

**Ethnic Studies: 310 Race and the media**  
**M/W 10:00-11:20**  
**Class Location: 204 CHA**

**Instructor: Dr. Irum Shiekh**  
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**Office hours: MW 2:00-3:00 or by**  
**appointment @ Alder Building 216**

**To be finalized in the first week of class**  
**Race and the Media**

In this class, we will examine the construction of race and its intersections with gender and sexuality through the prism of films, documentaries and other visual media. We will explore how films have represented race and gender and how these images consequently shape and influence our understanding of people in the real world. These images seem insignificant to the majority of viewers because they are perceived to have entertainment value only.

In this class, we will discuss and study how cinema is not only a form of entertainment but also a medium for informing us about the world we live in. In addition, cinematic images interpret our world and fill it with meaning. We will explore these processes through journal writing by focusing on how they play out in the conscious/unconscious spectator's relationship to cinematic images. To illustrate and understand the depth of this impact, we will watch films and documentaries and see how they influence our opinion on race, gender, sexuality etc. Examples include *Pocahontas* (1995) and *Paris is Burning* (1990)

Course Objectives: The primary objective of the class is to develop critical thinking, speaking and writing skills that can help students in deconstructing visual images (especially those that are considered pure entertainment by the majority of viewers). Students will achieve this objective through writing journals, and response papers, leading discussion sessions and participating in class discussions. I also would like to introduce you to alternative and independent media/filmmaking. By watching the works of independent filmmakers and having conversations with them, you will learn that you can also become independent filmmakers/critics/writers.

Format of the Class: The format of the class includes weekly lectures, film viewings, journal writing, student presentations and in-class discussions. This is a highly interactive class and you will be required to participate in the discussions through journal entries, questions, comments, and class presentations. The purpose of these discussions is to make you feel more comfortable in expressing your opinions in a large group setting.

In this class, you will participate in the development of the class syllabus and selecting a film/readings for your class presentation. The purpose of these exercises is to develop your voices and opinions in the formulation, development and construction of knowledge and to understand the ethical implications of the knowledge creation and production process.

## Assignments:

Journal Assignment: (12%) Your journal assignments are based on weekly readings—see the syllabus for deadlines and topics. These entries should be written in first person narrative. The purpose of these journal entries is to reflect upon the materials that you hear/read/watch on a weekly basis. Your journals should be typed and between one to two pages. **You will complete a total of 4 journals, which are each worth 3 points. Late journals will not be accepted.**

Library Research Assignment: (5%) In the third week of class, we will attend a library research session that will guide you in finding movies, articles, and reviews. For this assignment, you will select a narrative film of your choice, and research it by finding at least three scholarly articles written about the film. You are required to use the databases provided through your library—the sources can be electronic. You can use this session to find resources for your midterm/final assignment.

Group Presentation (15%): Select a film of your choice, and prepare/present a power point presentation that provides a quick summary of the film and explains how the movie addresses one of the following issues: gender, race, sexuality, or class. Conduct a quick library search and find one or two articles written about the film or those, which address any of the themes included in the film. Use these articles to support your argument and cite them in your presentation. Send your cited articles electronically to the class and the instructor a day before your presentation. Your presentation may include showing film clips, highlighting some of the major themes included in the film, and asking questions for discussion. You will work in a group **and the assignment will count for 15% of your grade.** The purpose of this assignment is for you to hone your research skills and to learn to share your knowledge with your classmates.

In-class student feedback on group class presentations: 10%. All students are required to actively engage with each group presentation by completing an in-class feedback handout. Your feedback should be constructive and comments should be connected to class readings, lectures and discussions. You can also comment on group effort and quality of the presentation. The completion of feedback handouts will count towards your grade. Forms should be handed back to the group at the end of the class who will give it to the instructor for grading. Note: Your feedback should reflect your efforts to engage with the presentation—handouts will receive a low grade low if I observe that comments are not constructive/relevant and if you are putting cursory effort into the handout. I will give you a one-time warning if your handouts are not meeting expectations.

Final Abstract and bibliography: 10%, In the last week of class, you will be required to submit a one page abstract of your final paper along with a list of resources that you will be using to support your argument. You will also be required to share your topic area with the class and request feedback.

Final Project: (38%). Your final project could be a written paper (6-8 pages) addressing any of the themes discussed in the class or a creative project addressing the issues of race, ethnicity, gender

and sexuality. If you are writing a paper, you must use at least three scholarly articles to support your argument. You can also do a creative project. This project can be in the form of a short film/video or a documentary (3-5 minutes), a collection of photographs, a screenplay, or a short story. In the creative project, you will be required to address at least one and preferably two areas of study (race, ethnicity, class, gender, or sexuality) in your project. You will be required to submit your creative project to your instructor for grading. Please obtain instructor's final approval before starting this project.

Note: I will not be providing any production or camera training in the class. If you are interested in making a short film/documentary, please make sure that you have some basic training in the use of cameras, lights, a sound system and editing. If more than half of the class is interested in making a short film, I may spend a class session on production techniques. Production equipment is available from media services at Knight library.

Grading Policy: Grading breakdown for the class is as follows:

1. Journals: 12%
2. Group Power point presentation 15%
3. Final abstract and bibliography: 10%
4. Final: 38%
5. Peer Evaluations: 10%
6. Attendance: 10%
7. Participation: 5%

**Grading Scale:**

- |                      |            |            |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| 1. A+ = 97-100       | A = 93-100 | A- = 90-92 |
| 2. B+ = 87-89        | B = 83-86  | B- = 80-82 |
| 3. C+ = 77- 79       | C = 73-76  | C- = 70-72 |
| 4. D+ - 67-69        | D= 63-66   | D- 60-62   |
| 5. F = 59 and below. |            |            |

Course Reader:

Assigned readings will be made available electronically via Blackboard.

<p>1<sup>st</sup> Week (Session 1: Monday Sept. 24th)</p>	<p><b><i>Introductions—review of the course outline, objectives and assignments.</i></b></p> <p><u>In Class Assignment</u>—Write a letter to your instructor—in your letter explain your reasons for taking the class. What do you hope to learn? What other ES classes have you taken? Anything unique and interesting that you want to share with the instructor/class?</p> <p><u>First Journal Assignment for September 26th:</u> Write a review of the syllabus—provide feedback on assignments, readings and films. Think about a film that you want to share with the class on Wednesday.</p>
<p>1<sup>st</sup> Week (Session 2: Wednesday Sept. 26th)</p>	<p><b><i>Finalize the syllabus and discuss/share journals</i></b></p> <p><u>In-class group writing exercise:</u> Write about a movie that has influenced you which may have addressed issues of gender, race, class, sexuality or any other sociopolitical issue important for you. Describe the movie, cast, and storyline. Also note its year of production, director and its significance. Plan to share your journal with the class.</p>
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Week (Session 1: Monday October 1st)</p>	<p><b><i>Discuss theories and problems of representation. Explore the subjectivities of the author.</i></b></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> Issues with Representation. Watch portions of <i>bell hooks; Cultural Criticism &amp; Transformation</i>—(a documentary available online)</p> <p><u>Assigned Readings for October 1<sup>st</sup> and October 3<sup>rd</sup></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Hall, Stuart. <i>Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices</i>. London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997, pages 1-13.</li> <li>❖ Shohat and Stam, “Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle over Representation” in <i>Unthinking Eurocentrism, Multiculturalism and the Media</i>, edited by Ella Shohat/Robert Stam, Routledge, 1994, pages 178-219.</li> <li>❖ <b>Watch</b> <i>bell hooks: Cultural Criticism &amp; Transformation</i>—available online at <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLMVqnyTo_0">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLMVqnyTo_0</a> (watch all portions)</li> </ul> <p><u>2<sup>nd</sup> Journal assignment due October 1st:</u> Discuss the meaning of “White Supremacist Capitalist Patriarchy,” or explain the concepts of “motivated representations” or the importance of interconnectedness of gender, race, class, and sexuality. <b>Plan to share your journals with the class.</b></p>
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Week (Session 2: Wednesday October 3rd)</p>	<p><b>Continued Discussion about Theories and Problems of Representation:</b></p> <p>Discussion of readings and journals</p>

<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Week (Session 1: Monday October 8th)</p>	<p><b><i>Watch portions of Paris is Burning (1990), a documentary about New York Black and Latino gay men, transvestites and transsexuals—videotape 02170 available at Knight—portions also available at youtube</i></b></p> <p><u>Assigned Readings for October 8<sup>th</sup>:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ bell hooks, “Paris is Burning” in <u>Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies</u>, Routledge 1996, pages 214-226.</li> <li>❖ Schacht, Steven P. 2000. Paris is burning: How society's stratification systems make drag queens of us all. <i>Race, Gender &amp; Class</i> 7, no. 1: 147-157.</li> </ul> <p><u>3<sup>rd</sup> Journal Assignment due on October 8th:</u> Discuss bell hooks' criticism of <i>Paris is Burning</i> for not “interrogating whiteness” and for being unable to provide explanations for the gay men, transvestites, and transsexuals subjects' desire to become part of the White heterosexual culture <b>or</b> Discuss the importance of <i>Paris is Burning</i> in providing a space for New York Black and Latino homosexuals, transvestites and transsexuals to express their voices.</p>
<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Week (Session 2: Wednesday October 10th)</p>	<p><b><i>Library Research Session with Elizabeth Peterson</i></b></p> <p>Meet @ Library classroom, Knight 144—complete in class library research assignment about a film and submit at the end of the class/day. Use this exercise to find resources for your midterm/final projects.</p>
<p>4<sup>th</sup> Week (Session 1: Monday October 15th)</p>	<p><b><i>Native Americans in Hollywood Films</i></b></p> <p>Watch <i>Pocahontas</i> (1995), a Disney cartoon about the romantic relationship between a Native American princess and Captain James Smith, an Englishman, DVD 03301 available at Douglass</p> <p><u>Assigned Readings for October 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Raheja, Michelle H. <i>Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film</i>. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010, Pages 1-30.</li> <li>❖ Gary Edgerton and Kathy Merlock, “Redesigning Pocahontas: Disney, the “white man’s indian,” and the marketing of dreams.” <i>Journal of Popular Film and Television</i>, summer 1996.</li> <li>❖ Kiyomi Kutsuzawa “Disney's Pocahontas: Reproduction of Gender, Orientalism, and the Strategic Construction of Racial Harmony in the Disney Empire,” <i>Asian Journal of Women's Studies</i>. Seoul: Dec 31, 2000. Vol. 6, Iss. 4, p. 39.</li> </ul> <p><u>4<sup>th</sup> Journal Assignment due:</u> Discuss the significance of <i>Pocahontas</i> in perpetuating the themes of “White Man’s Indian,” and “White Man’s Dream of America,” and distorting history. Use one of the assigned readings for this week to support your argument.</p>

4 <sup>th</sup> Week (Session 2: Wednesday October 17th)	In class small-group discussion: share your understanding of <i>Pocahantas</i> and representations of Native Americans in motion pictures.  <i>Confirm group presentation schedule</i>
5 <sup>th</sup> Week (Session 1: Monday October 22nd)	<b><i>Media and Islamophobia</i></b>  <i>Watch "Reel Bad Arab" (2006) DVD 02815 available at Knight as well as on youtube and</i> <i><a href="http://freedocumentaries.org/teatro.php?filmID=316&amp;lan=en&amp;size=big">http://freedocumentaries.org/teatro.php?filmID=316&amp;lan=en&amp;size=big</a></i>  <u>Assigned Readings for October 22<sup>nd</sup>:</u>  ❖ Said, Edward W. <i>Orientalism</i> . New York: Vintage Books, 1979, pages 1-28.  ❖ Alsultany, Evelyn. <i>Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation After 9/11</i> . New York: New York University Press, 2012, pages 18-46.
5 <sup>th</sup> Week (Session 2: Wednesday October 24th)	<b><i>First and Second Group Class Presentations—</i></b>  Select a film/documentary in which you find the representations of Arabs/Muslims problematic and share it with the class—see guidelines under class assignments for your power point presentation.
6 <sup>th</sup> Week (Session 1: Monday October 29th)	<b><i>Representation of African Americans in Motion Pictures—</i></b> In class screening and discussion of <i>Ethnic Notions</i> (2004)—DVD 04347 available at Knight  <u>Assigned Readings for October 29<sup>th</sup>:</u> ❖ Bogle, Donald. <i>Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, &amp; Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films</i> . New York [u.a.]: Continuum, 2010. Pages 1-18 and pages 194-223. ❖ Edwards E.R. 2011. "The Black President Hokum". <i>American Quarterly</i> . 63, no. 1: 33-59. ❖ Mask, Mia. <i>Contemporary Black American Cinema Race, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies</i> . Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012. <a href="http://public.eblib.com/EBLPublic/PublicView.do?ptiID=981965">http://public.eblib.com/EBLPublic/PublicView.do?ptiID=981965</a> pages 175-199.
6 <sup>th</sup> Week (Session 2: October 31st)	<b><i>3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> group class presentation</i></b>

<p>7<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 1: Monday November 5<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><i>Historical depictions of Latinos in Motion Pictures</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Watch and discuss Bronze Screen DVD 02814 available at Douglass</i></b></p> <p><u>Assigned Readings for November 5<sup>th</sup>:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Berg, Charles Ramírez. <i>Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, Resistance</i>. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002, pages 66-86.</li> <li>❖ Ovalle, Priscilla Peña. <i>Dance and the Hollywood Latina: Race, Sex, and Stardom</i>. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2011, Pages 126-144.</li> </ul>
<p>7<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 2: Wednesday November 7<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><i>5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> group class presentation</i></b></p>
<p>8<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 1: Monday November 12<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><i>Asian Americans in Hollywood</i></b></p> <p><b><i>In Class screening of portions of “Reloaded” (2011)</i></b></p> <p><u>Assigned Readings for November 12<sup>th</sup>:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Kent A. Ono and Vincent Pham, “The Interface of Asian American Independent Media and the Mainstream” in <i>Asian Americans and the Media</i>, Polity Press, 2009, 124-139.</li> <li>❖ Kent A. Ono and Vincent Pham, “Problematic Representations of Asian American Gender and Sexuality” in <i>Asian Americans and the Media</i>, Polity Press, 2009 63-79.</li> </ul>
<p>8<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 2: Wednesday November 14<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><i>7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> group presentations</i></b></p> <p>Students to select a film of their choice examining the representations of Asians and Asian-Americans</p>
<p>9<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 1: Monday November 19<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><i>Independent Filmmakers</i></b></p> <p><u>Assigned Readings for November 19<sup>th</sup>:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Holmlund, Chris, and Justin Wyatt. <i>Contemporary American Independent Film: From the Margins to the Mainstream</i>. London: Routledge, 2005, pages 1-20.</li> <li>❖ Yannis Tzioumakis, “The Institutionalization of American Independent Cinema,” <i>American Independent Cinema: An Introduction</i> (Rutgers, 2006), 246-280.</li> </ul>

<p>9<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 2: Wednesday November 21<sup>st</sup></p>	<p><b>9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> group presentations.</b></p>
<p>10<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 1: Monday November 26<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><i>Contribution of marginal filmmakers in changing stereotypes:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Guest Speaker: To be Determined (feel free to make recommendations)</i></li> <li>❖ Watch portions of <i>Saving Grace</i> (2004) ordered for the class.</li> </ul> <p><u>Assigned Readings for November 26<sup>th</sup> :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ MacDonald, Scott. <i>A Critical Cinema: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers</i>. Berkeley, Ca: University of California Press, 1992, pages 196-217.</li> <li>❖ Holmlund, Chris, and Justin Wyatt. <i>Contemporary American Independent Film: From the Margins to the Mainstream</i>. London: Routledge, 2005, pages 211-226.</li> </ul>
<p>10<sup>th</sup> Week</p> <p>Session 2: Wednesday November 28<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>Discussion about finals: Students to share their final projects.</u></b></p>
<p>Final Paper/ Project</p>	<p>Final paper/project due electronically at <a href="mailto:irums@uoregon.edu">irums@uoregon.edu</a> by Friday midnight December 7<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Grades due on December 11<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday Noon</p>