

This course looks at the relationship between specific film genres and their representation of race and sexuality. Students will develop skills in formal film analysis and learn the conventions of classical Hollywood genres; we will then use these tools to explore how genre expectations can reinforce and/or challenge ideological perceptions of race, gender and sexuality. Topics may include the traditional emphasis on white male heterosexuality in Westerns or the impact of race on representations of female sexuality in the melodrama. This course focuses on Hollywood films to interrogate US national identity through cinematic representations of the past century.

Course Objectives

Students will...

- 1 Explore the facets of genre to critically engage Hollywood film within a national context.
- 2 Analyze ideologies of race, gender and sexuality according to the conventions of genre.
- 3 Develop notation/research skills to better contextualize your written analysis of genre films and dominant ideology.
- 4 Produce an analysis of a genre film that engages race, gender and sexuality through popular and scholarly research.

Course Requirements 488

- 10% Group Discussion Questions and Participation
- 15% Notation of Grant ch3 or ch4 + Response Essay (2-3 pgs) + Annotated Bibliographic Entry (Assignment A)
- 20% Midterm
- 35% Final Research-Based Analysis Project (8-10 pgs, 5-7 sources, MLA Bibliography, 12 pt Times font, 1" Margins)
 - 15% Proposal + Annotated Bibliography (4-5 sources) + Scene Analysis (Proposal)
 - 20% Final Product (Final Paper)
- 20% Final Exam (10:15 on 6/9)

Group Discussion Questions: Each week, small groups will develop a set of questions to guide the discussion for that week based on readings and screenings.

Final Project: A research-based close reading of one genre film that explores the connection between genre conventions and representations of race, gender and sexuality.

Course Requirements 588

- 10% Notation of Grant ch3 or ch4 + Response Essay (2-3 pgs) + Annotated Bibliographic Entry (Assignment A)
- 20% Midterm
- 50% Final Research-Based Analysis Project (12-15 pgs, 8-10 sources, MLA Biblio, 12 pt Times font, 1" Margins)
 - 20% Proposal + Annotated Bibliography (5-6 sources) + Scene Analysis (Proposal — Due Week 6)
 - 30% Final Product (588 Final Paper — Due Exam Week)
- 20% Final Exam

Participation & Course Protocol

- Come to class prepared to discuss your perspective based on course readings and media.
- Post a nameplate throughout the term so I (and your classmates) can address you by name.
- Maintain a professional environment for exploring challenging questions, inquisitive thought, and debate. Pay full attention to whoever has the floor and refrain from side-conversations.
- Three absences may impact your grade by one full letter, without notice. Four absences may result in failure for the course. If you are late, it is your responsibility to see me after class or you will be marked absent. Repeated tardiness may be marked as an absence without notice.
- Absences due to athletic tournaments or other extracurricular duties must be verified in advance.
- Do your best to avoid leaving and re-entering the room during screenings, lectures and presentations.
- Please turn off cell phones. Checking your phone during lectures and screenings is distracting and disrespectful.

Assignments

- Hardcopy assignments are due on the day listed and at the start of class. I will not accept emailed work.
- Any and all late papers must be arranged 1-week in advance. This policy does not apply to group assignments and I reserve the right to refuse requests for late submissions.

- **Unless previous arrangements have been made, late assignments will automatically be reduced 1 letter grade for each day late.**
- Each assignment must be completed to pass this course and all work is due by the end of exam week.
- Plagiarism (intentional or unintentional) is grounds for – at very least – failing this class.
- Document *all sources* consulted in preparing your work, including websites and other material obtained on the Internet. If in doubt, document.
- No incompletes will be given and no late papers accepted unless you contact me *in advance* about a serious illness or family emergency that can be verified.

Communication

- I will reply to email within 48 hours or less.
- Maintain professional etiquette in all email correspondence — including “Dear Professor Ovalle,” etc.
- If you have any questions, feel free to talk to me during office hours or via email. I welcome your questions and the chance to meet you outside of class time.

Academic Help & Resources

- If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please meet with me as soon as possible with a notification letter from Disability Services.
- The University of Oregon Crisis Line offers free, anonymous telephone counseling and referrals for help in dealing with a variety of problems – from academic concerns, suicide concerns, depression, relationship problems, eating disorders, grieving, gay/lesbian/bi-sexual issues, sexual assault and beyond. The Crisis Line is in operation Monday through Friday from 5:00pm to 8:00am and 24 hours a day on the weekends. The Crisis Line number is 346-4488.

Disclaimers & Caveats

- I reserve the right to change the syllabus (screenings/readings/topics) during the term.
- This course may screen programming/films that contain graphic violence, explicit sex and adult themes and/or situations. We will discuss issues in depth and may view difficult scenes or sequences several times. If there are specific topics, programs or films that you believe may cause you difficulty, please contact me as soon as possible. If the subject matter makes you uncomfortable, for whatever reason, please consider whether or not this course is the appropriate choice for you.

Readings

Book (Grant) and Reader (R) are available for purchase in the bookstore.
Additional Readings, Press, and Reviews for selected weeks will be available on Bb.

wk 1 **Introductions: Music Videos & Genre**

M 3/30 Syllabus
Screening: Music Videos (Genre, Form & Content)

W 4/1 Formal Conventions & Cultural Studies
Discussion: Benshoff/Griffin (1-22) & Grant (1-3)

wk 2 **Reading Genre: Women, Horror & Sexuality (Conventions)**

M 4/6 Genre Discussion
Discussion: Grant (4-55)

W 4/8 The Horror Screening: *Night of the Living Dead* (Romero, 1968) 90 min

wk 3 **Reading Genre: From Horror to the Western**

M 4/13 The Horror Film Discussion
Reading: Grant (56-108)
Outside Screening: *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (Siegel, 1956)
Assignment A Due

W 4/15 The Western Screening: *Blazing Saddles* (Brooks, 1974) 95 min

- wk 4 Re-Reading Genre: Dominant Ideology and Body Genres**
 M 4/20 The Western Discussion — Led by Group 1
 Reading: Dyer (1-40, R)
 Outside Screening: *Stage Coach* (Ford, 1939)
- W 4/22 Library Research Session #1 & Proposal Format
 Discussion Reading: Shohat (216-250, R)
 Review
- wk 5 The Horrifying Midterm**
 M 4/27 **MIDTERM**
 Begin The Horror Screening: *Halloween* (Carpenter, 1978) 91 min
- W 4/29 The Horror Screening Con't & Discussion — Led by Group 2
 Reading: Clover (21-64, R)
- wk 6 The Excessive/Bodily Spectacle**
 M 5/4 The Horror/Melodrama Screening: *Imitation of Life* (Stahl, 1934) 111 min
Proposal Due
- W 5/6 The Horror/Melodrama Discussion — Led by Group 3
 Reading: Williams (2-13, R) and Courtney (142-192, R)
 Outside Screening: *Imitation of Life* (Sirk, 1959) 125 min
- wk 7 The Bodily Spectacle**
 M 5/11 The Musical I Screening: *Flying Down to Rio* (Freeland, 1932) 90 min
- W 5/13 The Musical I Discussion — Led by Group 4
 Reading: Schatz (186-220, R) and Freire-Medeiros (52-67, R)
 Outside Screening: *Saturday Night Fever* (Badham, 1977) 118 min
- wk 8 Research Week**
 M 5/18 Library Research Session #2 — Popular and Scholarly Sources
- W 5/20 The Musical II Screening: *Flashdance* (Lyne, 1983) — Outside Screening
- wk 9 The Spatial/Musical Spectacle**
 M 5/25 The Musical II Discussion — Led by Group 5
 Reading: D'Emilio/Freedman (85-108, R) and Press/Clippings (on Bb)
 Outside Screening: *Footloose* (Ross, 1984)
- W 5/27 The Musical Screening: *All That Jazz* (Fosse, 1979) 123 min
- wk 10 The Musical Spectacle**
 M 6/1 The Musical Discussion II
 Reading: Press/Clippings (on Bb)
 Outside Screenings: *Dirty Dancing* (Ardolino 1987)
 and *Save the Last Dance* (Carter, 2001) 112 min
- W 6/3 Discussion: Music Videos Redux
 Reading: Gow (41-70, on Bb)
Final Paper Due
- wk 11 T 6/9 Final Exam at 10:15am**