

Race, Gender and the Media

COM 346

Course Description

Race, Gender & the Media explores intersections of identity in Britain and their representations within and experiences of British print, broadcast television, film, and digital media. The course will examine how some of the United Kingdom's domestic media organisations were established and function today as well as the influence social and political history has had (and continues to have) on their operation and output. Centring race and gender within this examination, students will develop a critical awareness of how Britain's media industry shapes and is shaped by the socio-cultural climate as well as the legacies of the British empire.

Learning Objectives

After taking this course, students will be able to:

1. Independently and collaboratively research and navigate the British media landscape to develop a self-reflective awareness of national and independent media organisations (research skills and cultural immersion).
2. Describe some of the ways that race and gender have historically been represented within British media industries and how this is impacted by legacies of the British Empire (knowledge).
3. Apply an intersectional framework to studies of British media texts and cultures with a critical focus on topics such as representation, creative labour, and industry policy (critical thinking).
4. Creatively interpret assignment briefs and develop skills related to media dissemination (skill development).
5. Critically evaluate genre, audience, form, and content in relation to a variety of theoretical concepts (theory and application).

Required Assignments and Projects

Name of assignment and learning objective(s)	%	Brief description and requirements
Editorial Review (Learning objectives 1, 5)	10	Write a short 500-750-word review of a British media text of your choice. This can be a film, TV show, song, article, newspaper, etc. This short reflexive review should reflect your own interests in the British media industry and your perspective as an international student.
Mid-Term Peer Review (Learning objectives 1)	10	In this pass/fail class, students will peer review one another's essay. Students are required to bring an essay draft into class in preparation for this class
Essay (Learning objectives 2, 3)	25	Students will submit a 2,500-word essay based on one of the questions on British TV posted onto Blackboard. In Week 7, students will have their work peer-reviewed, they are expected to develop their essay before they submit.
Film Newsletter (Learning objectives 3, 4)	15	Imagining themselves as film bloggers, students will create a critically informed newsletter that reviews and theoretically engages one of the films we covered in class.
Self-Reflection (Learning Objective 1)	10	Based upon our classroom conversation on digital media, technology, and encoded bias, students will reflect on their own use of tech within the course of a week. They will write a 500-750-word reflection on how and where bias emerges in their everyday lives.
Creative Response (Learning objectives 3, 4, 5)	30	In this final assignment, students will produce a creative response to either a media text, medium, theory, or British media context that we have explored during the course. Your creative response will take a form of your choosing, including but not limited to: poetry, zine, short film, creative writing, poster, collage, presentation. In Week 15 , you will present your piece to the rest of the class and will reflect on your creative process, the aims of your piece, and your method.

Final Grades

Letter Grade	Grading Scale (%)	Letter Grade	Grading Scale (%)
A	93-100	C+	78-79
A-	90-92	C	73-77
B+	88-89	C-	70-72
B	83-87	D	60-69
B-	80-82	F	0-59

Week	Topic and session objective	Required readings / assignments / site visits
	UNIT 0 - Introduction	
1	<p style="text-align: center;">Topic: Introduction to Race, Gender & the Media</p> <p>Outline: This first session will be split into two parts. We will begin with an introduction to the professor, the course, the rest of the class, and important course details. As an output we will co-create and agree upon classroom expectations and course methodologies.</p> <p>In the second part of the class, we will continue the introductions with an overview of the social construction and cultural production of the British media landscape. We will also discuss some of the questions that might arise over the course and students will be briefed on their first assignment.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 3</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>Patricia Hill Collins, "What is Intersectionality" In <i>Intersectionality</i>. London: Polity Press, 2016. pp. 12-27.</p>
	UNIT 1 – Public Service Broadcasting	

2	<p>Topic: Empire, Race & Media Representations 1940-1980</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will explore the history of race and ethnicity in the UK and examine how they have been represented in television broadcasting. To do this, we will historically and critically assess the BBC and Channel 4 as public-service broadcasters, and discuss some of the ways cultural critics have discussed them.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 2, 5</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>Stuart Hall, "Representation and the Media" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTzMsPqssOY&t=264s</p> <p>Hall, Stuart and Maggie Steed. 1979. "It Ain't Half Racist, Mum." <i>BBC</i>. [Documentary]. 30:52. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-7CqOKD5c8. Transcription available: Link</p>
3	<p>Topic: Culture, Power, and Subversive Comedy in British TV (1985-2000)</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will explore the use of subversive racial comedy at the turn of the millennia. We will begin with a critical critique of culture and hierarchy in a British context, before we analyse our case study: <i>Goodness Gracious Me</i>.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 2, 5</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>Stuart Hall, "Which Public, Whose Service" (1993).</p> <p>Petzold, Jochen. 2016. "Laughing at Racism or Laughing with the Racists? The 'Indian Comedy' of Goodness Gracious Me." <i>In British TV Comedies: Cultural Concepts, Contexts and Controversies</i>, edited by Jürgen Kamm and Birgit Neumann. London: <i>Palgrave Macmillian</i>. pp.185-196</p> <p>Goodness Gracious Me Going for an English BBC Comedy Greats. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-uEx_hEXAM.</p>

4	<p>Topic: Muslim Women Representations Beyond the Multicultural Paradigm</p> <p>Outline: This class extends some of our previous debates and discussions on race and television by examining how Channel 4 have recently approached concepts of cultural diversity and multiculturalism in their initiatives and programming. We will critically examine how cultural diversity is produced on screen.</p> <p>Then, focusing on Muslim representations on television, we will explore some examples of representational diversity practices, identifying where they have failed and how these have been challenged.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 1, 3, 5</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>“Riz Ahmed - Channel 4 Diversity Speech 2017 @ House of Commons.” 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36bcxDVNr1s&t=337s</p> <p>We Are Lady Parts Ep.1 (Available on Channel 4 on Demand)</p>
UNIT 2 – Film		
5	<p>Topic: Love and/in the City</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will watch a screening of <i>Rye Lane</i> (2023). Afterwards, we will engage in a Black feminist informed discussion on Black love and spatiality.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 3, 5</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>Katherine McKittrick, <i>Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, xii-xiv</p> <p>bell hooks, <i>Salvation: Black People and Love</i>. London: Harper Collins, 2001. Pp. xv-xxvv.</p>

6	<p style="text-align: center;">Topic: Gallery Visit</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will visit South London Gallery to view the exhibition, "Lagos, Peckham, Repeat: Pilgrimage to the Lake". This exhibition builds upon our previous class discussions on Peckham Rye, Black British culture, and gentrification. It offers students a lived perspective and experience of Peckham.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 1</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>"Creating Home with the Nigerian Community in Peckham, London" Crossing Cultures Ep. 1 YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzndKNV9HrE</p>
7	<p style="text-align: center;">Topic: Peer Review</p> <p>Outline: In this class students will be paired to conduct a peer review for their essays.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 1</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>**This is a graded class and students MUST be in attendance</p>
8		

9	<p>Topic: The Male Gaze, British Folklore, and the Horror Genre</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will discuss theories of the male gaze and apply this to British folk horror film, <i>Men</i> (2022). We will examine the ways that pleasure of looking and consuming bodies on film manifests in the horror genre.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 2, 5</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema". 835-840.</p> <p>Linda Williams, "When the Woman Looks", in <i>Horror, the Film Reader</i>. p. 61.</p> <p><i>Men</i> (2022). Dir. [Available on Amazon Prime]</p>
UNIT 3 – Print & Publishing		
10	<p>Topic: Newspapers, National Belonging, and Imagined Communities</p> <p>Outline: This class begins our exploration of the British press by examining the relationship between British newspapers and ideas of national belonging and citizenship. We will identify some national newspapers and their political allegiances, as well as revealing how views on social class and British citizenship are enmeshed within them. Then, focusing on responses to case studies related to immigration, nation, and justice, we will analyse how ideas of British citizenship shape and are shaped by the "imagined communities" circulated by the press.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 1, 3</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>Anderson, Benedict. 2016. <i>Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i>. London: Verso. First published in 2006. pp. 29-31.</p>

11	<p>Topic: Digital Magazines and Media Collectives</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will identify some of the grassroots collectives and online magazines that were created in response to marginalisation in the British press. We will explore how grassroots media is created and sustained and examine how they cater to marginalised communities. In small groups, students will be assigned an independent media collective and will have the produce a case study to disseminate to the rest of the class.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 1, 3, 4</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>N/A</p>
UNIT 4 – Digital Media & Technology		
12	<p>Topic: Guest Lecture</p> <p>Outline: TBC</p> <p>Learning Objectives: TBC</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>TBC</p>
13	<p>Topic: Digital Embodiment and the Queer Afterlife</p> <p>Outline: In this class we will explore digital configurations of queer and trans identities. We will conceptualise and discuss forms of digital embodiment and queer afterlife as it relates to the production (& play) of video games and artificial intelligence.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 3</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing</p> <p>TBC</p>
UNIT 5 – Digest		

14	<p style="text-align: center;">Topic: Workshop</p> <p>Outline: In this workshop we will reflect on some of the theories, texts, and contexts that we have explored throughout the course. In the second part, students will work on their creative responses and check in with the lecturer on progress.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 2</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>There will be no required readings/viewings for this class, however, students will be required to attend class with two discussion points prepared based on texts and theories covered in the course, as well as their time spent immersed in British media since they arrived.</p>
15	<p style="text-align: center;">Topic: Creative Response Showcase</p> <p>Outline: In this final session, students will present their creative responses and we will close the class.</p> <p>Learning Objectives: 4</p>	<p>Required reading/viewing:</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>**This is a graded class and students MUST be in attendance</p>