

Brooklyn College
Spring 2020
WGS 1234
Women in Hollywood
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Course Description

A critical look into the formation of Hollywood from a small town into a massive empire of entertainment. In this course we will study women's roles in this industry on and off camera, as well as how the power structures oppressed women in the industry. We will also be studying how Hollywood has played a role in solidifying stereotypes about women of color and how women of color are neglected in the #MeToo Movement.

Week 1

Reading: ***Complicated Women: Sex and Power in Pre-Code Hollywood***, Mick Lasalle

On week 1, we will discuss Hollywood in the early 1930s. We will look at women's liberation behind the scenes in contrast to their sweet, on-screen demeanor. We will discuss the works of classic Hollywood actresses such as Greta Garbo and Norma Shearer. This reading is important in understanding early Hollywood and the formation of unconventional ways in which Hollywood women lived, which led to the Production Code of 1934, banning modern women from the screen.

Week 2

The Relationship Between the "Invisibility" of African American Women in the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s and Their Portrayal in Modern Film, Martha Lott

On week 2, we will discuss women of color in Hollywood and their underrepresentation on screen. This is important in understanding how Hollywood has been used as a tool to oppress women of color, despite the progress they have made during the Civil Rights Movement. This reading will touch on the inaccurate depiction of African American women in history as well as the ongoing stereotypical role of "Mammy" in modern day films.

Week 3

Sister Outsider, Audre Lorde

On week 3, we will compare the events that led to the #MeToo movement, to the collection of essays and poems written by Audre Lorde. We will discuss how the industry of modern Hollywood relates to the experiences from Audre Lorde. Highlighting the intersections of being a woman of color and working in Hollywood, in hopes of gaining insight into how sexual trauma is dealt with by women of color in Hollywood.

