**Topic Selection Paper**

This paper will provide the ideas that we will draw upon to choose topics for week 6 and 9. Because there are so many different avenues of inquiry in popular culture it is important that you have the opportunity to shape part of this course. I do this to further the development of a learning community in this course and to make the material relevant to your interests.

For this assignment I want you to write a 2-3 page typed, double-spaced paper on one particular phenomenon that you think plays an important role in contemporary popular culture. Examples of potential subjects could include any of the following: a genre (e.g. emo, science fiction, hip hop), a pop cultural phenomenon or obsession (e.g. reality TV, vampires, aliens, serial killer stereotypes on crime dramas, etc.), an everyday event or fad (e.g. coffee culture, leisure activities such as video gaming, or a specific fashion trend), or any other pop cultural phenomenon.

In your paper you’ll want to summarize the phenomenon and provide examples to illustrate it (don’t assume we all know it), and argue its relevance/importance as popular culture using the ideas from our readings/studies thus far or from other sources. It is important that you make a case as to why this phenomenon in particular is worth studying with the limited time we have. Be sure to cite any sources in your paper.

Be prepared to share your argument with the class. We will do a go around where each person will briefly (1-2 minutes) present their idea. For this you should be prepared to summarize your topic, provide examples to illustrate it and give an argument as to its relevance/importance. We will then vote to narrow the list down to roughly five to seven different topics. At this point we will have a longer discussion about choosing the two that are most interesting to the class. If your topic is chosen you should be prepared to further discuss the arguments presented in your paper. During this part of the discussion other students will also weigh in as to why they are interested in this topic.

You should review the topics we are already scheduled to discuss in the syllabus. Also, any topics not chosen for the case study can be considered for your final group teaching presentations.

Finally, you will need to turn in a hard copy to on the due date and post the assignment to the blog upon completion. You’ll do this during mentor session and we’ll talk about this in class. Don’t worry it is easy and I’ll teach you. Please try to include at least one piece of media (photo, audio, video, etc.) in your blog entry.