This chapter explores how we have limited our own understanding and application of ethics at work through our everyday talk about it. The chapter begins by arguing that how we frame ethics is as important, and sometimes more important, than the specific ethical decisions we make. The chapter explains how a perspective on ethics that is grounded in communication and rhetoric can illuminate how we unnecessarily restrain the influence of ethics at work. The chapter makes the case for examining popular culture and everyday talk for clues to how ethics is treated in our professional lives. Turning the saying “talk is cheap” on its head, the chapter urges a serious consideration of what it means to say, for example, that one's work is “just a job” or that we should “let the market decide.” Thus, the reader is urged to find ethical implications in diverse messages and cases, ranging from codes and handbooks, to television shows and Internet advertising, to everyday conversation, including sayings that become part of who we are.

Subversive Spirits
Robin Roberts

The supernatural remains extraordinarily popular in literature, television, and film. But one figure has remained in the shadow, the female ghost. Inherently liminal, often literally invisible, the female ghost has nevertheless appeared in all genres. Subversive Spirits presents a history of the figure in the United States and the United Kingdom from the 1920s to the present, focusing on the female ghost in heritage sites, theatre,
Hollywood film, literature, and television in the United States and the United Kingdom. What holds these disparate female ghosts together is their uncanny ability to disrupt, illuminate, and challenge gendered assumptions and roles. As with other supernatural figures, the female ghost changes over time, especially responding to changes in gender roles. Comedic female ghosts in literature and film disrupt gender norms through humor (Topper and Blithe Spirit). Terrifying and vengeful female ghosts in England and America draw on horror and death to present a challenge to restrictions on mothers (The Woman in Black and La Llorona). The female immigrant experience and the horrors of slavery provide the focus for ghosts who expose history’s silences (The Woman Warrior and Beloved). Heritage sites use the female ghost as a friendly and inviting but structurally subordinated narrator (The Untold Story and The Ghost of the Castle). In the twenty-first century, the female ghost expands her influence to become a mother and savior to all humanity (Being Human, U.K. and U.S.). Subversive Spirits brings this figure into the light, exploring her cultural significance in popular culture.

The Golden Age of Comic Book Filmmaking
Liam Burke

in The Comic Book Film Adaptation: Exploring Modern Hollywood's Leading Genre
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Item type: chapter

The first chapter identifies why, after a century of indifference, comic books moved from the fringes of popular culture to the center of mainstream film production in the early 21st century. It argues that comic-book movies were well suited, perhaps ideally suited, to the cultural, technological, and economic concerns that beset Hollywood production at the start of the twenty-first century, including post-9/11 concerns, digital filmmaking techniques, and conglomerate practices. That comic book adaptations could meet and surmount such demands, and achieve unprecedented levels of popularity, testifies to their importance within modern Hollywood filmmaking.

Pop Culture and the Dark Side of the American Dream
Paul A. Cantor

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DOI: 10.5810/kentucky/9780813177304.001.0001
Item type: book
What is the American dream, and why has it proven so elusive for many people? By examining popular culture’s portrayal of the dark side of the American dream, this book seeks to answer these questions. Only when we see people fail in their pursuit of the American dream do we begin to understand its limitations and its inner contradictions. This book explores five representative examples of the American dream gone awry: (1) Huckleberry Finn; (2) the films of W. C. Fields; (3) the Godfather films; (4) Breaking Bad; and (5) The Walking Dead (and other “end-of-the-world” narratives). As these cases suggest, America, as the fresh-start nation, always threatens to become the land of the false start. America gives its people the freedom to reinvent themselves, but that easily turns into a license to imposture. The American ideal of the self-made man is shadowed by the specter of the con man, and the line between legitimate business and criminal activity sometimes becomes hard to draw clearly. Although the American dream is to achieve success in both family and business, the Godfather films and Breaking Bad show these goals tragically at odds. With its Hollywood endings, American popular culture is often thought to be naively optimistic; this book demonstrates that film and television creators have been capable of raising thoughtful questions about the validity and viability of the American dream, thus deepening our understanding of America itself.

The Naked Communist
Roland Végső

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Item type: book

The book argues that the political ideologies of modernity were determined in a fundamental manner by four basic figures: the world, the enemy, the secret, and the catastrophe. While the “world” names the totality that functioned as the ultimate horizon of modern political imagination, the three other figures define the necessary limits of this totality by reflecting on the limits of representation. Although the four figures have formed a number of different historical constellations, the book highlights their enduring presence in the modern imagination through the detailed analysis of one concrete historical example: American anti-Communist politics of the 1950s. Within this historical context, the primary objective of the book is to describe the internal mechanisms of what we could call an anti-Communist “aesthetic ideology.” The book traces the way anti-Communist popular culture emerged in the discourse of Cold War liberalism as a political symptom of modernism. Based on a discursive analysis of American anti-Communist politics, the book presents parallel readings of modernism and popular
fiction from the 1950s (nuclear holocaust novels, spy novels, and popular political novels) in order to show that in spite of the radical separation of the two cultural fields they both participated in a common ideological program.

**Introduction**
Paul A. Cantor

in *Pop Culture and the Dark Side of the American Dream: Con Men, Gangsters, Drug Lords, and Zombies*

While acknowledging that the American dream does have a bright side, the introduction explains why we can learn more by examining the portrayal of its dark side in popular culture. Works like the Godfather films and Breaking Bad reveal the inner contradictions and tragic tensions in the American dream. The introduction offers an overview of the book and sketches the ways the chapters build on each other, developing a set of common themes, such as self-invention and imposture. All the works point to the western frontier as the mythical space for American self-fulfillment. The chapter discusses the Western as the archetypal American genre and traces the ways it migrates to other genres, such as science fiction and the gangster story. All these genres offer alternatives to the everyday middle-class world that popular culture normally mirrors, and thereby they raise questions about a narrowly middle-class conception of the American dream.

**Clocks, monsters, and drolls:**
Anne Wohlcke

in *The 'perpetual fair': Gender, disorder and urban amusement in eighteenth-century London*

Chapter six examines what a popular audience of London’s inhabitants - elite and non-elite - gained from their consumption of fair amusements. Though urban officials and middling social reformers believed fairs threatened local and national order, they were in fact instrumental to celebrating local and national events. Print evidence of fair culture
reveals the messages ordinary men and women consumed at fairs. These messages reflected and helped shape gendered understandings of men and women’s appropriate place in Britain. Theatrical entertainments and fair exhibits such as clocks or mechanical pictures reveal themes of local and national significance. In the context of increasingly global conflicts, fair exhibits communicated notions of one’s role in the community of Britain’s emerging empire. The fair ground was also a site at which a popular audience encountered ideas about new science and nation at exhibits and spectacles. While there was certainly not an ‘official’ popular scientific culture at fairs, during the late seventeenth century, fair-goers saw some of the same curiosities also exhibited at court. These curiosities contributed to fair-goers’ understandings of the larger world and their place, as Londoners and Britons, within it. Fair exhibits disseminated to popular audiences notions of local and national identity through plays, waxworks, clocks, and other exhibits illustrating national victories, royal lineages and masterpieces of British architecture, and the natural landscape. The visual and popular culture of fairs demonstrates that Britons of various economic and ethnic backgrounds actively contributed to national imagining. National identities were not only consolidated in the world of print or in strictly political contexts.

From entertainment to citizenship
John Street, Sanna Inthorn, and Martin Scott

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Item type: book

The relationship between politics and popular culture is often seen to take one of two forms. Either popular culture is seen to disengage or pacify citizens; or it is portrayed as a source of political knowledge and expression. Such claims are rarely subjected to detailed scrutiny. From Entertainment to Citizenship is an attempt to make up this deficit by examining carefully how popular culture’s politics is understood and used. Focusing on the lives and experiences of 17-18 year olds in the UK, it explores the extent to which these young people use popular culture to think about and engage with politics. The book compares the political role of different forms of popular culture (video games, music and entertainment television), and it considers different dimensions of the relationship. It looks at the phenomenon of the ‘celebrity politician’, at popular culture as a source of knowledge about the ‘real world’ and at the group identities forged around the pleasures of music, TV and video games. We conclude that popular culture is an important source of knowledge about the world, that it helps forge identities and the interests associated with them, and it gives form to the evaluations of power and
its exercise. Rarely, though, does this interplay of politics and popular culture happen in neat or straightforward ways.

“Stressed” Spelled Backwards Is “Desserts”: Self-Medicating Moods with Foods
Michael Owen Jones

in Comfort Food: Meanings and Memories
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Item type: chapter

Conventional wisdom, gift-giving, funerary customs, eating rituals, jokes, sayings, and other traditions often invoke linkages between moods and foods. This chapter considers differences in patterns of comfort food cravings and consumption related to gender, age, and other factors. It also reviews hypotheses about reasons for comfort eating, e.g., sensory properties of food, associations of food with particular people or events, pharmacological constituents of items, and physiological processes of counteracting stress-induced hormones. Perhaps sometimes we eat what we do because of “what’s eating us,” but a combination of influences seems more likely—one in which folklore and popular culture play a significant role that has not been adequately explored.

Introduction
Allison Abra

in Dancing in the English Style: Consumption, Americanisation and National Identity in Britain, 1918-50
Published in print: 2017 Published Online: January 2018
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The introduction presents the book’s arguments and historiographical interventions, outlines its structure, and provides an explanation of the study’s periodisation. The years between the end of the First World War and the early 1950s saw what was known as ‘modern ballroom dancing’ rise and fall as Britain’s foremost popular style, and witnessed the professionalisation and commercialisation of popular dance. The introductory chapter also provides definitions for the book’s framing concepts and key terms. It defines ‘commercial nationalism’ as the process through which national identity was commodified by the ballroom dance profession and dance hall industry, producing an
explicitly ‘national’ dancing style, which was in turn accepted, rejected, or transformed by the dancing public. This dialectical relationship between the producers and consumers of dance also accounts for why the book employs the term ‘popular dance’, rather than ‘social dance’. The ‘popular’ references theoretical frameworks from cultural studies and the history of popular culture, to encapsulate the mechanisms of the culture industry that surrounded dancing.

From Madea to Media Mogul
Trea Andea M. Russworm, Samantha N. Sheppard, and Karen M. Bowdre (eds)

From Madea to Media Mogul examines multi-hyphenate media mogul Tyler Perry’s unique role in contemporary media culture. Unlike the discordant, popular, and limited range of academic responses to Perry’s work, the essays here are engaged with neither celebrating nor condemning Tyler Perry. This collection demonstrates that there is something inherently political about the intersection between understanding the pleasure as well as displeasure surrounding black popular cultural expression. This intersection is crucial not only to understanding Tyler Perry but also to how we think about race and identity in the 21st Century. The collection is organized around a core set of key concepts, because Perry’s image and productions are an invitation to interrogate and transform some of our most familiar disciplinary terms, such as affect, cinephilia, platforms, mogul, rebrand, and niche. Other concepts that Perry prompts us to reconsider, like the politics of respectability, centrality, exceptionalism, and disguise are informed by cultural studies traditions, while new perspective on terms like chitlin and gospel broaden our grasp on thematic concerns from black cultural traditions. Above all, what this collection aims for in offering this rubric for reading Perry are paradigm-shifting approaches that embrace the unexpected. This is a collection that deliberately brings these diverse approaches and disciplinary traditions together by arguing that Tyler Perry’s productions are unintelligible without them and that these critical perspectives reveal Tyler Perry as perhaps one of the most important figures in American media history.
This chapter explores the entanglement between queer desires and struggles with normativities in fandoms through the case study of Denise Ho (a.k.a. HOCC) in Hong Kong. HOCC is one of the few celebrities in the Chinese-language entertainment industry to have come out as a lesbian. Data is drawn from participant observation and semi-structured interviews with 29 fans between 2009 and 2014. By analyzing the interplay between Hong Kong sexual cultures, fans’ everyday lives, and fans’ interactions with global media, it is found that fans struggled with negotiating HOCC’s gender and sexuality and their own before HOCC’s coming-out, leading to the paradoxical celebration and self-policing of queer reading at the same time. HOCC’s coming out in 2012 has significantly reshaped her queer fandom. It is observed that fans have turned their attention to the negotiation of HOCC’s “proper” lesbian embodiment as the “correct” representation of the LGBT/tongzhi movement. By revealing the complex relations between heteronormativity and homonormativity, this chapter concludes that HOCC fans in Hong Kong, who are situated within macrostructural and micropolitical forces, desire to be queer by transgressing normal and paradoxically desire to be normal by tactically negotiating the limits of queer.

They Walk Among Us: Vampires and Zombies in Popular Culture
Stacey Abbott

This chapter offers a brief consideration of the role that the renewed popularity of the vampire and zombie plays within popular culture. Through consideration of the growing popularity of zombie walks, zombie runs, vampire fashion, vampire cosplay, this chapter argues that a
fascination with the undead is a response to an unsettling cultural climate in which we are bombarded by the threat of annihilation but also serves as evidence of a cultural appropriation of this apocalyptic threat.

Superman and the Folkloristic Perspective
Daniel Peretti

in Superman in Myth and Folklore
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Item type: chapter

This chapter introduces readers to the basic concepts of the study of folklore, called folkloristics, including genres (such as folk speech, myth, folk tale, and legend), performance, and variation. It provides a comparison of folklore and popular culture, highlighting the importance of performance for understanding how folklore differs from mass media such as television and comic books, before discussing the importance of Superman’s transcendence of those boundaries. Included is a brief description of Superman as a collective character—he is comprised of numerous versions across different media. The introduction provides a discussion of how popular culture becomes folklore: becoming performed in face-to-face human interaction. This first chapter foregrounds folkloristics as a perspective, a way to approach material that can be applied to those elements of culture that originate in oral tradition, but that can also illuminate our understanding of material such as Superman.

Cool Optimism
David Leheny

in Empire of Hope: The Sentimental Politics of Japanese Decline
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DOI: 10.7591/cornell/9781501729072.003.0004
Item type: chapter

The “Cool Japan” wave that began in 2001 has ebbed and flowed, with many continuing to extol the country’s success in global pop culture markets while others express concern that it has fallen behind “K-Pop” and the increasing global weight of China. This chapter critically examines Joseph Nye’s conception of “soft power,” considering its affective role in representing national aspirations and concerns about global status. The achievement of “soft power” became a broad goal that would link a new, creative generation to the collective endeavors of
their parents and grandparents, who had built ostensibly Japan’s postwar economic miracle. In this examination of post-Bubble Japan’s nervous efforts to maintain global cultural weight, the chapter draws from Lauren Berlant’s widely noted book Cruel Optimism, particularly its recognition of addictive modes in contemporary political and social life.

**Popular Culture in Emergent Brazil**
Bryan McCann

in Emergent Brazil: Key Perspectives on a New Global Power

Three transformations have reshaped Brazilian popular culture over the last two decades—the emergence of a new middle class, the spread of digital media, and the rise of new forms of cultural sponsorship. The first has expanded the market for cultural products while driving changes in the themes and styles of those products. The second has expanded the number of distributors of cultural products, cracking open circuits previously dominated by a few media titans. The third has changed the economic calibration of cultural production. These three transitions are mutually constituted, informing each other as they unfold. This chapter will consider their importance in shaping recent trends, including the growing consumption of sports and advertising as popular culture and the evolution of sertaneja (“country”) popular music.

**Popular Religion and Pluralism, or, Will Harry Potter Be Left Behind?**
Peter W. Williams

in Gods in America: Religious Pluralism in the United States

Popular religion appears in extra-ecclesial settings, is transmitted outside normal channels of official religious communication, manifests itself in terms of supernaturalism, and has an elective affinity with the mass culture created by capitalistic modes of cultural production merging with sophisticated communications technologies. The proliferation and persistence of popular religion in the United States has been a manifestation of religious pluralism from the nation's beginning, and its
founding documents have continued to guarantee the possibility of that pluralism. Although popular religion has been protean in its expression, it has nevertheless tended to cluster into “metaphysical” and “evangelical” strains. Some types of popular religion, especially within metaphysical movements, have themselves been essentially pluralistic, as manifest in their eclecticism, their fascination with the exotic, and their resistance to institutionalization. Evangelicalism, however, has generally proven less receptive to coexistence with religions that do not share its interpretation of Christianity.

Dancing in the English Style

Allison Abra

Published in print: 2017 Published Online: January 2018

Dancing in the English style explores the development, experience, and cultural representation of popular dance in Britain from the end of the First World War to the early 1950s. It describes the rise of modern ballroom dancing as Britain’s predominant popular style, as well as the opening of hundreds of affordable dancing schools and purpose-built dance halls around the country. It focuses in particular on the relationship between two emerging commercial producers – the dance profession and dance hall industry – and the consumers who formed the dancing public. Together these groups negotiated the creation of a ‘national’ dancing style and experience, which constructed, circulated, and commodified ideas about national identity. At the same time, the book emphasizes the global, exploring the impact of international cultural products on national identity construction, the complexities of Americanisation, and Britain’s place in a transnational system of production and consumption that forged the dances of the Jazz Age.

The bond beyond

Claire Hines

in The playboy and James Bond: 007, Ian Fleming and Playboy magazine

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The final chapter considers aspects of the Playboy-Bond connection from the mid-1960s onwards, reflecting on the legacy of past associations and outlining some of the broader transformations that tested the
limits of James Bond and Playboy as cultural icons. The nature and general patterns of the relationship formed between Bond and Playboy magazine in the early- to mid-1960s proved to be influential in the decades that followed, but were also negotiated in relation to social and cultural change. These changes include perceived shifts in gendered power relations and feminist critiques, meaning that strategies like humour and nostalgia became increasingly prominent ways to address cultural anxieties and the ongoing struggle to maintain some kind of contemporary relevance. In particular the chapter discusses the mid-1960s Bond parodies, the women of the Bond films in Playboy, the Bond of the Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan and Daniel Craig eras, and challenges to the playboy post-1960s. In the later sections of this chapter the importance of nostalgia to the Playboy-Bond relationship, and contemporary popular culture more generally, becomes especially apparent. The chapter concludes that the foregrounding of nostalgia is a key strategy used by Playboy and Bond to mediate and (re)narrate the relationships between past, present and future.

Exploring the Significance of “Japaneseness”

Weijung Chang

in Boys' Love, Cosplay, and Androgynous Idols: Queer Fan Cultures in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan

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The main purpose of this chapter is to examine the localization of Fujoshi culture in Taiwan by situating it within the context of Japanophilia. By examining the Japanophilia phenomenon and interviewing twelve Taiwanese Fujoshi, the author argues that the role Japaneseness plays in Taiwanese Fujoshi’s BL fantasies, which facilitates their desire for confluent intimacy, is heavily related to the historical, political, and social context in which both the familiarity and foreignness of Japaneseness have been gradually shaped. It shows how gender, sexuality, and national and cultural practices intersect with each other, resulting in the creation of fantasies and pleasures, in the sense that the construction of Taiwanese Fujoshi BL fantasies contains a range of women’s attitudes toward male homoerotism and their desire for Japaneseness. It not only explores how Fujoshi cultures are practiced and localized under different social contexts, but also suggests a situating of Taiwan as an exemplary mediator within the East Asian cultural sphere by indicating how the complicated historical, political, and cultural relation with Japan has contributed to shape a kind of hybrid cultural practice.