

MCS 132: Intersections of Media and Popular Culture
Rip It Up: Punk and Post-Punk Subcultures in the U.K. and U.S.

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Location: TBA

Time: TBA

Course Description

Building on the theoretical and methodological insights put forward by scholars in the field of cultural studies, this course will examine British and American subcultures emerging from the 1980s. In particular, the course will examine the historical and cultural politics of punk and post-punk. Through music, fashion, film, literature, and other expressive cultural forms, we will use Dick Hebdige's classic cultural studies book *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* as a guide to assess the ways punk and post-punk appealed—and continue to appeal—to youth on both sides of the Atlantic. We will pay close attention in particular to three locations to help us ground our assessment: London, Los Angeles, and Glasgow.

Required Texts

Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*

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

John Doe, *Under the Big Black Sun: A Personal History of L.A. Punk*

Simon Reynolds, *Rip It Up and Start Again: Post-Punk 1978-1984*

Simon Goddard, *Simply Thrilled: The Preposterous Story of Postcard Records*

Course Policies and Requirements

You are responsible for knowing the class policies as detailed on this syllabus. The answers to questions you may have throughout the summer are addressed here.

This class emphasizes active learning and participation. Fulfillment of these expectations will be evaluated in the following ways:

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend both lecture and section by arriving on time and staying until the completion of the course. Both attendance and participation are essential for class success. Accordingly, we expect and require that everyone will participate actively in the discussion sections and in lecture. Time will always be provided to you for asking questions and voicing opinions and reactions related to the content of the course.

Class attendance is mandatory. Excused absences include absences due to an emergency or a serious concern. Official verification on paper or from a certified email address is required for an excused absence. All unexcused absences will result in point deductions from your participation grade.

If it becomes apparent in section that you are not reading, additional quizzes may be given and these will figure into your participation grade. Full points will be given if discussion raised in class satisfactorily meets the requirements.

Blog Entries

You will complete 3 short blog entries to be posted on iLearn. You are invited to be creative with your entries and raising points in questions you may have about matters covered in the course.

Exams

There will be two exams: a **midterm** and a **final** exam. They will consist of short answer, multiple choice, and essay questions and will cover assigned readings, lectures, films, and other materials discussed in class.

Please note: Syllabus is subject to change.

Assignments

Attendance and participation	25 % (includes lecture and discussion sections)
3 blog entries on iLearn	15% (each post is worth 5%)
Midterm Exam	30% (short answer and identification exam)
Final Exam	30% (short answer and identification exam)

Academic Integrity and Disorderly Conduct

Do not engage in academic dishonesty. The University of California, Riverside and the instructors of this class take plagiarism very seriously. Students found guilty of plagiarism can fail the assignment, the course, or even be expelled from the university. Please consult the following URL to ascertain plagiarism: <http://guides.lib.ucr.edu/c.php?g=1083>

Students with Disabilities

The professor will make every practical effort to ensure that no person is denied educational access because of a disability. Any student who is disabled and who can benefit from any adjustments to the classroom, the furniture, or anything else within the professor's power to modify should speak with them.

Cell Phones

All cell phones **MUST** be turned off and must be put away for the duration of lectures and section meetings. The use of these and other electronic devices during class (including the exchange of text messages) is disruptive and disrespectful of your fellow classmates and the instructors. During exams, any cell phone use will be considered as cheating and will be dealt with as such. Breaks will be provided during lecture for students to stretch, use the restroom, and check their phones.

Interruptions and Disruptions

The professor welcomes your thoughts and perspectives, and encourages you to share them with the class. In the spirit of collegiality and respect, please refrain from engaging in side conversations with your peers. Packing early and web surfing also constitute disruption to the class. Engagement in any of the above will elicit reminders when necessary and could potentially impact one's participation percentage.

Hate speech and personal insults **will not be tolerated**. It is crucial to respect those with whom we may not always agree. Our class will be discussing what some might perceive as controversial subject matter and although you may not agree with certain points of view, you must show consideration to others and their beliefs.

Schedule of Classes and Readings

Week 1

Subcultural Style and Thatcherite England

Read: Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*

Film: *The Iron Lady* (Phyllida Lloyd, 2012)

Week 2

London, Punk Subcultures and Resistance through Rituals

Read: Jon Savage, *England's Dreaming*

Film: *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (Julien Temple, 1980)

Excursion: Trip to the Edinburgh College of Art

Week 3

Punk Cultures Across the Atlantic: The Case of L.A.

Read: John Doe, *Under the Big Black Sun*

Film: *The Decline of Western Civilization* (Penelope Spheeris, 1981)

Excursion: Trip to the Riverside Museum

Week 4

Post-Punk in Scotland: The Case of Glasgow

Read: *Simply Thrilled: The Preposterous Story of Postcard Records*

Film: *Big Gold Dream: The Story of Scotland's Post-Punk Scene* (Grant McPhee, 2017)

Excursion: Trip to Glasgow

Week 5

Post-Punk and the Emergent Aesthetics of Pop

Read: Simon Reynolds, *Rip It Up and Start Again*

Film: *Soul Boys of the Western World* (George Hencken, 2014)

Excursion: Trip to London

Final Exam: TBA

Minor and Major in Media and Cultural Studies

A minor or major in Media and Cultural Studies (MCS) offers students excellent preparation for many careers, including teaching, law, public policy, social work, media activism, journalism, engagement with the film and television industries, education, etc. Many times students take courses in MCS without realizing how close they are to acquiring at least a minor in the field. For more information on the MCS minor or major, contact an advisor in the Multidisciplinary Financial and Administrative Unit (MDU) assigned to students based on the first letter of their last name and listed on the following website:

http://mdu.ucr.edu/undergrad_advising/index.html