Envisioning America Through HBO’s Westworld
21:525:100
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Classroom: ENG 203

Mondays and Wednesdays: 10:00-11:20am
Office Hours: By Appointment Only
Office: ENG 219

Course Description:

The HBO television show Westworld lends itself to conversations about how different ideas, images, moments, and visions of the past and the future are created, fantasized, remembered, re-remembered, manipulated, and profited from. While this class will engage in visual analysis’ of the show itself, it will be primarily centered on the underlying themes portrayed and avoided in the show and investigate the layered historical contexts and ideas that are connected to it. The focus will be on the concept of frontiers and the themes that emerge from it, such as nostalgia, representation, displacement, manifest destiny, fantasy, entertainment, colonization, pleasure, violence, technology, changing notions of gender and sexuality, definitions of humanity, and freedom. This course is about the evolution of frontiers, whose changing vision has continued to inform American culture. We will use the show Westworld to act as a vehicle to engage with what has influenced the evolutions.

Readings:

Readings and Assignments are posted Canvas

You are required to read EVERYTHING that is listed on the schedule BEFORE you attend class.

It is essential that you bring each days reading with you to class. In a digital format is fine.

In order to watch the show, you will need to buy or borrow the DVD set from the library.
Grading and Assignments:

Assignment #1: Short paper
Assignment #2: Short paper
Assignment #3: Group presentation with short paper
Final Paper: Medium sized paper
Class Participation: Required

Class Participation and Attendance:

Attending class is not optional. Class lectures not only include discussions on your assigned readings, but the material presented is what you will be writing about. In-class participation is essential to this discussion driven course. Any student who misses four or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Cheating

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Academic Integrity Pledge and the Rutgers Honor Pledge on all assignments.

“On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment.