



# MEDIA AND CULTURE (ZUR 436)

PROFESSOR ELAVSKY



# MAKING SENSE OF CULTURE TODAY

- Poland is trying to rewrite history with this controversial new holocaust law
- 'Black Panther' crushes box office records in opening weekend

# WHY THEORIZE AND ANALYZE?

## Theory

- a framework or set of ideas that transcends the individual example, but that cannot be proven
- the “right answer,” vs. exploring how any given theory helps provide insights and new ways of understanding; theory as part of an ongoing process of discovery, not an absolute progression toward truth
- theory as a tool to be put into practice, not an object of study on its own (academia)
- no single theory can explain everything about a text; critics need a range of theoretical tools and approaches to be able to answer specific questions and address particular analyses (often in dialogue with other theoretical frameworks)
- What can we learn about our world at a deeper level?

## Goals

- be inspired to rethink cultural objects/texts/meanings
- come away from this class with more awareness about your own underlying frameworks and assumptions used when you consume (and produce) culture

# CULTURAL THEORY

- *Culturalism,*
- *Marxism; Frankfurt School*
- *Structuralism/Poststructuralism,*
- *Postmodernism,*
- *Postcolonialism,*
- *Identity Politics,*
- *Critical Sociology/Practice Theory*
- *Ideology*
- *Semiotics*

# CULTURE, IDEOLOGY, AND SYMBOLIC MEANING

- Culture/Popular Culture:
  - A general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development
  - A particular way of life
  - Works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity (signifying practices)
- Ideology
  - A systematic body of ideas articulated by a particular group of people
  - A masking, distortion, or concealment (false consciousness/power relations)
  - Form/Texts (signification)
  - Connotative operations
  - Material practice (“practice” of everyday life)

# GROUPS

- **Bečáková, Klára; Čížová, Iveta; Filanová, Petra – week 4**
- **Mikešová, Marianna; Skopalová, Markéta; Kříž, Jan – week 4**
- **Hornová, Pavlína; Havlík, Tomáš; Skalická, Veronika – week 5**
- **Yalvacli, Volkan; Ryšavá, Monika; Forethová, Monika - week 6**
- **Fiero, Alana Rose; Poledníková, Hana; Hambálek, Tomáš – week 7**
- **Kubicová, Tatiana; Žiaranová, Monika; Bořutová, Martina – week 8**
- **Chumchalová, Markéta; Singer, Jan; Vaisová, Michaela – week 8**
- **Soto Castro, Yessenia Lizbeth, Fašalek, Patricija; Martinková, Helga – week 9**
- **Holotíková, Tereza; Spoustová, Martina; Weinlichová, Markéta – week 10**
- **Kovářová, Veronika; Tichá, Radka; Daňková, Aneta – week 10**
- **Pichaničová, Petra; Chroustová, Aneta; Vyklická, Jana – week 11**
- **Valentíková, Martina; Krošláková, Laura; Sittová, Barbora – week 12**
- **Ševčíková, Kateřina; Reisiglová, Michaela; Fuente Robles, Marina Inmaculada – week 12**

# ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

- Meet with your group for coffee/beers
- Introduce yourself
  - Introduce yourself (where you are from, why you are here, what you hope to get from this course)
  - Your favorite cultural/media interests/dislikes
- Discuss your previous engagement with cultural theory/media analysis
- Map out your approach to your presentation (who is doing what)
- **Deposit your 3 page summary online (HW vault) by 3.3.2018**
  - everyone writes a page about your groupmates; one document (include an outline of your approach)

# DETAILS

- Syllabus
  - Readings/Schoolology
- Introductions – Boris Rafailov