

ETHN 0050 - ETHNIC IMAGES IN FILM

Catalog Description

Formerly known as SSCI 50

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Interdisciplinary approach to study the intersections of ethnic culture, race, socio-economic class, and gender in the United States through the medium of film. Examines film content for representation and accuracy, the multiple dimensions of media stereotypes, and the authenticity of diverse ethnic experiences with particular emphasis on gender, race and class. Note: not a course in film making or film criticism. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Formulate an analytical framework for evaluating stereotypes in films and popular media cultures, with an emphasis on historically defined racialized core groups (i.e. Native Americans, African Americans, Latina/o Americans and/or Asian Americans).
- CSLO #2: Deconstruct films as documents and critique content for accurate or stereotypical representation of the intersections of race and ethnicity with other forms of difference affected by hierarchy and oppression, such as class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability and/or age.
- CSLO #3: Describe how media imagery, and the use of film, influences and informs anti-racist education, and the movements and methods by which public policy is formed.

Effective Term

Fall 2023

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

With a focus on ethnic images in film, and through oral and written formats, students will:

1. Analyze films as documents and critique content for accurate representation of historically defined racialized core groups (i.e. Native Americans, African Americans, Latina/o Americans and/or Asian Americans).
2. Formulate an analytical framework for uncovering, evaluating and challenging stereotypes, bias, and misrepresentation.
3. Compare and contrast similar film content from different perspectives (outsider perspectives versus insider perspectives).

4. Apply theory to describe the connection between film portrayals and critical events in the histories, cultures and intellectual traditions, with special focus on the lived-experiences and social struggles of historically defined racialized core groups (i.e. Native Americans, African Americans, Latina/o Americans and/or Asian Americans).
5. Analyze and articulate how society influences the interpretation and message of films, specifically with regard to race and ethnicity.
6. Identify, comprehend and interpret visual messages, images, and symbols to analyze media in a variety of visual forms.
7. Analyze the portrayal and representation of the intersections of race and ethnicity with other forms of difference affected by hierarchy and oppression, such as class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability and/or age.
8. Analyze the use of film in anti-racist education and movements to build a diverse, just, and equitable society.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Ethnic Studies
 - AA/AS - Literature & Language
 - AA/AS - Multicultural Studies
 - AA/AS - Social Sciences
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - C1 Arts
 - CSUGE - D3 Ethnic Studies
 - CSUGE - D7 Interdisciplinary Soc/Behav
 - CSUGE - F Ethnic Studies
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3A Arts
 - IGETC - 4C Ethnic Studies
 - IGETC - 4G Intradis Social/Beha
 - IGETC - 7 Ethnic Studies

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Students will write a two-page critique on five films. The critique will integrate and reflect course readings, definitions and concepts for examining issues of race, class and gender. Papers will be graded on: a. clarity, coherence and intellectual rigor of thesis and argument b. quality and relevance of details, examples, and citations used to support thesis c. conciseness, and grammaticality of writing d. thorough fulfillment of assignment.
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: Students will take a multiple choice examination that focuses on the identification of archetypes based on the showing of short clips. Example Question: Based on the film clip observed, which archetype was not represented a. Angel Figure b. Background Figure c. Menace to Society Figure d. Comic Relief Figure e. Utopian Reversal Figure
- Projects
 - Example: Students will develop a ten minute video that focuses on racial, gender, socio-economic class representation or

create a movie critique that utilizes the critical gaze theory of representation. This is group or individual project.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will provide lectures on the distinction between racial archetypes and stereotypes. Film clips (Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World - 2019; Reel Injun - 2010; The Black Power Mixtape - 2011; etc) will be included that visually reinforce the concepts and help students differentiate the representation of race in films and other media forms. Students will complete a written examination requiring the differentiation among archetypes.
2. Instructor will provide lectures and facilitate discussions that examine the representation of Black female characters in the work of African American female and/or male directors. Some of the prominent African American directors include: Spike Lee (She's Gotta Have It; Jungle Fever; Crooklyn) Julie Dash (Daughters of the Dust; The Rosa Parks Story) Kasi Lemmons (Eve's Bayou; Talk to Me) Darnell Martin (Their Eyes Were Watching God) Forrest Whitaker (For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf) Sanaa Hamri (Something New; Just Wright) Students will learn to critically analyze, and compare and contrast identity representation in contemporary films.

Distance Learning

1. Faculty will facilitate a discussion with students to examine the representation of Native American characters traditionally shown in American film with an emphasis on a comparative analysis between depiction and reality.

Typical Out of Class Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read bell hooks' "The Oppositional Gaze," Bobo's "Reading through the Text: the Black women as audience," and Claire Pajaczkowska's "Racism, Representation, Psychoanalysis." Compare and contrast their ideas. In whose ideas do you find most useful in thinking about the representation of African Americans in film? 2. While watching and then reading at least one movie/television script students will tally the occurrence of pre-selected criterion and behaviors (who speaks most often—white men, men of color, white women, women of color; who defers to whom; who has the lead role/who has the sidekick role; etc.) An analysis referencing assigned readings will accompany the assignment.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Article Response Paper: In an article summary, your job is to write about the article, not about the actual topic of the article. For example, if you are summarizing Smith's article about the causes of the Bubonic plague in Europe, your summary should be about Smith's article: What does she want to find out about the plague? What evidence does she use? What is her argument? You are not writing a paper about the actual causes of Bubonic plague in Europe. Further, as a part of critical reading, you will often consider your own position on a topic or an argument;

it is tempting to include an assessment or opinion about the thesis or findings, but this is not the goal of an article summary. Rather, you must identify, explain, and analyse the main point and how it is supported. Read Carefully and Closely Your key to success in writing an article summary is your understanding of the article; therefore, it is essential to read carefully and closely. Consider the following questions: What is the topic? What is the thesis or position? What are the supporting arguments? How are supporting arguments developed? What kind of evidence is used? What is the significance of the author's thesis? What does it help you to understand about the topic? Sample Outline for an Argumentative Article Summary I. Introduction General topic of article Author's research question or approach to the topic II. Author's thesis III. Main points Explain some key points and how they support the thesis Provide a key example or two that the author uses as evidence to support these points IV. Conclusion Review how the main points work together to support the thesis? How does the author explain the significance or implications of his/her article? Note: You will need to explain the author's main points and find a few excellent examples that illustrate the points. You should also keep in mind that article summaries need to be written in your own words. Writing about an Informational Documentary (example: The Black Power Mixtape): 1. State the title of the film and the year it was released. Then briefly describe what the film is about. 2. Identify the people, places, events, or aspects of people, society, or nature that are the focus of this film. Describe and clarify the significance of each. 3. List six facts described in the film that impressed you and explain how each fact relates to the film's premise or theme. 4. Nonfiction can enrich viewers in several important ways. Describe an aspect of the film that showed you something you hadn't seen before, caused you to think in a new way, or helped you understand something more thoroughly than before. In addition, describe how it changed your thinking. 5. Was there anything that you saw or heard in the film that was unconvincing or which seemed out of place? 6. What particularly appealed to you in the film, such as the use of experts, the evidence presented and the use of primary/secondary sources? 7. If the filmmakers were to ask you how the film could be improved, what would you tell them? Describe the changes you would suggest in detail and the reasons for your suggestions. 8. If someone asked you whether you would recommend this film, how would you respond? Fully explain your reasons.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

In small groups of 4-6, select the following: (1) an ethnic or cultural group (example, Asian American), (2) a movie/documentary made by a person from the chosen ethnic or cultural group (Joy Luck Club), and (3) a movie/documentary made by someone outside of the ethnic/cultural group (Come See Paradise.) The student is to compare and contrast the representation, centrality and accuracy of portrayal of the movies/documentaries. A written report and short presentation to the class will be required.

Required Materials

- Reel Inequality: Hollywood Actors and Racism
 - Author: Yuen, Nancy Wang
 - Publisher: Rutgers University Press
 - Publication Date: 2017
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

- Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film
 - Author: Michelle H. Raheja
 - Publisher: University of Nebraska Press; Illustrated Edition
 - Publication Date: 2013
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretative History of Blacks in American Film
 - Author: Bogle, Donald
 - Publisher: Bloomsbury Academic
 - Publication Date: 2016
 - Text Edition: 5th
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- The Race and Media Reader
 - Author: Rodman, Gilbert
 - Publisher: Routledge
 - Publication Date: 2012
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Media Messages
 - Author: Linda Holtzman and Leon Sharpe
 - Publisher: Routledge Publishers
 - Publication Date: 2014
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.