

**General Education Course Information Sheet**  
*Please submit this sheet for each proposed course*

Department & Course Number FTV 98TB  
 Course Title American Genre Films and Domestic Trauma

1 Check the recommended GE foundation area(s) and subgroups(s) for this course

**Foundations of the Arts and Humanities**

- Literary and Cultural Analysis \_\_\_\_\_
- Philosophic and Linguistic Analysis \_\_\_\_\_
- Visual and Performance Arts Analysis and Practice X

**Foundations of Society and Culture**

- Historical Analysis \_\_\_\_\_
- Social Analysis X

**Foundations of Scientific Inquiry**

- Physical Science \_\_\_\_\_  
*With Laboratory or Demonstration Component must be 5 units (or more)*
- Life Science \_\_\_\_\_  
*With Laboratory or Demonstration Component must be 5 units (or more)*

2. Briefly describe the rationale for assignment to foundation area(s) and subgroup(s) chosen.

This course engages with the ways in which films and popular culture engage with society at different points of history. The course will entail the analysis of films, literature, and social and historical contexts.

3. List faculty member(s) who will serve as instructor (give academic rank):

Kathleen McHugh, Professor; Benjamin Sher, teaching fellow

4. Indicate when do you anticipate teaching this course:

2013-2014 Winter \_\_\_\_\_ Spring X  
 Enrollment Enrollment

GE Course Units 5

## 5. Please present concise arguments for the GE principles applicable to this course.

## ❑ General Knowledge

The course will introduce core concepts of film theory, film history, and trauma studies. Students will be introduced to a wide variety of popular genre films, and learn how to critically analyze media texts in relation to historical and social contexts. Students will practice putting film texts and historical events in conversation with academic theory.

## ❑ Integrative Learning

Students will discuss the films we watch (and the social and historical events we discuss) through several theoretical lenses: film theory, trauma theory from various disciplines (including psychology and English literature), and theories of gender, sexuality, and race. Students will examine the social implications of a novel's transformation into a film, and consider how "true events" have been fictionalized using film language (raising the question, how can fiction films function as historical documents?). They will examine how films contribute to audiences' understandings of real social structures. This course may be of interest to students studying Film, English, Contemporary American History, Cultural Studies, Psychology, Gender Studies, African American Studies, and Social Work.

## ❑ Ethical Implications

Genre films that represent domestic trauma raise profound ethical questions. For example, do these films help to stop domestic traumas by raising awareness of them, or do they help to propagate the social structures that allow domestic trauma to happen? In what instances is it ethical to turn domestic trauma into popular entertainment? Are certain films ethical in their depictions of domestic trauma, while other films are not? Why or why not? How do films illuminate the ways in which trauma is purposefully made visible, or invisible, in American culture? I would argue that this course will raise fundamental questions about the ethics of American culture.

## ❑ Cultural Diversity

The films shown in my course represent a culturally diverse group of characters, including men and women, LGBT people and heterosexual people, and people of different races and ethnicities. The course will ask how issues like race, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity lead people to experience domestic trauma differently (and lead people's traumas to be represented in different ways). At the same time, these films demonstrate how trauma creates commonalities across social barriers, and even historical periods. The course will also examine what kinds of trauma survivors (based on class, race, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity) get to be represented by popular culture, which ones do not, and why.

## ❑ Critical Thinking

Students will read many academic and popular critical articles that will give them models of how people have thought critically about films, trauma, and American culture. These articles, and my facilitation of class discussions, will prepare them to do their own original critical thinking and analysis about the films and issues that we discuss in class verbally and in writing. One of the main purposes of this class is to encourage students to think critically about "entertainment," which people sometimes take for granted as something socially insignificant, to be enjoyed without analysis or "too much thought."

## ❑ Rhetorical Effectiveness

In journals and final papers, students will practice critical writing, and be encouraged to come up with their own original arguments about the materials discussed in class. In class, we will participate in workshops regarding how to formulate successful thesis statements and overall arguments when writing about the specific topics of our class.

□ Problem-solving

I consider writing a research paper to be one of the ultimate acts of problem solving! Students will be encouraged to ask themselves “What is the question I want to pursue, and how will I answer that question? What kinds of sources do I need to answer that question? Where can I get them? And how do I put them together to answer my question persuasively for a wide variety of readers?”

□ Library & Information Literacy

For their final paper, students will be required to gather primary (including newspaper articles and, possibly, Hollywood censorship files, to which I will introduce them in class) and secondary sources from the library. My department’s wonderful Arts Librarian, Diana King, will give a tutorial on how to optimally use the library to meet the specific requirements of our course.

**(A) STUDENT CONTACT PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)**

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|---|-------|---------|
| 1. Lecture (and screenings):                            | 3.5   | (hours) |
| 2. Discussion Section:                                  | 2.5   | (hours) |
| 3. labs   | _____ | (hours) |
| 4. Experiential (service learning, internships, other): | _____ | (hours) |
| 5. Field Trips:   | _____ | (hours) |

**(A) TOTAL Student Contact Per Week** 6 **(HOURS)**

**(B) OUT-OF-CLASS HOURS PER WEEK (if not applicable write N/A)**

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|-------------------------------------|-----|---------|
| 1. General Review & Preparation:    | .5  | (hours) |
| 2. Reading                          | 4   | (hours) |
| 3. Group Projects:                  | N/A | (hours) |
| 4. Preparation for Quizzes & Exams: | .5  | (hours) |
| 5. Information Literacy Exercises:  | N/A | (hours) |
| 6. Written Assignments:             | 3   | (hours) |
| 7. Research Activity:               | 1   | (hours) |

**(B) TOTAL Out-of-class time per week** 9 **(HOURS)**

**GRAND TOTAL (A) + (B) must equal at least 15 hours/week** 15 **(HOURS)**

**FILM, TV & DIGITAL MEDIA 98TB:  
AMERICAN GENRE FILMS AND DOMESTIC TRAUMA  
SPRING 2014**

**Instructor:** Ben Sher  
**Email:** bensher@ucla.edu

This course will examine the ways in which popular genre films have represented domestic trauma. Scholars have argued that, in various ways, mainstream genre films make efforts to resolve cultural contradictions for a mass audience. At the same time, academic and popular commentators have described actual traumas that take place in the home, including abuse, abandonment, and neglect, as unspeakable or un-representable for those who experience them. This paradox -- between a mass cultural form that resolves contradiction, and a traumatic experience that exceeds the capacity of representation and narrative -- provides an ideal case study for understanding the role of popular genres in American culture. In doing so, this course will investigate how these films have spoken “the unspeakable,” represented “the un-representable,” and made efforts to resolve the “un-resolvable”.

Domestic trauma usually takes place away from public view, and its survivors often repress their experiences of trauma, leaving the traumas and/or post-traumatic affects to exist in their memory and consciousness only in indirect or symbolic ways. Film genres structure “real” events similarly by adding fantastic, melodramatic, surreal, symbolic, and otherwise cinematic elements to them. This course argues that genre films exemplify several important ways in which the traumatic and the cinematic similarly structure meaning. Like trauma, genre films problematize notions of “the real.” Thus, genre films are especially effective texts in which to examine representations of trauma. At the same time, by focusing on representations of trauma, this course will help students to understand the formal and cultural functions of different film genres in new ways.

Through readings, screenings, and lectures, this course will encourage undergraduate students to look at films’ generic codes and structures of meaning in order to assess how they represent trauma. We will study films from three genres that have repeatedly represented domestic trauma throughout American film history: melodrama, horror, and comedy. The course will be divided into three chronological units: Classical Hollywood Genres and the Production Code (1920-1950), Genres in Transformation (1950-1980), and Genre in Contemporary Cinema (1980-2013). As a result, the course will examine how films refer to American culture’s collective understandings of domestic trauma at different historical and industrial periods. We will consider how certain genres and genre conventions emphasize and allegorize such cultural understandings. At the same time, by interrogating how one relatively small subject has been repeatedly represented in films from highly disparate genres, we will look closely at the malleability of film genres.

Students will gain a deeper understanding of how film genres function formally and how filmmakers and audiences have used genre films to process social and cultural events. At the same time, they will examine how and why domestic trauma, though often swept under the rug by powerful institutions like the nuclear family, organized religion, and schools, nonetheless remains a constituent element of our mainstream culture.

**Course objectives:**

- Introduction to core concepts of American film theory (specifically genre theory), film history, and trauma studies.
- Exposure to a broad sampling of U.S. made, popular genre films representing domestic trauma from early Hollywood through the present.
- Understanding of shifts in cultural attitudes and media industry trends that have impacted both the evolution of film genres and the ways in which domestic trauma is perceived in American culture at large.
- Students will develop critical media analysis, interpretation, and argumentation skills through screenings, readings, class discussions, writing, and presentations.
- Students will hone their own critical writing and speaking skills, and do their own critical writing and speaking about the ways in which popular genre films have engaged with domestic trauma.

***Readings and Screenings:*** All readings can be found on the course website, or in the course reader. All films, including those screened in class, will be available for viewing at the Media Collections and Services in Powell Library (some are also available through companies including iTunes, Amazon, and Netflix).

***Class Participation:***

Since everyone provides a useful perspective on each subject at hand, participation is essential and mandatory. In order to receive credit for participation, you must attend each meeting. I will take attendance at the beginning of each screening and seminar. In order to avoid being considered absent, please do not come late. If you are unable to attend a class, let me know in advance. If I do not hear from you before class with a legitimate explanation of your absence, you will lose participation credit for the day.

While doing course readings and watching films, please take notes and record any questions or comments that you would like to raise during seminar. Also think about how you would answer the discussion questions outlined on the syllabus.

Some of the readings on this syllabus can be difficult. Do not be intimidated! I view the classroom as an interactive space where, through open communication, we will learn together. My hope is that readings that may seem initially inscrutable will, after consideration of assigned research questions and engagement in seminar, come to seem dynamic and thought provoking. I am also happy to meet privately during my weekly office hours to discuss the readings, your papers, or anything else related to the course.

***Class Presentations:***

During Week 1, students will sign-up for one reading **and** one screening presentation. These presentations will be no more than 5 minutes. Students will identify a text's key arguments/film's main themes and suggest two discussion questions to initially start off our group discussion.

***Reading and Screening Journal:***

Your journal is meant to help you respond thoughtfully to readings and screenings. At the beginning of each week, you need to bring to class a one- to two-page response (typed, double-spaced) about one or more of the previous week's readings and screenings. In advance, I will give you questions to prompt your thinking. I will collect these responses on the day they are due, and I won't accept late responses. When evaluating your reading journal, I will look for signs of thoughtful insights and careful responses to the issues you discuss. While your writing does not need to be formal in style, it should be grammatically correct and proofread for mechanical errors and typos. You are allowed to miss one response without penalty.

***Final paper (15-18 pages):***

For the final paper, students will select two films from a single genre that represent domestic trauma, each from a different time period that we've discussed in class. Your paper will discuss how the films' representations of domestic trauma are informed by the evolutions in genre and cultural understandings of trauma that had taken place during each time period. Papers will be graded for argument, research, style, analysis, and clarity. I recommend that students meet with me multiple times during office hours to discuss their research and writing process. During class discussions, students will have ample opportunities to work through sample case studies as a way to prepare for their final projects. An 8-10 page rough draft of the final paper will be due on Week 8. Students should use my feedback on their draft to revise and write their final draft. During the last half of our final class, students will give a brief (5-7 minutes, depending on enrollment) presentation of their final paper. This presentation will not be graded. However, failure to be prepared for the presentation will affect your final paper grade.

***Final Paper Prospectus With Annotated Bibliography (350 words):***

Students will submit a paper prospectus and annotated bibliography in the fifth week of the quarter. I require that students meet with me during office hours in advance of the paper prospectus deadline to discuss your topic. The outline for the proposed final paper topic must include a 350-word description of the argument that the essay will make. It will contain the essay's main (possibly hypothetical) argument/thesis statement and a brief, but specific, summary of the main points that the paper will address. In addition (not included in the 350 word description), please include a list of the films you will be writing about and an annotated bibliography of **at least five potential print sources** (articles from academic journals and/or books) you plan to use. You may also include additional sources from newspapers, magazines, and internet sources. During Week 2, instructions for compiling an annotated bibliography will be covered, as well as how to use film and paper archives (at UCLA and the Margaret Herrick Library) and on-line databases such as ProQuest.

**Grading Distribution:**

Class Participation: 15%  
 Class Presentations: 10% (both grades averaged)  
 Reading journal: 15%  
 Final Paper Prospectus with Annotated Bibliography: 15 %  
 Final Paper Rough Draft: 10 %  
 Final Paper: 35 %

**Plagiarism:**

Using another's thoughts, ideas, and/or language from printed or electronic sources without giving the proper credit constitutes plagiarism. I will report any suspected cases of plagiarism to the Dean of Students Office, and disciplinary action may include failing the assignment and/or expulsion from UCLA. For information on how to cite sources, consult Hacker, sections R1e and R2b, or feel free to talk to me. For further information on UCLA's plagiarism policy, see the Dean of Students' website: <http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/integrity.html>

**Office Hours:**

Throughout the quarter, I encourage you to consult with me on your essay and/or any questions or concerns you might have regarding your progress in the class. If you can't make my office hours, please email me and I will be happy to schedule an appointment at a different time. I enjoy meeting with students to discuss their work, so please don't be shy.

**Assignments:**

**Due at the beginning of each week:** Journal entry (1-2 pages)  
**Due Week 5:** Final Paper Prospectus with Annotated Bibliography  
**Due Week 9:** Draft of Final Paper  
**Due Week 10:** Brief Presentation of Final Paper  
**Due Week 11 (Finals Week):** Final paper

**SEMINAR SCHEDULE:**

Please make sure to read the assigned selections before our class meeting on the corresponding day.

**UNIT 1: Introduction****WEEK 1: Why discuss American genre films in relation to domestic trauma?**

Screening: *Mysterious Skin* (2005, Gregg Araki)

## Readings:

Walker, Janet. *Trauma Cinema: Documenting Incest and the Holocaust*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2005. "Preface," pp. xv-3; "Chapter 1: Catastrophe, Representation, and the Vicissitudes of Memory," pp. 3-33.

Neale, Steve. *Genre and Hollywood*. London: Routledge, 2000. "Introduction," pp. 1-9; "Definitions of Genre," pp. 9-31; "Dimensions of Genre," pp. 31-49.

Discussion questions: In what genre might *Mysterious Skin* be categorized? How does *Mysterious Skin* represent some of the post-traumatic mental processes described by Walker? How do characters in *Mysterious Skin* engage with genre films as a way to process their experiences of trauma? Does *Mysterious Skin* draw comparisons between domestic trauma and genre films? Does *Mysterious Skin* fit into Janet Walker's definition of "trauma cinema"?

## **UNIT 2: 1920-1960 (Classical Hollywood Cinema and The Production Code)**

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### **WEEK 2: Melodrama**

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Screening: *King's Row* (1942, Sam Wood); clips of *Freud* (1962, John Houston)

Readings:

Walker, "The Excision of Incest from Classical Hollywood Cinema: *King's Row* and *Freud*," pp. 33-49.

Neale, "Genre and Hollywood: The Studio System," pp. 231-41; "Melodrama and the Woman's Film," pp. 179-205

Maltby, Richard. "The Production Code and the Hays Office." *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930-1939*. Ed. Tino Balio. New York: Scribner's, 1993, p. 37-73.

Discussion questions: Melodrama has historically been one of the genres in which domestic trauma is represented most frequently. Why do you think that this is the case? How are the conventions of melodrama outlined by Steve Neale uniquely resonant with various elements of domestic trauma? What does Walker mean when she describes *King's Row* as "a disassociated film"? Is *King's Row* disassociated for the same reasons that people who have experienced domestic trauma disassociate? How is the social context that led to the censorship of *King's Row* similar to (and/or different from) the social context that leads to the repression/silencing of traumas in the film?

### **WEEK 3: Comedy**

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Screening: *Unfaithfully Yours* (1948, Preston Sturges); clips from *Finn and Hattie* (1931, Norman Z. McLeod and Norman Taurog)

Readings:

Sikov, Ed. *Screwball: Hollywood's Madcap Romantic Comedies*. New York: Crown, 1989.

"Introduction: Pitching Screwballs," pp. 15-32; "Chapter 3: Out for Blood: The Intimacy of Violence," pp. 64-78.

Neale, "Major Genres: Comedy," 65-71

Discussion questions: Sikov argues that, in screwball comedies, filmmakers replaced sex between the central couple (which could not be shown because of the Production Code Administration's censorship) with comical domestic violence. Do you feel that the domestic violence in *Unfaithfully Yours* stands in for sex? In what ways? Is it ethical to represent



domestic violence as comical? Does the screwball comedy's conflation of sex and violence resonate with the ways in which domestic abuse is discussed in contemporary culture?

#### **WEEK 4: Horror**

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Screening: *Dracula* (1931, Tod Browning) and *Psycho* (1960, Alfred Hitchcock)

Readings:

Tudor, Andrew. *Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991. "Genre History I: 1931-1960," pp. 27-48

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Dracula (Tod Browning, 1931): The Vampire's Secret." *Southwest Review* 76.4 (Autumn). Pp. 498-510

Discussion questions: Does *Dracula* represent domestic trauma? If so, what kinds of trauma? If not, why not? Oates writes that certain instances of domestic trauma that were described overtly in Bram Stoker's book (i.e. Dracula's victim, Lucy, becomes a child predator), were censored and omitted in the film. Can we find traces of these "repressed" traumas in the film, as Janet Walker does in the censored film version of *King's Row*? How would you compare the sexual violence represented in *Psycho* to that in *Dracula*? Do the film's very different visual styles and settings make different statements about the ways in which domestic trauma functions in American culture and society?

#### **UNIT 3: 1960-1980 (Genres in Transformation)**

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#### **WEEK 5: Melodrama**

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#### **DUE: FINAL PROSPECTUS AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Screening: *Sybil* (1976, Daniel Petrie; two hour theatrical version); clips from *Mommie Dearest* (1981, Frank Perry)

Readings:

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Howard F. Stein. "Child Abuse and the Unconscious in American Popular Culture." *The Children's Culture Reader*. Henry Jenkins, ed. New York: New York University P, 1998. Pp. 178-199.

Walker, "Incest on Television and the Burden of Proof: *Sybil*; *Shattered Trust: The Shari Karney Story*; *Liar, Liar*; and *Divided Memories*," pp. 49-82.

Discussion questions: What are some ways in which *Sybil* indicates an evolution in the depiction of domestic trauma in melodrama since the classical Hollywood period (and, in particular, *King's Row*)? How and why does *Sybil* draw upon the conventions of melodrama to tell a "true story"? Many have characterized the 1970s as a period during which genres were frequently blended. Does *Sybil* draw on conventions from genres other than melodrama? If so, to what effect? Do *Sybil*, and the other TV movies described by Walker, support or counteract Scheper-Hughes and Stein's arguments about the ways in which child abuse was represented in American popular culture in the 1960s and 1970s? Of course, they may support some parts of the argument and counteract others.

**WEEK 6: Comedy**

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Screening: *Female Trouble* (1974, John Waters)

Readings:

Rosenbaum, Jonathan and J. Hoberman. "John Waters Presents 'The Filthiest People Alive'." *Midnight Movies*. New York: Harper & Rowe. Pp. 136-174.

Kane, Meddock Derek. "Trash Comes Home: Gender/Genre Subversion in the Films of John Waters." *Gender and Genres in Postwar Cinema*. Christine Gledhill, ed. Urbana: U of Illinois. Pp. 205-219.

Discussion Questions: Rosenbaum and Hoberman argue that John Waters films, and *Female Trouble* in particular, were part of an anti-establishment youth culture that gained increasing prominence in the 1970s (most famously, through punk music). Is *Female Trouble*'s depiction of domestic abuse aligned with this anti-establishment attitude? How might representing domestic abuse and sexual abuse make a film "anti-establishment," or against mainstream American norms and conventions? Does *Female Trouble* make fun of sexual abuse and domestic violence, thereby minimizing its seriousness to get a laugh? Or does it satirize sexual abuse and domestic violence, using comic conventions to raise awareness about and condemn it?

**WEEK 7: Horror**

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Screening: *Carrie* (1976, Brian De Palma)

Readings:

Wood, Robin. "The American Nightmare: Horror in the 70s." *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan*. New York: Columbia UP, 1986. Pp. 63-85.

Stolorow, Robert D. *Trauma and Human Existence: Autobiographical, Psychoanalytic, and Philosophical Reflections*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007. "The Contextuality of Emotional Life," p. 1-7; "The Contextuality of Emotional Trauma," p. 7-13; "The Phenomenology of Trauma and the Absolutisms of Everyday Life," p. 13-17; "Trauma and Temporality," p. 17-23.

Stamp, Shelley Lindsay. "Horror, Femininity, and Carrie's Monstrous Puberty." *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*. Barry Keith Grant, ed. Austin: U of Texas P, 1996. Pp. 279-96.

Discussion Questions: How do *Carrie*'s screenwriter and director represent Carrie's subjective experiences of trauma (child abuse and vicious bullying) using the formal (cinematography, editing, music) and narrative conventions of the horror film? How do the film's depictions of Carrie's subjective experiences of trauma resonate with Stolorow's theories about how human beings experience life during and after traumas? Wood argues that monsters in horror films of the 1960s and 1970s represented the increasing visibility of real social anxieties that mainstream society tried to repress in the 1950s (including the breakdown of the nuclear family, women's dissatisfaction, and domestic violence). In what ways does this "return of the repressed" manifest itself in *Carrie*? Why tell Carrie's story as a horror film, rather than a melodrama?

**UNIT 4: 1980-2013 (Contemporary Genres)****WEEK 8: Melodrama**

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**DUE: ROUGH DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER**

Screening: *The Color Purple* (1985, Steven Spielberg)

Reading:

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. London: Harcourt, 1982. 300 pages.

Bobo, Jacqueline. "Text and Subtext: *The Color Purple*." *Black Women as Cultural Readers*. Pp. 61-91.

Bobo, Jacqueline. "*The Color Purple*: Black Women as Cultural Readers." *Female Spectators: Looking At Film and Television*. E. Deidre Pribram, ed. London: Verso, 1988. Pp. 90-110.

Discussion questions: One film critic pejoratively described *The Color Purple* as "the first Disney movie about incest." What might he have meant by this? Do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not? *The Color Purple*'s film adaptation was altered substantially from Alice Walker's book in order to make it palatable for mainstream audiences, and to suit director Spielberg's style. One of these alterations was Spielberg's use of heightened film style to make Walker's gritty, straightforward story fit into the conventions of a big, bold Hollywood melodrama. How did these alterations effect the film's representations of domestic trauma? According to Bobo, how do black women "read" *The Color Purple*'s depictions of abuse in subversive ways? Do their readings change the meaning of the text itself?

**WEEK 9: Comedy**

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Screening: *Madea's Family Reunion* (2006, Tyler Perry); clips from *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (Tyler Perry discloses his history of abuse; 200 men speak out about their experiences of sexual abuse).

Reading:

Cvetkovich, Ann. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke UP, 2003. "Introduction," and "The Everyday Life of Queer Trauma." Pp. 1-49.

Discussion questions: How might *Madea's Family Reunion* be understood as "an archive of feelings," like those described by Cvetkovich? Critics often describe Perry's melding of madcap comedy and highly serious melodrama as uncomfortable and problematic. Why do you think he chooses to mix these genres in such jarring ways in order to depict domestic trauma? *Madea's Family Reunion* quotes directly from movies and television shows about domestic trauma, including *The Color Purple*. What are the purposes and effects of these quotations? Tyler Perry frequently discloses his own experiences of child abuse in interviews, and states that they inspire his plays and films. However, in his films, he only ever represents women being abused. Based on our readings and discussions throughout the quarter, what might be reasons for this trend in

his work? Is it problematic for a male director to process his own traumas by making films about abuse against women?

## **WEEK 10: Horror**

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### **DUE: BRIEF CLASS PRESENTATION**

Screening: *Scream* (1996, Wes Craven)

#### Readings:

Tudor, Andrew. "From Paranoia to Postmodernism?: The Horror Movie in Late Modern Society." *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood*. Steve Neale, ed. London: BFI, 2002. Pp. 105-117.

Clover, Carol. "Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film." *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*. Barry Keith Grant, ed. Austin: U of Texas P, 1996. Pp. 66-117.

Discussion questions: 54 years after the release of *King's Row* (the second film we watched in class), *Scream* tells a similar story of a seemingly perfect, all-American small town seething with secret traumas. Why, so many years later, is this story still relevant enough in American culture to be told through a mainstream blockbuster? How have social and cultural changes regarding perceptions of domestic trauma that took place between *King's Row* and *Scream* impact the ways in which the story is told (this time, as a horror film)? Clover's article and *Scream* both make arguments about how male and female film spectators use horror films in order to process traumas and difficult emotions. What are their arguments, and do you find one or another more persuasive? How does *Scream* suggest that domestic traumas, genre films, and film spectatorship have become connected in mainstream discourse about the relationships between violence in the media, young people, and criminal behavior?

**FINAL PAPER IS DUE ON THE THURSDAY OF FINALS WEEK (WEEK 11). Please leave the paper in my office mailbox. Final papers will not be accepted over e-mail.**

## Reading List

- Bobo, Jacqueline. "Text and Subtext: *The Color Purple*." *Black Women as Cultural Readers*. Pp. 61-91.
- . "The Color Purple: Black Women as Cultural Readers." *Female Spectators: Looking At Film and Television*. E. Deidre Pribram, ed. London: Verso, 1988. Pp. 90-110.
- Clover, Carol. "Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film." *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*. Barry Keith Grant, ed. Austin: U of Texas P, 1996. Pp. 66-117.
- Cvetkovich, Ann. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke UP, 2003. "Introduction," and "The Everyday Life of Queer Trauma." Pp. 1-49.
- Kane, Meddock Derek. "Trash Comes Home: Gender/Genre Subversion in the Films of John Waters." *Gender and Genres in Postwar Cinema*. Christine Gledhill, ed. Urbana: U of Illinois. Pp. 205-219.
- Maltby, Richard. "The Production Code and the Hays Office." *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930-1939*. Ed. Tino Balio. New York: Scribner's, 1993. Pp. 37-73.
- Neale, Steve. *Genre and Hollywood*. London: Routledge, 2000. "Introduction," pp. 1-9; "Definitions of Genre," pp. 9-31; "Dimensions of Genre," pp. 31-49; "Genre and Hollywood: The Studio System," pp. 231-41; "Melodrama and the Woman's Film," pp. 179-205; "Major Genres: Comedy," pp. 65-71.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. "Dracula (Tod Browning, 1931): The Vampire's Secret." *Southwest Review* 76.4 (Autumn). Pp. 498-510
- Rosenbaum, Jonathan and J. Hoberman. "John Waters Presents 'The Filthiest People Alive'." *Midnight Movies*. New York: Harper & Rowe. Pp. 136-174.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Howard F. Stein. "Child Abuse and the Unconscious in American Popular Culture." *The Children's Culture Reader*. Henry Jenkins, ed. New York: New York University P, 1998. Pp. 178-199.
- Sikov, Ed. *Screwball: Hollywood's Madcap Romantic Comedies*. New York: Crown, 1989. "Introduction: Pitching Screwballs," pp. 15-32; "Chapter 3: Out for Blood: The Intimacy of Violence," pp. 64-78.
- Stamp, Shelley Lindsay. "Horror, Femininity, and Carrie's Monstrous Puberty." *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*. Barry Keith Grant, ed. Austin: U of Texas P, 1996. Pp. 279-96.

Stolorow, Robert D. *Trauma and Human Existence: Autobiographical, Psychoanalytic, and Philosophical Reflections*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007. "The Contextuality of Emotional Life," p. 1-7; "The Contextuality of Emotional Trauma," p. 7-13; "The Phenomenology of Trauma and the Absolutisms of Everyday Life," p. 13-17; "Trauma and Temporality," p. 17-23.

Tudor, Andrew. *Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991. "Genre History I: 1931-1960," pp. 27-48

---. "From Paranoia to Postmodernism?: The Horror Movie in Late Modern Society." *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood*. Steve Neale, ed. London: BFI, 2002. Pp. 105- 117.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. London: Harcourt, 1982. 300 pages.

Walker, Janet. *Trauma Cinema: Documenting Incest and the Holocaust*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2005. "Preface," pp. xv-3; "Chapter 1: Catastrophe, Representation, and the Vicissitudes of Memory," pp. 3-33; "Chapter 2: The Excision of Incest from Classical Hollywood Cinema: *King's Row* and *Freud*," pp. 33-49; "Chapter 3: Incest on Television and the Burden of Proof: *Sybil*; *Shattered Trust: The Sharey Karney Story*; *Liar, Liar*; and *Divided Memories*."

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## New Course Proposal

## Film and Television 98TB

### American Genre Films and Domestic Trauma

**Course Number** Film and Television 98TB**Title** American Genre Films and Domestic Trauma**Short Title** AM FLM&DOMSTC TRAMA**Units** Fixed: 5**Grading Basis** Letter grade only**Instructional Format** Seminar - 3 hours per week**TIE Code** SEMT - Seminar (Topical) [T]**GE Requirement** Yes**Major or Minor Requirement** No**Requisites** Satisfaction of entry-level Writing requirement. Freshmen and sophomores preferred.**Course Description** Seminar, three hours. Enforced requisite: satisfaction of Entry-Level Writing requirement. Freshmen/sophomores preferred. Examination of how American genre films have represented domestic trauma (including abuse, abandonment, and bullying) during 20th century. Through readings, screenings, and writing, students think critically about genre films' engagement with American society and culture. Letter grading.**Justification** Part of the series of seminars offered through the Collegium of University Teaching Fellows.**Syllabus** File [Film\\_TV & Digital Media 98Tb syllabus.pdf](#) was previously uploaded. You may view the file by clicking on the file name.**Supplemental Information** Professor Kathleen McHugh is the faculty mentor for the seminar.**Grading Structure** class participation: 15%; class presentations: 10%; reading journal: 15%; final paper prospectus with annotated bibliography - 15%; final paper rough draft: 10%; final paper: 35%**Effective Date** Spring 2014**Discontinue Date** Summer 1 2014

<b>Instructor</b>	Name	Title
	Benjamin Sher	Teaching Fellow

<b>Quarters Taught</b>	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer

**Department** Film, Television, & Digital Media

<b>Contact</b>	Name	E-mail
	CATHERINE GENTILE	cgentile@oid.ucla.edu

**Routing Help**

## ROUTING STATUS

**Role:** Registrar's Office**Status:** Processing Completed

**Role:** Registrar's Publications Office - Hennig, Leann Jean (LHENNIG@REGISTRAR.UCLA.EDU) - 56704

**Status:** Added to SRS on 8/29/2013 1:25:31 PM

**Changes:** Description

**Comments:** Edited course description into official version.

**Role:** Registrar's Scheduling Office - Bartholomew, Janet Gosser (JBARTHOLOMEW@REGISTRAR.UCLA.EDU) - 51441

**Status:** Added to SRS on 8/14/2013 2:33:21 PM

**Changes:** Short Title

**Comments:** Added a short title.

**Role:** FEC School Coordinator - Castillo, Myrna Dee Figurac (MCASTILLO@COLLEGE.UCLA.EDU) - 45040

**Status:** Returned for Additional Info on 8/6/2013 12:39:32 PM

**Changes:** No Changes Made

**Comments:** Routing to Doug Thomson in the Registrar's Office.

**Role:** FEC Chair or Designee - Meranze, Michael (MERANZE@HISTORY.UCLA.EDU) - 52671

**Status:** Approved on 8/5/2013 3:37:36 PM

**Changes:** No Changes Made

**Comments:** No Comments

**Role:** FEC Chair or Designee - Castillo, Myrna Dee Figurac (MCASTILLO@COLLEGE.UCLA.EDU) - 45040

**Status:** Returned for Additional Info on 8/5/2013 12:09:17 PM

**Changes:** No Changes Made

**Comments:** Routing to Michael Meranze for FEC approval.

**Role:** CUTF Coordinator - Gentile, Catherine (CGENTILE@OID.UCLA.EDU) - 68998

**Status:** Approved on 8/5/2013 11:15:49 AM

**Changes:** No Changes Made

**Comments:** on behalf of Professor Kathleen Komar, chair, CUTF Faculty Advisory Committee

**Role:** Initiator/Submitter - Gentile, Catherine (CGENTILE@OID.UCLA.EDU) - 68998

**Status:** Submitted on 8/5/2013 11:14:59 AM

**Comments:** Initiated a New Course Proposal

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