Objectives

How does popular culture change the way we process the world around us? How does popular culture influence the way we understand ourselves in relation to others, and others in relation to us? How and why does popular culture construct gender and ethnic identities?

This course will explore the various ways that popular culture (e.g., newspapers, television, film, etc.) work to create a multitude of identity schemas. Starting with the rise of advertisements in the late 19th century and ending with new popular culture forms of online videos and gaming in the present era, the materials this course presents will help students critically analyze a variety of popular culture forms, placing images and words in a larger cultural context. From the creation of the “appropriate” male identity to the “othering” of different ethnic groups, this class will allow students to enter into a conversation with how popular culture participates in constructing reality. Further, students will discover the ways in which marginalized communities respond to these forced identities, from the Civil Rights Era’s renegotiation of black identity to using modern platforms to push back against negative ethnic and gender identities.

This course will meet for two (2) one hour and fifteen minute lectures which will use audio and visual popular culture to facilitate conversation. On top of attending lectures, there will also be a number of required readings. Students are expected to attend every section and be prepared to respond to the readings and lecture. Students will complete two papers through the semester before turning their attention to a longer final project. Said final project will be either an academic paper, a video essay, or a piece of creative fiction which critically explores narrative tropes.

Contact

You are free to stop by my office hours or make an appointment to see me if you are unclear on any course material. However, the easiest and fastest way to contact me is through e-mail. I stop checking my e-mail daily at 5:00 p.m. – if you have sent an e-mail before this time, I will make every attempt to respond that day. At the latest, you can most likely expect a response within 24 hours.

As per FERPA guidelines, I cannot and will not discuss grades over e-mail. I will be more than happy to discuss your progress in person, but I will not reply to any e-mails requesting grading information.

Additional information on policy and procedure can be found here: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/SyllabusLinks.pdf

If you are having problems meeting course requirements or understanding what is expected, I encourage you to contact me as soon as possible. Waiting for the semester to end before asking questions or voicing concerns will severely limit any assistance that I can provide.

Course Requirements
Readings: There are numerous readings throughout the semester which will need to be completed every week in order to facilitate discussion and understanding course materials. You must bring these materials to class, whether it is a printed physical copy or electronically (please see page 4 for course policy regarding electronic devices in class). It is strongly recommended that you take notes and write down any questions you may have with the available readings as these will help prepare for the graded components of the course.

Most readings are available on Canvas.
The following books are required for the course:


Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and makes up 10% of your final grade. The course readings can only provide so much to your understanding the concept of the contested identity. Both the lecture and discussion between classmates will be vital to creating new ideas and concepts as well as critically approaching the reading. Further, you will not be able to acquire participation credit if you don’t show up.

You will be afforded two (2) unexcused absences—although appreciated, there is no need to warn me ahead of time if you are unable to attend. After this, your attendance grade will be determined by the total number of days that you attend out of the total possible (e.g., five absences, one excused, will result in a grade calculation of 24/26; this is a 92% attendance grade, which makes for 9.2% of your final grade). Attending every class will not give you extra credit.

Participation: Responding to your peers and instructor and posing questions on lecture and reading material makes up 10% of your final grade. Ethnic Studies, like many disciplines, can cause emotions to run high, so please be mindful of what you say before you say it. This is in no way meant to discourage the sharing of ideas — after all, showing up and sitting in the back with folded arms does not count as participation. You must be an active part of your learning process.

Participation is important! A hypothetical student who earns a B+ average (88%) on all coursework only earns 70.4% of the overall course grade (.88 x 80). If they attend every class (10%) and participate in every class (10%), they will end up with 90.4% (70.4+10+10) or an A-. Similarly, if this hypothetical student attends half the classes (5%) and participates in only half of those (2.5%), they will end up with a 77.9%, or a C+ (70.4+5+2.5).

It is not possible to earn more participation than attendance; the student who attends only half the classes may only earn a total of 5% toward the participation portion of their final grade. In another version of our hypothetical student's grades, they would earn a B+ (the grade reflected on the course website) if they attended all the classes and participated in 80% of them (70.4+10+8 = 88.4) or 90% of lectures and participated in all of them (70.4+9+9 = 88.4). Anything less than that would result in a lower grade.

Papers: You are required to write two papers which will comprise 20% of your final grade each. These papers task you with critical analysis of different aspects of American popular culture in a broader context. For more information, see pages 9 - 10.

Proposals/Rough Drafts: In gearing up for the end of the semester, there are two major checkpoints that help orient your mind toward the final. First is a proposal wherein you tell me what it is you want to do for your final. This can be as simple as an email that indicates your intention or something more elaborate, such as a brainstorming session during office hours. There is also a required rough draft
of your final to be submitted by **May 1st**. This does not have to be a thorough draft, but at the very least a discussion about where you’re headed is required.

**Final Project/Paper:** Your final evaluation for this class comprises 30% of your final grade. You will be asked to critically analyze a piece of American popular culture in one of three ways: you can elect to write an academic analysis, create a video essay, or write creative fiction which responds to the various rhetorical tools we have talked about in class. For more information, see pages 11 - 13.

For info on UWM’s final exam policy, see [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm).

**Grades**

**Breakdown:**
- Paper 1 – 20%
- Paper 2 – 20%
- Final Project Proposal/Rough Drafts – 10%
- Final Project – 30%
- Participation – 10%
- Attendance – 10%

**Grading Scale:**

**A:** Work exceeded expectations; student provided thoughtful, creative, and critical analysis while consistently using course material and outside resources to bulwark their arguments. Student consistently responded to course materials and classmates without dominating the conversation.

**B:** Work exceeded expectations; student provided thoughtful, creative and critical analysis which was supported by most (but not all) of their evidence. Student was willing to share thoughts and questions with the course material, but sometimes dominated the conversation or merely reiterated earlier sentiments.

**C:** Work met expectations; student provided thoughtful and critical analysis. Arguments were generally shored up, but lacked detail or missed critical counter-evidence that needed to be discussed. Student made consistent effort to engage with course materials and other students.

**D:** Work did not meet all expectations; student’s argument was muddled and lacked sufficient evidence or was not sufficiently critical in nature. Participation usually amounted to an occasional “hand vote” or murmured agreement.

**F:** Work did not meet any expectations; student did not follow guidelines for projects or provide evidence. Student did not participate consistently or actively worked to agitate classmates or derail discussion.

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>F</td>
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**Important Information:**

All course assignments must be completed to earn your total grade – one missing assignment will result in an F.

I consider a C average and something to be earned. Please keep this in mind when you approach your assignments for this class.

I reserve the right to add more graded items in response to overall class participation and behavior.

As mentioned above, but what always bears repeating, **as per FERPA guidelines, I cannot and will not discuss grades over e-mail.** This is not my rule, nor the school’s, but federal guidelines. I am
happy to attempt to accommodate reasonable student requests, but breaking federal law does not fall under “reasonable.”

Important Dates

**Paper One:** Wednesday, March 6th  
**Spring Break!:** March 17th-24th  
**Paper Two:** Wednesday, April 10th  
**Final Proposals:** Wednesday, April 17th  
**Rough Drafts/Progress Report:** May 1st  
**Final Due Date:** Tuesday, May 14th at 5:00 PM on Canvas

Workload Statement:

This class meets twice weekly for 75 minutes, for a total of 37.5 hours of required lecture time. You should expect to take at least 60 hours over the course of the semester reading the required texts. There are also 2 papers and one take-home exam homework assignments which you should expect to require at least 15 hours each. You should reserve at least ten hours to study for and take the final exam. All told, this class is likely to take 147.5 hours of your time.

Course Policies

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. You will be afforded two (2) unexcused absences – although appreciated, there is no need to warn me ahead of time if you are unable to attend. After this, your attendance grade will be determined by the total number of days that you attend out of the total possible.

An excused absence is determined on a case-by-case basis and must be documentable. I know it seems callous, but if an unforeseeable tragedy occurs, please get some documentation. This saves both of us from an awkward conversation.

Regardless of whether or not the absence is excused, it is up to you to acquire materials presented in lecture. I would recommend making acquaintances with someone in class so that you have a source for notes in the event of illness, family emergency, alarm clock failing to go off, or what have you.

**Technology:** Students may use electronic devices to collect notes and do quick checks on relevant course discussions. Students using their devices to watch videos, access Facebook, or anything decidedly un-academic will not be allowed to use their device for the remainder of the course. Due to the distracting nature of using technology for entertainment rather than lecture, this will further result in the reduction of the next grade you receive by half a letter grade. Long story short, just take notes.

**Tardiness:** Please come to class on time out of respect for your fellow classmates and myself. There will be a five minute window before anyone entering class will be considered as having an unexcused absence. Barring a previously discussed excuse, this is inarguable.

**Late Work:** All work in this class has been outlined well ahead of the respective due dates. As such, late work will only be accepted under the following conditions:

1) I am notified at least 48 hours in advance that there is an issue.
   a. If there is an issue that arises with less than 48 hours before the due date, I will require a “deposit” of your most recent revision in addition to (2) below
2) This issue is documented.
3) This issue reasonably prevents you from completing the material on time. I alone determine what is considered reasonable (e.g., a cold is not a reasonable excuse).
4) There is no other way to comply with the requirements of the assignment.
5) We agree upon an alternate due date which is then non-negotiable.
6) You accept a grade penalty.

If any of these criteria are not met, late work will not be accepted.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism (or academic misconduct, if you are so inclined) is the misrepresentation of others’ work as your own. This includes copy-and-pasting published and unpublished material that is not yours into a paper, incorrectly citing material, or paraphrasing without proper citation. There are extremely harsh ramifications for plagiarism beyond just failing the assignment in question. If you are unclear what plagiarism is, feel free to ask. When in doubt, cite it.

For more information, please see [http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/](http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/).

**Campus Resources**

This is a writing-intensive class. If you want to make sure that you are being clear in your writing, are hitting the appropriate guidelines, or just need a second pair of eyes to look at your material, I would highly recommend stopping by the Writing Center ([http://www4.uwm.edu/writingcenter/](http://www4.uwm.edu/writingcenter/)). Although they do take walk-ins, I encourage you to make an appointment online to facilitate the process.

If you need accommodations or would are looking for other resources, the campus has quite a bit for you.

If you are looking for resources regarding LGBT+ inclusivity in the college environment, you can find more information at [http://uwm.edu/lgbtrc](http://uwm.edu/lgbtrc).

If you have a disability, you should contact the Accessibility Resource Center for assistance ([http://www4.uwm.edu/arc/](http://www4.uwm.edu/arc/)). If you need accommodations for religious observance, please let me know ([http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm)). Additionally, if you are called into active military, please visit [http://www4.uwm.edu/active-duty-military/](http://www4.uwm.edu/active-duty-military/) for information on the next steps.

If you an unexpected circumstance prevents you from being able to complete the course after successful navigation through most of the material, an incomplete may be given instead of a final grade. Please see [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE_GRADES.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE_GRADES.pdf) for more information.

For information regarding the university’s policy of discriminatory conduct, please visit [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf). Information on Title IX is available at [https://uwm.edu/sexual-assault/](https://uwm.edu/sexual-assault/); you may always wish to speak to the Title IX coordinator directly at titleix@uwm.edu.

If you need to speak with anyone about my conduct, please contact rbuff@uwm.edu. To appeal a grade, see [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm).
Course Calendar

Week One
Jan 23rd – Course Introduction: Expectations, Guidelines, and Important Keywords

Week Two
Jan 28th – A Quick Overview of America in the 19th - 20th Century
Ritterhouse Reading
Jan 30th – Newspapers, Popular culture, and the Creation of Identity
Mitchell Reading

Week Three
Feb 4th – Commodifying Identity: The Rise of Advertisements and Selling a Myth
Schultz Reading (Chapter Four and Conclusion ONLY)
Feb 6th – Power of the Photograph: How the Other Half Lives
Riis Reading

Week Four
Feb 11th – Entertainment as Control: The Dime Novel
Denning Reading
Feb 13th – Making an Enemy, Part One: Domestic “Threats”

Week Five
Feb 18th – Making an Enemy, Part Two: Incoming Foes
Lee Reading
Feb 20th – Terrorism, Domesticity, and Expansion
Kipling Reading

Week Six
Feb 25th – The World’s Fair: Hand-Crafting Exclusion
Wexler Reading
Feb 27th – Paper One Due
Making an Enemy, Part Three: Selling Wars
Wilson Reading
Propaganda Images

Week Seven
Foner Reading
Mar 6th –
Enemies of the New Order – The United States and the 1920’s
Gardner Reading

Week Eight
Mar 11th – Against Foes Unnatural: The Horror Genre
Mar 13th – Against Foes Indefatigable: Noir, Nihilism, and the Great Depression
Denning Reading

Week Nine
Spring Break!

Week Ten
Mar 25th – Making an Enemy, Part Three: Blameless Perpetrators and Citizen-Villains
Shibusawa Reading
Mar 27th – The Ignored Past: the 1950’s and the Mushroom Cloud
21st Century Calling
What About Juvenile Delinquency?

Week Eleven
Apr 1st – Conspicuous Consumption: Gender Roles and Moral Hygiene
Faludi Reading (Stiffed, Ch. 1)
Young Man’s Fancy
Apr 3rd – Ed Wood, The Violent Years, and a Sign of the Times

Week Twelve
Apr 8th – Renegotiating Identity: The Civil Rights Movement and Black Power
Kelley Reading
Apr 10th – Paper Two Due
On Vietnam
Faludi Reading (Stiffed, Ch. 7)

Week Thirteen
Apr 15th – Evolving Roles and Southern Strategies
Apr 17th – Final Proposals Due
The Echo Chamber: the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the 1980’s
Faludi Reading (Backlash, Ch. 2)

Week Fourteen
Apr 22nd – Enforced Domesticity: Anti-Feminist Backlash in the Popular culture
Faludi Reading (Backlash, Ch. 6)
Apr 24th – What Makes a Man: Die Hard, The Detective, and the New Masculinity

Week Fifteen
Apr 29th – The Horror Show: Gender, Race, Monsters… Romance?
Sarkeesian Reading
hooks Reading
May 1st – Rough Drafts/Progress Reports
Identity in Video Games and Other New Popular culture

Week Sixteen
May 6th – Where Do We Go from Here?
May 8th – Last Day for Check-Ins on Final Projects

PAPER REQUIREMENTS ON NEXT PAGE
Your Last Name in the Header (You Do Not Need Any Other Identifying Info), Page Number

This is the Title – It Starts No Lower than the First Line

This is how your paper should look. You should not deviate from this format unless explicitly requested by a professor. Failure to follow this format will result in a substantial reduction in your paper grade. If you do not know how to format your paper, please make an appointment at the Writing Center or contact me. For papers requiring one, you will need a thesis statement, which is explicitly what you plan to argue in your paper. A good thesis, especially for a short paper, will be concise and directly lay out what you intend to discuss. For instance, “The formation of illegal identities by the United States government is best articulated in works by Gunderson and Payne in regards to Russian and Australian immigrants,” is a fairly strong thesis – it lays out what you intend to discuss and, loosely, what evidence you will use. In the other direction, “Misogyny is bad,” while inarguably true, is not a strong thesis.

Your body paragraphs should all reinforce your thesis statement. If you read a paragraph and it does not add to your argument, I would advise you to take it out. The body paragraphs are where you will incorporate evidence from your sources. If you use direct quotations, think of it like making a sandwich: first, create context for the quote; second, put in the quote word-for-word in quotation marks, followed by a citation (Gunderson 6) / (Gunderson 2013, 6) / (Gunderson, 2013, 6)\(^1\); third, interpret the quote in your own words. You may also paraphrase, which is putting another author’s words into your own. This is still followed by a citation which will, as shown above, include at least the author’s last name and page number.

Margins are to be set at 1” all around – no more, no less. If you think you’re being clever, you’re not. Font should be Times New Roman. Paragraphs should have no extra spacing between them – check your “Paragraph” settings. Ignorance of how to change these settings is no excuse.

\(^1\) These citation styles are MLA, Chicago, and APA respectively. You can also use footnotes if you prefer Chicago’s far superior citation style: First and Last Name, Title of Book (Publication City: Publication Company, Year), Page.
This **1,050 to 1,750 word** paper asks you to identify a major cultural theme/trope that we have discussed in class or that you’ve noticed across at least **two (2)** of the course readings up to and including week seven. This theme should be named and described in a reasonable amount of detail, with special attention as to what makes this theme unique and worthy of scrutiny. You will then discuss this theme and how it appears in various forms across the readings. You will then address the following:

**What is the primary purpose of this historical theme (e.g., reinforcement of norms, identity, etc.)?**

**What else does this theme do?** That is to say, is there anyone outside of the intended audience that is affected by this?

**What does the theme tell us about the culture (e.g., hopes, dreams, ideals, etc.)?**

**How does this theme manifest in these two (or more) readings?** What is different? What is similar?

**Is this theme or trope intentional or unintentional?** Why do you think so? What evidence do you have?

The purpose of this paper is to create a synthesis of two or more works that we have read and discussed in class. Further, it asks you to interpret the available data to come to a conclusion regarding whether or not this theme/trope was intentionally created. Ideally, this will allow you to begin to bridge together some of the broader themes of this course in a way that establishes connections between various eras of the American experience.

Outside materials are not forbidden but should not be more than one-third of your total sources. All materials must be cited appropriately in a bibliography as well as in standard citation.

**Advice and Warnings**

This paper requires a thesis statement, a firm declaration of what it is you are trying to prove. If you are having trouble writing an introduction, start writing your body paragraphs – sometimes, it’s easier to figure out what you want to say when you’ve already said it.

It is vital that your sources “talk to each other” – that is to say, they are being used in a way that communicates your intention while staying true to the original author’s purpose. Remember that you are synthesizing material – bringing together multiple sources to reinforce your argument/craft a new interpretation.

Tropes can be taken from class or hypothesized from your own interpretation of the material **as long as it is identifiable across popular culture incarnations.**

You will have until **March 1st** to send me a draft, outline, flowchart, doodle, or whatever you come up with for this paper. I will send you feedback in as timely a way possible. This feedback will focus on the strengths and weaknesses of your ideas and point out any areas you will want to rethink. I **will not rewrite the paper, nor will I turn it into an A-quality assignment. That is up to you.**

Visit the Writing Center early. They may not be able to help you with grammar, but they will help say what it is you want to say.

Pay attention during discussions and lectures, take notes, and ask questions. These will help you formulate ideas on what to write on.

**MIND THE PAPER REQUIREMENTS (PAGE 8).**
This **1,400 to 2,100 word** paper asks you to isolate **at least two (2)** distinct gender- or ethnic-specific tropes that you can identify in the readings/popular culture thus far. These tropes should be named, described in a reasonable amount of detail (essentially giving enough information so as to identify them when they appear in different media), and you should be able to ascertain the **purpose** of the trope (e.g., what moral message does this memetic shorthand have?). At least one example must be provided for each item, although two will help to augment your assertion that you have successfully identified tropes. The next step is to articulate whether or not these tropes have **survived intact** or **evolved**.

**If it has survived intact…**
... give at least one pertinent example from recent popular culture (2005-present).
... theorize why this trope has been entrenched in our culture using historical context.
... if there has been any attempt at renegotiating this trope, what is it? If not, why not?
... is this intentionally done? Or is it an example of unintentional symbolism? Why?

**If it has evolved…**
... articulate what form this trope now takes using an example from recent popular culture.
... place it in a historical context – what changed between then and now which resulted in this evolution?
... is this evolution positive, negative, or neutral? Why?
... is this intentionally done? Or is it an example of unintentional symbolism? Why?

The purpose of this paper is to critically analyze a trope as it grows and changes/stagnates over time. You are free to bring in outside sources, but they should not outnumber the sources cited from class. All materials must be cited appropriately in a bibliography as well as in standard citation.

**Advice and Warnings**
This paper requires a thesis statement, a firm declaration of what it is you are trying to prove.
If you are having trouble writing an introduction, start writing your body paragraphs – sometimes, it’s easier to figure out what you want to say when you’ve already said it.
Tropes can be taken from class or hypothesized from your own interpretation of the material as long as it is identifiable across popular culture incarnations.
You will have until **April 5th** to send me a draft, outline, flowchart, doodle, or whatever you come up with for this paper. I will send you feedback in as timely a way possible. This feedback will focus on the strengths and weaknesses of your ideas and point out any areas you will want to rethink. **I will not rewrite the paper, nor will I turn it into an A-quality assignment. That is up to you.**
Visit the Writing Center early. They may not be able to help you with grammar, but they will help say what it is you want to say.
Pay attention during discussions and lectures, take notes, and ask questions. These will help you formulate ideas on what to write on.

**MIND THE PAPER REQUIREMENTS (PAGE 8).**
Option A
The Final Paper
Due Tuesday, May 14th at 5:00 PM on Canvas

For the final paper, you are tasked with writing a substantial, scholarly paper on a piece of popular culture of your choosing. How you approach this is largely up to you, but it must remain consistent with the themes of the course – that is to say, it must discuss themes and/or tropes dealing with gender and/or ethnicity. This paper must be a minimum of 2,100 words to a maximum of 3,500.

I highly encourage that you to do something that interests you but doesn’t leave you with a lack of sources. For instance, you may wish to examine the concept of slasher films as a whole—plenty has been written on them, and there are many ways to interrogate different entries’ portrayal of gender. Something more obscure might take some more digging than you are comfortable with. That being said, you are given more than a month to prepare this paper, so I hope that you spend some time looking around.

Some Suggestions to Get Started:

* Find a book that has been turned into a movie. What changed? What stayed the same? How does it change the way we understand the characters, narrative, etc.?
* Evaluate a book’s treatment of different ethnicities and women. How does the author want you to feel about them? Why? What tropes are being used and why?
* Examine how heroes and villains have changed over the years. What historical factors have precipitated this change? Is this behavior reactionary or does it force change elsewhere?

Proposal

Your proposal should include the popular culture you intend to investigate, possible tropes you wish to discuss, and how you plan on investigating the material. This should be no more than two paragraphs long. Please list any relevant sources you have so that I can provide you with appropriate guidance when and if it is necessary.

Checklist

_____ Submit your proposal by Thursday @ 6 p.m. on April 17th
_____ Submit a rough draft by Thursday @ 6 p.m. on May 1st
_____ Submit your final copy on or before Tuesday, May 14th at 5:00 PM on Canvas

MIND THE PAPER REQUIREMENTS (PAGE 8).
This version of the final consists of two parts: a creative writing component and brief analytical component.

For the creative writing portion, you are tasked with writing a piece of fiction that seeks to directly interact with at least one trope. Since this is creative, be creative! You can have a group of superheroes chatting about how all of their romantic partners have been ‘fridged’. You can have a princess locked in a dungeon rescue herself. You can write romance where the ‘Happily Ever After’ consists of friendship rather than love. You can be subversive or meditate on why these tropes are valuable to their genre. Due to the fact that fiction is hard to pin down in terms of ‘acceptable’ length, aim for 1,400 words. If it will be substantially (~350 words or more) shorter or longer, let me know.

For the analytical component, you will be writing a sort of ‘author’s intent’ about the piece. Here, you will address several key issues.

- Identify the trope(s) you sought to critique in your work.
  - Is there a historical legacy for this storytelling device?
  - Why is this something you felt necessary to critique?
  - How did you effectively dig into this trope in the framework of your story?
- Identify and explain the relationship of your story/trope to a minimum of 3 readings/lectures and how they inspired/challenged your view of this trope.
  - You may, of course, bring in fictional work that you feel you are responding to provided that you explain what about it you are working off of.
- Finally, explain what it is in the current cultural landscape that you are attempting to negotiate.
  - What are you responding to?
  - What do you hope your audience understands from your work?

This component should be a minimum of 700 words, though a well-considered analytical component may be much longer.

The goal of this project is to create a piece of fiction that knowingly works as a both entertainment and critique.

Proposal

Your proposal is essentially a pitch for your creative endeavor. Tell me the trope you want to discuss, what story beats you feel are needed to critique it effectively, and what work or works specifically inspired this journey.

Checklist

- Submit your proposal by Thursday @ 6 p.m. on April 17th
- Submit a rough draft by Thursday @ 6 p.m. on May 1st
- Submit your final copy on or before Tuesday, May 14th at 5:00 PM on Canvas

MIND THE PAPER REQUIREMENTS (PAGE 8).
Option C
The Video Essay
Due Tuesday, May 14th at 5:00 PM on Canvas

For the final project, you are will create a video essay that critiques at least one element of popular culture. This will require access to an editing program (such as Adobe Premier or Final Cut), a computer microphone or other means to record narration, and access to stills, clips, or an entire film. There are stations around campus that do have access to these programs and devices, but you should be able to download Adobe Creative Suite programs as a UWM student.

I recommend going to archive.org to find a good piece of popular culture to critique. The 1940’s and 50’s have plenty of public domain shorts that you have full access to. Otherwise, there are some other ways to collect clips and stills from films off your computer. Once you have selected an appropriate video, you will want to watch the whole thing at least twice in order to take down notes on tropes and themes that you can talk about.

You will want to create a script for your narration. You can be funny, wry, bland, whatever, but you must be critical. That is to say, you must point out what tropes and themes are being used, why they are being used, and how it is affecting the audience. You will also be able to cite authors with ideas similar to the ones you are pointing out.

Video editing is very time consuming, so it is important that you plan for this. As such, there are more checkpoints for this final than the others. Further, this is the only final where you can partner with up to two other students – this will require you to show me your planned division of labor. If it is apparent that one person does the bulk of work, I will adjust grades accordingly. Editing programs eat up a lot of space on a computer and will utterly destroy your processing speed if you don’t know what you’re doing. Please see me if you need help getting started to ensure a smooth project.

If you are looking for different types of video essays to base this off of, I recommend looking into Lindsay Ellis on YouTube.

Requirements

_____ Minimum of ten minutes (videos can be edited as long as the original intention remains)

_____ Title sequence introducing yourself, the class, and what you will be talking about

_____ Submit the script via e-mail when you submit your video

_____ Roughly 2 minutes of commentary for every 3 minutes of footage shown (i.e., you find a 15 minute video, your final project will be roughly 25 minutes with your commentary)

Checklist

_____ Tell me you are choosing Option C, along with the names of your partners and your intentions for the project by Thursday @ 6 p.m. on April 17th

_____ Submit a progress report by Thursday @ 6 p.m. on May 1st

_____ Submit final product on or before Tuesday, May 14th at 5:00 PM on Canvas