ANTHROPOLOGY s27
DECODING DISNEY: RACE, GENDER & SEXUALITY IN THE ANIMATED BLOCKBUSTER
SHORT TERM 2012
MTR 10-2 HEDGE 106

INSTRUCTOR
PROF. ELIZABETH EAMES
159 Pettengill Hall
eames@bates.edu
786-6082 office/841-5738 cell

TEACHING ASSISTANT
SYDNEY HARE ’12
122A Coram
share@bates.edu
203-246-6636 cell

WRITING SPECIALIST
MISTY BECK, Ph.D.
222A Coram
mbeck@bates.edu
207-786-8375 office

The full-length cartoons so formative for the current generation of college students become, for us, “cultural texts” subject to anthropological analysis. Students learn to discern America’s contested beliefs and values by unearthing the cultural politics embedded in Disney Corporation’s mainstay—feature length animated motion pictures. Such demystification entails delving beyond apparent surface messages to reveal underlying tensions, recurring contradictions, and even counter-hegemonic themes. With respect to the particular intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability and nation, what distinguishes millennial popular culture from animated productions of the early 20th century? What American cultural continuities do we detect? Given the corporation’s covert messages on love & sex, individualism & freedom, pleasure & entertainment, violence & conquest—to name just a few—what are the implications of Disney’s increasingly global touch?

Students are responsible for all assigned readings, screenings and essays, for keeping an up to date critical viewing journal, and for participating in our collective close textual analysis of the animated content. In addition, small groups conduct independent research on a particular cartoon and teach the rest of the class about the context of its production and reception.

Decoding Disney fulfills requirements for the Rhetoric major and counts towards the Racisms, Film & Media Studies, and Culture & Meaning GECs.

Due to departmental circumstances, this year’s class will be held in conjunction with ANs10 affectionately known as Anthro Boot Camp and officially called Encountering Community: Ethnographic Fieldwork Methodology. Our focus on American values and beliefs as rendered in Disney’s popular feature length cartoon texts will be supplemented by the fieldwork projects of the methodology students. As anthropologists, we “endeavor to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange” (Spiro 1990) and during the final week students in the two classes will compare notes on the advantages and disadvantages of the diverging approaches to the same material.

Besides doing assigned Lyceum readings, students are required to purchase, read and write about The Mouse that Roared by Giroux & Pollock. Additional items are on reserve for student researchers.
SUMMARY OF 2012 COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance at all scheduled meetings 10%
2. Personal Reflection on formative film (first day) 10%
3. Weekly Viewing Journal (thematic focus) 10%
4. Group Presentation on one film (with students in s10) 20%
5. Draft Essay on Giroux and Pollock 10%
6. Revised Essay on Giroux and Pollock (entails peer tutor consultation session) 10%
7. Final Essay (thematic focus) 15%
8. Report Out to Fieldwork students in final ‘Reviewing Viewing’ session 15%

NB: Portfolio containing all logs, reports and essays due at the end of term

DAILY COURSE CONTOUR for s27
Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays in Hedge 106

10:00-11:30 Student Presentations/Discussion of last Disney Feature Film
11:30-12:30 Lunch/Break
12:30-2:00 Screening of next Disney Feature Film

ASSIGNMENTS IN MORE DETAIL
Items are listed on the day they are due. Bring them to class.

WEEK ONE:

Monday April 23rd
Presentation: Eames Introduction; Logistics Explained
Reading: Handouts
Screening: Mickey Mouse Monopoly
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Tuesday April 24th
Presentation: Dr. Misty Beck Writing Specialist
Reading: Giroux Introduction
Krazneiwicz Round up the Usual Suspects
Eames Avatar and Anthropology
Writing: Personal Reflection on Formative Film Due
Screening: Little Mermaid
Thursday April 26th
Presentation: Little Mermaid
Reading: Giroux Chapter One
Kellner Adventures in Media and Cultural Studies
Artz Monarchs, Monsters and Multiculturalism
Screening: Beauty and the Beast
Writing: Turn in your Themed Viewing Log

WEEK TWO

Monday April 30th
Presentation: Beauty and the Beast
Reading: Craven Beauty and the Belles
Screening: Aladdin

Tuesday May 1st
Presentation: Aladdin
Reading: Giroux Chapter Two
Staninger Disney’s Magic Carpet Ride
Screening: Lion King (you could attend OIE screening Wed. 6pm)

Thursday May 3rd
Presentation: Lion King
Reading: Giroux Chapter Three
Byrne Racing Disney
Eames Whoopi Afri/Canis
Screening: Pocahontas
Writing: Turn in your Themed Viewing Log
(I will hand out prompt for upcoming paper today)

WEEK THREE

Monday May 7th
Presentation: Pocahontas
Reading: Parekh Pocahontas: The Disney Imaginary
Screening: Hunchback of Notre Dame
Tuesday May 8th
Presentation: Hunchback of Notre Dame
Reading: Giroux Chapter Four
Bean Stripping Beauty
Screening: Mulan

Thursday May 10th
Presentation: Mulan
Reading: Giroux Chapter Five
Byrne Queering Disney
Screening: Tarzan
Writing: Giroux Paper Draft Due Today
You must meet with a peer tutor by the 15th

WEEK FOUR
You may wish to attend an INTO THE WOODS performance this week

Monday May 14th
Presentation: Tarzan
Reading: Hurley Seeing White
Screening: Princess and the Frog

Tuesday May 15th
Presentation: Princess and the Frog
Reading: Giroux Chapter Conclusion
Screening: Tangled
Writing: Peer Tutor Your session should have happened by now

Thursday May 17th
Presentation: Tangled
Screening: (TBA) Class Choice!
Non Disney: Fern Gully The Last Rainforest?
Pixar: Ratatouille? Wall-E? Nemo?
Non Disney/Live Action: Babe?
Disney/Demi-live action: ...Roger Rabbit?
East Asian contrast: a Miyazake film?
Writing: Giroux Paper Revised Draft Due Today
### WEEK FIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday May 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>REVIEWING VIEWING</td>
<td>Textual analysis alone can reveal American cultural contradictions, preoccupations, and established values &amp; beliefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday May 22&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>FIELDWORK FAIR</td>
<td>Observation of people in time and space produces distinctive knowledge, adds insight, tests texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday May 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>PORTFOLIO DUE</td>
<td>That means everything, including Overview Essay on your Viewing Theme</td>
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FMI: Initial Tasks for Decoding Disney ANs27 2012

Initial Written Reflection (10 pts)

In a brief and relatively informal essay, due for the second class, please reflect upon your relationship with one personally formative Disney animated feature. Under what circumstances did you first encounter the film? With whom did you identify and why? What pleasures or terrors did the film contain for you? What lessons? Only if applicable, briefly articulate some ways in which your attitude shifted over time.

Thematic Viewing Journal (10 pts)

Every student will be responsible for keeping a viewing log focused on their assigned themes. These are to be turned in weekly, and are designed to feed into a thematically-focused final essay.

Group Presentation with Boot Camp Students (20 pts)

A set of three (or perhaps four) students drawn from a combination of s10 and s27 will collaborate to lead a morning class session through a discussion of the film screened the previous afternoon. Four tasks are involved: 1) Conveying information; 2) Orchestrating a discussion; 3) Supplying an example of afterlife; 4) Assessing your process. Please note that our Teaching Assistants will serve as your advisors and mentors. Be sure to contact them in plenty of time to schedule your consultation!

1) The information to be conveyed about your film consists of at least its production history, popular reception, and critical reception.
2) Leading discussion entails at least the production and deployment of thought-provoking questions about filmic intertextualities as well as linkages to written course material. These sessions may be enhanced with inventive learning tasks or class activities.
3) What I mean when I ask you to supply an example of a film’s ‘afterlife’ is sharing with the class a parody or imitation—examples of subversive or resistant re-readings abound in the world of Disney.
4) A brief written retrospective assessment of your role in your group’s process is due within a week of your presentation day. It should also include an honest appraisal of relative success and speculate about what to change if you had the chance.
Decoding Disney: Race, Gender, & Sexuality in the Animated Blockbuster

ANs27 Short Paper Assignment 2012

Draft Due by Thursday May 10th; Meeting with Peer Assistant by Tuesday May 15th; Revised Paper Due Thursday May 17th

Option Number One:
Do you fundamentally disagree with a major or non-trivial assertion in something you read for this class? In a paper of approximately five pages, mobilize a variety of assigned course material as you muster your counter-argument. You must address the following in your essay, but the order is up to you: Cite and summarize in your own words the questionable claim. What sort of author/s made the contention? When? For whom? Why? What is the nature of your dispute? As you make your case for your presumed reader—imagine a fellow student in the class—cite relevant evidence from our films and at least three different course readings, presentations and class discussions. Insights you can bring to this paper from your experiences outside class are fair game if properly cited, but this is not a research paper.

Option Number Two:
Krasneiwicz celebrates popular movies as straightforwardly akin to “the myths that have provided values and identities for cultures around the world throughout time” (2006: 9). Working in a more critical mode, Artz contends that: “Disney’s ability to market popular films and the public’s delight in consuming their little pleasures can best be understood as negotiated hegemonic activity…. Disney animates and narrates myths favorable to a corporate culture, including its own” (2011: 388). Locate one occasion of reading our Disney animated material either outside or against dominant cultural codes. This should be an extension or new application of something you read about, you heard in class, you came up with on your own, or a combination thereof. Explain to your presumed reader—a college student who has seen the movie but is not in this class—what film moment is at issue and how this interpretation is counter-hegemonic (which likely entails a discussion of what would constitute a hegemonic reading). Cite course material (films, articles, books, presentations, discussions) as you construct your approximately five page argument. Use a minimum of three distinct sources. This is not a research paper, but insights you have gleaned outside this class are fair game, when properly cited.

Rubric:

Effective cultural analysis demonstrated through student’s compelling use of evidence (6 pts):
- Film text well chosen, clearly relevant and skillfully analyzed
- Written texts well chosen, clearly relevant and adroitly applied
- In class presentations or discussions well chosen, clearly relevant and capably deployed

Formal college writing technique demonstrated through paper’s configuration (4 pts):
- Argument has a clear thesis or focus
- Organization and structure made sufficiently clear to reader
- Prose style is clear and straightforward, with few errors in grammar or punctuation
- Citations and bibliography follow AAA format or another standard academic mode (MLA,APA,etc.)
Decoding Disney: Race, Gender, & Sexuality in the Animated Blockbuster

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- Prose style is clear and straightforward, with few errors in grammar or punctuation
- Citations and bibliography follow AAA format or another standard academic mode (MLA,APA,etc.)
YOU GET TO FOCUS ON THREE THEMES EACH (for discussions, viewing logs and final papers)

EVERYONE GETS TO CHOOSE ONE OF THESE TO STICK WITH ALL TERM:

- RACIALIZATION
- PATRIARCHY
- HETERONORMATIVITY
- CASTE ORDERING/CLASS RANKING

AND TWO OF THESE (but no more than two people per theme):

1. Age
2. Androgyny/Transgender
3. Attire/Dress
4. Autonomy
5. Beauty
6. Choice
7. Color/Shading
8. Conformity
9. Consumption
10. Dis/Ability
11. Family
12. Friendship/Teamwork
13. Greed/Jealousy
14. Humans’ Relationships with Non-Humans
15. Justice
16. Labor/Work
17. Language/Accent/Voice
18. Love/Romance
19. Monstrosity
20. Order/Chaos
21. Queerness
22. Size
23. Space/Place
24. Spirituality
25. Strangers
26. Touch
27. Transformation
28. Violence
29. ?
30. ?
COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity
All students are responsible for reading and understanding the Bates College Statement on Academic Honesty (see http://abacus.bates.edu/pubs/Plagiarism/plagiarism.html). When you turn in an assignment to satisfy the requirements for this course, you are indicating it is your own work. The failure to properly acknowledge your use of another work is plagiarism. When citing your sources, use the American Anthropological Association Style Guidelines (link available on the library website, the department website or see http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated by the Instructor and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the class. NB: Your instructor serves as the Faculty Co-Chair of the Student Conduct Committee and knows whereof she speaks!

Late Assignments
Overdue assignments will be penalized. Assignments handed in late will be graded down, in fairness to students who have met the deadline. For each day an assignment is late, I will mark it down 1/3rd of a letter grade. For example, a student hands a paper in 2 days late; the initial mark is a B+ but the actual recorded grade will be a B-.

Statement on Learning Differences
If you have any learning difference which may hinder your ability to succeed in the course as laid down in this syllabus, please inform me directly and immediately. I will then endeavor to make adjustments to improve the learning environment for all concerned. Also always remember to contact Holly Gurney in the Dean of Students Office (786-6220 or hgurney@bates.edu) if you have these or other special needs.

Additional Class Policies
- Come to class with assigned material in hand and be prepared to discuss them.
- Many additional items are on reserve for you to consult as you require.
- Arrive to class on time, leave only during breaks, and turn off all cell phones.
- Only on rare occasions should a computer be open in class (but see me if yours is required as an accommodation).
- Practice active and respectful listening.
- If you cannot attend class, contact me directly.
- No assignments may be submitted via email.
- All work must be completed in order to receive a passing grade for this course.
FYI FOR DECODING DISNEY STUDENTS (boot camp syllabus first page)

ANTHROPOLOGY s10

ENCOUNTERING COMMUNITY: ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

A.K.A.: “ANTHRO BOOT CAMP”

SHORT TERM 2012  MTWR 10-4 Hedge 106

INSTRUCTOR  TEACHING ASSISTANT  WRITING SPECIALIST

PROF. ELIZABETH EAMES  CHARLIE EMPLE ’12  MISTY BECK, Ph.D.
159 Pettengill Hall  cemple@bates.edu  mbeck@bates.edu
eeames@bates.edu  781-307-1766 cell  207-786-8375 office
786-6082 office/841-5738 cell  781-307-1766 cell  222A Coram

Required of all sophomore anthropology majors (and available to Environmental Studies majors on the ‘human culture’ track), this short term unit teaches students not only how to “do ethnography” but how to “be anthropologists.” A series of skill-building exercises (along with screenings, readings and discussions) will focus learners’ attention upon anthropological praxis, epistemology, and the ethics of fieldwork. By the end of five exceptionally intense weeks, students will have been trained to conduct original ethnographic fieldwork. Bates anthropology majors will then be prepared for junior year independent study projects and subsequently for their senior theses.

Due to departmental circumstances, this year’s class will be held in conjunction with ANs27 Decoding Disney. Hence, our focus will be on deciphering American values and beliefs as rendered in Disney’s popular feature length cartoon texts from the millennial period. Primary fieldwork sites may be related to our Disney theme, but, alternatively, they might derive from a longstanding affiliation or interest unrelated to media representations. As anthropologists we “endeavor to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange” (Spiro 1990).

Besides doing all Lyceum readings, students are required to purchase and read two textbooks:

Fieldworking by Sunstein & Chiseri-Slater and also The Mouse that Roared by Giroux & Pollock

SUMMARY OF 2012 COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance at all scheduled meetings  10%
2. Participation in all group activities  10%
3. Group Presentation on one film (with students in s27)  20%
4. Fieldwork exercises (every ‘Box’ and ‘Do This’ is required, unless specifically excluded)  35%
5. Ethnographic Essay Draft  10%
6. Presentation to Decoding Disney students in final week’s ‘Fieldwork Fair’  15%

NB: Portfolio containing all analytical exercises and essays due at the end of term