

Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Culture: Consumers and Communities

- Ephemera as Evidence -
- Creative directing Mars
- Virgil lecture - Wk 2
- Commentary on Society of the Spectacle
- Visions
- Signalling as a service
- Meta Layer for Notes (Week on context, mix w ephemera)
- Michael Mann archive (week on archival?)
- HBR articles
- The Taste Economy
- Future of Social Communities + Outsiders Social Signals
- Find good video essays
- The Infrastructure of Community
- Virgil Archive
- Mimetic Hauntology
- Cities overthink episode?
- Urban Design Ted Talk
- Not Just Bikes videos
- Virgil Archive (week on archival, talk ab posterity)
- Library of Threads (Explore)
- Elijah slides
- Elizabeth Goodspeed Arena
- Communities offline vs communities online? How they intersect?
- On Swag - Wk1/2?
- The Case for Premium Tourism - Wk 2
- Leisure Monetization (Capitalism & Culture?)
- Everyone should be a cultural poducer
- Hamilton LRT image
- How Capitalism Commodifies time?
- Extra Resources Page - ABIOR, The Social Network, The Big Short, The Wolf of Wall Street
- Balkanisation and Babelification

Link to Course Slides:

<https://www.canva.com/design/DAGQA0mecqs/x1yh16S4pzl0f3bhu9MYog/edit>

Link to Course Article:

<https://cyriledet.substack.com/p/6c965021-7503-4f1a-a70f-bbfb21364c55>

Note: I left my draft notes on this page because I think it's fun to see a rough idea and then a finished product. Also I'm still refining the assignments, figuring out how I can tie them into all the course material. It's more suggestive than anything, mainly to help you engage with the resources

ACT I: Compile, Create, Expand (Weeks 1 - 4)

Week 1 - Building Blocks

Themes: developing taste; individuality within community

Read: Cyril Edet - On Swag (Why We Need Reference Lists) -

Watch: Fashionlover4 - How to Acquire Good Taste

<https://youtu.be/d6oPSXG-UjM?si=rFls3hET8ftoFb2g>

Explore: The Cultural Tutor - Library of Threads - <https://culturaltutor.com/the-library>

Elijah Slides - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QkxYOZM_fL38yko2r6rs7tuiF9hBS9ua

Elijah Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/eli1ah>

Read: Reggie James - Taste is the personalizing of Culture

<https://substack.com/home/post/p-149324576?source=queue>

Assignment: Make a playlist of songs where the lyrics, flow, delivery, or production feel like they capture you as a person. Not just songs you like a lot, but songs that feel like you.

You can note in a separate document a detailed breakdown of what aspects of each song you resonate with, but don't send it! I'll have to make a document first to analyse what I think you're about based on the songs you've chosen.

Also note down specific lyrics you relate to, and why.

Create a separate list and just note whether a song in the playlist is there because of lyrics, flow, delivery or production so your partner knows what to pay attention to when they listen

Week 2 - Associative Chains

Themes: systems thinking; explaining taste;

Read: Read: Cyril Edet - Visions - <https://cyriledet.substack.com/p/visions>

Watch: "Insert Complicated Title Here" - Virgil Abloh -

<https://youtu.be/qie5VITX6eQ?si=p7mD8QgQPsG0HVVYB>

Assignment: Create a personal reference list and write a blog post/journal entry about what each aspect means to you as a person. Do a Premium Tourist Documentation of Self

Maybe I should make wk 1 to make the ref list (music and otherwise) then Wk 2 to explain everything

Week 3 - Idea Expansion

Themes: sankofa; past informing future

Read: Cyril Edet - The Case for Premium Tourism -

<https://cyriledet.substack.com/p/2e72912b-ca35-4dd6-b393-69a3079f6333>

Reggie James - Mimetic Hauntology -

<https://hipcityreg.substack.com/p/mimetic-hauntology>

Assignment: Write a blog post critiquing or expanding on an idea/concept by someone you're interested in. Pick a book, movie, concept etc by someone you admire. What would you do differently? What gaps do you think need filling?

ACT II: Greater Community (Online & Offline) (Weeks 4-7)

Week 4 - Larger Units (change later)

Themes: social interaction; community formation

Listen: The Atlantic - The Infrastructure of Community -

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/2sySKIiKilnGJLQHz5phP4?si=e39bedd9b41249bb>

Listen: Overthink - Cities -

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/78N0bgbzAvTMWJVFrADNrK?si=a6529f7cdd4d428a>

Assignment: Write a journal entry on the issues you face getting around your city. If you were given an unlimited budget, what would you fix? What transit options would you add, and where? What parts of the city do you think are essential to fix first, and why?

What are the general social dynamics of interacting in your city? What is the default state that people are in? Are they angry, happy or indifferent? Why? What do you think would fix that?

Week 5 - Building for Better

Themes: urban design; urban planning; sustainability; physical community

Watch: Not Just Bikes - Designing Urban Places that Don't Suck (a sense of place) -

<https://youtu.be/AOc8ASeHYNw?si=7E8xlezhEWJF0IEE>

Watch: Not Just Bikes - The Great Places Erased by Suburbia -

<https://youtu.be/VvdQ381K5xg?si=fBTR5cl5ANHNb5bU>

Watch: TED, Peter Calthorpe - 7 principles for building better cities -

https://youtu.be/IFjD3NMv6Kw?si=Tz86ggHj1t3Yg_c

Explore: Foster + Partners (Climate and Sustainable Design) -

<https://www.fosterandpartners.com/expertise/climate-and-sustainable-design>

Assignment: Write a blog post on what physical infrastructure you think your city is missing, and where you think that infrastructure should go. Is there a lack of third spaces? Thrift stores, skate parks? A lack of shopping malls, no variety in restaurants? No low-cost, but quality options? Where would you place them?

Week 6 - Spectacular Influence

Themes: the spectacle; propaganda; identity signaling

Read: Commentary on Society of the Spectacle -

<https://thedangerousmaybe.medium.com/commentary-on-debords-the-society-of-the-spectacle-chapter-1-37b2e105614a>

Julian Lehr - Signaling as a Service - <https://julian.digital/2020/03/28/signaling-as-a-service/>

Assignment: Write a blog post on this prompt: In your daily life, what (clothes, topics, brands, music) do you use to signal your identity? Where did this identity come from? Media? Your experiences as a child? What type of life do you aim to get out of how you dress and perform in society?

Further: If someone asked you your top 4 artists or albums right now, what would they be? And what information (about yourself) would you be trying to pass across to them? The more honest you are with this, the better.

Break down your media diet. What platforms and creators do you spend most of your time consuming? For example: "I spend a lot of time on Tiktok and I watch x creator because she talks about y thing a lot". It doesn't have to be super serious. Honestly assess the things you consume most and how useful you feel they are for your life. Compare your consumption to your short term and long term goals. Do they align?

Week 7 - Capitalism, Community & Culture

Themes: online communities; digital behaviour

Read: Cyril Edet - Leisure Monetization and the Death of Culture -

<https://cyriledet.substack.com/p/b7bcadde-ff69-4222-8b92-19a6b45505c6>

Matt Stasoff - Future of Social Communities -

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jK1D_ENMPMKYRBjVv1-RLp6BiXhF9Y0LzYItqffT-KI/mobilepresent?slide=id.gb79a7e7fb9_0_9

Matt Stasoff - OUTSIDERS social signals -

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1F4JkvNJtEKoAyW2j-xxWQ0DlTrwSCXpPhDdK-AFP31A/edit#slide=id.g2f6605c14af_540_3

Listen: The 1975 - The Man Who Married A Robot

Assignment: Write a blog post on this prompt: What are your favourite brands (could be clothing, institutions etc) right now and why do they have your attention? What do you think they're doing well enough that has convinced you to buy into their community?

ACT III: Sort, Save, Share (Weeks 11-12)

Week 8 - Layers

Themes: creating context

Read: Julian Lehr - Multi Layered Calendars -

<https://julian.digital/2023/07/06/multi-layered-calendars/>

Back in the Days - <https://archive.aperture.org/article/2018/3/3/back-in-the-days>

Watch: Struthless - The Journaling System that changed my life -

<https://youtu.be/U8RQsJ0Q3Mo?si=L-9SB5Y4NADVam4I>

Assignment: Journal for a week using the VOMIT method, then write a blog post on what you learned about how you process your days.

Fill out my Notion template by personalising it for your life. Make your daily and weekly checklist a list of things you want to CONSISTENTLY do every day and every week. Use the monthly overview tab to plan out what you want to get done by the end of each month. Fill out a list of things you're looking forward to (movies, albums, videogames, concerts etc) throughout the year

Week 9 - Time Capsules

Themes: archival; cultural preservation

Explore: Canary Yellow (Virgil Abloh Archive) - <https://canary---yellow.com/>

Explore: Michael Mann Archive - <https://www.michaelmannarchives.com/purchase-ferrari#>

Euphoria Books - <https://shop.a24films.com/products/euphoria-book-set>

Euphoria Fashion -

https://shop.a24films.com/products/euphoria-fashion-by-heidi-bivens?pr_prod_strat=jac&pr_rec_id=7254bebfd&pr_rec_pid=6776113299505&pr_ref_pid=6560843399217&pr_seq=uniform

Assignment: Create an are.na or pinterest account and start archiving and organising things you like according to categories. Start to create a personal reference list.

Create YouTube playlists based on your interests. Add videos on topics you like into playlists. It could be funny videos, videos on a specific field, music videos you like etc.

Week 10 - Moving Forward

Themes: positioning ideas;

Watch: Daisy Alioto - The Taste Economy -

<https://youtu.be/IUnYbLoyplo?si=Op7Unn0sz1Oo8fPa>

Watch: Reggie James & Eugene Angelo - Mars Needs a Creative Director -

<https://youtu.be/2NP5A3l2stA?si=Au4ShVgvWOtADfd1>

Assignment: Based on this week's videos, what institutions, products and programs do you think we need to prepare us for the future? How should that take place?

Use the principles for Mars from the second video, and create a pitch for an idea you think is necessary to usher your city into the future. It could be a product that makes life easier for citizens, an educational program, a third space or an artistic project.