

# MDIA 8A: RACE & GENDER IN AMERICAN MEDIA

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture, 1 laboratory per week (60 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand the influence of the moving image in shaping values and perceptions in the U.S. and abroad.

## Description

This course examines the complexities of race and gender representation in U.S. film and media. Students study the history of media representations, applying theory as a tool for analysis. Examine the means by which the media define and promote cultural stereotypes. In addition, students examine how media images and institutions influence and shape racial and gender identities. Contributions to the field of important filmmakers and media artists will be examined.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Examine and interpret U.S. racial histories and how they reflect and influence contemporary racial definitions and biases
- Describe how cultural myths and narratives about race and gender have been defined and shaped by media
- Identify and apply major media theories, including reception/spectator, feminist, queer, and multicultural, to the study of race and gender representation
- Appraise and critique media sources with regard to their representation of race and/or gender
- Identify the contributions to film and media made by people of diverse cultures and backgrounds

## Course Content

- Key concepts of media analysis and theory
  - Structuralism and semiotics
  - Medium theory

- Reception/spectator theories
  - Feminist and queer film theory
  - Psychoanalytic analysis
- Concepts of critical race theory
    - Whiteness
    - Institutionalized racism
    - White privilege
    - Color blindness
  - The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930 and its impact on race and gender media representations
  - African American histories and stereotypes in media
    - Racist African American stereotypes and histories: Uncle Tom, coon, pickaninny, the savage, mammy, wench, Sapphire
    - The evolution of early racist African American stereotypes to current media
    - History of Blackface: Vaudeville and the silent film era
    - Race movies
    - Blaxploitation films
  - Latino histories and stereotypes in media
    - Early racist Latino/Latina stereotypes: the bandit, the clown, greaser, Latin lover, spitfire, maid
    - The evolution of early Latino/Latina stereotypes to current media
    - The early 1920s Mexican government protest and embargo of Hollywood films
  - Asian American histories and racist stereotypes in media
    - Early racist Asian stereotypes: the dragon lady, coolie, yellow peril
    - The evolution of early Asian American stereotypes to current media
  - Gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender histories and stereotypes in media
    - Early LGBTQ stereotypes: the sissy, villain, show queen, psychotic, butch
    - The evolution of LGBTQ stereotypes to current media
  - Seminal media, films, actors, filmmakers
    - Analysis of film and media, including: Birth of a Nation, The Jazz Singer, Amos 'n Andy
    - Early 20th century directors, including: Oscar Micheaux, Alice Guy-Blache, D.W. Griffith, Dorothy Arzner, Tazuko Sakane, Ida Lupino, Germaine Dulac
    - Early 20th century actors, including: Anna May Wong, Ramon Novarro, Lupe Velez, Dolores del Rio, Paul Robeson, Hattie McDaniel

## Lab Content

- Media screenings either on-campus or via the internet for the completion of written assignments, exams, and analyses
- Preparation and collaborative work on group projects

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

- Forum-type room with projection booth, video projection system, amplified sound system. Internet access and laptop computer patch to system. Playback equipment formats required: DVD or Blu-ray disk.
- Library for media research, books, scripts, videotape/DVD playback facility.
- When taught via Foothill Online Learning: on-going access to computer with email software and capabilities, email address, JavaScript-

enabled internet browsing software, and videotape viewing ability as stated in 2, above.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Writing assignments that require the student to construct, develop, and defend an argument referencing the course media screenings and reading materials

Objective exam(s) that reference reading materials and lecture

Writing assignments (including research paper, homework, essay exam)

that demonstrate mastery of concepts in media analysis and theory

Oral presentations that require students to demonstrate key concepts

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lectures, presentations, and screenings that present and examine course objectives

Discussion and critique of assigned reading and representative media

Cooperative learning exercises that require students to apply core concepts in media

Group project presentation followed by in-class discussion and evaluation

Screenings of media that illustrate and support course content

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Benshoff, Harry M., and Sean Griffin. America on Film: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies. 2021.

Berg, Charles Ramirez. Latino Images in Film. 2002.

Diawara, Manthia. Black American Cinema. 2012.

Dines, Gail, Jean McMahon Humez, William Yousman, and Lori Bindig Yousman. Gender, Race, and Class in Media. 2020.

Dyer, Richard. White: Essays on Race and Culture. 1997.

Feng, Peter X.. Screening Asian Americans. 2002.

hooks, bell. Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies. 2009.

Kaplan, E. Ann. Feminism and Film. 2000.

Marchetti, Gina. Romance and the "Yellow Peril": Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction. 1993.

Stam, Robert, and Ella Shohat. Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media. 2014.

Williams, Linda. Playing the Race Card: Melodramas of Black and White from Uncle Tom to O. J. Simpson. 2001.

Although several texts on this list are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal in this area of study.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Critical analyses in the form of journals or online discussion assignments
2. Research or critical essay that requires the student to select media from viewing list and construct, develop, and defend an argument referencing the film and the reading materials
3. Examination that requires students to apply core concepts and issues of course content
4. Quizzes and exams that test understanding of reading material and lecture

## Discipline(s)

Media Production or Film Studies or Mass Communication or Broadcasting Technology