

01:050:301

Cult Film

Winter 2008

This lecture-discussion course focuses on the American "cult" film from its origins in the 1920s to its evolution in American culture. Close analyses of cult films will be paired with readings by J. Hoberman and Jonathan Rosenbaum, Sigmund Freud, and others. According to Freud, for example, social organization for the primordial horde came about as a result of the incest taboo and the law of exogamy. Several of the films to be screened depict scenes that violate this organization and break the taboo. This course will explore how and why these violations permeate cult films. In addition, many cult films are open ended metaphors for contemporary social anxieties. We will examine how these counter-culture films are a reaction to late '60s and '70s American society. Finally, this course will include in-depth analyses of the structure of celebrated American cult films ("mise-en-scene," editing, narrative form, set design, sound, and special effects) including: *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Eraserhead*, *Night of the Living Dead*, *Cat People*, and others.