

Film and Digital Media 187 Advanced Topics in Television Studies
DISSECTING THE PROBLEMATIC
Summer 2019

Instructor: Yasheng She

Class Meetings: Tuesday & Thursday, 1 – 4:40 p.m. in Social Science 167

Office Hours: Wednesday, 1-2 p.m. in Porter 163

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Any fictional narrative in contemporary television series seems to be eventually “problematic” in some way. There is always something amiss and/or controversial. In this course, we will reframe television as a mirror of the world, a form of social control, and a site of political discourses. By establishing a critical distance between us and the shows we watch, we will dissect how television reflect and shape our perceptions of gender, race, class, sexual norm, and culture. The goal of this course is to think about the fictional text we love in a critical manner. As future cultural critics and media producers, you will be able to understand the “problematic” in a generative manner rather than a trap to avoid or a snap judgement to make.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, each student will have gained:

- A sound knowledge of methodologies employed in media studies.
- An understanding of basic procedures of media analysis, precisely, how to conduct cultural and textual analysis.
- The ability to understand how to approach fiction narrative with a critical and thoughtful mindset without making snap judgement.
- The ability to produce an academic research paper and/or a well-researched video essay demonstrating critical media literacy and the ability to interpret different social issues represented in fictional narratives.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each week will involve readings, creating agenda items, and in-class discussion; there will be a viewing component as well. There will be three major assignments in this class: annotated bibliography, textual analysis essay, and final research project. All, ideally, should share one theme that you wish you explore in this class.

Agenda Items. At the beginning of each seminar meeting we will build an agenda, which will drive the discussion for the remainder of our meeting. Each student will bring at least one "agenda item" -- a particular idea they wish to discuss.

This idea must be grounded in at least one specific page reference (to a reading for that week) or moment from a tv show (ideally with a clip to show).

- Agenda items should be expressed in a few-word "headline" during the agenda-building,
- with a sentence-length version prepared, and
- should be expanded into a larger idea when it becomes the active topic in the seminar discussion.

Agenda items form an important part of the participation requirement, while also broadening who determines what we will discuss.

Annotated Bibliography. An annotated bibliography is an organizing tool that is helpful when working on a research project. An effective annotated bibliography is used to compile research sources in one location and provide the researcher with quick access to the information contained in each source. Your annotated bibliography will consist of the sources that you have deemed relevant to your topic and/or question(s) of inquiry.

- Cite the source in proper Chicago format. The citations should be organized in alphabetical order by author just as in a Chicago References page.
- Follow with a brief annotation that summarizes the source (approx. 3-5 sentences). You may quote from the source, but do not copy and paste the abstract. Ideally, all of the annotation should be in your own words.
- In 1 or 2 sentences, explain the source's relevance and importance to your issue.

Textual Analysis Essay. To help recognize and contemplate the rhetoric of fictional texts, you will write on a part of one episode of a TV series of your choice. The Textual Analysis Essay will ask you to analyze an author's methods and their effectiveness. By investigating the author's methods and the impact on their audience and purpose, you are required to argue for a reading informed by some perspective, theory, social issue, etc. Requirements:

- 3-4 pages
- 12 point Times New Roman font
- Double spaced

Final Research Project. The research project is an analysis informed by course reading and/or other scholarly literature. This project should, ideally, be informed by your **Annotated Bibliography** and **Textual Analysis Essay**. On July 25th,

you will present on your finalized project of around 7-8 pages (12 font Times New Roman double spaced) words or a video essay proposal.

- You may work in groups of 2-4. In order to that, you will have to come up with a team contract that is due July 9th. Your grade will be evaluated base on your project as well as your team evaluation.
- The video essay proposal will include:
 1. a script,
 2. screenshots (clips) that are noted, and
 3. director's notes.

Final Presentation. Each person or group will have 10-15 minutes to present their final research project. There will be a 5-7 minutes Q&A and critique after each presentation.

The format of the presentation can be flexible. For more traditional style of presentation, you can do handouts, short-screening and discussion, or make a PPT and present your ideas. For more creative style, you may choose to screen your video essay or present your scripts in class with visual aids. The goal of the presentation is to share your ideas with the class and get feedbacks on your project.

Everyone is expected to give critique on each other's work and be respectful to others. Please arrive on time on the final day to make sure that each group/person has sufficient time for presentation.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

- Attendance and class participation - 30%
- Agenda Items - 10%
- Annotated Bibliography - 15%
- Textual Analysis - 15%
- Research Paper - 30%

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- Attend classes regularly, arrive on time, and be ready to engage.
- All assignments must be turned in on time. Extensions will be granted on an individual basis if needed—communicate with your instructor if you for any reason cannot meet the deadline.
- Read carefully and write thoughtfully.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Acts of academic misconduct during the course, including plagiarism, can and usually do result in failure of the course, at the sole discretion of the instructor of record. Your case will be reported to the College Provost as per the Academic Integrity guidelines found online at https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct. More information about research and information ethics can be found here: <http://unitproj.library.ucla.edu/col/b Bruinsuccess/03/01.cfm>.

DRC The University of California, Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to your instructor during office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. We would like to ensure your full participation in the course. All students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services should contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Recording or Distribution of Class Materials Please note that selling, preparing, or distributing for any purpose lecture notes or video or audio recordings of any course is explicitly forbidden by campus policy, unless authorized by the University *in advance* (for instance, by the Disability Resource Center, which can assign students who need one a note taker with a laptop or other recording device) and unless *explicitly permitted* by the course instructor *in writing*.

TITLE IX The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors. The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. Information about the Title IX Office, the online reporting link, applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at titleix.ucsc.edu.

The Title IX/Sexual Harassment Office is located at 105 Kerr Hall. In addition to the online reporting option, you can contact the Title IX Office by calling 831-459-2462.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS. Course evaluations for faculty will be available online for students to complete towards the end of quarter. You will receive a notification in your UCSC email account when online evaluations become available. Please be thoughtful in your responses, as we take these evaluations seriously. Course evaluations help faculty consider ways to improve instruction.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 Introduction

June 25 Tuesday

Introduction to FILM 187

- Methodologies

In-class Screening

1982. *Illusions*. Directed by Julie Dash

Week 1 Scripted Culture

June 27 Thursday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item

Reading Due

- During, Simon, Donna Jeanne Haraway, and Teresa De Laurotis. *The Cultural Studies Reader*. Third edition. London: Routledge, 2007.
- Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Marxist Introductions. Oxford [England: Oxford University Press, 1977.

At-home Screening

- 2013. *Snowpiercer*. Directed by Bong Joon-ho

In-class Screening

- 2006. *The Host*. Directed by Bong Joon-ho

Week 2 Two Sides of the Male Gaze

July 2 Tuesday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item

Reading Due

- Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16, no. 3 (October 1, 1975): 6-18.
- [Recommended] Ahmed, Sara. *Willful Subjects*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. (Selected Chapters)

At-home Screening

- 2018. *Sharp Objects*. Created by Marti Noxon
- 2011. *Black Mirror* (Selected Episode). Created by Charlie Brooker.

In-class Screening

- 2012. *Lupin the Third: The Woman Called Mine Fujiko*. Directed by Yamamoto Sayo

Week 2 NO CLASS

July 4 Thursday

Independence Day

Assignment Due

- Annotated Bibliography

Week 3 Neoliberalism and Video Essay

July 9 Tuesday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item
- Project Proposal (250-500 words)
- Team Contract (Optional)

Reading Due

- Han, Byung-Chul. *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism and New Technologies of Power*. Verso Futures. London; Verso, 2017. (Selected Chapters)

In-class Screening

- 1997. *South Park* (Selected Episodes). Created by Trey Parker and Matt Stone.
- 2004. *Paranoia Agent*. Directed by Kon Satoshi

Week 3 The Human Spectacle

July 11 Thursday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item

Reading Due

- Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2014.

In-class Screening

- Examples from Reality TV shows (Selected Episodes)
- 2011. *Black Mirror* (Selected Episode). Created by Charlie Brooker.

Week 4 Touchy Subjects

July 16 Tuesday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item

Reading Due

- Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Norton, 2001. (Selected Chapters)

In-class Screening

- 2009. *The Good Wife*. Created by Robert King and Michelle King
- 2015. *A Restaurant with Many Problems*. Directed by Namiki Michiko and Kato Hiromasa

Week 4 Metaphoric Android

July 18 Thursday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item

Reading Due

- Haraway, Donna. *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*. Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. Routledge, 1991.

In-class Screening

- 2009. *Time of Eve*. Directed by Yoshiura Yasuhiro.

Week 5 Translation and Adaptation

July 23 Tuesday

Assignment Due

- Agenda Item

Reading Due

- Iwabuchi, Koichi. *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*. Duke University Press, 2002. (Selected Chapters)

In-class Screening

- 1998. *Cowboy Bebop*. Directed by Yatate Hajime

Final Presentation

Each person or group will have 15 to 20 minutes to present their final research project. There will be a 15 minutes Q&A and critique after each presentation.