

# SO343: Sociology of Hollywood

Fall 2021

Class Meetings: Monday and Wednesday, 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

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## Course Description

How did Hollywood films transform from entertainment to art? Who are the villains in action movies? How do minority actors and directors “make it” in Hollywood? Does Hollywood still dominate global film markets? Hollywood is a popular topic that spans areas of the sociology of culture, race, organizations, and globalization, serving as a window to examine various social problems. This course examines sociological research on the production, distribution, and reception of Hollywood film and television. We will explore various social forces such as cultural gatekeeping, racial hierarchies, globalization, and censorship, examining how these processes affect what Hollywood brings to the big screen.

## Course Schedule

R = required readings

O = optional but highly recommended

ENTRY: HOLLYWOOD & CULTURAL PRODUCTION	
WEEK 1	<b>Introduction and Discussion</b> <i>What do we know about Hollywood?</i>
September 8	No Readings
WEEK 2	<b>Theoretical Frameworks &amp; Methods</b> <i>How to study cultural production?</i>
September 13	R Griswold, Wendy. 2014. Chapter 4 “The Production, Distribution, and Reception of Culture” in <i>Cultures and Society in a Changing World, 4th Edition</i> . Sage.
	Becker, Howard S. 1974. “Art as Collective Action.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 39: 767-776.

	O	Hirsch, Paul M. 1972. "Processing Fads and Fashions: An Organization-Set Analysis of Cultural Industry Systems." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 77(4): 639-59.
September 15	R	Baumann, Shyon. 2014. "Making Film into Art" (pp. 314-331) in <i>Cultural Sociology: An Introductory Reader</i> , edited by Matt Wray. W.W. Norton. Ortner, Sherry. 2014. "Studying Sideways: Ethnographic Access in Hollywood" (pp. 175-189) in <i>Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries</i> . Routledge.

UNIT 1: DEVELOPMENT & PRE-PRODUCTION		
WEEK 3	<b>Evaluation Communities (1): Above the Line/Creatives</b>	
September 20	R	Caldwell, John T. 2008. Chapter 5 "Industrial Auteur Theory (Above the Line/Creative)" (pp. 197-231 & a few pages on pitches) in <i>Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television</i> . Duke University Press. Podcast: Money Planet, "Hollywood's Black List" (24-minute listen). <a href="https://www.npr.org/2020/07/10/889708583/hollywoods-black-list">https://www.npr.org/2020/07/10/889708583/hollywoods-black-list</a>
September 22	R	Fang, Jun. 2021. "Anatomy of a Script Meeting." Unpublished Manuscript. Bielby, Denise D., and William T. Bielby. 2002. "Hollywood Dreams, Harsh Realities: Writing for Film and Television." <i>Contexts</i> 1(4): 21-27.
	O	Buckley, Cara. 2018. "As TV Seeks Diverse Writing Ranks, Rising Demand Meets Short Supply," <i>The New York Times</i> (September 2). <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/02/arts/television/tv-writers-diversity.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/02/arts/television/tv-writers-diversity.html</a>
WEEK 4	<b>Evaluation Communities (2): Producers</b>	
September 27	R	Ortner, Sherry. 2013. Chapter 5 "Making Value" (pp. 147-172) in <i>Not Hollywood: Independent Film at the Twilight of the American Dream</i> . Duke University Press.

September 29	R	Zafirau, Stephen. 2014. "Audience Knowledge and the Everyday Lives of Cultural Producers in Hollywood" (pp. 190-202) in <i>Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries</i> . Routledge.
		Podcast: Money Planet, "We Buy A Superhero 5: Hollywood" (28-minute listen). <a href="https://www.npr.org/2021/04/30/992365334/a-superhero-goes-to-hollywood">https://www.npr.org/2021/04/30/992365334/a-superhero-goes-to-hollywood</a>
WEEK 5	Evaluation Communities (3): Agents & Experts	
October 4	R	Roussel, Violaine. 2017. Chapters 3, 4, 6 in <i>Representing Talent: Hollywood Agents and the Making of Movies</i> . University of Chicago Press.
October 6	R	Zafirau, Stephan. 2008. "Reputation Work in Selling Film and Television: Life in the Hollywood Talent Industry." <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> 31: 99–127.
		Khitrov, Arsenii. 2020. "Hollywood Experts: A Field Analysis of Knowledge Production in American Entertainment Television." <i>The British Journal of Sociology</i> 71(5): 939-951.
PAPER #1 DUE IN CLASS (10/6)		
WEEK 6	Racial Politics and Inequality: Actors & Directors	
October 11	R	Yuen, Nancy Wang. 2016. Chapters 1-4 in <i>Reel Inequality: Hollywood Actors and Racism</i> . Rutgers University Press.
	O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "Hollywood Diversity Report 2021," by UCLA Social Sciences: <a href="https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2021-Film-4-22-2021.pdf">https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/UCLA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2021-Film-4-22-2021.pdf</a></li> <li>○ "The Prevalence and Portrayal of Asian and Pacific Islanders across 1,300 Popular Films," by USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative: <a href="https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii_aapi-representation-across-films-2021-05-18.pdf">https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii_aapi-representation-across-films-2021-05-18.pdf</a></li> </ul>

October 13	R	Erigha, Maryann. 2019. Chapter 2 and 3 (and skim chapter 4) in <i>The Hollywood Jim Crow: The Racial Politics of the Movie Industry</i> . New York University Press.
		GUEST SPEAKER: Prof. Erigha will join us for discussion via Zoom

UNIT 2: PRODUCTION		
WEEK 7	<b>Intro to Production</b>	
October 18	NO CLASS. FALL RECESS (10/18 – 10/19).	
October 20	No Readings. In class screening of <i>Into the Unknown: Making Frozen II</i> (2020), two episodes	
WEEK 8	<b>The Production of Culture</b>	
October 25	R	Ganti, Tejaswini. 2012. Chapter 4 “A Day in the Life of a Hindi Film Set” (pp. 155-174) in <i>Producing Bollywood: Inside the Contemporary Hindi Film Industry</i> . Duke University Press.
		Ortner, Sherry. 2013. Chapter 7 “Making Films” (pp. 199-227) in <i>Not Hollywood: Independent Film at the Twilight of the American Dream</i> . Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
October 27	R	Jones, Deborah, and Karen Smith. 2005. “Middle-Earth Meets New Zealand: Authenticity and Location in the Making of <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> .” <i>Journal of Management Studies</i> 42(5): 923-945.
	O	Kokas, Aynne. 2017. Chapter 6 “Farm Labor, Film Labor” in <i>Hollywood Made in China</i> . University of California Press.
WEEK 9	<b>The Culture of Production (1): “The Line”</b>	
November 1	R	Stahl, Matt. 2014. “Privilege and Distinction in Production Worlds: Copyright, Collective Bargaining, and Working Conditions in Media Making” (pp. 54-67) in <i>Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries</i> . Routledge.

		Grindstaff, Laura. 2014. "Self-Serve Celebrity: The Production of Ordinarity and the Ordinarity of Production in Reality Television" (pp. 71-86) in <i>Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries</i> . Routledge.
November 3	R	<p>Martin, Sylvia J. 2012. "Of Ghosts and Gangsters: Capitalist Cultural Production and the Hong Kong Film Industry," <i>Visual Anthropology Review</i> 28(1): 32-49.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Martin, Sylvia J. 2017. Chapter 2 "The Production of Spectacle/The Spectacle of Production" (excerpts, p. 67, p. 79) in <i>Haunted: An Ethnography of the Hollywood and Hong Kong Media Industries</i>. Oxford University Press.</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 10</b>	<b>The Culture of Production (2): Occupational Structures</b>	
November 8	R	Faulkner, Robert R. 2013[1971]. "Preface" by Becker (4 pages); on "contingencies" (pp. 20-23); and "Making It in the Studios" (pp. 95-115) in <i>Hollywood Studio Musicians: Their Work and Careers in the Recording Industry</i> . Aldine Transaction.
		Davidson, Adam. 2015. "What Hollywood Can Teach Us About the Future of Work," <i>The New York Times</i> (May 5). <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/magazine/what-hollywood-can-teach-us-about-the-future-of-work.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/magazine/what-hollywood-can-teach-us-about-the-future-of-work.html</a>
November 10	R	Banks, Miranda J. 2014. Chapter 6 "Gender Below-the-Line: Defining Feminist Production Studies" (pp. 87-98) in <i>Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries</i> . Routledge.
		Scott, Allen J. 2005. Chapter 7 "Local Labor Markets" (excerpts) in <i>On Hollywood: The Place, The Industry</i> . Princeton University Press.
	O	Steedman, Robin. 2019. "Nairobi-Based Middle Class Filmmakers and the Production and Circulation of Transnational Cinema." <i>Poetics</i> 75: 1-10.
<b>PAPER #2 DUE IN CLASS: DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS (12/10)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Into the Unknown: Making Frozen II</i> (2020)</li> <li>o <i>Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse</i> (1991)</li> <li>o <i>Score: A Film Music Documentary</i> (2017)</li> </ul>		

**UNIT 3: GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION & RECEPTION**

<b>WEEK 11</b>	<b>Hollywood in the World: Distribution and Markets</b>	
November 15	R	Crane, Diana. 2014. "Cultural Globalization and the Dominance of the American Film Industry: Cultural Policies, National Film Industries, and Transnational Film." <i>International Journal of Cultural Policy</i> 20(4): 365–382.
		Horkheimer, Max, and Adorno, Theodor W. 2014 [1946]. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" (pp. 65-79) in <i>Cultural Sociology: An Introductory Reader</i> , edited by Matt Wray. W.W. Norton.
November 17	R	Bielby, Denise, and C. Lee Harrington. 2008. "Chapter 2: Television in the Global Market" (pp. 37-65) in <i>Global TV: Exporting Television and Culture in the World Market</i> . New York University Press.
		Scott, Allen J. 2005. Chapter 9 "Cinema, Culture, Globalization" (excerpts) in <i>On Hollywood: The Place, The Industry</i> . Princeton University Press.
	O	Kuipers, Giseline. 2011. "Cultural Globalization as the Emergence of a Transnational Cultural Field: Transnational Television and National Media Landscapes in Four European Countries." <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i> 55(4): 541-557.
<b>WEEK 12</b>	<b>Blockbusters and Hit-Making</b>	
November 22	R	Smith, Michael D. and Rahul Telang. 2016. "Blockbusters and the Long Tail" (pp. 63-77) in <i>Streaming: Sharing, Stealing: Big Data and the Future of Entertainment</i> . The MIT Press.
		Bielby, William, and Denise Bielby. 2014 "Making Hits" (pp. 186-198) in <i>Cultural Sociology: An Introductory Reader</i> , edited by Matt Wray. W.W. Norton.
		Podcast: Planet Money, "The Scariest Thing in Hollywood" (22-minute listen). <a href="https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2015/09/11/439632877/episode-650-the-scariest-thing-in-hollywood">https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2015/09/11/439632877/episode-650-the-scariest-thing-in-hollywood</a>
	O	Elberse, Anita. 2013. "Betting on Blockbusters" (pp. 15-55) in <i>Blockbusters: Hit-Making and the Big Business of Entertainment</i> . New York: Henry Holt.

November 24	NO CLASS. THANKSGIVING RECESS (10/24 – 10/28)	
WEEK 13	Villains, Representations, & Politics	
November 29	R	Soberon, Lennart. 2020. "In Action Cinema's Crosshair: A Longitudinal Mapping of Enemy Images in the American Action Film." <i>Poetics</i> 85: 1-14.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raustiala, Kal. 2020. "Hollywood Is Running Out of Villains." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> (August 4). <a href="https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-08-04/hollywood-running-out-villains">https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-08-04/hollywood-running-out-villains</a></li> <li>• Li, Shirley. 2021. "A Superhero Movie That's Worth Seeing for the Villain Alone." <i>The Atlantic</i> (August 23). <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2021/08/shang-chi-legend-ten-rings-marvel-review/619867/">https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2021/08/shang-chi-legend-ten-rings-marvel-review/619867/</a></li> </ul>
December 1	R	Kokas, Aynne. 2019. "Producing Global China: <i>The Great Wall</i> and Hollywood's Cultivation of the PRC's Global Vision." <i>Journal of Chinese Cinemas</i> 13: 215-227.
		Fang, Jun. 2021. "How Politics Shape Aesthetics: State Censorship and Complicity Work in China-Hollywood Collaboration." Unpublished manuscript.
	O	Brzeski, Patrick, and Tatiana Siegel. 2021. "From Deal Frenzy to Decoupling: Is the China-Hollywood Romance Officially Over?" <i>The Hollywood Reporter</i> (May 21). <a href="https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-features/hollywood-and-china-what-now-1234955332/">https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-features/hollywood-and-china-what-now-1234955332/</a>
WEEK 14	Digital Technology	
December 6	R	Hirsch, Paul M, and Daniel A. Gruber. 2015. "Digitizing Fads and Fashions: Disintermediation and Glocalized Markets in Creative Industries" (pp. 421-438) in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Creative Industries</i> . Oxford University Press.
	O	Logan, John. 2021. "I Wrote James Bond Movies. The Amazon-MGM Deal Gives Me Chills." <i>The New York Times</i> (May 31). <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/opinion/amazon-mgm-james-bond-bezos.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/31/opinion/amazon-mgm-james-bond-bezos.html</a>

December 8	R	Lobato, Ramon. 2019. "The Infrastructures of Streaming" (pp. 73-105) in <i>Netflix Nations: The Geography of Digital Distribution</i> . The NYU Press.
		Smith, Michael D. and Rahul Telang. 2016. "House of Cards" (pp. 3-15) in <i>Streaming: Sharing, Stealing: Big Data and the Future of Entertainment</i> . The MIT Press.

FINAL PAPER DUE: DATE TBA (December 15-20)