



## **SYLLABUS**

### **SEXUALITY AND GENDER IN ITALIAN CINEMA AND MEDIA**

**Instructor: Sergio Rigoletto**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**UO Credits: 4**

**Contact Hours: 40**

**SIENA, ITALY**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course aims to provide students with an understanding of how cinema and culture 'construct' ideas about gender and sexuality and of how these ideas become meaningful to audiences through media representations.

We will examine some of the narrative and aesthetic procedures that have been used to construct different forms of masculinity and femininity by considering, for example, questions of genre, point of view and mise en scène. The course has also the objective of exploring some of the ways in which Italian cinema, throughout its history, has repeatedly made use of ideas about masculinity, femininity and sexual deviance as crucial components in the articulation of discourses about the nation and its socio-political lacerations.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

#### **Expected Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the term, students will:

1. identify a set of narrative and stylistic procedures used to construct ideas about gender and sexuality in the cinema.
2. be able to relate these procedures to the cultural contexts of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Italy
3. acquire a basic vocabulary for articulating the relationship between words, images, sounds and meanings.
4. gain familiarity with the technology of cinema and with techniques of filming and editing.
5. outline the thematic concerns and formal features of some key Italian films.

## COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 – Introduction: theory and methodology

**Film: La dolce vita (1960)**

Reading:

- Scott, Joan Wallach, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis' in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp 28-50

Week 2 - Masculinity as construction

**Film: Il conformista (1970)**

Reading:

- Hall, Stuart, 'The Work of Representation' in Hall, Stuart (ed.), *Representation. Cultural representation and signifying practices* (London: Sage Pub., 1997), pp. 15-29
- Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 11-33

Week 3 – On subject positions

**Film: La città delle donne (1980)**

Reading:

- Mulvey, Laura, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989), pp. 14-26.
- Dyer, Richard, 'Male sexuality in the Media' in *The Matter of images* (New York: Routledge), pp. 89-99

Week 4 – The gender politics of fascism

**Film: Luciano Serra pilota (1938)**

Reading:

- Mosse, George, 'Introduction: the Masculine Stereotype', in *The Image of Man* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 3-16.
- Connell, R.W. 'The Social Organization of Masculinity' in *Masculinities* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 67-86.

Week 5 –After the war: defeat and disempowerment

**Film: Il bandito (1946)**

Reading:

- Ben-Ghiat, Ruth, 'Unmaking the fascist man: masculinity, film and the transition from dictatorship', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 10:3, 2005, pp. 336-365.
- Connell, R.W. 'The history of masculinity' in (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 185-203.

Week 6 – Male ineptitude (and the rise of the *maggiorate*)

**Film: La fortuna di essere donna (1955)**

Reading:

- Reich, Jacqueline, 'The Inetto versus the Unruly Woman' in *Beyond the Latin Lover* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), pp. 105-122.

- Gunsberg, Maggie, 'Commodifying Passions: Gender and Consumerism in Commedia all'Italiana' in *Italian Cinema Gender and Genre* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), pp. 61-96

Week 7 – Heroic bodies

**Film: Le fatiche di Ercole (1958)**

Reading:

- Neale, Steve, 'Masculinity as Spectacle' in Screen (eds.), *The Sexual Subject*, London, Routledge, 1992, pp. 277-290.
- Michele Lagny, 'Popular Tase. The Peplum' in G. Vincendeau and R Dyer (eds.) *Popular European Cinema*, (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 163-180.

Week 8 – Italian masculinity under the economic miracle

**Film: Il sorpasso (1962)**

Reading:

- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men* (New York: Columbia University Press), pp. 1-27.
- Sergio Rigoletto, 'The Italian Comedy of the Economic Miracle: *L'italiano medio* and Strategies of Gender Exclusion' in Lucy Bolton and Christina Siggers Mason (eds.), *Italy on Screen: Italian Identity in the National Imaginary and International Symbolic* (London: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 35-49.

Week 9 – Gay romances

**Film: Una giornata particolare (1977)**

Reading:

- Jacqueline Reich, 'The 1970s: A Special Day and the woman on Top' in *Beyond the Latin Lover* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 132-136)
- Richard Dyer, 'Gays in film', *Jump Cut*, 11, 1978, pp. 15-16

Week 10 – Summary and Final Remarks

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## METHOD OF EVALUATION

### Assessment:

- Short presentation (10 minutes): scheduled from week 6 to 10 **(20% points)**
- Mid-course essay questions (2,000): due on week 5 **(30 %)**
- Final essay (3,000 for undergraduates; 4,000 for graduate students): due final week **(50%)**

### Late course work

No late papers will be accepted unless you contact me *in advance* about a serious illness or other emergency. Hard copies of assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day listed.

### **Missing course work**

If you fail to submit your work or fail to do your presentation, you will lose all points for that particular component of the course.

### **Attendance**

You are expected to arrive on time and stay the full class. It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet every time. If you miss a class, you must check with your classmates to find out what you have missed. *Three absences will affect your grade, without notice. Four absences will result in failure for the course.*

### **Readings**

All readings are available digitally on Blackboard under Course Documents.

### **Paper grading**

A – The paper addresses all elements in the prompt comprehensively and (as far as possible) exhaustively incorporates material from lectures, discussions and readings. It provides extra insights and makes further arguments in addition to what was discussed in class. All supporting details serve to substantiate the argument and give the reader important information that goes well beyond the obvious and predictable. The arguments are logically structured, the conclusions drawn are strong and the paper provides a clear answer to the question “So what?” The paper contains explanation, analysis, discussion, comparison/contrast that demonstrate mastery and depth of understanding. The text is written clearly and elegantly, it is proofread and there are no grammatical or spelling mistakes. Sources are documented and the paper is formatted correctly.

B – The paper adequately addresses the prompt and most ideas are supported with arguments from lectures, discussions, and with references to class readings. However, the paper only provides limited extra insights and makes hardly any further arguments. The paper clearly structures the arguments, the conclusions drawn are logical and the paper adequately answers the question “So what?” The paper contains explanation, analysis, discussion, comparison/contrast that logically support the concrete details. The text is written clearly and contains no more than two errors in spelling or grammar. Sources are documented and the paper is formatted correctly.

C – The paper addresses the prompt and reflects an adequate exploration of the issues. Material from lectures, discussions and readings is incorporated, but no extra thoughts, comments, or answers are provided. Supporting details are relevant, but some ideas remain unsupported. The paper lacks concrete details and contains explanation, analysis, discussion, comparison and/or contrast that is weak or off topic. The structure is clear and conclusions drawn are logical, but do not always answer the question “So what?” The text shows three or four errors in spelling or grammar. Sources are used, though not always documented. For the most part, the paper is formatted correctly.

D – The paper addresses the prompt only partially and only superficially

incorporates material from lectures, discussions and readings to support its claims. The paper hardly shows evidence of engaged reading. It gives few concrete details, ideas are often unsupported and the paper clings to generalities. The text shows five or six errors in spelling or grammar. Formatting and source documentation do not meet the standard.

F – Superficial attempt at addressing the prompt. Few details are given and it is questionable whether the student has engaged with the material presented in class. There are more than six errors in grammar or spelling. Overall impression of carelessness and minimal effort.

### **Academic Misconduct**

The University Student Conduct Code (available at [conduct.uoregon.edu](http://conduct.uoregon.edu)) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at [researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism](http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism).

### **Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Reporting**

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at [safe.uoregon.edu](http://safe.uoregon.edu). To get help by phone, a student can also call either the UO's 24-hour hotline at 541-346-7244 [SAFE], or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator at 541-346-8136. From the SAFE website, students may also connect to Callisto, a confidential, third-party reporting site that is not a part of the university.

Students experiencing any other form of prohibited discrimination or harassment can find information at [respect.uoregon.edu](http://respect.uoregon.edu) or [aaeo.uoregon.edu](http://aaeo.uoregon.edu) or contact the non-confidential AAEO office at 541-346-3123 or the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 for help. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, additional information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment unrelated to sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is available at [Discrimination & Harassment](#).

The instructor of this class, as a Student Directed Employee, will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or sexual violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration when the student requests that the information be reported (unless someone is

in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor). The instructor of this class is required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the university administration.

Specific details about confidentiality of information and reporting obligations of employees can be found at [titleix.uoregon.edu](http://titleix.uoregon.edu).

### **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse**

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following links for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

### **Students with Disabilities**

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).