MEDIA AESTHETICS

description | This course develops critical reading and research skills and introduces the technical vocabulary for analyzing film form in the study of media aesthetics.

expectations | Read and study assigned texts and more in preparation for class meetings. Prepare questions and comments for class discussion. Bring materials. Respect people’s space, backgrounds, contributions, names, pronouns, and frames of reference.

required course books |

Sophia Al-Maria, The Girl Who Fell to Earth
Christopher Isherwood, Prater Violet
Neil Landau and Matthew Frederick, 101 Things I Learned in Film School

Other reading assignments are on the course canvas site.

presented in class

Brother to Brother
Is It Really So Strange?
Not Quite the Taliban
The Grace Lee Project
Theme Time Radio Hour
television sitcoms/commercials
the work of Sophia Al-Maria

course work / basis for evaluation |

Attendance and Participation [10 pts.]
Homework and Quizzes [15 pts.]
Exam [25 pts.] 11/1

Research and Writing Assignments [50 pts. total]

1) the look of In the Life [15 pts.] 10/23
2) archives online: one still image [15 pts.] 11/8
3) moving image analysis: one edit [20 pts.] 11/29
Texts under study may include nudity, sex, violence including coercive sex and misgendering, profanity, harassment, and a variety of sensitive issues like social and sexual taboo transgression, expressive sexuality, social variance, sex work, discrimination, and oppression. If this may present a problem for you, please see me, speak up, +/- or register for another class. Material may appear without notice of content.

Please discuss with me any concerns; absent yourself for trigger mitigation; avoid plagiarism; and let me know as soon as you can of any accommodations you may need.

policies | Your final grade drops if you miss more than four class meetings. After four, each absence will lower your final grade a full notch (A to B, etc.). All assignments must be submitted in order to pass the course. Contact the professor at least two days in advance to ask for an extension. Essay grades drop a full mark for every day past due. You are responsible for meeting Student Conduct Code and Community Standards.

| Students who observe religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with their instructor. | If bad weather or an emergency requires cancelling a class, I will notify you by email or put a note on the door. | Always use your own discretion in class + en route.

| Scholarship in queer media studies (and thus our readings, examples, and conversations) may actively pursue explicit representation of sex and sexual expression.

| The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Please be aware that Prof. miller is a required reporter. UO’s goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO’s 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit http://safe.uoregon.edu/
learning objectives | analyze media, material objects, aesthetics, and cultural history with a focus on print, sound, tumblr, and film/video/tv.

- explore elements of analog and digital media culture through reading and discussion
- identify complexity in representation
- use and deconstruct the vocabulary of formal analysis
- develop argumentative and poetic skills for writing about media
- learn and practice critical approaches to sound, subculture, objects, and affect
- identify the interplay of production, norms, and power in performance and composition
- analyze mediation as a process

Course Schedule  | subject to change

1.1 m 9/25 | Introduction
1.2 w 9/27 | Harry Benshoff, “Camp: The End of Camp?”  

Brother to Brother

2.1 m 10/2 | 101 Things 1-54
2.2 m 10/4 | Prater Violet 3-44
3.1 m 10/9 | Prater Violet 44-82
3.2 w 10/11 | Prater Violet 82-128

4.1 m 10/16 | Hall and Whannel, “The Young Audience”  

Is It Really So Strange?
4.2 w 10/18 | Nicholson Baker, “State of Matter”  

Theme Time Radio Hour
Dennis Cooper, “Brighten the Corners”

5.1 m 10/23 | Celine Parreñas Shimizu, “H. Filipina Video H.”  
The Grace Lee Project
In the Life short, research-based critical essay due 3pm hard copy

5.2 w 10/25 | The Girl Who Fell to Earth 1-89
6.1 m 10/30 | 101 Things 55-87
6.2 w 11/1 | exam

7.1 m 11/6 | The Girl Who Fell to Earth 91-140
7.2 w 11/8 | Not Quite the Taliban

critical essay 2 [ilt/LA/Lupino/WWII] due 5pm hard copy

8.1 m 11/13 | The Girl Who Fell to Earth 141-229
8.2 w 11/15 | The Girl Who Fell to Earth 231-265

9.1 m 11/20 | Kaulingfreks, “Broken Mug”; Marks, “My Rock”
9.2 w 11/22 | McCarthy, “Television at the Point of Purchase”

10.1 m 11/27 | 101 Things 88-101
10.2 w 11/29 | essay 3 due 10am hard copy