9-2013

MAR 304.50: Modern Horror Film

Nicholas G. Jenkins
University of Montana - Missoula, nicholas1.jenkins@umontana.edu

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
Jenkins, Nicholas G., "MAR 304.50: Modern Horror Film" (2013). Syllabi. 521. https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/521

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
THE MODERN HORROR FILM
MAR 304.50
Online Course
Instructor: Nicholas Jenkins
E-Mail: profnickjenkins@gmail.com
Office Hours: Since this is an “Online Class” I have set aside time throughout the semester to answer emails. Typically I can get back to most emails within 24 hours. If you are having an emergency with something class related and cannot get a hold of me, please contact the Media Arts Office at 406.243.4540 and ask if they can locate me on campus.

“Read Marcus Aurelius. Of each particular thing ask: what is it in itself? What is its nature?”
- Hannibal “The Cannibal” Lecter

Course Description:
The horror genre is one of the most profitable in the history of filmmaking. It is lauded by some, rebuked by others, but enjoyed by millions. But what makes this genre of filmmaking so popular and powerful? Why does it endure in all forms of art? What is it about horror that draws so many people in and keeps them coming back? These questions as well as others we will attempt to answer in this 15-week online course. You will explore the changing landscape of the horror film since 1960, studying the movies in filmic terms (Acting, Directing, Cinematography, Music, etc...) and sociological importance. Through online discussions, selected readings, multimedia projects, and online lectures, we will seek to understand the often-controversial genre of horror.

COURSE MATERIALS:
Required Text:
The Horror Film by Peter Hutchings

This is NOT a suggested text. It is REQUIRED. I have scanned in the first two chapters and ONLY the first two chapters of the book to give you time to get it ordered and shipped. We do weekly readings from the text that you will be quizzed on and expected to understand for the exams.

Movies:
It will be your responsibility to acquire copies of all the required films we will be viewing. A list is provided on this syllabus in the “Schedule” section. Also there is a list on Blackboard with links to each movie’s page on www.imdb.com. ALL of these films are available on Netflix (a few as Instant Streaming) as well as most local video stores. Also, Amazon.com has many of them on their instant streaming rental option.

You will also be required to have access to a computer that is capable of viewing Quicktime Movies and YouTube videos. In the Top of the Topics Outline section of this class on Moodle you will find Introductory Videos that will test your computer’s ability to play videos. If you can view those movies, you’ll have no problem with any of the media in the class. If you cannot view those movies, contact me immediately so I can help you find a suitable solution to the problem.

Course Expectations:
Students will develop the abilities to...
• Articulate how the Horror Film (and the Genre as a whole) Functions.
• Understand the Change that Horror Films Have Undergone Since 1960.
• Critically Analyze the Selected Films for Common Themes and Iconography.
• Critically Analyze the Selected Films for Sociological Relevance and Importance.
• Communicate Film Specific Ideas and Concepts About What Horror Is.
Course Requirements:
There are 150 points possible in this class. These points are divided into four categories.
1. Online Discussions
2. Weekly Assignments
3. Exams and Quizzes
4. Final Paper

Grading Guidelines:
I have sought to make grading as clear as I can. If you have any questions, please contact me.

1. Online Forums.
The Forum Discussions will be graded as follows:

- Participation - you will be required to make a certain amount of posts for each discussion as well as a certain amount of responses. Each discussion will list the requirements for participation at the start.

- Vocabulary - You will be expected to communicate your ideas using terms and ideas we have discussed in readings, assignments, and film lectures.

2. Weekly Assignments.
You will be expected to complete the assigned Learning Units within the given dates (usually a 7 day period). Each assignment is different but all of them are exercises used to gauge your understanding of the Horror Genre so I will be looking for...

- Completion - The Learning Units will be made available for a certain amount of time on Moodle and you will have until the Units are taken offline to complete them. Everything will be submitted on Moodle OR through Email. It will be clear in each assignment how that assignment should be submitted.

- Vocabulary and Coherence - You will be discussing ideas and concepts relating to the films we have watched. Be clear and concise.

3. Exams and Quizzes.
You will have Quizzes after every lecture and reading assignment. These are self-explanatory and are simply there to make sure you have a solid understanding of the material before we get into discussions. Quizzes will be "Multiple Choice" or "Fill in the Blank" type tests, while the Exams (a Mid Term and Final) will be Essay.

4. Final Papers.
Papers will be assigned at the Mid Term. You will be doing a Synopsis, a Breakdown of the film based on readings, and an analysis of a Horror Film that we HAVE NOT covered in the class. Similarly to discussions and assignments, you will be expected to use Vocabulary and Concepts introduced in the class and articulate common themes and iconography.

Grade Breakdowns Are As Follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>140 - 150 points and above</td>
<td>93 % and above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grade Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>135 - 139</td>
<td>90 - 92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>130 - 134</td>
<td>87 - 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>125 - 129</td>
<td>83 - 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>120 - 124</td>
<td>80 - 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>115 - 119</td>
<td>77 - 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>110 - 114</td>
<td>73 - 76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>105 - 109</td>
<td>70 - 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>100 - 104</td>
<td>67 - 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>95 - 99</td>
<td>60 - 66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>94 points and below</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**EXTRA CREDIT:**

There will be a one time Extra Credit assignment at Mid-Term that entails a small paper. It will be the only Extra Credit in the class and I encourage EVERYONE to take advantage of it.

---

**HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS**

1. **Visit this Moodle Page several times per week.** Make sure you check for all recent announcements and DOUBLE CHECK that you have turned in all assigned work before the deadline. If you are unsure of whether or not an assignment or quiz has been turned in (as the gradebook can be difficult to read sometimes) feel free to email me and ask.

2. **Devote time to your work.** Not only should you be committing to THINK about what you write, but you should also proof your work before you turn it in to me. If I can't understand what you've written, then you won't get a grade for it. Also, be aware that if you misspell a filmmaker’s name, or a vocabulary word, YOU WILL BE DOCKED POINTS.

3. **Contact the instructor.** Never feel as though you are bothering me with emails. It is my responsibility to answer your emails and help you with problems relating to this class, but it is YOUR responsibility to ask the questions. In fact, I recommend you email me at the start of the class just to make sure I am receiving your emails and responding to you.

---

*All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [http://www.umt.edu/SA/vpsa/index.cfm/page/1339](http://www.umt.edu/SA/vpsa/index.cfm/page/1339)*

---

**Schedule**

Though fairly thorough, this list doesn't include all of the activities you'll be doing. You will notice that I ask you to watch the upcoming film BEFORE we begin the section on that film. When you finish the sections for one week, watch the film for next week.
ALL BLOCKS ARE ASSIGNED ON A MONDAY AND ARE DUE THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT!

**August 26th - September 1st**

*Introduction to the Class*
*Where The Horror Film Started: Horror in the Movies to 1960*
*Discussion and Quiz on Early Horror History*
*Understanding the Filmic Lingo*
*Watch: PSYCHO (1960)*

**September 1st - 8th**

*Modern Horror Begins*
*Discussion and Quiz on PSYCHO*
*Watch: THE EXORCIST (1973)*

**September 9th - 15th**

*Discussion and Quiz on THE EXORCIST*
*Introduction to Psychoanalysis*
*Understanding Abjection*

**September 16th - 22nd**

*Discussion and Quiz on THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE*
*Introduction to Sound In Horror*
*Watch: THE SHINING (1980)*

**September 23rd - 29th**

*Family And Horror*
*Discussion and Quiz on THE SHINING*
*Understanding Performance in the Horror Film*
*Watch: A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1984)*

**September 30th - October 6th**

*Discussion and Quiz on A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*
*Understanding Sexuality in the Horror Film*

**October 7th - 13th**

*Discussion and Quiz on AUDITION*
*Understanding Sexual Difference and Savage Cinema.*
*FINAL PAPERS Assigned*
*MID-TERM EXAM Goes Live*
*EXTRA-CREDIT PAPER assigned*
*Watch: THE DEVIL’S BACKBONE (2001)*

**October 14th - 20th**

*Discussion and Quiz on THE DEVIL’S BACKBONE*
*Understanding the history of Gothic Horror/Romance*
*Watch: The Blair Witch Project (1999)*
October 21st - 27th
The Reality of Horror
Discussion and Quiz on THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT
Perception of Reality in Cinema Part 1

October 28th - November 3rd
Discussion and Quiz on LAKE MUNGO
Perception of Reality in Cinema Part 2
Watch: HOSTEL (2005)

November 4th - 10th
...And Beyond
Discussion and Quiz on HOSTEL
Postulating the Future of Horror
Watch: THE CABIN IN THE WOODS (2011)

November 11th - 17th
Discussion and Quiz on The Cabin in the Woods
Discussion on the ideas of sacrifice and why we need Horror.
Watch: Evil Dead (2013)

November 18th - 24th
Discussion and Quiz on Evil Dead
Addiction, Reboots and Remakes
Study for Finals.

November 25th - December 1st
Thanksgiving Break. No units assigned or due.

December 2nd - 9th
Final Exam Goes Live
Final Papers due