SC 304: Race, Ethnicity, and Popular Culture

T/Th 9-10:20

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10:30-11:45

In this course we will be looking at the messages about race, gender, class, and sexuality that are communicated in a number of popular television shows, movies, and books. This semester we will be looking at the *Twilight* series (the biggest selling book of 2008 and the top selling DVD of 2009), the MTV series *Jersey Shore* (the ‘most viewed’ series in MTV’s history), *Oprah* (the highest rated talk show in t.v. history), *Keeping Up With the Kardashians* (E! network’s highest rated series among women aged 18-34), and *Kendra* (the highest rated series debut on the E! network in the last 5 years). We will also be looking at the global impact of hip-hop and the phenomenon of ‘celebrity activism/philanthropy’ particularly as it pertains to Africa.

**Requirements:**

**Required Texts:**

- Participation: 25%  
  Celebrity Diplomacy (Andrew Cooper)
- Paper 1: 25% (2/22)  
  Female Chauvinist Pigs (Ariel Levy)
- Paper 2: 25% (3/22)  
  Hip Hop Desis (Nitasha Tamar Sharma)
- Paper 3: 25% (5/5)  
  Oprah and the Glamour of Misery (Eva Illouz)
  Pimps Up, Ho’s Down (T. Sharpley-Whiting)
  Playing in the Dark (Toni Morrison)
  Playing Indian (Philip DeLoria)
  White (Richard Dyer)
  Makeover Television (B. Weber)
  Twilight (S. Meyer)
  New Moon (S. Meyer)
1/18: Introduction

1/20: Toni Morrison. *Playing in the Dark* (Chapter 1)

1/25: *Playing in the Dark* (Chapters 2 & 3)


2/1: *Twilight* (movie shown in class). Read *Twilight* book (Ch. 1-12)

2/3: *Twilight* (2nd half of movie shown in class). Read *Twilight* book (Ch. 13-Epilogue)

2/8: *White* (Chapter 6); Julia Perlman *Happily (For) Ever After: Constructing Conservative Youth Ideology in the Twilight Series* (Blackboard Vista Course Site); ‘Twilight Blogs (links found on Blackboard Vista Course Site)

2/10: *New Moon* (movie shown in class). Read *New Moon* (Ch. 1-13)

2/15: *New Moon* (2nd half of movie shown in class). Read *New Moon* (Ch. 14-24)


2/22: Movie: *The Life and Times of Sara Baartmaan: Hottentot Venus* (shown in class)-1st paper due

2/24: T. D. Sharpley-Whiting. *Pimps Up, Ho’s Down*. Prologue; Intro; Ch. 1, 3, 4, 5;

3/1: *Keeping Up With the Kardashians & Kendra* (videos shown in class)

3/3: Ariel Levy. *Female Chauvinist Pigs* (Intro; Chapter 1; P. 52-82; p. 89-108; p. 176-196 and Conclusion); E. Childs. *Fade to Black and White* (Ch. 4) [e-reserves @ O’Neill Library]; M. Barerra “Hottentot 2000” [e-reserves @ O’Neill)

3/7: Spring Break

3/9: Spring Break

3/15: *Jersey Shore* (shown in class)

3/17: T. Guglielmo. *White on Arrival* (Ch. 3 & 4) [available on e-reserves @ O’Neill Library]; P. Bondanella. *Hollywood Italians* [available on e-reserves @ O’Neill Library]; Soraya Roberts “Jersey Shore’s ‘Guido Style’ (available on Blackboard Vista); MTV’s ‘Guido’ Controversy (available on Blackboard Vista); D. Tricarico ‘Fashioning Italian-American Youth Style’ (on Blackboard Vista); Nicole LaPorte ‘Jersey Shore’s Surprise Feminists’ (Blackboard Vista);
3/22: Movie: South African Women in Hip Hop (shown in class)—2nd Paper Due

3/24: N.T. Sharma. *Hip Hop Desis*; M. Morgan *The Real Hip Hop* (Ch. 4) [available on e-reserves @ O’Neill Library]

3/29: MTV ‘Made’ (watch in class)

3/31: B. Weber. *Makeover TV.* (Intro & Ch. 1-3 & Ch. 5)

4/5: Oprah Winfrey Show (watch in class)

4/7: E. Illouz. *Oprah Winfrey and the Glamour of Misery* (Ch. 1-5)

4/12: *Oprah and the Glamour of Misery* (Ch. 6-9)

4/19: Movie: ‘When Harry Met Bob’ (Watch in Class)

4/26: A. Cooper. *Celebrity Diplomacy* (Ch. 1-3)

4/28: Oprah Episode: ‘Celebrity Philanthropy’

5/3: A. Cooper. *Celebrity Diplomacy* (Ch. 4-Conclusion); Dyer. *White* (Ch. 5); Z. Magubane ‘The Product Red Man’s Dilemma’ (Blackboard Vista Course Site)

5/5: Final Class—Paper Due