

Coming up with some sort of helpful study guide for a class like Race and Gender in Film and Television is not very easy. Short of actually telling you what questions I am going to be asking on the exam --and I wouldn't be able to since I still need to write the exam out-- I really don't know what to offer up to alleviate your exam anxiety --because that's really what a study guide ends up being.

In any case, as I said in class, the exam is going to cover lectures, class discussions and screenings and the readings. No definitions. I am mostly interested in your ability to articulate the concepts that we have encountered during this first half of the semester. The exam is going to be divided evenly between short answer questions, primarily based on the readings and one longer essay question asking you to synthesize our class discussions and lectures primarily around gender representations and the various approaches that we have encountered.

Be prepared to discuss the theoretical framework that we have been following in class and that is also reflected in many of your readings both explicitly and implicitly. ***What is cultural studies, what are its methodological underpinnings and what is the multiperspectival approach that it brings to the study of the media and popular culture.*** Kellner's essay is where most of this is covered as well as the Hall and Lull. Be prepared to talk about 'culture' and the question of 'power' and its distribution in society and how that is dealt with at the cultural level.

Be familiar with terms such as 'hegemony' and 'representation' and 'culture' and 'ideology' and 'resistance' and 'containment' and Hall's encoding/decoding and the 'readings' he identifies as possible when confronting media texts and their meanings.

Be familiar with the terminology and methodology of semiotics and be clear on what this particular 'study of signs' brings to the study of representations and ideology. Be specific on how this relates to the issue of gender (and race even though we will be looking at this in much more detail after the exam). There's a very good on-line resource for reviewing the main concepts of semiotics (in addition to the ones you were assigned) courtesy of Daniel Chandler:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>

Don't forget Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding essay in case you want to turn to the source.

In addition,

--be ready to speak in a sensible and informed manner on the everyday ways in which privilege is lived within society and more importantly how those privileges relate to ideologies in our culture. Be clear on what these privileges reveal about the fundamental frameworks of belief about gender, race and sexual identity. Relatedly, be ready to identify the ideologies inscribed in exemplary media texts --be able to speak of specific examples from the essays you read.

--be able to speak in an informed manner about the different notions surrounding identity (ie. essentialist vs constructed and the media's role in (re)constructing/reflecting identity.

As far as the readings go:

You are responsible for all of the readings that have been assigned. I can tell you, however, that I will be putting a greater emphasis on those articles that we discussed in class and those that were accompanied by screenings. In other words, you should be able to --this is just an example-- answer questions about the media representations of the type of masculinities described by either Katz, Locke or Dines in their respective articles but I expect you to be much more detailed when discussing Katz's notion of ie. white masculinity. The same thing goes for the performance of femininity discussed by Kilbourne (Killing Us Softly is viewable on YouTube). (Just to be clear, this does not mean that you are not responsible for these other readings or that you will not necessarily find questions about them).

-Finally, don't forget our discussion of Laura Mulvey and the contribution of psychoanalysis to the analysis of the pleasures afforded by the media (film specifically) and the consequences of this kind of theoretical perspective and analysis for an actual feminist media practice.

Apologies if this is not the kind of 'study guide' you were expecting. Hopefully it will at the very least point you in the right direction.

Have a good weekend and remember that we will try to keep some class time on Monday for questions.

