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ENG 4904-001: Studies in Film Horror Cinema & the Nature of the Monster

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Course Description:

Studies in Film: Horror Cinema & the Nature of the Monster

English 4904, Studies in Film, will explore the horror film in relation to a monstrous nature that evolved either deliberately or by accident and incites fear in humanity as both character and audience. According to film scholar Noel Carrol “In works of horror, humans regard the monsters they meet as abnormal, as disturbances of the natural order” (16). For Carrol, “horror involves essential reference to an entity, a monster, which then serves as a particular object of the emotion of art-horror” (41). By the end of this course, students will become familiar with the nature of such monsters in and of the horror film. (Group 5)

Course Objectives:

Students will:
1. Evaluate genre films as art form and cultural artifact
2. Analyze and synthesize theories of film form and visual style
3. Identify and analyze both narrative and non-narrative horror cinema
4. Identify, critique and apply film theories and historical contexts to horror cinema
5. Write analytically and effectively about horror cinema and related concepts

Course Texts:


Course Policies and Requirements: In order to succeed in this course, you must effectively complete each of the following:

1. Once a week you will complete an entrance card answering a question about the film(s) screened and/or text read for that class. More later.

2. You will also be expected to keep a film log, with notes on each film screened in class (you may use on your midterm and final). Make sure you read the material for each class. In-class writing and quizzes will occur sporadically, as well.
3. You will also write two papers, one due at midterm and one due by the final class session:

- The first paper will give you the opportunity to expand one of your entrance cards and critically analyze one of the films on the course calendar in 4-6 pages.

- The second paper will allow you to look beyond films screened for class to examine a particular sub-genre in 6-8 pages.

- You will also provide a Wiki page for your sub-genre and at least two representative films.

**Note: Paper prompts will be provided.**

4. Individually you will choose a film (of your week's sub-genre) introduce it and lead discussion following its screening.

5. You will take a midterm exam and final exam, which will allow you to synthesize information gained from the text books, films, and their cultural and historical contexts.

In addition to the above requirements, students enrolled in the course for graduate credit will extend one of their papers to approximately 15 pages. These students will be asked to submit a prospectus for the paper, as will all other students, but should also include a bibliography with their prospectus.

**Note: No late work will be accepted unless I have approved extensions before the date the work is due.**

**Grades:** Grades for this course will be determined as follows

- Entrance Cards 15%
- Paper 1 10%
- Paper 2 15%
- Wiki Page 10%
- Film Log 10%
- Presentation 15%
- Midterm 15%
- Final Exam 10%

**Other Policies:**

1. **Plagiarism Statement:** "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—’the inappropriate imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work’—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of ‘F’ for the course."
2. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

3. Please also note that this course is Writing Intensive, so a paper completed for the course can be turned in to your electronic writing portfolio—some time during the actual course of the class.

4. Ambitious students can also seek help from the Writing Center. Call for an appointment (581-5920) or visit ((CH3110) at any point in the writing process, from brainstorming, planning and drafting, to final editing. Bring your assignment sheet and any written work and/or sources with you. The Writing Center is open Monday-Thursday, 9-3 and 6-9, and Friday from 9-1.

5. You must complete all major assignments to complete this course.

6. Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English department professors with the yellow form, “Application for English department Approval to Student Teach.” These are available on a rack outside the office of Dr. Donna Binns (CH 3851).
Spring 2014 Tentative Course Calendar, Subject to Change
English 4904, Studies in Film

January

Silent Horror

14 Introduction to the class and review of film form, style, and history. Read Film Art excerpts for Thursday, January 16.

16 Introduction to the horror genre. Read excerpts from Noel Carroll The Philosophy of Horror, chapter 1 (pdf) for Tuesday, January 21. Introduce in-class responses.

Silent Horror II: German Expressionism


23 German Expressionist Silent horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Read 324-365, Film Genre Reader III for Tuesday, January 28.

The Golden Age of Hollywood Horror: 1931-1939

28 Discuss Film Genre readings. In-class response.


February

Big Bug Horror

4 Discuss Film Genre reading. In-class response. Big bugs as monsters.

6 Big Bug horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Read 3-25, FGR for Tuesday, February 11.

The Blaxploitation Horror Film

11 Discuss Film Genre readings. What is Blaxploitation? In-class response.
13 Blaxploitation horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Read 27-50 FGR for Tuesday, February 18.

**The Racialized Zombie**

18 Discuss Film Genre readings. The zombie film before, during, and after Romero. In-Class Response.

20 Zombie horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Read 51-74, FGR and complete draft of Paper I for Tuesday, February 25.

**Third and Fourth Cinema Vampire Horror**


**March**

**Feminist Werewolf Horror**


6 Midterm. No reading!

10-14 Spring Break! No Classes

**Horror and the Documentary**

18 CIFFF Film and Talk: *Beetle Queen Captures Tokyo*


**Cannibal Horror and the Female Director**

25 Discuss Film Genre readings. Cannibals through history. In-class response. Introduce Paper II.
27 Cannibal horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Read 130-159 FGR for Tuesday, April 1. *Ecology and Popular Film* reading.

April

Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Hong Kong, and Chinese Horror


Of Ghosts and Monsters

8 Discuss reading. Ghosts as monsters. In-class response.


Comic Horror

15 Discuss reading. Comic horror. In-class response.

17 Comic horror introduction, screening, and discussion. *Ecology and Popular Film* reading. Complete draft of Paper II for Tuesday, April 22.

The Contemporary Frankenstein Monster


24 Contemporary Frankenstein horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Readings of your choice.

International Horror in 2010s

29 Discuss reading. Horror today. In-class response.

May

1 Contemporary International horror introduction, screening, and discussion. Paper II due.

6 Final Exam