

## **Creating Media that Counters Oppressions**

HRRS-2040

3 Units

Starr King School for the Ministry – Graduate Theological Union

Spring 2021

### **Instructor Information:**

M. S. Pourfarzaneh, Ph.D.

[spourfarzaneh@gtu.edu](mailto:spourfarzaneh@gtu.edu)

Office Hours: By Appointment

### **Meeting Dates and Times:**

Mondays, 2:10-5PM

### **Course Description:**

This course will present an overview of developing a counter-oppressive popular media and technology framework that includes films, TV shows, comic books, video games, music, weblogs, streaming services, social network platforms, and other forms of infotainment. It will also foster discussion about the ways in which different forms of media are utilized both to reify and counter stereotyping, hegemony, discrimination, prejudice, and other categories of oppression. By the end of the course, students will be able to write a research paper or create a project that employs this media and technology framework to disseminate content that works to counter oppression(s).

### **Learning Objectives:**

During this course, students will:

- Discover theories about cultural capital and modern social imaginaries
- Engage with cultural production in various forms of popular media and technology
- Learn how to use valuable tools to develop and disseminate counter-oppressive content
- Write a research paper or create a project that utilizes a counter-oppressive media framework

### **Learning Outcomes:**

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Speak conversantly about cultural capital, modern social imaginaries, and counter-oppressive media
- Recognize the ways in which media and technology are used both to reify and counter oppression(s)
- Engage in topics related to media, technology, cultural production, and educating to counter oppressions (ECO)
- Create and deploy content using a counter-oppressive media framework

## **Course Policies:**

### **Academic Conduct and Plagiarism**

Please refer to the SKSM/GTU policy statement for guidelines on academic conduct and plagiarism.

### **Privacy**

Please refer to the SKSM/GTU policy statement for guidelines on privacy (FERPA).

### **Disability**

If you have a disability or requirement for special needs either inside or outside of the classroom, please make your needs clear both to the instructor and the SKSM/GTU center for disabilities, in accordance with the SKSM/GTU policy on disability.

## **Course Assignments:**

You are expected to attend all classes and engage in class discussions, having prepared the reading materials for the week. Each week, we will look at a new component in our discussion of counter-oppressive media, beginning with a theoretical framework on cultural production and followed by contemporary examples. It is important that you come to class having prepared the readings as we will be building on the themes of the assignments in our lectures and discussions. Excused absences must be cleared with the instructor.

This course is structured around the production of a 10-15 page research paper or substantive counter-oppressive media project on a topic approved by the instructor. You will also be required to provide two 1-2 page journal entries in response to a reading or media project of your choice.

Weeks 13-14 are reserved for presentations. You will be required to give a 10-15 minute presentation on your research paper topic.

Due to the online component of this course, you will also be required to set up a Moodle account to help coordinate research paper drafts, notes, announcements, and discussions outside of class.

## **Grading:**

The grading for the class will be based on these areas:

*Class Participation and Attendance – 25%*  
*Research Paper/Project Presentation – 25%*  
*Research Paper/Project – 30%*  
*Reading/Media Journals – 20%*

## **Required Texts:**

All course readings will be available on Moodle, except for *Entromancy: Book One of the Nightpath Trilogy* (ISBN 978-0692563847, \$4.99 Kindle / \$6.99 Paperback).

Please see the section on “Course Readings” for more information about required texts.

**Course Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments</b>
Week 1	Reading: Taylor (23-30, 83-99, 175-183); Johnson (1-25)
Week 2	Reading: Wolf (1-15); Farzan (1-27)
Week 3	<b>PRESIDENTS’ DAY – NO CLASS</b>
Week 4	<b>*RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT TOPICS DUE*</b> Reading: Wolf (65-96); Farzan (28-61)
Week 5	Reading: Wolf (96-152); Farzan (62-83)
Week 6	Reading: Hansen (19-33); Farzan (84-118)
Week 7	<b>*RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT FIRST DRAFT (~5 PAGES) DUE*</b> Reading: Miller (54-82); Farzan (119-131)
Week 8	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>
Week 9	Reading: Miller (3-19); Farzan (132-152)
Week 10	Reading: Alpert (1-38); Farzan (153-182)
Week 11	<b>*RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT SECOND DRAFT (~10 PGS) DUE*</b> Reading: Bilici (195-208); Farzan (183-227)
Week 12	Reading: Morehead (176-189); Farzan (228-250)
Week 13	<b>*RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS*</b> Reading: Nakamura (1-5); Research Papers/ Projects
Week 14	<b>*RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS*</b> Reading: Research Papers/ Projects
Week 15	<b>*READING/MEDIA JOURNALS (1-2 PAGES EACH) DUE*</b> <b>*FINAL PAPERS/PROJECTS (10-15 PAGES) DUE*</b>

**Course Readings:**

Course readings will be selected from:

Alpert, Rebecca T. *Religion and Sports: An Introduction and Case Studies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.

Bilici, Mucahit. "Muslim Ethnic Comedy: Inversions of Islamophobia." In *Islamophobia/Islamophilia: Beyond the Politics of Enemy and Friend*, edited by Andrew Shryrock, 195-208. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

Farzan, M. S. *Entromancy: Book One of the Nightpath Trilogy*. Berkeley: Nightpath Publishing, 2015.

Hansen, Chris. “From *Tekken* to *Kill Bill*: The Future of Narrative Storytelling?” In *Halos and Avatars: Playing Video Games with God*, edited by Craig Detweiler, 19-33. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.

Johnson, Randal. Introduction to *The Field of Cultural Production*, by Pierre Bourdieu, 1-25. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Miller, Kiri. *Playing Along: Digital Games, YouTube, and Virtual Performance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Morehead, John W. "Cybersociality: Connecting Fun to the Play of God." In *Halos and Avatars: Playing Video Games with God*, edited by Craig Detweiler, 176-189. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.

Nakamura, Lisa. "Queer Female of Color: The Highest Difficulty Setting There Is? Gaming Rhetoric as Gender Capital." *Journal of Gender, New Media and Technology*, no. 1 (2012), <http://adanewmedia.org/2012/11/issue1-nakamura/>

Taylor, Charles. *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Wolf, Mark J. P. *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation*. New York: Routledge, 2012.