPTIONAL: Ahn, Samurai Champloo & Morimoto, [Trans]Cultural Legibility	4/3 Check-in 4/3 P3 Swap
	4/5	READ: Gilliland, Racebending fandoms and digital futurism (16pp) & Walker, Narrative Extraction (9pp) OPTIONAL: Jenkins, Negotiating Fandom	4/5 Check-in 4/8 P4 Plan
W14	4/10	READ: Martin, Fandom While Black (738-751) OPTIONAL: Lopez, Excessively Asian & Stanfill, Doing Fandom	4/10 Check-in
	4/12	Work day. No class meeting.	
			4/12 Check-In 4/15 P4 Media

	4/15	Reflection 4 Due	
W15	4/17	READ: Gray, How Do I Dislike Thee? (25-40) & Stein, Dissatisfaction & Glee (81-98)	4/17 Check-in
	4/19	READ: Shaw, Encoding and Decoding (592-600) & Stanfill, Interface as Discourse (1059-1071) OPTIONAL: White, Making Computer Spectators	4/21 P4 Draft
W16	4/24	Platform Analysis	4/24 Check-in
	4/26	Project 4 (Remix) Due	
Finals Week	5/1-55	5/1 Project Revisions & Reflection 5 Due	

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