

## **FILM 290 – 801 & 810 – Race, Ethnicity in US Film**

**Tue – 5:45-9:00pm**

**In Person: CDM Center 708, Digital Cinema**

**Online: COL Recordings in D2L**

**Prof. Raphael Nash**

**Office hours: Tue - 4-5:30pm, 14 EAS 200B, Online by appt.**

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### **Course Description**

From Minstrelsy to Memes, and everything in between.

Since the birth of cinema, films have assisted in forming viewers' perception of society, race relations and ethnic notions. As a late-19th century invention, American Cinema's development occurred during a time prone to racial intolerance, ignorance, exploitation, and fear. We will explore Hollywood's representation of African-American, Latinx, Muslim, and Asian-American groups, and more importantly, explore the socio-political contexts that support racial misrepresentation across the last two centuries. We will also examine the work of content creators, filmmakers, scholars, and institutions that seek to challenge this discrepancy. We will inherently engage in discussions of historic and modern instances of racism, bias, and inequity in all media. Lastly, we will explore what a more equitable film production practice should look like, and how it might function.

### **Course Work**

Homework will consist of written responses to articles, films, television programs, and online material. Completed assignments will be posted to our class submissions area in D2L.

Quizzes will cover terminology and historical facts related to our topics.

The Mid-term will be a detailed breakdown of your final research project.

The Final Research Project will consist of research on a particular mode of misrepresentation in film, supported by the analysis of films, television shows, and online content within its scope. The project can be in the form of a 10-page research paper, 20-slide presentation, or 5-7 minute video.

### **Course Management System – D2L**

#### **Textbooks**

Optional: *Media & Minorities: The Politics of Race in News and Entertainment*, Stephanie Greco Larson  
ISBN: 9780847694532

Online reading material & resources will be given throughout the course.

#### **Course Policies**

- Attendance and class participation is mandatory
- Late assignments will not be accepted without permission

## **Changes to Syllabus**

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

## **Grading**

Writing Assignments: 25%

Quizzes: 30%

Mid-Term: 10%

Final: 25%

In-Class or Online Participation: 10%

## **Week-by-week Assignments/Readings**

### **Week 1: “The Birth of Misrepresentation ”**

Class overview, student introductions, and history of US entertainment.

Homework:

- Read: Week 1.pdf text & linked articles
- Writing Assignment #1

### **Week 2: “Holly-wouldn’t”**

Writing Assignment review, Black American representation in Cinema.

Screening and discussion of clips:

- “The Birth of a Nation”, D.W. Griffith
- “Classified X”, Melvin Van Peebles

Homework:

- Read: Week 2.pdf text & linked articles
- Writing Assignment #2
- Read: Media and Minorities, Chapter 3 – “African Americans”

### **Week 3: “Towards Uncivil Rights”**

Writing Assignment review, Race Films to Blaxploitation era.

Screening and discussion, clips from:

- Select Sidney Poitier & Civil Rights Era film clips
- “They’ve Gotta Have Us”, Simon Frederick

Homework:

- Watch: "Baadasssss Cinema", Isaac Julien
- Read: Week 3.pdf text & linked articles

#### **Week 4: "Towards Uncivil Rights pt. 2"**

Rise and Fall of the 'Blaxploitation' era

Screening and discussion, clips from:

- "Baadasssss Cinema", Isaac Julien
- "They've Gotta Have Us", Simon Frederick
- "Bamboozled", Spike Lee

Homework:

- Read: Week 4.pdf text & linked articles
- Writing Assignment #3
- Read: "Media and Minorities", Chapter 4 – "Native Americans"

Quiz #1 Posted

#### **Week 5: "Discovering the Native"**

Native Communities, and Native American representation in Cinema.

Screening and discussion, clips from:

- "Reel Injun", Neil Diamond
- "Reservation Dogs", Sterlin Harjo

Homework:

- Read: Week 5.pdf text & linked articles
- Read: "Media and Minorities", Chapter 5 – "Hispanics (and Latino/x)"
- Post Final Project ideas to Discussion Board

#### **Week 6: "Welcome to the Border"**

Latino / Latinx representation in Cinema, TV, and Animation.

Screening and discussion:

- "Latinos on the Reel", Miguel Picker and Chyng-Feng Sun

Mid-term Prep. & Discussion

Homework:

- Read: Week 6.pdf text & linked articles
- Read: "Media and Minorities", Chapter 6 – "Asian Americans"

#### **Week 7: "Fu Manchu to Apu"**

Middle Eastern, South and East Asian representation in Cinema, TV, and Animation.

Screening and discussion, clips from:

- "The Slanted Screen", Jeff Adachi

Homework:

- Read: Week 7.pdf text & linked articles

Quiz #2

**Week 8: "Fu Manchu to Apu pt. 2"**

Middle Eastern, South and East Asian representation in Cinema, TV, and Animation.

Screening and discussion, clips from:

- "The Problem with Apu", Hari Kondabolu

Homework:

- Read: Week 8.pdf text & linked articles

**Week 9: "The White Savior Film"**

Representations of White Heroes saving Tragic Non-Whites, Post 9/11 Themes

Screening and discussion, clips from:

- "Dangerous Minds", John N. Smith
- "The Blind Side", John Lee Hancock
- "The Help", Tate Taylor
- "Crash", Paul Haggis

Homework:

- Read: Week 9.pdf text & linked articles
- Writing Assignment #4

**Week 10: "Equity in the Making"**

Review Writing Assignment, Equity and Diversity in Film Production.

Screening and discussion;

- "Saint Frances", Thompson

Quiz #3

Writing Assignment #5 posted

**Final (NO EXAM)**

**Final Research Projects Due & Presented**

**Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 5:45pm - 9pm**

## **Online Course Evaluations**

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in [CampusConnect](#).

## **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

## **Academic Policies**

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: [cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment](http://cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment).

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.

Phone number: (312)362-8002

Fax: (312)362-6544

TTY: (773)325.7296

## **COVID-19 Health and Safety Precautions**

Keeping our DePaul community safe is of utmost importance in the pandemic. Students, faculty and staff are expected to (1) wear a mask as required at all times while indoors on campus; (2) refrain from eating and drinking in classrooms; (3) keep current with their COVID-19 vaccinations or exemptions; (4) stay home if sick; (5) participate in any required COVID-19 testing; (6) complete the online Health and Safety Guidelines for Returning to Campus training; and (7) abide by the City of Chicago Emergency Travel Advisory. By doing these things, we are Taking Care of DePaul, Together. The recommendations may change as local, state, and federal guidelines evolve. Students who do not abide by the mask requirement may be subject to the student conduct process and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office. Students who have a medical reason for not complying with any requirements should register with DePaul's Center for Student with Disabilities (CSD).

## **Name & Gender Pronouns**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this information early in the quarter so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please also note that students may choose to identify within the University community with a first name that differs from their legal name and may also update their gender. The first name will appear in University related systems and documents except where the use of the legal name is necessitated or required by University business or legal need. For more information and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy at <http://policies.depaul.edu/policy/policy.aspx?pid=332>