Course Description
This course will examine the intersections of race and gender in mid to late 20th and 21st-Century American film. We will begin with an exploration of the constructions of white femininity and how these ideas are realized and perpetuated upon the American screen. We will then examine other intersections of race, gender, sexuality and class. How have historical and contemporary representations of women of color both subverted and reinforced previous assumptions about the intersection of whiteness and womanhood? What occurs when we increase the levels of intersectionality?

Course Goals
1. Identify and analyze the major themes and master the language of feminist film theory texts.
2. Identify and analyze how African American, Asian American, Latina and/or Queerness complicate feminist film theory.
3. To master the language of classic film terms and techniques.
5. Research and evaluate the quality of textual criticism.

Course Texts
America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies, Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin
Feminist Film Theory: A Reader, Sue Thornham
Film Art: An Introduction (9th Edition), David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson

Course Films
All About Eve (1950)
Gidget (1959)
Imitation of Life (1959)
Some Like it Hot (1959)
Psycho (1960)
The World of Suzie Wong (1960)
Funny Girl (1968)
Cleopatra Jones (1973)
Claudine (1974)
Sugar Hill (1974)
Halloween (1978)
Norma Rae (1979)
She’s Gotta Have It (1986)
The Joy Luck Club (1993)
Reflection Papers

Too often, when we read the words on a page we do not fully integrate that new information into our existing knowledge structure, and so we fail to gain new understanding of the world around us. Research in cognitive science and learning tells us that “deep learning” requires that the learner reflect on new knowledge and create personal meaning from it.

To help us reflect more deeply on readings in this course, we will use reading reflections. These reading reflections are designed to help the reader engage with the material in a deeper way, and to construct new meaning from it. The reflections also have the advantage of providing me with detailed information about your learning in this course. This not only helps guide my daily preparation of course activities, but also helps connect us as a community of learners.

You will write six (6) reading reflection papers. These papers should be 2-3 pages in length and must be turned in electronically via Blackboard Assignment Box by 10 a.m. the morning of class. You decide which six classes you wish to write responses for, but they must be days in which readings/film are due. It is your responsibility to keep track of your responses. This is meant to be an activity that allows you to digest and process everything you have read over the past week. This also prepares you for group and class discussion.

Your response must clearly indicate careful reading and thoughtful reflection. After completing the reading/viewing assignment, respond to the following questions:

1. What is the main point of this reading?
2. What information did you find surprising? Why?
3. What did you find confusing? Why?
What is the Main Point?
Reading assignments often contain a lot of information. What is the main concept that the author is trying to get across? This may, or may not, have been explicitly stated in the reading. Why did the author choose to emphasize this point, and not some other? Your response is not a summary of the chapter, but an analysis of it in a way that creates new meaning for you.

What is Surprising?
Your response to this question should be reflective. Did you learn something that is in conflict with your previous notions of the world? Did something make you feel uncomfortable? Did you learn something that fascinates you in a way that you didn’t expect? How does this new knowledge connect with material in other courses, or with other parts of your life? Responses must also clearly explain “why.”

What is Confusing?
Responses to this question require careful reading and reflection; it is only through the process of reconciling new information within our existing knowledge structure that we become aware of inconsistencies, or “gaps” in our understanding. Responses to this question should be specific and actionable—that is they should outline a clear path to understanding. Responses must also clearly explain “why.”

Rubric for Evaluation
10 points  Responses to the questions are labeled and clearly indicate careful reading and deep reflection. Responses submitted by 10 a.m.
5 points  Responses are not specific, do not clearly indicate reflection, or are submitted soon after (by 12 p.m.) deadline.
0 points  No response, or response submitted more than one class period late.

Viewing Films
Unless otherwise noted, all films must be viewed BEFORE class begins. All films for the course are available on Reserve at the UTSA Library. Viewing sessions for films will be provided in the Multipurpose Room of the John Peace Library (2.01.08E). Viewings will take place on Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.) and Sundays (2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.). Films will also remain on Course Reserve throughout the week for individual viewing. Whoever arrives first will need to:

1.  Go to the Front Desk and check out the key to the Multipurpose Room. Please let staff know you are in the ENG 3713 class. Also check out the film for the week.

2.  Unlock the room.

3.  Using the black control panel on the wall, press “System On” to turn on the DVD player and projector. You may also need to press “DVD/VCR”

4.  When you are finished with the room, make sure to press “System Off” on the control panel, lock the door, and turn in the key to the Front Desk.
It is your responsibility to ensure that you can view the film BEFORE class.

Class Organization
Please come to class on time and prepared, having read all assignments and viewed the films listed as due for the day. Also, come to class ready to speak and move around the classroom! We will do lots of small and large group discussion and everyone is expected to enthusiastically participate!

Participation
Being an active participant is an important component of the grade for this course. A literature classroom is not a place where one simply sits passively and takes notes; you will be sorely disappointed if you expect that. I expect everyone to engage enthusiastically with the readings/viewings (even the ones you don't like!) This means: coming to class having carefully read or viewed the assigned material and being ready and willing to talk about it, in class and in small groups. You will get so much more out of this course, and it will be a lot more fun if you are fully here with us.

Quizzes
There will be a weekly quiz that occurs the first ten (10) minutes of each class. Answers will be graded on a five (5)-point scale. I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

Midterm Assignment – The Auteurs
You will storyboard a five (5) minute movie sequence based on a prompt provided by me. You will also include an analysis of the choices you have made using the cultural lexicon we are exploring in the class. I will provide more specific information at a later date.

Final Paper Abstract
You will turn in an abstract or proposal of your ideas for your final paper. You must also include thesis statement. This does not lock you into this idea, but it establishes a topic of research for your annotated bibliography and, later, your final paper. This will also provide me with a solid idea of how to guide you through the process of writing your final paper.

Annotated Bibliography
An annotated bibliography is a bibliography that includes brief explanations or notes for each reference. This is to aid in your research for your final paper ensuring you are on the right track before you turn in your finished final paper. This also aids in your assessment of the adequacy of your research materials. Each entry will be in MLA format and contain a summary and evaluation of the worth of the article/chapter/book to your paper’s stated thesis. You will research and compile a four to five (4-5) page annotated bibliography. I will provide more specific information at a later date.
**Final Paper**
You will critically analyze two different texts in class in an 8-10 page paper. I will provide more specific information at a later date.

**Late Paper Policy**
I prefer to have all papers turned in to me on time. Unfortunately, I do realize that life happens. I have instituted a strict policy for turning in a paper past its due date. I must have 24 hours notice if your paper will be late. Your grade will decrease by one letter grade each day it is late. I will not accept a paper after three (3) days. You may only use this service once during the semester, so choose wisely.

**Absence Policy**
Class attendance is mandatory. You are expected to arrive promptly and there are no early departures. Three tardy arrivals count as one absence. If you decide to leave class early, it will count as an absence. If you miss more than three classes, your final grade will be dropped one whole letter grade (e.g. your final grade of a B will drop to a C). If you miss more than four classes, you will receive an F as your final grade. All absences count towards this number, both excused and unexcused. I do not distinguish between the two. Yes, I am anal about this.

**Classroom Policies**
To be decided by the class on the first day. What policies should we have toward the following:
- Classroom Decorum
- Group Work
- Good Citizenship in Class
- Discussing Complicated Topics

**University Academic Dishonesty Policy**
Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or part to another person. Plagiarism is using someone else’s words or ideas without acknowledging the source. It is essentially stealing. Don’t do it. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Unpleasant, painful, and potentially embarrassing happenings shall ensue. Outside sources you consult for assignments in this course (including your papers and your discussion leading material) must be properly cited in MLA style. If at any time you have any question whatsoever about how to attribute something, or even when to attribute something, please, please, ask! Which leads me to...
The University of Texas at San Antonio Academic Honor Code

A. Preamble
The University of Texas at San Antonio community of past, present and future students, faculty, staff, and administrators share a commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge. We honor the traditions of our university by conducting ourselves with a steadfast duty to honor, courage, and virtue in all matters both public and private. By choosing integrity and responsibility, we promote personal growth, success, and lifelong learning for the advancement of ourselves, our university, and our community.

B. Honor Pledge
In support of the ideals of integrity, the students of the University of Texas at San Antonio pledge:

“As a UTSA Roadrunner I live with honor and integrity.”

C. Shared responsibility
The University of Texas at San Antonio community shares the responsibility and commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge and adheres to the UTSA Honor Code.

Office Hours/Email
My office hours are listed above. During those times, you will find me in my office waiting to help you. Please do not hesitate to come by with concerns about your writing or the class, or if you just want to discuss the readings. You won’t need an appointment during that time; however, if you’d like to make one I’d be glad to do so. Remember, I’m here to help you, so don’t be shy about stopping by!

Everyone will have a conference with me in early October to discuss the final paper project.

You are also welcome to email me with concerns or questions, with one condition: do not expect a same-day response after 9 PM. Late night inquiries will be handled sometime the next day.
The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered.

As a Roadrunner,

I will:

- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct;

- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;

- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and

- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

Guided by these principles now and forever, I am a Roadrunner!
Course Schedule*

August 25  First Day of Class

August 31  *What is Femininity? How does it translate to American Cinema?*

**Readings Due:**
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 10: Women in Classical Hollywood Filmmaking
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 11: Exploring the Visual Parameters of Women in Film
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 13: Gender in American Film Since the 1960s
- Doane, M. A. – Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator (Thornham Reader)

**Films Due:**
- *All About Eve* (1950)
- *Gidget* (1959)

September 7  *How does American film work to visually reinforce Social Constructions?*

**Presentation of Midterm Assignment – Storyboarding**

**Library Visit – Jeff Lacy, Film Librarian**

**Readings Due:**
- Bordwell, D - Chapter 4: The Shot: Mise-en-Scene
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 5: The Shot: Cinematography
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 6: The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing

**Film Due:**
- *Psycho* (1960)

September 14  *Sexuality on Film: In Class Viewing of “Hedwig and the Angry Inch” (2001)*

**Readings Due:**
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 2: The Significance of Film Form
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 14: Heterosexuality, Homosexuality, and Classical Hollywood
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 15: Sexualities on Film Since the Sexual Revolution

**Films Due:**
- *Some Like it Hot* (1959)
- *Boys Don’t Cry* (1999)
September 21  

**What is Whiteness? How does it translate to American Cinema?**

**Readings Due:**
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 3: The Concept of Whiteness and American Film
- McIntosh, P – White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack (available on the Internet via Google)
- Gaines, J – White Privilege and Looking Relations: Race and Gender in Feminist Film Theory (Thornham Reader)
- Modleski, T – Cinema and the Dark Continent: Race and Gender in Popular Film (Thornham Reader)

**Films Due:**
- *Imitation of Life* (1959)
- *Funny Girl* (1968)

September 28  

**The Business of Making Films: Film and Narrative History**

**Readings Due:**
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study of Film Form and Representation
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 2: The Structure and History of Hollywood Filmmaking
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 1: Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, Business
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 3: Narrative as a Formal System

**Films Due:**
- No Films Due

October 5  

**Analyzing Intersectionality in American Cinema**

**Readings Due:**
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 8: Summary: Style as a Formal System
- Bordwell, D – Chapter 11: Film Criticism: Critical Analyses
- Fregoso, R – Hanging Out with the Homegirls? Allison Ander’s *Mi Vida Loca* (available on MLA online via UTSA Library)
- Reid, M – Criticism of *She’s Gotta Have It* (see Blackboard)

**Films Due:**
- *She’s Gotta Have It* (1986)
- *Mi Vida Loca* (1994)
October 12  

**Asian American Women in American Cinema**  
**STORYBOARDING ASSIGNMENT DUE!!!**

**Readings Due:**
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 6: Asian Americans and American Film
- Chow, E. N. – The Development of Feminist Consciousness Among Asian American Women (available via JSTOR)
- Feng, P – Recuperating Suzie Wong: A Fan's Nancy Kwan-dary (Countervisions: Asian American film Criticism)

**Films Due:**
- *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960)  

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October 19  

**Latinas in American Cinema**  
**Presentation of Final Paper Assignment**

**Readings Due:**
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 7: Latinos and American Film
- Beltran, M – The Hollywood Latina Body as a Site of Social Struggle: Media Constructions of Stardom and Jennifer Lopez’s “Cross-Over Butt” (available on MLA Online via UTSA Library)
- Cortés, C – Chicanas in Film: History of an Image (Latin Looks)

**Films Due:**
- *I Like It Like That* (1994)  

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October 26  

**African American Women in American Cinema**  

**Readings Due:**
- Benshoff, H – Chapter 4: African Americans and American Film
- hooks, b – The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators
- Manatu, N – Love and Romance: Cultural Prescriptive for “Appropriate” Sexual Behaviors for Men and Women (Black Women & Sexuality)

**Films Due:**
- *Cleopatra Jones* (1973)  
- *Eve’s Bayou* (1997)
November 2

*Race, Gender, and Class in American Cinema*

FINAL PAPER ABSTRACT DUE!!!

Readings Due:
Benshoff, H – Chapter 8: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Class
Benshoff, H – Chapter 9: Cinematic Class Struggle After the Depression

Films Due:
*Claudine* (1974)
*Norma Rae* (1979)

November 9

*The Horror Film: Implications of Race, Gender and Class*

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE!!!

Readings Due:
Clover, C – Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film
Creed, B – Horror and the Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection
Williams, L – Film Bodies: Gender, Genre and Excess
(All above readings located in the Thornham Reader)

Films Due:
*Sugar Hill* (1974)
*Halloween* (1978)

November 16

DRAFT WORKSHOP/FINAL EXAM REVIEW
ROUGH DRAFT DUE!!!

November 23

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

November 30

Mini Conference!!! – Last Day of Class

December 16

FINAL PAPER DUE by 12:00 p.m. (hard copy form only)

*Schedule is subject to change*