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Dabney 311, office hours tbd

En/ F 160a
Introduction to Classical Hollywood Cinema: the 1930s

Description: This course introduces students to Hollywood films and filmmaking, from the advent of sound film in the late 1920s through the beginning of World War II. It covers basic techniques and vocabulary of film analysis, as we learn to think of films as texts with distinctive formal properties, while attending to the special features of Hollywood filmmaking in particular. Topics covered include: the economic history of the film corporations, the phenomenon of stardom, genre (the musical, melodrama), technical achievements (sound, color), the Production Code, and the impact of the Depression on movies and audiences. At the end of the course students can expect to have acquired an understanding of how a significant body of films functioned as aesthetic, commercial, and cultural artifacts during the “Golden Age” of Hollywood.

Jan. 4	Introduction: A Brief History of the American Film Industry Basics of Film Analysis
Jan. 6	(film screening only)
Jan. 11	The Coming of Sound and the Studio System THE JAZZ-SINGER (1927)
Jan 13	APPLAUSE (1929)
Jan. 18	Fallen Women and the Star System POSSESSED (1931)
Jan 20	RED-HEADED WOMAN (1932)
Jan. 25	Warner Bros. and the Forgotten Man THE PUBLIC ENEMY (1931)
Jan. 27	42 ND STREET (1933)
Feb. 1	Creating the Couple in the Era of the Production Code THE THIN MAN (1934)
Feb. 3	THE GAY DIVORCEE (1935)
Feb. 8	Weepies THE LITTLEST REBEL (1935)

Feb. 10	STELLA DALLAS (1937)
Feb. 15	Hollywood Looks at Itself A STAR IS BORN (1937)
Feb. 17	THE GOLDWYN FOLLIES (1938)
Feb. 22	Hollywood Looks at Its Audience YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU (1938)
Feb. 24	FOUR DAUGHTERS (1938)
March 1	This American Life MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON (1939)
March 3	THE WIZARD OF OZ (1939) (no screening)
March 8	class rescheduled for Broadway theaters tour FINAL ESSAY AND EXAM DUE

PLEASE NOTE:

--Class attendance is mandatory. You will not pass this course if you miss more than three classes (the Broadway theater tour counts double!). The course is conducted primarily as a discussion. Participation accounts for 10% of your grade. As a courtesy to the professor and your classmates, please arrive on time.

--A mandatory film screening takes place after each class.

--Laptops, ipads, etc. are not permitted in class (waaaay too much emailing and websurfing...I'm on to you!!).

PAPERS AND EXAMS:

--In weeks 2 – 5 and 7 – 8 students will write a 600-word paper each week on one of the two films to be shown. Papers will be due in class. You may skip one paper; that is, you are responsible for completing 5 of the 6 short paper assignments. Or you can drop a grade. Late papers will not be accepted. These will count for 45% of your grade.

--A longer final paper (1000 words) and a final exam. These will count for 45% of your grade. Part of the exam will be administered in class to facilitate the showing of film clips.

--You must complete and receive a passing grade on all written assignments (except one of the short papers) to pass the course.

A WORD ABOUT PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is the wrongful use of another person's ideas by representing them as one's own. Plagiarism occurs when the general thoughts of another person and/ or specific sentences and passages from another writer's work are appropriated without proper attribution in the form of a footnote or endnote. Plagiarism applies to unattributed material that is lifted from unpublished as well as published work and material from the internet. No one who has committed plagiarism in one of my courses has passed it.