ENG 585: Studio Era Hollywood  
Spring 2004  
Thursday 6:00-10:00, Caldwell G107

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Office Hours: Tu/Th 9:30-10:00; Th 2:00-6:00; please make an appointment whenever possible

Course Description and Expectations:
This course will explore the economics, politics, and aesthetics of the Hollywood Studio System. We will study the “major” and “minor” studios that thrived (and struggled) during the era, including representative producers; directors; stars; make-up, costume, and set designers; and, of course, the movies themselves. Students will leave the course with an understanding of the business and politics of Hollywood during this era, especially the industry’s capacity for producing publicity and feeding its star-hungry public. Time will also be devoted to those filmmakers who managed to work outside of the powerful studio system. Regular course attendance and participation is required. Please bring relevant readings to each class session. Assignments will include an archival fan magazine project with an in-class presentation and a final research paper.

Academic Integrity:
Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade in the course. Please see http://www.ncsu.edu/student_affairs/osc/AIpage/acaintegrity.html for an explanation of academic integrity and of the consequences for violating it.

Grades:
Your final grade will be determined as follows:
Fan Magazine Archive Assignment/Presentation: 25%
Final Research Paper (around fifteen pages): 50%
Final Exam: 25%

Outside of Class:
One of the perks of studying film is the extra-curricular exploration you can do in theaters, on cable, at the library, or through rental. This may also be a way for you to stumble into a paper idea. This semester there are two film series you should consider attending. One will be taking place here at Witherspoon theater, http://www.ncsu.edu/cinema/, with screenings of three Bette Davis films: Jezebel on February 15, All About Eve on February 22, and Whatever Happened to Baby Jane? on February 29. All films start at 7:00 p.m. and are free. The second is at the NC Museum of Art, http://ncartmuseum.org/events/lecturesandevents/films.shtml. Films include Roman Holiday on February 14, Bringing Up Baby on February 20, Adam’s Rib on February 28, Road to Morocco on March 5, The Cat and the Canary on March 6, The Patsy on March 13, and Two Seconds on March 20. Films start at 7:30 and are $3.50 for students/NCMA members, $5 for the general public.
Texts:
Doherty, Tom. *Pre-Code Hollywood*. Columbia. (optional; also on e-reserve)

The following readings will be available on “e-reserve”: http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/rbr/ under Eng585. Please print out all articles and bring them to class on the days we will be discussing them.

Studio Era Hollywood
Syllabus for Spring 2004

Introduction:
Th Jan 15  The Birth of the Studio System: *It* (1927), Dir. Clarence Badger (72 min.)
           *A Trip Through A Hollywood Studio* (Vitaphone, 1934)
           Read:  *Genius*, 1-66

The Majors:
Th Jan 22  Paramount: *Trouble in Paradise* (1932), Dir. Ernst Lubitsch (82 min.)
           Read:  *Genius*, 69-81
           Black, Gregory. “Censorship and the Attack on Hollywood Immorality.” (e-reserve)
           “The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930” *Pre-Code Hollywood*. (e)

Th Jan 29  Warner Bros.: *The Public Enemy* (1931), Dir. William Wellman (83 min.)
           Read:  *Genius*, 135-155; 199-227
           Doherty, Thomas. “Criminal Codes.” *Pre-Code Hollywood*. (e)

Th Feb 5  Warner Bros.: *Mildred Pierce* (1945), Dir. Michael Curtiz (111 min.)
           Read:  *Genius*, 297-321; 411-439
           Allen, Robert. “The Role of the Star in Film History.” *Film Theory & Criticism*. (e)
           Gorbman, Claudie. Excerpt from “Classical Hollywood Practice: Max Steiner.” (e)

Th Feb 12 20th Century Fox: *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), Dir. John Ford (128 min.)

Th Feb 19  RKO: *Top Hat* (1935), Dir. Mark Sandrich (101 min.)
           Read:  *Genius*, 125-134
           Davis, Ronald. “Design, Hairstyling, and Makeup.” (e)
           Marmorstein, Gary. “Work Like a Soul Inspired: Fred Astaire.” (e)

Th Feb 26  MGM: *Grand Hotel* (1932), Dir. Edmund Goulding (115 min.)
           Read:  *Genius*, 98-124; 159-175; 252-270
           Berry, Sarah. “Consumer Fashion and Class.” (e)

Th Mar 4  MGM: *The Philadelphia Story* (1940), Dir. George Cukor (112 min.)
           Guest Lecturer, Laura Boyes, Film Curator of the N.C. Museum of Art
           Read:  *Genius*, 359-380

Th Mar 11  CLASSES CANCELLED—Spring Break

The Minors:
Th Mar 18  Columbia: *It Happened One Night* (1934), Dir. Frank Capra (105 min.)
Read: Buscombe, Edward. “Notes on Columbia Pictures.” *The Studio System*. (e)
Schatz, Thomas. “Anatomy of a House Director.” *Authorship & Studio System*. (e)
**Paper Proposals Due**

Th Mar 25  Universal: *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), Dir. James Whale (75 min.)
Guest Lecturer, Dr. Maria Pramaggiore, Head of Film Studies at NCSU
Read: *Genius*, 82-97; 228-251; 340-358

**Independent Production/B Movies:**
Th Apr 1  Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rebecca* (1940), a David O. Selznick Production (130 min.)
Read: *Genius*, 176-198; 271-294; 322-339; 381-407
Selected correspondence of David O. Selznick re: *Rebecca*. (e)

Th Apr 8  CLASSES CANCELLED—Easter Break

Th Apr 15  *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), Dir. Ida Lupino (71 min.)
Read: Flynn & McCarthy. “The Economic Imperative: Why Was the B Movie Necessary?” (e)
**Final Paper Roundtable with Annotated Bibliography**

Th Apr 22  B Double Feature!: *Detour* (1945), Dir. Edgar Ulmer (67 min.) and *Glen or Glenda?* (1953), Dir. Ed Wood (65 min.)

**The End of an Era:**
Th Apr 29  *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), Dir. Billy Wilder (110 min.)
Reading: *Genius*, 440-492
**Final Paper Due**

Th May 6  6:00-9:00, Final Exam