

Nottingham Trent University

Module Specification

	Basic module information	
1	Module Title:	Identity and Difference in Popular Culture
2	Module Code:	MCLT20612
3	Credit Points:	20
4	Duration:	Second half-year
5	School:	Arts and Humanities
6	Campus:	Clifton
7	Date this version first approved to run:	September 2013

8 Pre, post and co-requisites:

These are modules that you must have studied previously in order to take this module, or modules that you must study simultaneously or in a subsequent academic session

<u>Pre, Co, Post</u>	<u>Module Code</u>	<u>Module Title</u>
Pre	MCLT13011	Understanding Media and Culture

9 Courses containing the module

Level	Core/Option	Mode	Code	Course Title
2	Elective2	FT	MCLT101	BA (H) Media with pathways
2	Elective	PT	MCLT102	BA (H) Media with pathways
		FT	EURX002	European Exchange (Second Half Year)
		FT	EURX003	European Exchange (Full Year)
		FT	INTX002	International Exchange (Second Half Year)
		FT	INTX003	International Exchange (Full Year)

10 Overview and aims

Identity and Difference in Popular Culture explores the way in which popular media forms like television, music, magazines, and film often 'produce' powerful (and often ideological and hegemonic) ideas and experiences that confirm or challenge our understanding of our own identity and the identities of others who 'are not us'. In this module you will examine some of the constituents of our identity such as gender, sexuality, age, race, class and asks how popular culture might make those meaningful. The module might ask questions such as 'why are (female) fans of boys bands not taken seriously', 'why do gay people like disco music', 'what can reality television tell us about the class?', 'Why don't we think of television dating shows as 'heterosexual entertainment' 'Why are zombies usually white', and 'why is childhood innocence such a cherished concept'?

Working from the initial concepts of identity and ideas of self and other, centre and margin, visibility and invisibility, this module principally analyses different forms of popular culture that negotiate and produce identity. We will consider how forms of

popular culture may or may not speak meaningfully to us, how popular culture might regulate identity, and the assumptions, attitudes, and problems we encounter when attempting to deal with differences and otherness.

The aims of the module are:

- To introduce an intermediate understanding of the concept of identity.
- To consolidate and further develop an understanding of popular culture as a key area of analysis of the media.
- To create an awareness and sensitivity to other, different, and/or marginal identities.
- To understand how identity and difference are powerful constituents in how we make sense of ourselves.
- To develop an understanding of identity as a privileged site within popular culture.
- To encourage you to analyse your own experiences of identity using ideas and arguments explored in the module.
- To develop your research skills, individually and within a group, as a preparation for your capstone module.

11 Module content

The module consists of a three blocks:

Theorizing Identity and Difference in Popular Culture

In the first block students will be introduced to some of the key theories of identity and difference and develop an understanding of concepts of self and other as they can be understood through the analysis and interpretation of popular culture at an intermediate level. This block will also introduce students to some of the key areas in which identity is often theorised, for example, cultural studies, post-colonial studies, and feminism.

Mainstream Identities, Popular Cultures

In the second block students will examine some of the dominant and normative concepts of identity for example, heterosexuality, ugliness, femininity, and whiteness, and how they often appear invisible, normal, and natural and in most cases occupy the centre of popular culture both in terms of production and reception.

Popular Culture, Queer Theory, and Difference

In the third block students will explore the interdisciplinary area known as queer theory and how concepts of difference and otherness are constructed in and through popular culture for example, stereotyping, invisibility, shame, and marginalisation. Queer theory also addressed some of the ways in which those individual aspects of identity such as race and sexuality are actually interrelated and mutually reinforcing. This section will also introduce students to alternative, oppositional, and subcultural forms of 'popular culture' that often challenge or criticise 'the mainstream' and quite frequently resist the conventional and normative concepts and experiences of identity that were seen as typical in the second block.

12 Indicative reading

Richard Dyer (1997) *Whiteness*. London and New York, Routledge.

Umberto Eco (2011) *On Ugliness*. Rizzoli.

Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (1996) *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London, Sage.

Chrys Ingraham ed. (2004) *Thinking Straight*. London and New York, Routledge.

Diana Kendall (2011) *Framing Class: Media Representations of Wealth and Poverty*. Rowan and Littlefield.

Kathryn Woodward (1997) *Identity and Difference*. London, Sage.

13 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of the module

Knowledge and understanding. After studying this module you should be able to:

- Identify and articulate a range of theoretical perspectives in relation to the concepts of identity and difference in popular culture.
- Carry out a sustained piece of cultural analysis.
- Demonstrate the capacity to reflect critically on your own identity.
- Demonstrate an awareness and sensitivity to the identities that are 'not us'.

Skills, qualities and attributes. After studying this module you should be able to:

- The ability to formulate logical and coherent arguments at an intermediate level.
- The ability to understand, explore and evaluate new arguments with insight and sensitivity.
- The ability to design, sustain, and write up research in an appropriately scholarly form.
- Effective communication skills in writing.
- An understanding and appreciation of identity, difference, and social and cultural diversity.

14 Teaching and learning

Range of modes of direct contact

This indicates the range of direct contact teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. lectures, seminars

Lectures, seminars, and individual tutorials.

Total contact hours:

39

Range of other learning methods

This indicates the range of other teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. directed reading, research
Directed reading, independent reading.
Total non-contact hours: 161

15	Assessment methods
This indicates the type and weighting of assessment elements in the module	
<u>Element number</u>	<u>Weighting</u> <u>Type</u> <u>Description</u>
1	100% Coursework Essay
Diagnostic/formative assessment	
This indicates if there are any assessments that do not contribute directly to the final module mark	
Informal oral presentation of proposed learning journal entries. Formative feedback given on these in seminar and tutorial contexts. This formative assessment and feedback will happen three times.	
Further information on assessment	
This section provides further information on the module's assessment where appropriate	
There will be three points in the module where the learning journal entries have to be informally presented and formative feedback given in a tutorial or seminar context.	
Each entry will correspond to a block of the module and be prepared for seminar at the end of that block. A final fourth entry will be written as a critical reflection on the module as a whole. At the conclusion of the module the learning journal be submitted in full and given a summative mark.	

	Document management	
16	Module Title:	Identity and Difference in Popular Culture
17	Module Code:	MCLT20612
18	Subject (JACS) Code	P300
19	Cost Centre	145
20	School:	AAH
21	Academic Team	ECM
22	Campus	2 (Clifton)
23	Other institutions providing teaching	<i>Please complete in box 23 a-d - if applicable</i>

	Institution	%
23a	Other UK Higher Education or Further Education Institution- Please name Percentage not taught by NTU	
23b	Other public organisation in the UK- Percentage not taught by NTU	
23c	Other private organisation in the UK - Percentage not taught by NTU	
23d	Any other Non-UK organisation - Percentage not taught by NTU	
24	Date this version was formally approved by SASQC/DAG:	