

STEREOTYPES IN POP CULTURE

Course Description:

This course explores how stereotypes in American pop culture affect perceptions of race, gender, class, ethnicity and citizenship in the United States. Stereotypes will be approached through the media of film and television, popular literature, print journalism and advertising to assess a wide range of topics including: versions of the “native”, “minority”, and immigrant” populaces; notions of culture in popular language, dress and social behavior; representations of family, class, gender, class and sexuality.

Readings:

All readings for this course will be available from RU Libraries electronic reserve. You must print out and bring copies of all readings to class on the day they are assigned for discussion.

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: As this is a Wintersession course, attendance and participation are crucial in the short time we have together. No absences will be allowed. Any absences will have a profound effect on your grade, up to and including a drop of one full grade for the Wintersession term. The same is true of lateness and lack of participation. You will need to attend each class, on time, and prepared to participate in discussion. If you miss class material or time you are responsible for making up the work on your own time.

The assignments for this course will be as follows:

- First day assignment---see attached
- First paper based on first day assignment-5pgs
- In-class presentation
- Final paper

Attendance and Participation-----40%
Paper Assignments-----40%
In-class presentations-----20%

Academic Integrity:

Your work and conduct for this course must adhere to Rutgers University’s Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students which can be found online at: <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy> . Papers must represent your own, original work, done for this course only. If you submit work that has been copied without attribution or that has been prepared by someone other than you or that in any way misrepresents somebody else’s work as your own, your work will be failed and you will face discipline by the University. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

SCHEDULE

- January 2nd: Introduction to Stereotypes in American Popular Culture
Readings: Sander Gilman, "What are Stereotypes and Why Use Texts to Study Them"
Excerpt from "Racial Formation in the United States" (in-class)
Clips: Chapelle Show, TV Nation, Do The Right Thing, Concert for NYC and ads
Discussion of Ads from first assignment due today.
Film Screening: Crash
- January 4th: Fashion and Performance I
Readings: Cheryl Clarke: 'hair: a narrative'
Ingrid Banks: "Hair Still Matters"
Angela Davis: "Afro Images: Politics, Fashion and Nostalgia"
Donald Bogle: "Black Beginnings"
Clips: School Daze, West Side Story, Bamboozled
Film Screening: Bamboozled
- January 9th: Fashion and Performance II
Paper assignment 1 due today/get final paper assignment.
Readings: Eric Lott: Love and Theft: Intro and Chapter 1
Jeremy W. Peters: "An Image Popular in Films Raises Some Eyebrows In Ads" NYT 8/1/2006
Ann Fausto Sterling "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough"
Clips: Bringing Down the House, Legally Blonde, WEHT Baby Jane
Screening: Paris is Burning and excerpts from Tongues Untied
- January 11th: Television/Advertising/Consumer Identity/Commodification
Readings: Charles Eckert: "The Carole Lombard in Macy's Window"
Susan Willis: "Gender as Commodity"
Mark Crispin Miller: excerpt from Boxed In.
Robin D.G. Kelley: "Playing for Keeps: Pleasure and Profit on the Postindustrial Playground"
Clips: Rosie the Riveter, TV ads and programming,
- January 16th: Class and Audience
Readings: Patricia Williams: "The Ethnic Scarring of American Whiteness"
bell hooks: "Spending Culture: Marketing the Black Underclass"
"Seeing and Making Culture: Representing the Poor"
Clips: The Purple Rose of Cairo, The Cosby Show, The Boondocks, King of the Hill, Blue Collar Comedy

January 18th: “Homeland” Security and Immigration

Readings: Amy Kaplan: “Homeland Insecurities; Reflections on Language
And Space”

Mahmood Mamdani: “Culture Talk”

Clips: Lou Dobbs, 24

PRESENTATIONS

Final Paper due