



***Society and Politics
in Popular Culture***

Erasmus/WNPiSM/OGUN

Lecture

LECTURER

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DURATION

Days and hours: **Mondays, 13:15-14:45**

Place: **Stara Biblioteka – “Stary BUW” (Old Library), room 112**

Office hours: **Tuesdays, 13.15-14.45**, Nowy Świat 67, room 208 or 209

Academic Year: **2023/2024**

Winter term: **30 h**

EVALUATION

1. Presence.

2. Two short assignment on Google Classroom

COURSE AIMS/OBJECTIVES

The course is aimed at discussing selected aspects of the way socio-political phenomena presented in popular culture. Specific social and political problems of contemporary world will be discussed in class along with the analysis of their coverage in selected pieces of popular culture.

LITERATURE AND COURSE MATERIALS

Essential readings will be provided on Google Classroom.

Some further readings as well as recommended popular culture texts will also be provided on Google Classroom whenever possible.

Due to the copyright restriction students are not allowed to share received course materials with third parties.

In order to be able to use all features of Google Classroom you need to log in with your university email (@student.uw.edu.pl). For more information see: <https://it.uw.edu.pl/en/uslugi/UslugiMojaPocztaGmailStudent/>

Presentations will be made available to students [here](#). They will be removed from the site at the end of the term.

COURSE POLICIES

On-site:

For safety reasons, students with symptoms of infection must abstain from participation in the classes. If they appear in the class, they will be asked to leave the room.

Remote:

In case of going online due to epidemic situation Zoom application is going to be used.

During the classes students' cameras must be turned on.

Students are obliged to use their name and surname while logging to the meeting. Please make sure, you are not using any nicknames.

Presence will additionally be registered by Zoom.

Students need to log in with their university email (@student.uw.edu.pl).

COURSE SCHEDULE/CONTENT

1. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES IN POPULAR CULTURE: INTRODUCTION

Problems:

1. Cultural studies – basic terminology.
2. Popular culture – definitions and interpretations.
3. Popular culture vs mass culture.
4. High culture vs low culture.
5. Politics and society in popular culture – introduction.
6. Political fiction - art as a way of understanding politics.

Essential Readings:

- Davidson, James F. 1961. "Political Science and Political Fiction." *American Political Science Review* 55 (4): 851–860.
- Storey, John. 2009. *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture. An Introduction*. Pearson. Longman: 1–16.
- van Zoonen, Liesbet. 1998. "A Day at the Zoo: Political Communication, Pigs and Popular Culture." *Media, Culture & Society* 20 (2): 183–200.

Further Readings:

- Barker, Chris. 2002. *Making Sense of Cultural Studies. Central Problems and Critical Debates*. London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Fiske, John. 1995. *Understanding Popular Culture*. London-New York: Routledge.
- Hamilton, Caitlin, and Laura J. Shepherd. 2016. *Understanding Popular Culture and World Politics in the Digital Age*. Abingdon & New York: Routledge.
- Miller, Toby, ed. 2015. *The Routledge Companion to Global Popular Culture*, London & New York: Routledge.
- Negash, Girma. 2004. "Art Invoked: A Mode of Understanding and Shaping the Political." *International Political Science Review* 25 (2): 185–201.
- Mulligan, Kenneth, and Philip Habel. 2013. "The Implications of Fictional Media for Political Beliefs." *American Politics Research* 41 (1): 122–46
- Patterson, Molly, and Kristen Renwick Monroe. 1998. "Narrative in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1: 315–331.
- Street, John, Sanna Inthorn and Martie Scott. 2012. "Playing at Politics? Popular Culture as Political Engagement." *Parliamentary Affairs* 65: 338–358.
- Strinati, Dominic. 2000. *An Introduction to Studying Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.
- van Zoonen, Liesbet. 2007. "Audience Reactions to Hollywood Politics." *Media, Culture & Society* 29 (4): 531–547.
- Woodcock, Pete. 2006. "The Polis of Springfield: The Simpsons and the Teaching of Political Theory." *Politics* 26 (3): 192–199.

2. WAR IN POPULAR CULTURE

Problems:

1. War as a theme in popular culture.
2. War movies – between fiction and reality.
3. From propaganda to war in comic book panels.
4. War trauma in Rogers Waters' and Pink Floyd's songs.

SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN POPULAR CULTURE

Recommended popular culture texts:

- A Bridge Too Far*, directed by Richard Attenborough. 1977. United Artists and Joseph E. Levine Productions. 1977. Film.
- Ennis, Garth (w), Peter Snejberg (a). 2009. "Dear Billy." In *The Complete Battlefields. Volume 2*, Garth Ennis (w), Peter Snejberg (a). Mt. Laurel: Dynamite Entertainment.
- Saving Private Ryan*, directed by Steven Spielberg, 1998. DreamWorks Pictures, Paramount Pictures. Film.
- Spiegelman, Art (w&a). 2011. *The Complete Maus. 25th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Vaughan, Brian K. (w), and Niko Henrichon (a). 2008. *Pride of Baghdad*. New York: DC Comics.
- Waters, Roger. *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), *The Wall* (1979), *The Final Cut* (1983), *Radio K.A.O.S.* (1987), *Amused to Death* (1992). Albums' lyrics. Online.

Essential readings:

- Rollins, Peter C. 2008. "Using Popular Culture to Study the Vietnam War." In *Why We Fought: America's Wars in Film and History*, edited by Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor. Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press.
- Scott, Cord. 2007. "Written in Red, White, and Blue: A Comparison of Comic Book Propaganda from World War II and September 11." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 40 (2): 325–343.

Further readings:

- Goodnow, Trischa, and James J. Kimble, eds. 2016. *The 10 Cent War: Comic Books, Propaganda, and World War II*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Hurka, Thomas. 2005. "Proportionality in the Morality of War." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 33 (1): 34–66.
- Łysak, Tomasz. 2008. "Contemporary Debates on the Holocaust in Poland: The Reception of Art Spiegelman's 'Graphic Novel' *Maus*." *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 21: 469–479.
- Rech, Matthew F. 2014. "Be Part of the Story: A Popular Geopolitics of War Comics Aesthetics and Royal Air Force Recruitment." *Political Geography* 39: 36–47.
- Rollins, Peter C., and John E. O'Connor, eds. 2008. *Why We Fought: America's Wars in Film and History*. Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press.
- Strömberg, Fredrik. 2010. *Comic Art Propaganda: A Graphic History*. Lewes: ILEX.
- Weinstein, Deena. 2002. "Progressive Rock as Text: The Lyrics of Roger Waters." In *Progressive Rock Reconsidered*, edited by Kevin Holm-Hudson, 91–110. New York & London: Routledge.
- Wright, Bradford W. 2003. *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America*. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press: 30–55, 86–108.
- Young, Richard. 2017. "The 'Real Victims' of the Vietnam War: Soldier Versus State in American Comic Books." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 50 (3): 561–584.

3. WAR ON TERRORISM IN POPULAR CULTURE

Problems:

1. 9/11 in popular culture – overview.
2. Revenge narratives in American popular culture.
3. Nature of human violence and enhanced methods.
4. Keep the citizens safe. Freedom vs security dilemma in *Civil War* comics.
5. Moral and practical aspects of war on terrorism.

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Recommended popular culture texts:

24, created by Joel Surnow, Robert Cochran. Season 1-9. 2001-2010, 2014. Imagine Television, 20th Century Fox Television. TV series.

Black Mirror, Season 3, Episode 5: *Man Against Fire*, directed by Jakob Verbruggen. 2016. House of Tomorrow, Netflix. TV Series.

Captain America: Civil War, directed by Anthony Russo and Joe Russo. 2016. Marvel Studios. Film.

Millar, Mark (w), and Steve McNiven (a). 2007. *Civil War*. New York: Marvel Publishing.

Essential readings:

Kendrick, James. 2008. "Representing the Unrepresentable: 9/11 on Film and Television." In *Why We Fought: America's Wars in Film and History*, edited by Peter C Rollins and John E O'Connor, 511–28. Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press.

O'Mathuna, Donal P. 2008. "The Ethics of Torture in 24: Shockingly Banal." In *24 and Philosophy: The World According to Jack*, edited by Jennifer Weed Hart and Ronald Weed, 91–104. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Prince, Michael J. 2015. "Whose Side Are You on?: Negotiations between Individual Liberty and Collective Responsibility in Millar and McNiven's Marvel Civil War." *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 6 (2): 182–192.

Watt, Kenn. 2018. "Wired: Man Against Fire" and the Revolution in Military Affairs." *Supernatural Studies* 4 (2): 42–60.

Further readings:

Ali, Sk Sagir, ed. 2023. *Literature and the War on Terror: Nation, Democracy and Liberalisation*. Oxon, New York: Routledge.

Altheide, David L. 2010, "Fear, Terrorism, and Popular Culture", In *Reframing 9/11: Film, Popular Culture and the 'War on Terrorism'*, edited by Jeff Birkenstein, Anna Froula and Karen Randell, London: Bloomsbury Academic: 11–22.

Hart, Jennifer Weed. 2008. "President Palmer and the Invasion of China: The Beginning of a Just War." In *24 and Philosophy: The World According to Jack*, edited by Jennifer Weed Hart and Ronald Weed, 57–66. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Hurka, Thomas. 2005. "Proportionality in the Morality of War." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 33 (1): 34–66.

Kellner, Douglas. 2010. *Cinema Wars: Hollywood Film and Politics in the Bush-Cheney Era*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Kim, Jodi. 2015. 'From Cold Wars to the War on Terror: North Korea, Racial Morphing, and Gendered Parodies in Die Another Day and Team America: World Police'. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 48 (1): 124–38.

Riegler, Thomas. 2014. "'Mirroring Terror': The Impact of 9/11 on Hollywood Cinema." *Imaginations*, 5 (2): 103–119, <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/imaginations/-index.php/imaginations/article/view/27348/20089>.

Shue, Henry. 1978. "Torture." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 7 (2): 124–143.

Wright, Bradford W. 2003. *Comic Book Nation. the Transformation of Youth Culture in America*. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press: 287–293.

4. POPULAR CULTURE AND CENSORSHIP. COMICS CODE AND BBC

1. Comic books after the World War II: dangerous new genres – crime and horror comics.
2. Anti-comics crusade and juvenile delinquency – Senate investigation.
3. Entertainment Comics (EC) – a victim of the witch-hunt (moral panic).
4. Creation of the Comics Code – autocensorship as a remedy for comic book business

SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN POPULAR CULTURE

5. Censorship in the name of social comfort: the case of *The War Game* (1965).

Recommended popular culture texts:

The selection of crime and horror comics available at: Seduction of the Innocent collection, Comic Book +, <https://comicbookplus.com/?cbplus=seductionoftheinnocentcollection>.

The War Game, directed by Peter Watkins, BBC, 1965.

Essential readings:

Chapman, James. 2006. "The BBC and the Censorship of The War Game (1965)." *Journal of Contemporary History* 41 (1): 75–94.

Nyberg, Amy Kiste. 2005. "«No Harm in Horror»: Ethical Dimensions of the Postwar Comic Book Controversy." In *Comics as Philosophy*, edited by Jeff McLaughlin, 27–45. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Further readings:

Adkinson, Cary D. 2008. "The Amazing Spider-Man and the Evolution of the Comics Code: A Case Study in Cultural Criminology." *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture* 3 (15): 241–261.

Chapman, James. 2006. "The BBC and the Censorship of The War Game (1965)." *Journal of Contemporary History* 41 (1): 75–94.

Adler-Kassner, Linda. 1995. "Why Won't You Just Read It?": Comic Books and Community in the 1950s." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington DC August 9–12. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED387852>.

Beaty, Bart. 2005. *Fredric Wertham and the Critique of Mass Culture*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi: 104–166.

Chapman, James. 2007. "Re-Presenting War: British Television Drama-Documentary and the Second World War." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 10 (1): 13–33.

Hajdu, David. 2008. *The Ten-Cent Plague. The Great Comic Book Scare and How It Changed America*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Shaheen, Jack G. 1972. "'The War Game Revisited'." *Journal of Popular Film* 4 (1): 299–308.

Shaw, Tony. 2006. "The BBC, the State and Cold War Culture: The Case of Television's *The War Game* (1965)." *English Historical Review* CXXI (494): 1351–1384.

Wertham, Fredric. 1954. *Seduction of the Innocent*. New York, Toronto: Rhinehart & Company, Inc.

Wright, Bradford W. 2003. *Comic Book Nation. the Transformation of Youth Culture in America*. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press: 86–108, 154–179.

5. HISTORY, POLITICS, AND POPULAR CULTURE. THE CASE OF POLAND

Problems:

1. History and contemporary politics. People's history of Poland.
2. People's history (of Poland.)
3. Popular culture and the image of a nation.
4. Popular culture text about Poland and its possible influence on international perception of Poland.
5. From socialism to democracy and neoliberalism: historical and theoretical context of Polish transition.
6. Neoliberal transformation through the eyes of popular culture,

Recommended popular culture texts:

1983, created by Joshua Long. Season 1. Netflix, 2018.

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Bitwa o tron [*A Battle of Thrones*], created by Jacek Mikołajczyk. 2021. Musical.

Selection of rock songs about Polish history by Sabaton, Lao Che or U2.

Essential readings:

Stańczyk, Ewa. 2014. "“Long Live Poland!”: Representing the Past in Polish Comic Books." *The Modern Language Review* 109(1): 178–98.

Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2023. "Capitalism, Freedom, Future: Picture of Polish Transformation in the Graphic Novel *Osiedle Swoboda*." In *Identity and History in Non-Anglophone Comics*, edited by Harriet E. Earle, and Martin Lund, 153–170. Routledge: Oxon, New York.

Further readings:

Borowski, Krzysztof E. .2023. "Poland under Martial Law in Netflix's *1983* as a Critique of Contemporary Polish Socio-Politics: An Intertextual Analysis." *Studies in Eastern European Cinema*: 1–15.

Chmielewska, Katarzyna. 2016. "Contemporary Historical Discourse on Polish Communism in a Narratological Perspective." *Teksty Drugie* 1: 99–115.

Dale, Gareth, and Adam Fabry. 2018. "Neoliberalism in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union." In *The SAGE Handbook of Neoliberalism*, edited by Damien Cahill, Melinda Cooper, Martijn Konings, and David Primrose, 234–247. London: Sage.

Krajewski, Marek. 2019. "Popular Culture in Poland." In *Being Poland: A New History of Polish Literature and Culture since 1918*, edited by Tamara Trojanowska, Joanna Nizynska, and Przemysław Czapliński, 739–761. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Nowicka-Franczak, Magdalena. 2018. "Was Another Modernisation Possible? Liberal and Leftist Critique of the Transformation in the Public Debate in Poland." *Polish Sociological Review* 3: 321–343.

Pehe, Veronika. 2022. „The Entrepreneur in ‘Transformation Cinema’: Representing the Economic Changes of the 1990s in Poland, Czech Republic, and Slovakia." *East European Politics and Societies* 36 (2): 446–464.

Sowa, Jan. 2012. "An Unexpected Twist of Ideology: Neoliberalism and the Collapse of the Soviet Bloc." *Praktyka Teoretyczna* 5: 153–180. http://www.praktyka-teoretyczna.pl/PT_nr5_2012_Logika_sensu/13.Sowa.pdf.

Żychlińska, Monika, and Erica Fontana. 2016. "Museal Games and Emotional Truths: Creating Polish National Identity at the Warsaw Rising Museum." *East European Politics and Societies: And Cultures* 30 (2): 235–269.

6. POPULAR CULTURE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Problems:

1. Concepts of nation and nationalism.
2. National identity.
3. Cultural roots of national identity.
4. Popular culture as a source of national identity
5. Nationalistic superheroes as a way of expressing national unity.
6. National myths and stereotypes in popular culture.

Recommended popular culture texts:

Brubaker, Ed (w), and Steve Epting (a). 2007. *Captain America Omnibus*. Vol. 1. New York: Marvel Publishing.

Ferguson, John (w), Gary Welsh (a), and Tone Juskjaer (a). 2013. *Saltire. Invasion*. Dundee: Diamondsteel Comics.

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Essential readings:

- Dittmer, Jason. 2011. "Captain Britain and the Narration of Nation." *The Geographical Review* 101: 71–87.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2013. "Scotsmen Versus Englishmen: Ancient Antagonisms as Depicted in a Belgian Comic Book." In *Facets of Scottish Identity*, edited by Aniela Korzeniowska and Izabela Szymańska, 145–152. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2016. "SuperScots. Superheroes and Scottish Identity." In *Scottish Culture: Dialogue and Self-Expression*, edited by Aniela Korzeniowska and Izabela Szymańska, 380–388. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.

Further readings:

- Dittmer, Jason. 2005. "Captain America's Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post 9/11 Geopolitics." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95: 626–643.
- Edensor, Tim. 2002. *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Hagley, Annika, and Michael Harrison. 2014. "Fighting the Battles We Never Could: The Avengers and Post-September 11 American Political Identities." *PS Political Science & Politics*, 47 (1): 120–124.
- Hoyer, Anne. 2009. "National Identity in a Popular Scottish Comic." *Journal of Linguistic and Intercultural Education*, 2 (2): 115–124.
- Reynolds, Richard. 1994. *Super Heroes. A Modern Mythology*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Scott, Cord. 2007. "Written in Red, White, and Blue: A Comparison of Comic Book Propaganda from World War II and September 11." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 40 (2): 325–43.
- Stevens, J. Richard. 2011. "'Let's Rap with Cap': Redefining American Patriotism through Popular Discourse and Letters." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 44 (3): 606–633.
- Strömberg, Fredrik. 2010. *Comic Art Propaganda: A Graphic History*. Lewes: ILEX.

7. POLITICIANS AND POPULAR CULTURE. CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS

Problems:

- Celebritization of politics – cultural roots of the phenomenon.
- Politician as a celebrity.
- Tony Blair – political celebrity or real statesman?
- From popular culture to politics – celebritization in practice.

Recommended popular culture texts:

- Harris, Robert. 2007. *The Ghost*. London: Hutchinson.
- The Ghost Writer*, directed by Roman Polański. 2010. Summit Entertainment, Optimum Releasing. Film.
- Love Actually*, directed by Richard Curtis. 2003. Universal Pictures. Film.

Essential readings:

- Driessens, Olivier. 2013. "The Celebritization of Society and Culture: Understanding the Structural Dynamics of Celebrity Culture." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 16 (6): 641–57.

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Olczyk, Tomasz, and Jacek Wasilewski. 2016. "From Rock Star to Political Star – Curious Case of Pawel Kukiz's Persona Power." *Persona Studies* 2 (2): 57–70, <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.968758199226136>.

Street, John. 2004. "Celebrity Politicians: Popular Culture and Political Representation." *British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 6: 435–52.

Further readings:

Archer, Alfred, and Amanda Cawston. 2021. "Celebrity Politics and Democratic Elitism." *Topoi*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-021-09763-0>.

Bartoszewicz, Monika Gabriela. 2019. "Celebrity Populism: A Look at Poland and the Czech Republic." *European Politics and Society* 20 (4): 470–485.

Dean, Jonathan, and Phoenix Andrews. 2021. "Celebritization from Below: Celebrity, Fandom, and Anti-Fandom in British Politics." *New Political Science* 43 (3): 320–338.

Granville, Shannon. 2009. "Downing Street's Favourite Soap Opera: Evaluating the Impact and Influence of Yes, Minister and Yes, Prime Minister." *Contemporary British History* 23 (3): 315–36.

Leal, Andres Bartolome. 2015. "Strangers in a Strange Land: Cinema, Identity and the Modern Nation-State in Roman Polanski's *The Ghost Writer*." *ATLANTIS. Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies* 37 (2): 119–136.

Morini, Marco. 2020. *Lessons from Trump's Political Communication: How to Dominate the Media Environment*. London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, Jeff. 2009. *The Presidents We Imagine: Two Centuries of White House Fictions on the Page, on the Stage, Onscreen, and Online*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Street, John. 2000. "Prime Time Politics: Popular Culture and Politicians in the UK." *The Public* 7 (2): 75–90.

van Zoonen, Liesbet, and Dominic Wring. 2012. "Trends in Political Television Fiction in the UK: Themes, Characters and Narratives, 1965–2009." *Media, Culture & Society* 34 (3): 263–279.

8. POLITICS, IDEOLOGY AND POPULAR CULTURE: *V FOR VENDETTA*

Problems:

1. Ideology in comic books and graphic novels.
2. Between fascism and anarchism: postapocalyptic Britain in Alan Moore's and David Lloyd's graphic novel *V for Vendetta*.
3. The nature of political obligation and political disobedience – theoretical, practical and moral aspects.
4. Individual vs totalitarianism: anatomy of disobedience in *V for Vendetta*.
5. Tyrannicide or terrorism vs state terrorism.

Recommended popular culture texts:

Moore, Alan (w.), and David Lloyd (a). 2008. *V for Vendetta*. New York: DC Comics.

V for Vendetta, directed by James McTeigue. 2006. Warner Bros. Pictures. Film.

Essential readings:

Crick, Bernard. 2006. "Justifications of Violence." *The Political Quarterly* 77 (4): 433–438.

George, David. 1988. "Distinguishing Classical Tyrannicide from Modern Terrorism." *The Review of Politics* 50 (3): 390–419.

Keller, James R. 2008. *V for Vendetta as Cultural Pastiche. A Critical Study of the Graphic Novel and Film*. Jefferson, NC, London: McFarland & Company, Inc., chap. 1–2.

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Further readings:

- Di Liddo, Annalisa. 2009. *Alan Moore: Comics as Performance, Fiction as Scalpel*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi: 111-125.
- Dillinger, Johannes. 2015. "Tyrannicide from Ancient Greece and Rome to the Crisis of the Seventeenth Century." In *The Routledge History of Terrorism*, edited by Randall D. Law, 15-27. London-New York: Routledge.
- Gray, Maggie. 2010. "'A Fistful of Dead Roses...': Comics as Cultural Resistance: Alan Moore and David Lloyd's «V for Vendetta»." *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 1 (1): 31-49.
- Heywood, Andrew. 2017. *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*. London: Palgrave: 137-162, 194-218.
- Kowalski, Dean A. 2008. "R for Revolution. Hobbes and Locke on Social Contracts and Scarlett Carsons." In *Homer Simpson Goes to Washington. American Politics through Popular Culture*, edited by Joseph J. Foy, 19-40. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2020. "Intertextuality and the Depiction of Ideological Conflicts: The Case of 'V For Vendetta'." *The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies* 2: 85-100.
- Lukin, Joshua. 1997. "I'm not Your Boss: The Paradox of the Anarchist Superhero." *Anarchist Studies* 5 (2): 131-155.
- Stohl, Michael. 2006. "The State as Terrorist: Insights and Implications." *Democracy and Security* 2 (1): 1-25.
- Testa, M. 2017. "'A Good Deal of Disorder' or the Anarchists & Anti-Fascism in the UK." *Anarchist Studies* 25 (2): 9-25.
- Tinwell, Angela. 2013. "The Impact of Thatcherism in Popular Culture." *Journal of European Popular Culture* 4 (2): 123-37.

9. HIDDEN REALITY: CONSPIRACY THEORIES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES AND POPULAR CULTURE

Problems:

1. Conspiracy theories – its nature and history.
2. Conspiracy theories and their popularity in contemporary popular culture.
3. Blood-stained monarchy – a secret identity of Jack the Ripper.
4. Governmental X-Files: The case of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.
5. Plandemic – COVID-19 as a conspiracy theory.

Recommended popular culture texts:

- Azzarello, Brian (w)., and J.G. Jones (a). "Comedian." in *Before Watchmen: Comedian, Rorschach*, Brian Azzarello (w), J.G. Jones, Lee Bermejo (a), DC Comics: New York, 2013.
- Brown, Dan. 2009. *The Da Vinci Code*, New York: Anchor Books.
- Moore, Alan (w)., and Eddie Campbell (a). 2004. *From Hell. Being a Melodrama in Sixteen Part*. Marietta: Top Shelf Productions.
- Newman, Paul (w)., and John Tartaglione (a). August-October, 1964. *John F. Kennedy: 1917-1963*. New York: Dell Publishing
- Straczynski, J. Michael (w)., and Adam Hughes (a). "Dr. Manhattan." in *Before Watchmen: Night Owl, Dr. Manhattan*, J. Michael Straczynski (w), Andy Kubert, Adam Hughes, Eduardo Risso (a), DC Comics: New York, 2013.
- The X-Files*. Created by Chris Carter. 1993-2002, Season 1-11. Ten Thirteen Productions, 20th Television, 20th Century Fox Television. TV series.

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Tynion IV, James (w), 2021-2022. *The Department of Truth*. Vol. 1-4. Image Comics: Portland.

Wein, Len (w), and Jae Lee (a). "Ozymandias." in *Before Watchmen: Ozymandias*, Crimson Corsair, Len Wein, John Higgins (w), Jae Lee, John Higgins, Steve Rude (a), DC Comics: New York, 2013.

Essential readings:

Bratich, Jack Z. 2008. *Conspiracy Panics. Political Rationality and Popular Culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press: 1–14.

Howley, Kevin. 2001. "Spooks, Spies, and Control Technologies in 'The X-Files'." *Television & New Media* 2 (3): 257–280.

Giry, Julien, and Tika Pranvera. 2020. "Conspiracy Theories in Political Science and Political Theory." In *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, edited by Michael Butter, Peter Knight, 108–120. London and New York: Routledge.

Prooijen, Jan-Willem van, and Karen M Douglas. 2017. "Conspiracy Theories as Part of History: The Role of Societal Crisis Situation." *Memory Studies* 10 (3): 323–333.

Further readings:

Bratich, Jack Z. 2008. *Conspiracy Panics. Political Rationality and Popular Culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Butter, Michael. 2020. "Conspiracy Theories in American History." In *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, edited by Michael Butter, Peter Knight, 648–659. London and New York: Routledge

Dawe, Ian. 2013. "JFK: Comic Book Hero." Sequart Organization. November 22. <http://sequart.org/magazine/35074/jfk-comic-book-hero/>.

Dawe, Ian. 2013. "Lee Harvey Oswald: a Comics Villain?" Sequart Organization. November 20. <http://sequart.org/magazine/34564/lee-harvey-oswald-a-comics-villain/>.

Eberl, Jakob-Moritz, Robert A. Huber, and Esther Greussing. 2021. "From Populism to the 'Plandemic': Why Populist Believe in COVID-19 Conspiracies." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 31 sup 1: 272–284.

Knight, Peter. 2008. "Outrageous Conspiracy Theories: Popular and Official Responses to 9/11 in Germany and the United States." *New German Critique* 35 (1): 165–93.

Lewis, John E. 2012. *The Mammoth Book of Conspiracies*. London: Constable & Robinson.

Parment, Henry S. 1990. "The Kennedy Myth and American Politics." *The History Teacher* 24 (1): 31–39.

Sturken, Marita. 1997. "Reenactment, Fantasy, and the Paranoia of History: Oliver Stone's Docudramas." *History and Theory* 36 (4): 64–79.

Thórisdóttir, Hulda, Mari Silvia, and André Krouwel. 2020. "Conspiracy Theories, Political Ideology and Political Behaviour." In *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, edited by Michael Butter, Peter Knight, 304–316. London and New York: Routledge

10. TECHNOLOGY AND POLITICS. FEAR OF (NOT ONLY) TECHNOLOGY IN MODERN SOCIETY

Problems:

1. Technology as the embodiment progress and possibilities for a better life.
2. Dangerous facets of technological development.
3. Technology and political power – chances and hazards.
4. Someone's watching you – politics of panoptism.
5. Technology and spirituality – between old and new gods.

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Recommended popular culture texts:

American Gods, created by Bryan Fuller, Michael Green, seasons 1-3, Starz, 2017-2021.

Black Mirror, created by Charlie Brooker, seasons 1-6, Channel 4, Netflix, 2011-2023.

Gaiman Neil. 2017. *American Gods*. London: Headline Publishing Group.

Essential readings:

Conley, Donovan, and Benjamin Burrough. 2019. "Black Mirror, Mediated Affect and the Political." *Culture, Theory and Critique* 60:2: 139–153.

Dzikrina, Naya Fauziam, and Ahmad Munjid. 2018. "The Clash of Culture in Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*." *Lexicon* 5 (2): 139–151.

Escurignan, Julie, and Francis Allard-Huver. 2020. "It's More Like an Eternal Waking Nightmare from Which There Is No Escape: Media and Technologies as (Digital) Prisons in *Black Mirror*." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Incarceration in Popular Culture*, edited by Marcus Harmes, Meredith Harmes, Barbara Harmes, 455–472. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Essential readings:

Akella, Shastri. 2016. "'We are Not in Control Anymore': Technological Possessions Facilitated by Simulacra in the Posthuman Reality of 'Hated in the Nation'." *Supernatural Studies* 4 (2): 11–26.

Bauman, Zygmunt, and David Lyon. 2012. *Liquid Surveillance: A Conversation*. Malden: Polity Press.

Brooker, Charlie, Annabel Jones, and Jason Arnopp. 2018. *Inside Black Mirror*. New York: Random House.

Carroll, Siobhan. 2012. "Imagined Nation: Place and National Identity in Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*." *Extrapolation* 53 (3): 307–326.

Foucault, Michel. 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Transl. by Alan Sheridan. New York: Random House.

Johnson Dave Kyle, eds. 2019. *Black Mirror and Philosophy: Dark Reflections*. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell.

McKenna, Tony. 2019. "Behind the Black Mirror: The Limits of Orwellian Dystopia." *Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory* 47 (2): 365–376.

Mc Sweney Terrence, and Stuart Joy, eds. 2019. *Through the Black Mirror: Deconstructing the Side Effects of the Digital Age*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sorolla-Romero, Teresa, José Antonio Palao-Errando, and Javier Marzal-Felici. 2021. "Unreliable Narrators for Troubled Times: The Menacing 'Digitalisation of Subjectivity' in *Black Mirror*." *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 38 (2): 147–169.

11. MACHIAVELLI IN ACTION: POPULAR PERCEPTION OF POWER AND POLITICS

Problems:

1. Political power as the object of desire.
2. Fictionalised power struggle.
3. Machiavelli and others: Ethical aspects of political actions.
4. Between fiction and reality: Amoralism as a source of political popularity and power.
5. Lighter side of Machiavellism.

Recommended popular culture texts:

Game of Thrones, created by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Seasons 1-8. 2011-2019. HBO. TV series.

House of Cards, directed by Paul Seed. Season 1, 1990. BBC. TV series.

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House of Cards, created by Beau Willimon. Seasons 1-6. 2013-2018. Netflix Original. TV series.

Ucho Prezesa [The Chairman's Ear]. created by Robert Górski. Season 1-4, YouTube, 2017-2019.

Essential readings:

Kogelmann, Brian. 2016. "Frank Underwood Gives the Ideal Society a Reality Check." In *House of Cards and Philosophy: Underwood's Republic*, edited by J Edward Hackett, 31–41. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell.

Littmann, Greg. 2012. "Maester Hobbes Goes to King's Landing." In *Game of Thrones and Philosophy: Logic Cuts Deeper than Swords*, edited by Henry Jacobi, 5–18. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Littmann, Greg. 2016. "American Machiavelli." In *House of Cards and Philosophy: Underwood's Republic*, edited by J Edward Hackett, 81–91. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell.

Schulzke, Martin. 2012. "Playing the Game of Thrones: Some Lessons from Machiavelli." *Game of Thrones and Philosophy: Logic Cuts Deeper than Swords*, edited by Henry Jacobi, 33–48. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Further readings:

Chou, Mark. 2014. "Democrats Against Democracy." *Cultural Politics* 10 (2): 163–81.

Keller James R. 2015. "The Vice in Vice President: *House of Cards* and the Morality Tradition." *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 43 (3): 111–120.

Larsson, Simon, and Markus Lundström. 2020. "Anarchy in the Game of Thrones." *Neohelicon* 47 (1): 117–29.

McKenna, Tony. 2015. *Art, Literature and Culture from a Marxist Perspective*. London, New York: Palgrave: 134–140.

Milkoreit, Manjana. 2019. "Pop-Cultural Mobilization: Deploying Game of Thrones to Shift US Climate Change Politics." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 32 (1): 61–82.

Morini, Marco. 2020. *Lessons from Trump's Political Communication, How to Dominate the Media Environment*. London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, Jeff. 2009. *The Presidents We Imagine: Two Centuries of White House Fictions on the Page, on the Stage, Onscreen, and Online*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

12. JOKER OCCUPYING WALL STREET: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DISSENT IN POPULAR CULTURE

Problems:

1. Forms of social and political dissent.
2. Popular culture icon as the symbols of political resistance.
3. Hacktivism with Guy Fawkes' face.
4. Neoliberalism vs Joker.

Recommended popular culture texts:

Joker, directed by Todd Phillips, 2019. Warner Bros. Pictures, DC Films. Film.

Occupy Comics. 2013. #1-3. Black Mask Studios.

Essential readings:

Alexopoulou, Sofia, and Antonia Pavli. 2021. "'Beneath This Mask There Is More Than Flesh, Beneath This Mask There Is an Idea': Anonymous as the (Super)Heroes of the Internet?" *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law – Revue Internationale de Sémiotique Juridique* 34, 237–264.

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Harris, Stephen. 2019. "The Joker to Guy Fawkes: Why Protesters around the World are Wearing the Same Masks." *The Conversation*. November 13. <https://theconversation.com/the-joker-to-guy-fawkes-why-protesters-around-the-world-are-wearing-the-same-masks-126458/>.

Kohns, Oliver. 2013. "Guy Fawkes in the 21st Century. A Contribution to the Political Iconography of Revolt." *Image [&] Narrative* 14 (1): 89–104.

Further readings:

Bainbridge, Caroline. 2021. "Cracking Up: Joker and the Mediatisation of the Arse-end of the World." *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, 19 (1): 54–64.

Galimberti, Jacopo. 2021. "Democracy and Masks. Towards an Iconology of the Faceless Crowd." *European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes* 4 (1): 211–35.

Merk, Mandy. 2015. "Masked Men: Hacktivism, Celebrity and Anonymity." *Celebrity Studies* 6(3): 272–287.

Permatasari, Shita Dewi Ratih. 2020. "The Altruistic Side of Arthur Fleck as the Main Character in Todd Phillips' 'Joker' (2019)." *JHSS (Journal of Humanities and Social Studies)* 4 (1): 36–40.

Phillips, Kendall R. 2021. *A Cinema of Hopelessness: The Rhetoric of Rage in 21st Century Popular Culture*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ruiz, Pollyanna. 2013. "Revealing Power: Masked Protest and the Blank Figure." *Cultural Politics* 9 (3): 263–279.

Sharpe, James. 2005. *Remember, Remember: A Cultural History of Guy Fawkes Day*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Skryabin, Valentin Yurievich. 2021. "Analysing *Joker*: An Attempt to Establish Diagnosis for Film Icon." *BJPsych Bulletin*. First View.

Soncul, S. Yigit. 2014. "From Screens to Streets: The Dissemination of Guy Fawkes: Image in Physical and Living Media." *Between* 4 (7): 1–9, <http://www.Between-journal.it>.

13. BREXIT IN POPULAR CULTURE

Problems:

1. British membership in the European Union.
2. Social, political and cultural backgrounds of Brexit.
3. Brexit or Exit?
4. Brexit and the future of European project.
5. Brexit in popular culture. The case of political caricature, comic books and television.
6. Not so much united – United Kingdom after Brexit.

Recommended popular culture texts:

Bodyguard, created by Jed Mercurio. 2018. World Productions, BBC. TV series.

Brexit: The Movie, directed by Martin Durkin. 2016. Wag TV. Film. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTMxfAkxfQ0>.

Brexit: The Uncivil War, directed by Toby Haynes. 2019. House Productions, Chanel 4. Film.

Collateral, directed by S. J. Clarkson. 2018. BBC Two, Netflix. TV series.

Grist, Paul (w.), and Andrea Di Vito (a.). 2021. *The Union: The Britannia Project*. New York: Marvel.

Years and Years, created by Russell T. Davies. 2019. Red Production Company, BBC One. TV series.

Essential readings:

- Gamble, Andrew. 2021. "The Brexit Negotiations and the Anglosphere." *The Political Quarterly* 92 (1): 108–112,
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2023. "Not So Much United: Comics, Scotland, and the Future of the Post-Brexit United Kingdom." In *The Meeting of Scotland and Europe*, edited by Aniela Korzeniowska, and Izabela Szymańska. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper: Warszawa. (forthcoming)
- Ryan, John. 2017. "If You Didn't Laugh, You'd Cry... Brexit and the Renaissance of British Humour." *LSE Brexit*. October 4. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2017/10/04/if-you-didnt-laugh-you-d-cry-brexit-and-the-renaissance-of-british-humour/>.
- Sobolewska, Maria, and Robert Ford. 2020. "Brexit and Britain's Culture Wars." *Political Insight*, no. 3: 4–7.
- Weaver, Simon. 2019. "Brexit Tricksters and the Reconstruction of Taboo: Populism, Irony and Satire in Post-referendum Britain." *Comedy Studies* 10 (2): 154–166.

Further readings:

- Archer, Neil. 2020. *Cinema and Brexit: The Politics of Popular English Film*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Ashcroft, Richard, and Mark Bevir. 2016. "Pluralism, National Identity and Citizenship: Britain After Brexit." *The Political Quarterly* 87 (3): 355–359.
- Habermann, Ina, ed. 2020. *The Road to Brexit: A Cultural Perspective on British Attitudes to Europe*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Henderson, Alice, Charlie Jeffrey, Robert Liñera, Roger Scully, Daniel Wincott, and Richard Wyn Jones. 2016. "England, Englishness and Brexit." *The Political Quarterly* 87 (2): 187–199.
- Newton, Michael. 2017. "Cults, Human Sacrifice and Pagan Sex: How Folk Horror is Flowering Again in Brexit Britain". *The Guardian*. 30. April. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/apr/30/folk-horror-cults-sacrifice-pagan-sex-kill-list>.
- Outhwaite, William, ed. 2017. *Brexit: Sociological Responses*. London, New York: Anthem Press.
- Petkar, Pravar. 2019. "Will of the People vs Democracy: Brexiteers are Turning into Their Own Worst Enemy, Brexit Vote." *LSE Brexit*. September 30. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/09/30/the-will-of-the-people-vs-democracy-brexiteers-are-turin-their-worst-enemy/>.
- Pemberton, Mark. 2018. "Orchestral Manoeuvres, in the Dark: What Brexit Means for Touring Musicians." *LSE Brexit*. August 13. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2018/08/13/orchestral-manoevres-in-the-dark-what-brexit-means-for-touring-musicians/>.
- Petley, Julian. 2019. "We are still Perilously Close to Hailsham's 'Elective Dictatorship'." *LSE Brexit*. September 30. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2019/09/30/we-are-closer-than-ever-to-hailshams-elective-dictatorship/>.
- Way Lyndon C. S. 2021. "Populism in Musical Mash Ups: Recontextualising Brexit." *Social Semiotics* 31 (3): 489–506
- Weidhase, Nathalie. "The Feminist Politics of Meghan Markle: Brexit, Femininity and the Nation in Crisis." *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, January 2021, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549420980010>.
- Weale, Albert. 2016. "Nostalgic Democracy Triumphs Over Democratic Internationalism." *The Political Quarterly* 87 (3): 352–354.

LECTURER

Wojciech Lewandowski, PhD, DSc – political scientist. Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, University of Warsaw. 2023 Fulbright Visiting Scholar at The Ohio State University. Co-founder and coordinator of British Socio-Political Studies Research Group *BRITANNIA*. Guest Lecturer at American Studies Center, UW. Host of a radio shows “Imaginaria” and “Art.Rock Universe”. Runs a blog Imaginaria (imaginaria.pl) devoted to popular culture with focus on comics and rock music.

Scientific interests

- Politics and popular culture (socio-political issues and political ideologies in texts of popular culture, especially: comic books, progressive rock, 1960s counterculture, and horror movies and literature);
- Political thought and the axiological dimension of politics (British and American traditions, fascism, anarchism and political ideas of the counterculture of the 1960s);
- British politics (devolution and cultural and socio-political conditions and consequences of Brexit).

Selected publications

- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2023. “Capitalism, Freedom, Future: Picture of Polish Transformation in the Graphic Novel *Osiedle Swoboda*.” In *Identity and History in Non-Anglophone Comics*, edited by Harriet E. Earle, and Martin Lund. Oxon, New York: Routledge: 153-170.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2022. “Małe historie, wielka polityka. Obraz Hołodomoru w komiksowym reportażu Igort *Dzienniki ukraińskie*.” [Small Histories, Big Politics: The Vision of Holodomor in Igort’s graphic reportage *Ukrainian Notebooks*], *Studia Wschodnioeuropejskie* 16: 131-148.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2020. “Values not Semantics: Captain America and Self-Reliance.” *Studia Filologiczne Uniwersytetu Jana Kochanowskiego* 33: 275-291.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2020. “Intertextuality and the Depiction of Ideological Conflicts: The Case of ‘V For Vendetta’.” *The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies* 2: 85-100.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2019. *Od faszystowskiej dystopii do anarchistycznej utopii. Idee polityczne w powieści graficznej «V jak Vendetta» Alana Moore’a i Davida Lloyd’a* [From Fascist Dystopia to Anarchistic Utopia. Political Ideas in Alan Moore’s and David Lloyd’s «V jak Vendetta» Graphic Novel]. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2018. “Siedem małych słów. Obraz wojny wietnamskiej w powieści graficznej «Kaznodzieja» Gartha Ennisa i Steve’a Dillona.” [Seven Little Words. The Image of Vietnam War in «Preacher» Comic Book by Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon] In *50 twarzy popkultury*, edited by Ksenia Olkusz, Kraków: Ośrodek Badawczy Facta Ficta: 623-640.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2017. “Heavy History – Difficult History. Scottish National Myths and History Interpreted by a German Heavy Metal Band.” In *Imaging Scottishness: European and Domestic Representations*, edited by Aniela Korzeniowska, Izabela Szymańska, 217-231. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2016. “Political Monologue vs Political Dialogue in Graphic Novels.” *Przegląd Europejski* 4 (42): 76-87.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2016. “SuperScots. Supheroes and Scottish Identity.” In *Scottish Culture: Dialogue and Self-Expression*, edited by Aniela Korzeniowska and Izabela Szymańska, 380–88. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2015. “Nowy człowiek, zamaskowany niszczyciel. Wizja zagłady dystopijnego państwa w powieści graficznej «V jak Vendetta» Alana Moore’a i Davida Lloyd’a.” [New Man, Masked Murderer: Vision of Annihilation of a Dystopian State in Alan Moore’s and David Lloyd’s Graphic Novel *V for Vendetta*] *Creatio Fantastica* 3 (50): 26-41.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2013. *Kto ma się bać? Władza polityczna i sprzeciw wobec niej w filmie «V jak Vendetta»* [Who Should be Afraid? Political Power and Resistance in «V for Vendetta» movie]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Wydziału Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2013. “Scotsmen versus Englishmen: Ancient Antagonisms as Depicted in a Comic Book.” In *Facets of Scottish Identity*, edited by Aniela Korzeniowska, Izabela Szymańska, 145-152. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2011. *Wolność i samotność. Myśl społeczno-polityczna amerykańskiego transcendentalizmu*. [Freedom and Loneliness. Social and Political Thought of American Transcendentalism] Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Wydziału Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych UW.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2010. “Pudel, mąż agentki i niedoszły zbawca Brytanii. Obraz Tony’ego Blaira w wybranych tekstach kultury popularnej.” [Poodle, Agent’s Husband and Would-Be Saviour of Britain: Tony Blair’s Depiction in Selected Texts of Popular Culture] In *Era Blaira i Browna. Wybrane problemy polityczne rządów Partii Pracy w Zjednoczonym Królestwie 1997-2010* [Blair’s and Brown’s Era. Select Political Problems of Labour Government in the United Kingdom 1997–2010], edited by Franciszek Gołembski, Przemysław Biskup, Małgorzata Kaczorowska, 67-79. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR.
- Lewandowski, Wojciech. 2007/2008. “The Dark Side of Walden.” *The Americanist. Warsaw Journal for the Study of United States* 24(American Popular Culture as Import and Export): 117-132.