

American Studies: 01:050:300:B7
Erica Romaine
Summer I, 2008
Class meetings: T Th 6PM-9:45PM
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**TOPICS IN AMERICAN STUDIES:
THE AMERICAN FILM MUSICAL**

Required Texts: Belton, John: *American Cinema, American Culture* (2nd edition)
Feuer, Jane: *The Hollywood Musical* (2nd edition)
Electronic reserve articles

Optional Text: Bordwell & Thompson: *Film Art* (any edition after 4th edition)
(highly recommended if you have not taken a film course before)

All books are available at the Douglass Bookstore. Electronic reserve is available through the Rutgers Libraries online.

Class Requirements and Policies:

This course requires the following work:

2 essays papers, one short (3-4 pages), one long (5-8). These essays will require substantial analytical work with the films we will view and the articles we will read this semester as well as your own creative ideas and arguments.

Weekly quizzes on the film and assigned materials for the week. These quizzes will add up to the equivalent of an exam grade.

Class Participation and attendance: As this class will consist primarily of in-class discussion, your individual participation will count greatly toward your final grade.

You must come to class and screenings regularly, on time, and having done the assigned reading, carefully. This course requires a sizeable amount of reading and the screening of all assigned films. Attendance at screenings is mandatory. There will be frequent quizzes based on our schedule of readings and screenings, so be sure to keep up.

Class begins at 6PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Two or more absences or persistent late arrivals, will result in failure of this course

No late papers will be accepted. There will be no extensions granted unless you have discussed the problem with me in advance.

(over)

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There will be no make-up quizzes or exams.

Screenings cannot be repeated.

You are expected to know and abide by the policies on academic integrity as described in the Rutgers Student Guide. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Use proper citation to acknowledge all reading, film and research sources in your essays.

Keep a copy of everything you hand in to me.

The American Film Musical
E. Romaine
Summer I 2008

Preliminary Syllabus and Schedule

- Tues.5/27: Introduction to course
For next time read Belton ch.1
Screening: THE JAZZ SINGER (1927) and excerpts from HALLELUJAH (1929)
- Thurs.5/29: Discuss readings and films.
For next time read Belton, Ch.2, Roth, "Some Warners Musicals and the Spirit of the New Deal", (on reserve)
Screening: 42ND STREET (1933)
- T 6/3: Discuss readings on industry, genre, history and Berkeley.
Begin film-tech materials.
For next time read: Belton Ch3, Cook, (Cinema Book, from Genre: The Musical) excerpt on Top Hat (on reserve).
Screening: TOP HAT (1935)
- Th 6/5: Discuss readings, technical materials and film
For next time read: Stanfield "From the Vulgar to the Refined...", (on reserve)
Dyer: The Colour of Entertainment, (on reserve)
Screening: SHOWBOAT (1936)
Get first paper assignment
- T 6/10: Discuss readings, film and further tech.
For next time read: Bordwell/Thompson excerpt on "Meet Me in St. Louis" (on reserve), Feuer book chapters 1&2.
Screening: MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS (1944)
- Th 6/12: Discuss readings and film
For next time read: Dyer: Entertainment and Utopia, (on reserve) Feuer article: "The Self-reflective Musical and the Myth of Entertainment (reserve) Belton: Musical Chapter, Feuer: Ch. 4.
Screening: SINGING IN THE RAIN (1952)
Home Screening: THE BAND WAGON (1953)
- T 6/17: Discuss readings and film
For next time read: Turim, Gentlemen Consume Blondes (rsv), Arbuthnot and Seneca, Text and Pretext... (rsv)
Screening: GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES (1953)
First paper due

Th 6/19: Discuss readings and film.

For next time read: Feuer ch 5

Screening: ALL THAT JAZZ (1979)

Get final paper assignment

T 6/23: Discuss readings and film

For next time read: Feuer ch. 3&6

Screening: PENNIES FROM HEAVEN (1981)

Th 6/26: Discuss readings and film

For next time read: Cook article on genre (reserve), Garner article "I've Heard that Song Before.." (reserve)

Screening: EVERYONE SAYS I LOVE YOU (1996) and
excerpts from SCHOOL DAZE (1988)

Home Screening: CHICAGO (2002) or DREAMGIRLS (2006)

T 7/1 : Discuss readings and films

Screening: MOULIN ROUGE (2001)

Th 7/3: Class discussion and wrap up.

Final Paper Due