

*FILM AS THEOLOGICAL TEXT:  
RACE, GENDER, CLASS, AND SEXUALITIES*

TR360

United Theological Seminary

Spring 2010

Monday 6:00-9:15 PM

Room A

Professor Jann Cather Weaver

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Appointments available upon Requests

[jweaver@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:jweaver@unitedseminary.edu)

We will be using the web-based Moodle

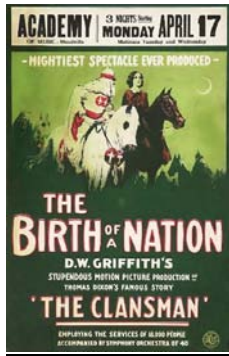
**I. COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course examines the cultural medium of film as theological text and as a visual medium of re-presenting formative narratives about race, class, gender, and sexualities. Specially, we will view films that explore the theological issues around the enforcement and/or inversion of stereotypical meanings of gay/straight/transsexual African American men and women (*Birth of a Nation*, *Hustle & Flow*, and *Paris is Burning*), matriarchal and Africanized Gullah religious ritual traditions (*Daughters of the Dust*), Lakota Indian reservation life and religious practices (*Skins*), and economic class and religious traditions in Hindu India (*Slumdog Millionaire*).

The course will also explore through film the theological issues around the enforcement and/or inversion of stereotypical understandings of homelessness and mental illness (*The Soloist*), lesbians as vampires (*The Hunger*), white gay men (*Milk*), and white transgenderism (*Transamerica*). We will also examine the systemic religious and political Palestinian situation through the film *Paradise Now*.

A critical method rooted in theological, biblical, and visual fundamentals, expanded by literary, cultural-theological social analysis, guides this study of film as theological text.

**N.B. The films and materials of this class are challenging and may at times be offensive to our sensibilities. May we use this as an opportunity to learn about situations in which people live to broaden our theological understanding of God's Presence in difficult and diverse situations.**



## **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE**

By the end of the course student will be to --

- Examine the cultural medium of film as theological text and as a visual medium of representing formative narratives about race, class, gender, and sexualities
- Understand the theological issues around the enforcement (mythic) and/or inversion (parabolic) of stereotypical and prejudicial meanings of race, class, gender, and sexualities in film
- Apply a critical method that is both theological and visual to examine film as visual theological text and discourse analogically, not allegorically
- Examine theologically the racial history of Hollywood film style, production and distribution
- Deconstruct the anatomy of racist, gender-ist, and classist stereotyping, as well as cultural prejudice and appropriation, as seen in film and mass media
- See film and mass media in new ways in order to serve as sources for liturgical, parish, and social ministry
- Have a self-understanding about how to minister/teach personal, cultural, and institutional dismantling of racism, sexism/genderism, classism, xenophobia, and heterosexism within theological, liberationist, and/or biblical paradigms
- Research with web-based tools films and prejudicial histories
- Be in civil, learning dialogue with differing theologies, denominations, and cultures

## **III. FORMAT OF THE COURSE**

Class time will include opening worship or time for reflection, lecture-discussion; class viewing of supplemental film clips; small group work; large group discussions.



*Middle Passage*

## **V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**



### ***Required Films***

*Birth of a Nation*, D.W. Griffith, 1915  
*Hustle & Flow*, Craig Brewer, 2005, 116 m  
*The Hunger*, Tony Scott, 1983, 97 m  
*Milk*, Gus van Sant, 2008, 128 m  
*Paris is Burning*, Jennie Livingston, 1990, 71 m  
*Transamerica*, Duncan Tucker, 2005, 103 m  
*Daughters of the Dust*, Julie Dash, 1991, 112 M?  
*Skins*, Chris Eyre, 2002, 84 m  
*The Soloist*, Joe Wright, 2009, 117 m  
*Paradise Now*, Hany Abu-Assad, 2005, 90 m  
*Slumdog Millionaire*, Danny Boyle and Loveleen Tandan, 2008, 120 m

Seeing all films, except *Birth of a Nation*, will be the responsibility of the student outside of class. Viewing each film twice is highly recommended.

(Also in class: *The Portrait of Jesus through the Ages*, a video on the re-presentation of Christ in art and film; *The Celluloid Closet* Clips.)

## **IV. REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND OTHER READINGS**

### **Required Reading and Resource Material**

Benshoff, Harry M. "Milk" and Gay Political History" *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 51 (Spring 2009). <http://www.ejumpcut.org/currentissue/Milk/index.html>  
(PDF ON MOODLE)

Benshoff, Harry M., and Sean Griffin. *America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies*. Second Edition. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.imdb.com/media/rm4117272832/tt0284494> accessed January 25, 2010.

- Brooks, David. "The White Messiah Complex." *New York Times*, January 7, 2010, Op-Ed Columnist. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/08/opinion/08brooks.html?emc=eta1> (PDF ON MOODLE)
- Dash, Julie. *Daughters of the Dust: The Making of an African American Woman's Film*. With Toni Cade Bambara and Bell Hooks. New Press, 1992.
- Dirks, Tim. "The Birth of a Nation (1915)," <http://www.filmsite.org/birt.html>. Accessed July 16, 2007. (PDF ON MOODLE)
- Feinberg, Leslie. "Natural becomes 'Unnatural'." In *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to RuPaul*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996, 60-65. (ON RESERVE)
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Not Just Passing." In *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to RuPaul*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996, 82-89. (ON RESERVE)
- Grosvenor, Vertamae. "Carolina's Coastal People," *NPR* Audio File (13 minutes) <http://www.npr.org/programs/atc/features/2000/aug/000830.cfoa.html> (LINK ON MOODLE)
- Hooks, Bell. "Is Paris Burning." In *Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies*. New York: Routledge, 1996, 214-226. (ON RESERVE)
- Huff-Hannon, Joseph. "Don't Call Them Hermaphrodites." *The Daily Beast*. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2009-09-16/dont-call-them-hermaphrodites/full/> (PDF ON MOODLE)
- "Indian Comedian's Ethnic Jokes are a Hit (Russell Peters)," *PRI* July 29, 2009. Audio File, PDF with three YouTube Links. <http://www.pri.org/arts-entertainment/arts/comedians-ethnic-jokes1520.html> (PDF ON MOODLE)
- Kaplan, Erin Aubry. "Stereotypes for Sale." *The Crisis* (Fall 2008):12-14. (ON RESERVE)
- "'New Testament' Translated into Gullah." *NPR: Morning Edition*. March 16, 2006. Audio File (4:17 minutes) <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storvid=5283230> (LINK ON MOODLE)
- "Outrageous Grace: Revelations" Tonéx "Gospel Singer Comes Out." *The New Yorker*, February 8, 2010. Audio File. [http://www.newyorker.com/online/2010/02/08/100208on\\_audio\\_sanneh](http://www.newyorker.com/online/2010/02/08/100208on_audio_sanneh) (LINK ON MOODLE)
- "Pakistan's 'Third Gender' Seek Greater Rights." *The New York Times. World Section*. February 7, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2010/02/07/world/AP-AS-Pakistan-The-Third-Gender.html> (PDF ON MOODLE)
- Selections from Russell, Letty M. , and J. Shannon Clarkson. *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. BT83.55 D5.3 1996 REFERENCE or from online book re-sellers.
- "Tonéx Gospel Singer Comes Out." ABSTRACT. *The New Yorker*, February 8, 2010. [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/02/08/100208fa\\_fact\\_sanneh](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/02/08/100208fa_fact_sanneh) (PDF ON MOODLE)
- Weaver, Jann Cather. "Avatar" as Classic Hollywood Flick in 3-D. [http://www.theologyandfilm.com/RELIGION\\_AND\\_FILM\\_CLASSROOM/Blog/Entries/2009/12/30\\_AVATAR.html](http://www.theologyandfilm.com/RELIGION_AND_FILM_CLASSROOM/Blog/Entries/2009/12/30_AVATAR.html) (LINK ON MOODLE)

Weaver, Jann Cather. *The Theological Eye: Beyond Illustration*. WORKING MANUSCRIPT, 2010. (PDFs ON MOODLE) (THESE ARE NOT POLISHED DOCUMENTS, SO CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS WELCOME.)

*Rules and Rights of Discussion of Film*  
*Basis Methodological Elements*  
*Introduction*  
*To See and be Seen*  
*Film as Illumination, Not Illustration*  
*Allegory and Analogy*  
*Chiasmic Method applied to Dead Man Walking*  
*Extensive Bibliography*

Weiss, Andrea. "The Vampire Lovers." In *Vampires and Violets: Lesbians in Film*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992, 84-108. (ON RESERVE)

N.B. Audio Files requires RealOne Player. See Moodle for links.

### *Class Work and Papers*

- 1) Weekly attendance and class participation essential. **(Only two (2) class absences allowed for extreme extenuating circumstances. Missing more than two (2) sessions ) is an automatic grade of "C." Missing 3 sessions is an automatic grade of "F."** (N.B. Due to the H1N1 Flu Virus, stay home if you are sick! Instructor will be lenient on absences due to colds/flu.)
- 2) Lead the class in an **intentional** 3-5 minute opening worship or time of reflection, with a definite opening and closing. This may be designed using any art form (within reason), scripture, and/or other spiritual readings. You are invited to use this time in creative and meaningful ways.
- 3) Students will prepare a one paragraph (3-4 sentences), theological COMMENT on each film to be shared in small groups for each required film (double-spaced, 12 point, Times Roman font). These paragraphs are to be in your 'voice,' not quoting someone else's thoughts on the film. These are P/NC and will be commented on by the instructor. **Please put your box number on all submitted written materials. 1" margins**
- 4) **A final paper 10-12 pages**, that provides an in-depth critical theological analysis on the re-presentation of race, gender, class, and/or sexualities on a film/s seen for class or in class. Your paper shall be your analysis, in your voice. Specify your method: e.g., myth/parable; hermeneutics; biblical text/s juxtaposition; theological analogy. This is not to be a research paper, although you can research historical or theological issues related to the film/s' concerns. The primary feature of the paper is your theological analysis of the film/s' re-presentation of race, gender, class, and/or sexualities as a whole, in specific scenes, or in cross-reference to other films. Begin with the text of the film/s, not a theological argument or doctrine to

be proven. This paper shall have **1” margins and page numbers, be double-spaced, 12 point, Times Roman font, emailed to instructor.**

([jweaver@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:jweaver@unitedseminary.edu)) Papers are to be written in an academic style, with **footnotes and bibliography.** (**Style Required:** *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.)

**Please put your box number on all submitted written materials.**

**OR**

**a final Multi-media project provides** in-depth critical, theological analysis the re-presentation of race, gender, class, and/or sexualities in film and media. This can be a video made from (copyright free) images, media clips, music. Windows Media Maker is a good software program for Windows users. MAC users – you know your options. Do not create a PowerPoint ppt. A PowerPoint mov is acceptable if well done. **Provide a short, written synopsis** of your theological analysis in your project, as well as a bibliography. (**Style Required:** *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.) Synopses may be emailed to instructor ([jweaver@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:jweaver@unitedseminary.edu)) and multi-media project given to instructor on CD/DVD.

**Please put your box number on all submitted written materials.**

**Criteria for Evaluation:**

Integration of assigned reading materials, material presented in class, and scripture or other theologically significant resources to support your position  
Clear, concise articulation of method  
Depth and clarity of theological analysis  
Ability to be authentic to the filmic text/s and its theological renderings  
Accurate use of academic style notations

**Assume the instructor knows the film/s, i.e., please do not recap the film in your papers/projects.**

**V. BASIS FOR EVALUATION**

Weekly attendance, out-of-class research, and in-class participation – 35%  
Paragraphs – 35%  
Final Paper or Media Project – 30%

**Papers or projects requiring extensions beyond the last day of class will not be graded until September. Requests for extension will have to be filed with the Registrar’s office before the last day of class.**

**See UTS policy on extensions below or in the student handbook:**

Extensions: (4/28/00; Revised 1/17/01)

The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor, in which case a formal petition for extension must be approved by the instructor by the end of the final class session. Extensions (of course work) beyond the end of the semester will be approved only under **extraordinary** circumstances. Each instructor will include this policy on each course syllabus as well as the criteria by which she or he will grant such an exception. (Serious illness; Serious injury; Death or serious illness in family.)

In the event such as exception is agreed to, the student shall complete the petition for extension form and the instructor shall file the extension form with the registrar by the date grades are due. The Student Review Committee shall monitor extensions. If no petition for extension is filed, a final grade will be submitted.

An extension may be granted for a period not to exceed six months from the end of the term. If the work is not completed by the date petitioned, a final grade will be submitted. Any renewal of an extension must be approved by the instructor and filed with the registrar prior to the due date on the original petition. No extension or its renewal will exceed six months from the end of the term in question.

All work in this class is expected to follow the Copyright Compliance Policy in the Masters Student Handbook (103). The full Copyright Policy is at the Circulation desk in the Spencer library.

All work in this class is expected to follow the Academic Integrity Policy in the Masters Student Handbook (52).

All work in this class is expected to follow the Inclusive Language Policy in the Masters Student Handbook, with opportunities for discussion on differences (114).

A selection from Implications of Inclusive Language Policy

3. Racially and ethnically inclusive language rejects the equating of color with virtue and does not equate darkness with negative qualities or lightness with positive qualities. It also rejects the use of or construction of “otherness” in language that connotes superiority of the dominant group.

All work in this class is expected to follow the Policy Regarding Confidentiality and Disclosure within Small Group Settings in the Masters Student Handbook (124—125).

Regarding Professorial Boundaries, see Statement on Boundaries in the Masters Student Handbook (115—117).

**VI. CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

**FEBRUARY 8: CLASS CANCELED DUE TO WEATHER**

**FEBRUARY 15:**

***Readings:***

Benshoff, Harry M., and Sean Griffin. *America on Film*, 21—30.

Brooks, David. “The White Messiah Complex.” *New York Times*, January 7, 2010, Op-Ed Columnist. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/08/opinion/08brooks.html?emc=eta1>  
**(PDF ON MOODLE)**

Weaver, Jann Cather. “*Avatar*” as *Classic Hollywood Flick in 3-D*.

[http://www.theologyandfilm.com/RELIGION\\_AND\\_FILM\\_CLASSROOM/Blog/Entries/2009/12/30\\_AVATAR.html](http://www.theologyandfilm.com/RELIGION_AND_FILM_CLASSROOM/Blog/Entries/2009/12/30_AVATAR.html) **(LINK ON MOODLE)**

Weaver, Jann Cather. *The Theological Eye: Beyond Illustration*. Working manuscript, 2010.  
**(PDFs ON MOODLE) (THESE ARE NOT POLISHED DOCUMENTS, SO CORRECTIONS AND COMMENTS WELCOME.)**

*Rules and Rights of Discussion of Film*

*Basis Methodological Elements*

*Introduction*

*To See and be Seen*

*Film as Illumination, Not Illustration*

*Allegory and Analogy*

Opening Reflection

Review of Syllabus and Class Expectations

Class “Rules” of Dialogue

Basic Methodological Elements

Classic Hollywood Structure

Anatomy and Construction of Prejudice

Prolegomenon on Seeing and a Visual Theological Film Method:

Relationship between Film and Theology

Theological Nature of Image and Re-Presentation: Signs, Symbols, and Icons

**In-Class View:** *The Portrait of Jesus* (The Role Images and Film play for Theological and Political Purposes)

**FEBRUARY 22:**

***Readings:***

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, Chapter 1, 30—37.

Dirks, Tim. “The Birth of a Nation (1915),” <http://www.filmsite.org/birt.html>. Accessed July 16, 2007. **(PDF ON MOODLE)**

“Colonization” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

“Conscientization” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*



“Deconstruction” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Eschatology” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Hermeneutics of Suspicion” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*.  
“Imperialism” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Inculturation” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Race” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Racism” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Seeing” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*,

Opening Reflection

Film Techniques from Griffith

**In-Class View:** *Birth of a Nation*, D.W. Griffith, and interview with D.W. Griffith

Anatomy and Construction of Prejudice Continued

History of Black Films in early 20th century

### **MARCH 1:**

**View:** *The Hunger*, Tony Scott, 1983, 97 m

**Optional to View:** *When Night is Falling*, Patricia Rozema, 1995  
*But I'm a Cheerleader*, Jamie Babbit, 1999  
*Fire*, Deepa Mehta, 1996 (India)

### **Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 305-324.

Weiss, Andrea. “The Vampire Lovers.” In *Vampires and Violets: Lesbians in Film*. New York: Penguin Books, 1992, 84-108. **(ON RESERVE)**

“Difference” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Feminist Hermeneutics” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Lesbian” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Liberation” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Postmodernism” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Reality, Women’s in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Sexism” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Sexuality” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Social Construct” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Stereotypes” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

Opening Reflection

Lesbians in Cinema

*The Celluloid Closet* Clips

**Attend Susan Draper White Lecture: 7:30 PM in Bigelow Chapel**

**This is not optional; it is part of the class. Lecture will be over by 9 PM.**

**Rev. Dr. Joyce Mercer:**

***Girls, God, and Vampires: The Spiritual Life of Adolescent Girls***

**MARCH 8:**

**View:** *Milk*, Gus van Sant, 2008, 128 m

**Optional to View:** *The Times of Harvey Milk*, Rob Epstein, 1984 (Documentary)  
*Bent*, Sean Mathias, 1997  
*Brokeback Mountain*, Ang Lee, 2005

**Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 324-339

“Tonéx Gospel Singer Comes Out.” ABSTRACT. *The New Yorker*, February 8, 2010.

[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/02/08/100208fa\\_fact\\_sanneh](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/02/08/100208fa_fact_sanneh)

(PDF ON MOODLE)

Benshoff, Harry M. “Milk” and Gay Political History” Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media(s) (Spring 2009). <http://www.jumpcut.org/currentissue/Milk/index.html>  
Theologies, Queer” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

(PDF ON MOODLE)

**Audio File:** “Outrageous Grace: Revelations” Tonéx “Gospel Singer Comes Out.” *The New Yorker*, February 8, 2010. Audio File.

[http://www.newyorker.com/online/2010/02/08/100208on\\_audio\\_sanneh](http://www.newyorker.com/online/2010/02/08/100208on_audio_sanneh)

(LINK ON MOODLE)

Opening Reflection

*The Celluloid Closet* Clips

Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Milk*

**MARCH 15:**

**View:** *Transamerica*, Duncan Tucker, 2005, 103 m

**Optional to View:** *TransGeneration*, TV Miniseries, 2005 (8 Episodes)  
*Boys Don’t Cry*, Kimberly Pierce, 1999  
*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, John Cameron Mitchell, 2001

**Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 213—216, 339—354.

Feinberg, Leslie. “Natural becomes ‘Unnatural’.” In *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to RuPaul*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996, 60-65. (ON RESERVE)

\_\_\_\_\_. “Not Just Passing.” In *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to RuPaul*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996, 82-89. (ON RESERVE)

Opening Reflection

Trans\*

Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Transamerica*

**MARCH 22: READING WEEK – NO CLASS**

**MARCH 29:**

**View:** *Paris is Burning*, Jennie Livingston, 1990, 71 m

**Optional to View:** *Pageant*, Ron Davis and Stewart Halpern-Fingerhut, 2008

**Readings:**

Hooks, Bell. "Is Paris Burning." In *Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies*. New York: Routledge, 1996, 214-226. **(ON RESERVE)**

Huff-Hannon, Joseph. "Don't Call Them Hermaphrodites." *The Daily Beast*.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2009-09-16/dont-call-them-hermaphrodites/full/> **(PDF ON MOODLE)**

"Pakistan's 'Third Gender' Seek Greater Rights." *The New York Times. World Section*. February 7, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2010/02/07/world/AP-AS-Pakistan-The-Third-Gender.html> **(PDF ON MOODLE)**

"Androgyny" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Desire" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Gender Construction" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Gendered Institutions" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Gendered Representation" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Marginalization:" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Paradigm Shift" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Solidarity" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

Opening Reflection

Presentation on Herms, Ferms, and Hermaphrodites ("Intersex"):  
The Third Gender

Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Paris is Burning*

**APRIL 5: EASTER BREAK – NO CLASS**

**Lot of reading for next class!**

**APRIL 12:**

**View:** *Hustle & Flow*, Craig Brewer, 2005, 116 m

**Optional to View:** *Tupac Shakur: Thug Angel*, Peter Spirer, 2002 (Documentary)

*Malcolm X*, Spike Lee, 1992

*Menace II Society*, Allen Hughes, 1993

*Boyz N the Hood*, John Singleton, 1991

**Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 47-60, case study *The Jazz Singer* on pages 68-69, 76, Chapter 4, photograph and caption page 226, 238—246, 253—255, 257—260, 270—273, 283—290, 296—301,

Kaplan, Erin Aubry. "Stereotypes for Sale." *The Crisis* (Fall 2008):12-14. **(ON RESERVE)**

"Misogyny" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Oppression" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Patriarchy" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

"Redemption/Salvation" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

“Responsibility” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Violence, Institutionalized” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

Opening Reflection  
*Hustle & Flow* as Blaxploitation?  
Gender as re-presented in *Hustle & Flow*  
Paragraphs and more discussion questions of *Hustle & Flow*

**APRIL 19:**

***View:*** *Daughters of the Dust*, Julie Dash

***Optional to View:*** *The Rosa Parks Story*, Julie Dash, 2002

***Readings:***

Dash, Julie. *Daughters of the Dust: The Making of an African Christ Woman's Film*. With Toni Cade Bambara and Bell Hooks. New Press: 1992. (Including screenplay.)

Grosvenor, Vertamae. “Carolina's Coastal People.” *NPR: All Things Considered*. Audio File (13 minutes) <http://www.npr.org/programs/atc/features/2000/aug/000830.cfoa.html>  
**(LINK ON MOODLE)**

“New Testament' Translated into Gullah.” *NPR: Morning Edition*. March 16, 2006. Audio File (4:17 minutes) <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyid=5283230>  
**(LINK ON MOODLE)**

“Ethics, Womanist” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Feminist Theology, Africa” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Memory” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Rituals, African” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Sisterhood” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Theologies, Womanist” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Virtue, Womanist” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Womanist Voice” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Work, Womanist” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

Opening Reflection  
Gullah Language and Culture  
Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Daughters of the Dust*

**APRIL 26:**

***View:*** *Skins*, Chris Eyre, 2002, 84 m

***Optional to View:*** *Smoke Signals*, Chris Eyre, 1998  
*No More Smoke Signals*, Fanny Bräuning, 2008 (Documentary)  
*Broken Rainbow*, Maria Florio, 1985 (Documentary)

***Readings:***

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, Chapter 5

“Epistemological Privilege” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Freedom” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Revelation” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Suffering” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Survival” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

Opening Reflection  
Native American Re-Presentations and Realities  
Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Skins*

**MAY 3:**

**View:** *The Soloist*, Joe Wright, 2009, 117 m

**Optional to View:** *Awakenings*, Penny Marshall, 1990  
*A Beautiful Mind*, Ron Howard, 2001  
*My Left Foot*, Jim Sheridan, 1989  
*One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, Milos Forman, 1975

**Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 359—384.

Weaver, Jann Cather. *The Theological Eye: Beyond Illustration*. Working manuscript, 2010.

**(PDF ON MOODLE) (THIS IS NOT A POLISHED DOCUMENT, SO  
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*Chiasmic Method applied to Dead Man Walking*

Opening Reflection  
Discussion of Chiasmic Method for Discerning the Religious in Film  
Mental Dis-ease/illness as Dis-ability?  
Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *The Soloist*

**MAY 10:**

**View:** *Paradise Now*, Hany Abu-Assad, 2005, 90 m

**Optional to View:** *Ha-Buah (The Bubble)*, Eytan Fox, 2006  
*The Lemon Tree*, Eran Riklis, 2008  
*The Syrian Bride*, Eran Riklis, 2004

**Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 70—75.

“Anti-Judaism, Anti-Semitism” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*  
“Holocaust” in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*

Opening Reflection  
Israeli-Palestinian Situation: Conflict of Geo-Politics, Race, and Religion  
Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Paradise Now*

**MAY 14: GRADUATING STUDENTS’ FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE!**

Email to [jweaver@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:jweaver@unitedseminary.edu)

**MAY 17: LAST CLASS**

**Due:** Final Paper or Media Project. Email to [jweaver@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:jweaver@unitedseminary.edu)

**View:** *Slumdog Millionaire*, Danny Boyle and Loveleen Tandan, 2008, 120 m

**Optional to View:** *Salaam Bombay*, Mira Nair, 1988  
*Mississippi Masala*, Mira Nair, 1992  
*The Namesake*, Mira Nair, 2006

**Readings:**

Benshoff and Griffin. *America on Film*, 167—170.

“Indian Comedian's Ethnic Jokes are a Hit (Russell Peters),” *PRI* July 29, 2009. Audio File, PDF with three YouTube Links. <http://www.pri.org/arts-entertainment/arts/comedians-ethnic-jokes1520.html> (PDF ON MOODLE)

Opening Reflection

Paragraphs and Discussion questions of *Slumdog Millionaire*

Class evaluations during class.



Four Indian Riders Fritz Scholder 1967 Oil on canvas (C)  
<http://xrl.in/4hdm>