



SCREENING RACE

Radio-Television-Film 323C

Cross-Listed with AFR 372E and AMS 325
Fall 2018

Lectures:

Monday 1:30-3pm in CMA 3.116*
Wednesday 1:30-3pm in CMA 3.120*
*Note the different room

Screenings:

5-7:30pm in CMA 3.116

Professor: Dr. Jennifer McClearen, Dept. of Radio-Television-Film

Office hours: Mondays 12:45-1:25pm; Tuesdays 3:20-5pm; Wednesdays 4:20-5pm

Office: TBD

Email jennifer.mcclearen@utexas.edu

Twitter: @jmcclareen

Web: jennifermcclearen.com

Teaching Assistant: Ceci Moffett, PhD Student, Radio-Television-Film

Office hours: By appointment

Email: c.moffett@utexas.edu

Note: This syllabus is subject to revision! Please check Canvas and your email frequently for any updates to readings, screenings, or class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

RTF 323C, Screening Race is designed to provide students with the language and critical tools to understand and discuss racial and ethnic representation and production issues in U.S. film and entertainment television. We will survey the history and evolving representations of race

and ethnicity in the entertainment media and related topics of concern to media producers, audiences, and scholars. While a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches will be reviewed, critical and cultural studies approaches to film and television criticism will be emphasized.

This course carries UT's Cultural Diversity flag. It focuses on the representation of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and American Indians/Alaskan Natives in narrative film and television, as well as on Middle Eastern/Arab, Jewish, and European American representation and the construction of "whiteness." In addition, intersections of class, gender, sexual orientation, and citizenship with race and ethnicity in mediated representation will be explored.

Some questions we'll explore and answer through the course of the semester:

- How have representations of various ethnic and racial groups evolved in the U.S. throughout film and television history? What is their significance in relation to social history and hierarchies in the United States?
- How can we assess contemporary representations, particularly in light of the increasing ethnic diversity of the U.S. audience and casting trends that emphasize ethnic and racial ambiguity?
- What can screenwriters and media producers do to attempt to improve how various groups are represented in film and television texts?

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required texts are available for download on Canvas.

SCREENINGS

The screenings in this class are required course material, like assigned reading in a literature course. If you do have to miss a screening, be sure to watch what you've missed *before the next class*.

ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments will be turned in on Canvas. I will provide additional details and information on these assignments on Canvas as well.

I: *Reading and Screening Pop Quizzes*. (15% of final grade).

Throughout the course I will administer pop quizzes on the readings, screenings, and lectures to test your basic knowledge of course content. I will not necessarily warn you that a pop quiz is coming the next class day and you should be ready to take the quiz on any day. The quiz questions will consist of content since the last quiz. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

II. Engagement Activities. (10% of final grade).

Engagement activities are opportunities for you to engage course content more deeply and share your insights in writing or with your classmates. These may be short reflective writing exercises, pair work, or group activities. Your two lowest engagement activities scores will be dropped.

III: Weekly Discussion Posts. (25% of final grade).

Each Friday you will submit a 300-word discussion post reflecting on some aspect of race and media covered that week and respond to two other students' posts. Each post will cite **at least one reading and one screening or topic discussed in class**. Your two lowest discussion post scores will be dropped. **Please see additional assignment instructions on Canvas.**

IV: Final Group Project Part 1: Photo Essay (20% of final grade)

You will analyze found images of a race in the media topic that interests you using concepts, theories, and discussions from this course. This activity will be done in **groups of two**. The photo essay that is essentially a first draft of your final video essay (see description below). You will select 8-10 images that help you argue a major thesis about some aspect of race in the media. You'll also provide written descriptions of the images that includes an introduction, body, and conclusion. The photo essay is due on November 19. **More information on this assignment is on the Canvas assignment page.**

V: Final Group Project Part 2: Video Essay (30% of final grade)

Your final project for this class will be a 5-minute video essay and will be completed with the same partner and on the same topic as your photo essay. A video essay is similar to a final paper in that you have to use analysis skills to make a claim about a particular media artifact. The assignment requires you to incorporate photos, video, and your own voices into the video essay. This assignment will be completed in pairs and I have reserved some class time for you to work with your partners. You do not need to have experience in video essays to do this assignment well and there will be dedicated class time for learning video editing/how to do video essays. The assignment is divided into three parts.

- a) 5-minute video essay
- b) Feedback on Student Videos
- c) Self and Peer Evaluation of Group Assignment

More information on this assignment is on the Canvas assignment page.

CLASS POLICIES

Syllabus Revisions: Changes to the course schedule and assignments may occur due to unforeseen circumstances; please make sure you check Canvas frequently for updates.

Grading system: This class will be graded using the following letter grade system: A (94%+), A- (90-93%), B+ (87-89%), B (84-86%), B- (80-83%), C+ (77-79%), C (74-76%), D (60-69%), and F (less than 60%). Final grades that are .5 and above will be rounded up.

Access and Accommodation: Your experience in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Texas to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. Please inform me early in the first weeks of the semester if you have a learning difference or other issue that could affect your performance in this class. The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Inclusion: Consideration for each other is very important in this classroom. This includes being respectful of diversity of all kinds: race, ethnicity, sex and gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, among others. The diversities that each of us bring to the classroom allow us to be exposed to other points of view. Please show consideration for each other, and be open to listening to new perspectives and ideas. If you have any concerns about any of these issues within this class, please let me know as soon as possible. Conversations will remain confidential unless you request otherwise. Alternatively, students seeking support around these issues can find more information and resources

Attendance: Each week we will have pair and group activities that will help you engage more deeply with course content. Although attendance is not specifically required, active engagement is a portion of your grade and a major factor in your learning. If you must be absent, please check with a classmate to find out what you have missed.

Late assignments. For purposes of fairness for all students, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete all assignments. Late assignments will be subject to a grade penalty.

Digital Devices. Computers and tablets are allowed (and encouraged) in our media classroom, but please only use them for class related work! People with laptops should sit in the middle or back of the room to avoid distracting other students. Cell phones should be on silent and put away during class.

Mutual Respect: In lecture and discussion sections we will be talking about such loaded topics as race and racism in the media industries and American society. In this endeavor, one of my main responsibilities is to ensure that the classroom is a space in which everyone can feel safe, speak up, and feel respected. I don't expect that we'll always agree or that conversations will always be comfortable for everyone. In fact, I encourage discussion and debate in class. What I do ask, is that you engage with me and with each other with attentive listening and mutual respect. If discomfort ever gives way to fearing for one's emotional or physical safety, then please address these concerns with me immediately.

Academic Honesty: Work turned in by a student should be solely her/his own work. Any time an outside source is utilized in the writing of a student paper and not properly acknowledged, this is a form of plagiarism. Plagiarism, cheating on an assignment or exam, or other academic misconduct will not be tolerated and results in severe sanctions, which can include failing the course or expulsion from the university. Please don't put yourself in this position. For more

information on scholastic dishonesty, please visit the Student Judicial services Web site at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

Writing Support: I encourage you to seek writing assistance from the Moody College Writing Support Program or the University Writing Center. The Moody College Writing Support Program, located at BMC 3.322, offers one-on-one assistance without charge to students seeking to improve their writing in all fields of communication, including film and television studies. Students may book half-hour appointments at moody.utexas.edu/students/moodywriting or drop in during all stages of the writing process. The University Writing Center, located in Learning Commons, PCL 2.330, also offers individualized assistance to students who want to improve their writing skills. There is no charge, and students may come in on a drop in or appointment basis. They are at 512-471-6222 and uwc.utexas.edu.

Counseling Support: Taking care of your general well-being is an important step in being a successful student. If stress, test anxiety, racing thoughts, feeling unmotivated or anything else is getting in your way, there are options available for support.

For *immediate* support:

- Visit/Call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC): M-F 8-5p | SSB, 5th floor | [512-471-3515](tel:5124713515) | cmhc.utexas.edu
- CMHC Crisis Line: 24/7 | [512.471.2255](tel:5124712255) | cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html

CARE Counselor in the Moody College of Communication is: Abby Simpson, LCSW

- M-F 8-5p | CMA 4.134 | [512-471-7642](tel:5124717642) (Please *leave a message* if she is unavailable)

FREE Services at CMHC:

- Brief assessments and referral services
- Mental health & wellness articles - cmhc.utexas.edu/commonconcerns.html
- MindBody Lab - cmhc.utexas.edu/mindbodylab.html
- Classes, workshops, & groups - cmhc.utexas.edu/groups.html

CLASS SCHEDULE

(Please refer to Canvas frequently for revisions to the schedule)

Week 1: Introductions

Wednesday, August 29: Introductions to the Course

Reading: The course syllabus (Canvas)

Week 2: Foundations

Monday September 4 Labor Day – No Class

Wednesday September 5: What is Race? What is Representation?

Reading: Omi and Winant, “Racial Formations;”

Reading: Sara Boboltz and Kimberly Yam. "Why On-Screen Representation Actually Matters"

Wednesday, September 5: Screening:

Film: Jordan Peele (2017). "Get Out." (153 mins)

Friday, September 7: Discussion Post 1 Due

Week 3: Representations of Blackness/Whiteness

Monday, September 10: Discuss "Get Out" and Early Hollywood Film

Reading: Lanre Bakare, "Get Out: The Film that Dares to Reveal the Horror of Liberal Racism in America"

Reading: Donald Bogle, "Black Beginnings"

Wednesday, September 12: Constructions of Blackness and Whiteness

Reading 1: Richard Dyer. "The Matter of Whiteness"

Reading 2: David Pilgrim, "The Tragic Mulatto Myth"

Wednesday, September 12: Screening

Film: John Stahl (1934). "Imitation of Life" (111 min.)

Friday, September 14: Discussion Post 2 Due

Week 4: Intersectionality

Monday, September 17: What is intersectionality

Reading: Thinking Race Blog (2017). "We're All Just Different: How Intersectionality is Being Colonized by White People" (Canvas)

Wednesday, September 19: Intersections of Race, Gender, & Sexuality

Reading: Marlo David (2015). "More than Baby Mamas: Black Mothers and Hip-Hop-Feminism."

Reading: bell hooks, "Is Paris Burning?"

Wednesday, September 19:

Film: Jeannie Livingston (1990). "Paris is Burning" (78 min.)

TV Episode: Ryan Murphy. (2018). "Pose" S1E1

Friday, September 21: Discussion Post 3 Due

Week 5: Stereotyping

Monday, September 24: Stereotype Part 1

Reading: Charles Ramírez Berg, "Stereotypes in Film" pp. 38-42 only;

Reading: Stuart Hall, excerpt, "Spectacle of the Other," p. 225-233, 239-253.

Wednesday, September 26: Stereotypes Part 2

Reading: Karin Wilkins, "Fearing the 'Other' in the Name of Security."

Wednesday, September 26: Screening

Film: Miguel Pickler & Chyng Sun (2012). "Latinos Beyond the Reel: Challenging Racial Stereotypes" (84 Minutes)

Friday, September 28: Discussion Post 4 Due

Week 6: Complexities of Latina/o (Under-)Representation

Monday October 1: Histories of Latina/o Representation and U.S. Racial Riddles

Reading 1: Angharad Valdivia, excerpt, Introduction, *Latina/os and the Media* (pp. 4-14)

Reading 2 Robert S. Lichter and Daniel R. Amundson. "Distorted Reality: Hispanic Characters in TV Entertainment."

Wednesday, October 3 Contemporary Latinidad

Reading: Jaime S. Gomez, "Telenovelas from the Rio Grande to the Andes" (Cristina Ibarra sections)

Canvas Reading: 6 Ways Jane the Virgin is Destroying Latino Stereotypes (Canvas)

Wednesday, October 3: Screenings

TV Episode: Jane the Virgin. S1E1

Film: Cristina Ibarra (2014) Las Marthas. (60min)

Friday, October 5: Discussion Post 5 Due

Week 7: Native American Representation

Monday, October 8 The Hollywood Western

Reading 1: John O'Connor, "The White Man's Indian;"

Reading 2: Gary Edgerton and Kathy Merlock Jackson, "Redesigning Pocahontas"

Wednesday, October 10: Contemporary Native Representation

Reading: TBD

Wednesday, October 10: Screening

TBD

Friday, October 12: Discussion Post 6 Due

Week 8: Asian and Pacific Islands American (APIA) Representation

Monday, October 15: Histories of Asian American and Pacific Islander Representation

Reading: Doobo Shim, "From Yellow Peril Through Model Minority..."

Reading: Chong-suk Han. "'Sexy Like a Girl and Horny Like a Boy': Contemporary Gay 'Western' Narratives About Gay Men"

Wednesday, October 17: Yellow Peril Futures

Reading: LeiLani Nishime (2016). "Whitewashing Yellow Futures in Ex Machina, CloudAtlas, and Advantageous: Gender, Labor, and Technology in Sci-fi Film"

Wednesday, October 17: Screening

Film: (Netflix): Advantageous (Jennifer Phang, 2015)

Friday, October 19: Discussion Post 7 Due

Week 9: Mixed Race Representation

Monday, October 22 Evolving Taboos and Images

Reading: Ralina Joseph. (2014). Recursive Racial Transformation: Selling the Exceptional Multiracial on America's Next Top Model

Reading: Sarah E. Gaither. I Study Biracial Identity in America. Here's Why Meghan Markle is a Big Deal

Wednesday, October 24: "Racelessness"

Reading: Mary Beltrán, "The New Hollywood Racelessness: Only the Fast, Furious (and Multi-racial) Will Survive"

Wednesday, October 24: Screening

Episode: Dear White People. S1E1
TBD

Friday, October 26: Discussion Post 8 Due

Week 10: Representing Whiteness

Monday, October 29: Classed Whiteness

Reading: Tasha Rennels. (2015). "Here Comes Honey Boo Boo: A Cautionary Tale Staring White Working-Class People."

Wednesday, October 31: Representing Arab and Jewish Americans

Reading 1: Peter Baumaunt: Homeland is a Brilliant Drama. But Does it Present a Crude Image of Muslims (Canvas)

Reading 2: Joyce Antler, "Jewish Women on Television: Too Jewish or Not Enough?"

Wednesday, October 31st: Screening

Film: Deepa Kumar (2017): "Constructing the Terrorist Threat: Islamophobia, The Media, and the War on Terror."

TV Episode: Floribama Shore. S1 E1

Friday, November 2: Discussion Post 9 Due

Week 11: Resistance: Reading Strategies

Monday, November 5: Coding Strategies

Reading: Stuart Hall, excerpt from "Spectacle of the Other" (pp. 269-275)

Wednesday, November 7: Oppositional Readings

Reading: bell hooks, "The Oppositional Gaze"

Wednesday, November 7: Screening

Film: Ryan Coogler (2018). *Black Panther*.

Friday, November 9: Discussion Post 10 Due (last discussion post!)

Week 12: Resistance: Media Production

Monday, November 12 *Black Panther* Discussion and Photo Essays

Reading: Reading: Clarisse Loughrey. "Black Panther Brings Afrofuturism to the Mainstream."

Reading: Photo Essay Assignment Description On Canvas

Wednesday, November 14: Diversity Debates

Reading 1: Emily Nussbaum, "Primary Colors: Shonda Rhimes, *Scandal*, and the Diversity Debate;"

Reading 2: Alfred Martin. "Pose(r): Ryan Murphy, Trans and Queer of Color Labor, and the Politics of Representation

Reading: Mary Beltrán, "Meaningful Diversity"

Wednesday, November 14: Screenings

TV Episode: TBD

TV Episode: TBD

TV Episode: TBD

Friday, November 16: **Photo Essay Due**

Week 13: Resistance: Media Production Continued

Monday, November 19: Peer Feedback on Photo Essays (Engagement Activity)

Reading: none

Wednesday, November 21 – **NO CLASS** Thanksgiving Break

Week 14: Going Public

Monday, November 26: Documentary for Public Dialogue on Race

Reading: TBD Canvas

Wednesday, November 28: Video Essays

Reading: Final Project Description on Canvas

Wednesday, November 28: Screening - None

Week 15: Screening Final Projects

Monday, December 3: Group Work on Final Project

Wednesday, December 5: Group Work on Final Project (**Final Project Due 11:59pm on Canvas**)

Wednesday, December 5: Screening Final Projects
Required Screenings: 5-7:30

Monday, December 10 – Screening Final Projects
Due: **Feedback on Video essays due by 11:59pm**
Due: **Partner and Self Evaluations due by 11:59pm**