

ETHN 101: Ethnic Images and the Construction of Racialized Spaces in Film
UCSD Summer Session I
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00 – 4:50 pm, WLH 2114

Instructor: Su-Shuan Chen

Email: susanchen_tpr@yahoo.com

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:00 – 6:30 pm

Course site: ted.ucsd.edu

Course Description

Films play a critical role in today's society. More than just entertainment, films constitute an important medium where social ideas are produced, disseminated, and shaped. This is true when it comes to their role in constructing racial representations. In this class, we will engage in critical analyses of contemporary films and readings from North America, in particular looking at how movies and documentaries inform the public about race, racism, and racial geographies. On one hand, this class explores the complicity of film in facilitating structural racism and constructing racial categories. On the other hand, films can also be used as a tool of resistance and agency in countering harmful stereotypes and in rupturing misconceptions and blind spots. Both of these themes will be examined in this course, and students are welcome to use this class as a space to engage in in-depth reflections and discussions about the impact of films on race.

Grading

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Weekly Reflection Papers (2-3 pages) for Weeks 1, 2, 3: 30%

Midterm (due week 4): 20%

Final (due week 5): 30%

Attendance and Participation: Attendance in class is mandatory. If you have more than one excused absence in this class, you will get a 10% deduction from your TOTAL course grade. It is also imperative that you arrive on time. (Note: If you get sick at some point during the course, you may give me a doctor's note for an excused absence.)

Please bring the texts we will be discussing to class. You may find all readings for this course on eReserves (reserves.ucsd.edu). Not bringing texts will impede with your ability to participate and make meaningful contributions to discussion. Failure to bring course materials will also reflect negatively on your participation grade.

Verbal participation is required. You are also expected to complete ALL readings. I expect you to come to class well-prepared, having done all assigned readings from the previous meeting. **You will be required to participate in class discussions at least 3 times.** You are not expected to agree with the opinions of myself or your peers and your opinions will always be respected. At the same time, I also ask that you be considerate of the interpretations, beliefs, and opinions of those around you.

Weekly Reflection Papers: 2-3 page reflection papers (12-pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1" margins) are due on Thursdays in class for weeks 1, 2, and 4. Each is worth 10% of your total grade. No late papers will be accepted.

Midterm: You will have a take-home midterm of 4-6 pages, due Thursday, July 19 in class (week 3). You are required to select one film from a list (to be handed out in class), and analyze it according to a prompt.

Final: Your final will be a take-home final of 5-6 pages, due Thursday, August 2 in class. The prompt will be handed out in week 3 following the midterm.

Academic Integrity

Please consult the UCSD policy on academic integrity at <http://www.ucsd.edu/principles>. Actions falling short of academic integrity such as cheating on exams, engaging in plagiarism, or submitting a paper from another class will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action. To avoid plagiarism, you must cite ALL your sources and refrain from copying passages/passing off others' work as your own (i.e. from other student papers, the internet, books). I take plagiarism very seriously and will refer all cases to academic misconduct.

Email response policy

Please keep your e-mail questions brief. If you need substantial questions answered you need to come to office hours for consultation. If you miss a class, ask a peer what you missed instead of asking me to give a recap. I will make every effort to respond to emails within two days during the work-week; please give me sufficient time to respond before assignments are due. When emailing me, **please remember to sign your name**. Thank you.

Class One: Films and Cultural Studies

Film: Representations and the Media

Stuart Hall. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Pages 24-51 and 91-107

Tim Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, Pages 17-55

Class Two: Structural Racism and Racial Geography

Stuart Hall. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Pgs 225-234 and 239-277

George Lipsitz. *How Racism Takes Place*. Pages 1-21

Bell Hooks. *Reel to Reel: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies*. Pages 1-9 and 197-212

Class Three: White Suburbs and Black Cities

Film: *Boyz in the Hood*

George Lipsitz. *How Racism Takes Place*. Pages 25-70.

Eric Avila. *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight*. Pages 1-19 and 65-105

Class Four: Prisons

Film: *Prison Town, USA*

Avery Gordon. "Globalism and the Prison Industrial complex: An Interview with Angela Davis."

Michelle Brown. "Setting the Conditions for Abu Ghraib: The Prison Nation Abroad."

Angela Davis. "Race, Gender, and Prison History: From the Convict Lease System to the Supermax Prison."

Class Five: Resistance in the City

Film: *Do the Right Thing*

Robyn D.G. Kelley. *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*. 1-34 and 183-227.

Spike Lee interviews, ed. Cythia Fuchs. Pages 13-24.

Class Six: Resistance through Films

Film: *La Mission*

Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. Chapters Five and Six.

Class Seven: The Border and Immigration (MIDTERM DUE at beginning of class)

Film: *Frozen River*

Read Wilfred Rausert's article, "Inter-American Border Discourses, Heterotopia, And Translocal Communities in Courtney Hunt's Film *Frozen River*," pages 15-30.

(Joseph Nevins. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the Illegal Alien and the Remaking of the U.S. Mexico Boundary*. Pages 1-101.)

Class Eight: The Border and Drugs

Film: *Traffic*

Curtis Marez. *Drug Wars: The Political Economy of Narcotics*. Pages 1-36 and 146-224.

Class Nine: Asian America

Film: *Ocean of Pearls* or *Finishing the Game*. (tentative.)

Robert Lee. *Orientalism*. Pages 1-14.

Ruthann Lee. "Ambivalence, Desire, and the Re-Imagining of Asian American Masculinity in Better Luck Tomorrow." Pages 51-67.

David Eng. *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America*. (Selections)

Class Ten: Multicultural Landscapes

Film: TBD

Jodi Melamed. *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*. Pages 1-50.

Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. Chapter Nine.

Matt Garcia. *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles*. Chapter Four.

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of "interest" yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor, at

858-534-3277 or yescamilla@ucsd.edu OR www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu