

Black Horror and Social Justice (IDS 2935)
Fall 2024
Dr. Sharon Austin
Professor of Political Science
University of Florida

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Office Hours: You may participate in office hours with Dr. Austin in her office or via zoom at <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5186400829> on Tuesdays and Thursdays (10:40am-1:40pm) or by appointment.

Teaching Assistants: **James Justus** (justusj@ufl.edu), **Rory Church** (rwentwork.churc@ufl.edu), and **Kristen Gary** (kristengary@ufl.edu) are doctoral students in the political science department.

Please direct all inquiries about course assignments, missed work, and grades to Professor Austin. They will make comments on your assignments according to my instructions and I will assign the grades.

Welcome to the Course/Course Description:

In the Horror Noire: A History of Black Horror documentary, Author, Filmmaker and Professor Tananarive Due says, “Black history is Black horror.” This asynchronous Quest 2 course examines the way in which filmmakers and scholar activists have advocated for social justice in horror movies. Quest 2 courses ask “what we can do” to address societal issues. Educators and filmmakers have created popular films over the years to discuss societal issues. In particular, they have described the racism that was occurring in America during various time periods in horror movies. In this class, students will examine real-world issues that cut across disciplines. We will examine questions such as the following:

- Did the Blaxploitation era of filmmaking end because of institutional racism or a lack of profits?
- How have filmmakers and educators used the horror genre of filmmaking to protest racism and promote social justice ideals?
- How have these films affected the way in which you understand social justice issues?

In addition, students will examine the ways that data, methods, and tools from diverse fields have been used to address pressing questions facing human societies today. We will examine qualitative scholarly articles, historiographies, oral histories, documentaries, and films. We focus on two questions: “What are the unintended consequences of racism?” and “How have individuals publicized racism and the fight for social justice in popular films?” In essence, these “movies” are about more than entertainment, but have the goals of educating individuals about the issues African Americans confront in their lives and how they address them. There are eight modules. At the beginning of each week, I’ll post a video on the announcements page that explains what’s due that week and refer you to the sources you’ll be required to analyze for the assignments. You can also find instructions on the assignment pages that include the questions

you're required to answer, and the sources you're required to cite when answering them. This course welcomes all opinions and perspectives.

Student Learning Objectives:

- Identify, describe, and explain the historical, journalistic, political, and sociological dimensions of racist stereotypes/images in horror films. Identify, describe, and explain the manner in which recent horror films have challenged these stereotypes/images and addressed social justice issues through innovative filmmaking. Students will read interdisciplinary articles and book chapters that use qualitative methodologies. I also encourage you to continue to engage in undergraduate research after completing this course. [Content]
- Critically analyze qualitative readings and films that address societal issues such as gentrification, police brutality, racism and discrimination, black-on-black crime, and others in discussion boards, response papers, and other assignments. [Critical Thinking]
- Develop and present effective responses to address societal issues such as gentrification, police brutality, racism and discrimination, black-on-black crime, and others. You will complete papers, an experiential activity, and an analytical essay and also must participate in class discussions that I will facilitate. [Communication]
- One main objective of the course is for you to connect the course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond. After completing this course, you will be more familiar with the social justice issues and be able to reflect on the ways in which these issues might impact your own intellectual, personal, and professional growth. [Connection]

Quest 2 Objectives:

UF's website states that, "Grounded in the Biological (B), Physical (P), or Social & Behavioral Sciences (S) subject areas of the General Education program (Gen Ed), Quest 2 courses provide second-year students thought-provoking courses that build on and expand the Quest 1 experience. Where Quest 1 asks what it means, Quest 2 asks what we can do. Rather than serve as surveys of or introductions to specific fields, Quest 2 courses reflect the instructor's expertise and challenge students as co-creators of knowledge in multi-disciplinary inquiry that uses scientific data to address pressing questions. In Quest 2 courses, students explore the ways that various scientific lenses can be turned on pressing questions facing human societies and/or the planet today, such as: What are the unintended consequences of technological progress? How do we address climate change? How do we create a just and fair society? Quest 2 courses approach these questions through active learning. They invite students to create arguments, mobilize evidence, and articulate ideas across relevant disciplines."

General Education Objectives (Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity):

Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving

techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

In this course, students will approach the history of key themes relating to negative African American images in films according to underlying theories or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. They will also examine the manner in which filmmakers and others have challenged these images by engaging in the problem-solving technique of producing horror films and documentaries and by calling attention to social justice issues in these films. The class will utilize multiple interdisciplinary qualitative methods (engaging in discussions, experiential learning opportunities, readings, and documentaries). Concerning the diversity requirement, we will discuss analyze and evaluate unethical and immoral depictions of African Americans in horror films during the early 1900s as well as the manner in which social inequities have affected, and continue to affect Black communities. In addition, the class will analyze and reflect on the ways in which a new generation of filmmakers have challenged other people's understandings and stereotypes of African Americans and the issues they face in their communities.

Writing Requirement

This course also fulfills the 4,000-word writing requirement. The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory evaluation on the writing requirements of the course. The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback, on all written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

- The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.
- The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback before the end of the course on all of the student's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.
- WR course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Required Textbook:

Robin R. Means Coleman. 2023. *Horror Noire: Blacks in American Horror Films from the 1890s to Present. Second Edition.*

Recommended Books:

Ed Guerrero. *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film.*

James D. Lester. 2014. *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*. (New York: Pearson).

The Reserve Articles:

These readings can be accessed by clicking on the title's name on canvas. If there is a paywall, please let me know. You won't be able to access the readings from Mozilla Firefox. Therefore, it's best to use Google Chrome. In addition, you must download VPN if you're trying to access the articles from an off-campus computer. Please see <https://uflib.ufl.edu/using-the-libraries/off-campus-access/> for instructions.

The Films and Documentaries:

A description of each is listed under the weekly schedule. They can be accessed through canvas.

Your Grade will be Based on:

- *Discussion Posts* (40% of your grade)
In these minimum one-page posts, please cite all of the materials to support your opinions when answering the questions. Also, respond to two of your classmates' posts. In order to earn higher grades, cite all of the assignments when both posting and responding. The teaching assistant will grade the discussion posts according to the rubric on canvas. Consistent informed, thoughtful, and considerate participation is expected. During the discussions, students will provide comprehensive answers to the questions listed in the modules by referring to the assigned information.
- *Reflection Papers* (30% of your grade)
Each of these papers requires an analysis of all of the required materials that are listed on canvas. Each reflection paper must be three pages (not including the reference page). In each paper, you will examine events that were happening in African American history, politics, civil rights, and film.
- *Experiential Learning Activity* (15% of your grade)
This activity allows you to select a film of your choice and reflect on the theme of Black women's monstrosity in a three-page paper. Black horror has mostly been a male-dominated industry, but Black women have excelled both in front of and behind the camera in recent decades.
- *Reflection Essay* (15% of your grade)
In this essay, you will reflect on the things you've learned in class by answering the following questions: How were filmmakers and scholars addressed social issues in recent years and how did they benefit from the films of earlier filmmakers and scholars? If you were making a film, what social justice issue would you address and why? How has the information you've learned in this class contributed to your intellectual, personal, and professional growth?

Grading Scale:

94-100	A	90-93	A-	87-89	B+	84-86	B	80-83	B-	77-79	C+
74-76	C	70-73	C-	67-69	D+	64-66	D	60-63	D-	Below 60	E

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit. Information on current UF grading policies can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Missed Work Policy:

The policy for missed work in this class is consistent with the university's policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). All required assignments must be uploaded on the correct date before 11:59pm. Students will not be allowed to make up any assignments unless proper documentation is submitted to the professor before the assignment is missed.

Disabilities Statement:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Dishonesty:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Course Evaluation:

Students will have the opportunity to evaluate the class and will be informed when they will be able to submit course evaluations. Summaries of the results can be found at www.evaluations.ufl.edu/results. Students will be given specific times when evaluations can be submitted.

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 3921575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources:

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Netiquette and Communication Courtesy: It is important to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

Security: Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- Don't share your password with anyone.
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it.
- Always log out when you are finished using the system.

General Guidelines: When communicating online, you should always:

- Treat the instructor with respect, even via email or in any other online communication.
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you are unsure use Mr. or Ms.
- Unless specifically invited, don't refer to a professor by their first name.
- Use clear and concise language.
- Remember that all college-level communication should have correct spelling and grammar.

- Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you.”
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 point font.
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING.
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) .
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or be construed as being offensive.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and others).
- Do not send confidential information via email.

Email: When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should:

- Use a descriptive subject line.
- Be brief.
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them.
- Avoid HTML in favor of plain text.
- Sign your message with your name and return email address.
- Think before you send the email to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, “Reply All.”
- Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the “Forward” button.
- FERPA guidelines prohibit the discussion of grades by email. The professor will discuss grades in in-person or online meetings.

Discussion Boards: When posting on the discussion board in your online class, you should:

- Check to see if anyone already asked your question and received a reply before posting to the discussion board.
- Remember your manners and say please and thank you when asking something of your classmates or instructor.
- Be open-minded.
- If you ask a question and many people respond, summarize all posts for the benefit of the class.
- Make posts that are on-topic and within the scope of the course material.
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying.
- Make a thorough comment that cites required materials to support your opinions in both the post and responses.
- Don’t repeat someone else’s post without adding something of your own to it.
- Take your posts seriously. Review and edit your posts before sending.
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, “I agree.” You should include why you agree or add to the previous point.
- If you refer to something that was said in an earlier post, quote a few key lines so readers do not have to go back and figure out which post you are referring to.

- Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source.
- If you reply to a classmate's question make sure your answer is correct, don't guess.
- Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own.
- When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way.
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks.
- Do not write anything sarcastic or angry, it always backfires.
- Do not type in ALL CAPS, if you do IT WILL LOOK LIKE YOU ARE YELLING.

Zoom: When attending a Zoom class or meeting, you should:

- Do not share your Zoom classroom link or password with others.
- Even though you may be alone at home, your professor and classmates can see you! While attending class in your pajamas is tempting, remember that wearing clothing is not optional. Dress appropriately.
- Your professor and classmates can also see what is behind you, so be aware of your surroundings.
- Make sure the background is not distracting or something you would not want your classmates to see.
 - When in doubt use a virtual background. If you choose to use one, you should test the background out first to make sure your device can support it.
 - Your background can express your personality, but be sure to avoid using backgrounds that may contain offensive images and language.
- Mute is your friend, especially when you are in a location that can be noisy. Don't leave your microphone open if you don't have to.
- If you want to speak, you can raise your hand (click the "raise hand" button at the center bottom of your screen) and wait to be called upon.

Minimum Technology Requirements: The University of Florida expects students entering an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to their degree program. Most computers are capable of meeting the following general requirements. A student's computer configuration should include:

- Webcam
- Microphone
- Broadband connection to the internet and related equipment (cable/DSL modem)
- Microsoft Office Suite installed (provided by the university)

Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations, which students should review before starting their program.

Minimum Technical Skills: To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of operating a computer and using word processing software.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies: For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- Adobe
 - [Adobe Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Adobe Accessibility](#)
- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Microsoft
 - [Microsoft Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Microsoft Accessibility](#)
- Sonic Foundry (Mediasite Streaming Video Player)
 - [Sonic Foundry Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Sonic Foundry Accessibility](#) (PDF)
- YouTube (Google)
 - [YouTube \(Google\) Privacy Policy](#)
 - [YouTube \(Google\) Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Zoom Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Zoom Accessibility](#)

Assignments and Instructions: Descriptions of (and instructions for) each assignment can be found on canvas. Each discussion post should be one complete page (single-spaced) and should cite the assigned materials that are listed for the assignment on canvas. The reflections papers, experiential activity, and reflection essay should each be three complete pages and have a reference page. Include parenthetical citations and a reference page for each assignment. The reference page does not count toward the page requirement. Do not include a title page. Please use a 12-point Times New Roman Font and parenthetical citations that include the author's last name, year of publication, and page number in parentheses (when referring to something from the readings). For example, you can include a citation that looks like (Austin, 2023, page 1). You can include the title of the film when referring to the films in parentheses. Also, list the readings, videos, lectures, and films you've cited in your papers on a reference page. You can also include more than three pages for the papers and more than one page for the posts. As explained on canvas, don't forget to respond to two of your classmates' posts for each discussion post and cite all of the required materials to support your opinions.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Module 1 Black History is Black Horror: An Overview of the Class

Films/Videos:

- **Horror Noire documentary (1 hour 30 minutes)** examines the images of African Americans in horror films from the 1890s to the present and the significance of these films for social justice movements. This film can be streamed for free for amazon prime members. It can also be purchased from amazon, Walmart, and Target for less than \$15.

- **Module One Lecture:** Dr. Austin defines the difference between race films and horror films and the manner in which the Birth of a Nation film exacerbated “horrificing” images of Black men and in which Oscar Micheaux presented films that rebelled against these images.
- Within Our Gates by Oscar Micheaux (1 hour)
[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1E0NrcnwAE>]
- Oscar Micheaux: The First Black Indie Filmmaker (2 minutes)
[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHRBK3Q23Ek>]
- Watch How the Birth of a Nation Caused a Century of Racism (8 minutes)
[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaOHi00Iai0>]

Reading Assignments:

- *Horror Noire*: Introduction (recommended) and Chapter 1 (required)
- Read “The Birth of a Nation and the Making of the NAACP” Reserve Reading

Things To Do for Module 1:

- August 30th Discussion Post
- September 6th Reflection Paper

Module 2 Horrifying Goons

Films:

- **Module 2 Lecture:** Dr. Austin discusses the Black horror movies of the 1940s and the civil rights and social justice efforts that occurred during the World War II era. While social justice organizations and activists fought for political and economic rights, comedians such as Stepin Fetchit and Mantan Moreland played offensive roles in horror and other films. Many wondered whether these actors were making it harder for organizations to seek civil rights (because they promoted negative images of Black men).
- **The Comedian Who Lost His Fortune, Stepin Fetchit - Story You Should Know (5 minutes):** Lincoln Theodore Monroe Andrew Perry was born in Key West, Florida and earned over a million dollars by playing the “Stepin Fetchit” character in several movies. But, Perry wrote a weekly column in the Chicago Defender newspaper despite playing the “laziest man in the world” in horror and other films. [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dbBaRDBUEE>]
- **Amos n’ Andy: Hospitalization (1952) (25 minutes):** Amos n’ Andy began as a radio show in 1929 and later became a popular television show - the first with an all-Black cast. On the radio show, White actors (Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll) used

“Negro dialects” in attempts to sound like the Black characters that were later featured on television. Because of the popularity of the radio show, the television show was developed, but was met with criticism by many civil rights groups. The actors were instructed to sound like Gosden and Correll when performing. It aired on television from 1951 until it was canceled in 1953 (in part because of NAACP opposition). This is a typical episode that displays the comedic talents of the actors, but also reinforces the “crooked shyster” stereotype of the Kingfish character. Despite the stereotypical roles portrayed in the show, it also showed African American educated professionals as well as their stable families and nice neighborhoods.

[\[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScSPGqLY6DM\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScSPGqLY6DM)

- **Lucky Ghost (1942 (1 hour)):** Like Lincoln Perry, Mantan Moreland was a successful comedian and actor who played stereotypical roles in horror and other films, but was a civil rights advocate in his private life. In *Lucky Ghost*, he plays a man who is of so little worth that he is ordered to leave town permanently and ends up in a haunted house.

[\[Lucky Ghost \(1942\) | Mantan Moreland All Black Cast - YouTube\]](#)

Reading Assignments:

- *Horror Noire*: Chapter 3 Horrifying Goons and Minstrel Coons: 1940s
- *Reserve Reading*: Civil Rights Consciousness in the 1940s

Things To Do for Module 2:

- *September 13th Discussion Post*
- *September 20th Reflection Paper*

Module 3 Black Horror and the Quest for Civil Rights

Films:

- **Module 3 Lecture:** In this module, Dr. Austin discusses the absence of Black actors from 1950s films that mostly focused on science fiction issues and discuss the significance of the night of the living dead film for events of the mid and late 1960s.
- **BaadAsssss Cinema: A Bold Look at 70's Blaxploitation Films (2002) (56 minutes):** This Blaxploitation documentary discusses the 1970s films developed by American International Pictures. These low-budget, relatively low-quality films had all-Black casts and most made little money at the Box Office. However, they introduced audiences to Black actors and to issues in Black communities.
- **Night of the Living Dead (1968) (1 hour 30 minutes):** African American Actor Duane Jones was the first Black actor to be cast as the star and hero of a horror film. His character, Ben, wasn't a victim, but was the smartest person in the film. This was also one of the few times in which a Black actor was cast in a role that didn't explicitly call for one, wasn't a criminal, and wasn't a gangster. This successful horror movie was made during the height of the civil rights and black power movements. Ben was killed by a white mob during a time when racial hate groups rebelled against desegregation and

when Dr. King was murdered. It also gave birth to the blaxploitation period of the 1970s because African Americans wanted to see themselves on screen after seeing this film and the Shaft films of the early 1970s.

Reading Assignments:

- *Horror Noire*: Chapter 4 Black Invisibility, White Science, and a Night with Ben: 1950s-1960s

Things to Do:

- *September 27th Discussion Post*
- *October 4th Reflection Paper*

Module 4 The Height of the Blaxploitation Era

Films:

- **Module 4 Lecture:** In this presentation, Dr. Austin provides a definition of Blaxploitation and talks about the positive and negative aspects of these films (with an emphasis on their images of Black power and the portrayals of Black men and women). In addition, she will discuss some of the major achievements of the civil rights and black power movements during the time period that these films were in their heyday.
- **BaadAsssss Cinema: A Bold Look at 70's Blaxploitation Films (1 hour):** This Blaxploitation Documentary discusses the 1970s films developed by American International Pictures. These low-budget, relatively low-quality films had all-Black casts and most made little money at the Box Office. However, they introduced audiences to Black actors and to issues in Black communities.
- **Blacula (1972)** starred Shakespearean actor William Marshall and was the mostly successful Blaxploitation of its era. The film begins with a discussion of slavery in the 1700s. In the plot, Marshall, an erudite free Black man during slavery, was transformed into Blacula by a racist white man (portrayed by legendary actor Vincent Price). This film explained the way in which free Black men and women rebelled against the institution of slavery. The movie also showed scenes of Blacks and Whites as friends during the early 1970s. This was a sign of the changing times as increasing numbers of Whites and Blacks attended integrated colleges and universities.

Reading Assignments:

- *Horror Noire*: Chapter 6 Scream, Whitey, Scream-Retribution, Enduring Women, and Carnality: 1970s
- *Reserve Article*: Tuskegee Experiment: The Infamous Syphilis Study

Things to Do:

- *October 11th Discussion Post*

- *October 18th No Assignment Due (Enjoy your homecoming weekend)*
- *October 25th Reflection Paper*

Module 5 Black Horror and Social Justice During the 1980s and 1990s

Films:

- **Module 5 Lecture:** In the presentation, Dr. Austin discusses the absence of Black actors and actresses from the most successful 1980s horror films, but a resurgence of Black horror during the 1990s. Also during the 1980s, Michael Jackson's short film, *Thriller*, made it possible for Black entertainers to have their videos shown on MTV and Director Spike Lee's films resulted in an increase in films featuring predominantly Black casts. Also during the 1980s and 1990s, racial tensions continued in many American cities. Many of these tensions were reflected in 1990s horror films.
- **Tales from the Hood 1 hour 30 minutes (1995)** is an anthology of four short stories directed by Rusty Cundieff and executive produced by Spike Lee. It deals with domestic violence, gang violence, a racist politician, and police brutality. The politician's campaign slogan is "An original American. Isn't it about time?" that was similar to political ads used at the time such as the "quota ad" of the U.S. Senator Jesse Helms when competing against African American candidate Harvey Gantt and the Willie Horton ad used by the George H.W. Bush presidential campaign. The 1990s was also the time period of the Rodney King beating, the OJ Simpson trial, and rampant gang violence in urban cities that were called "murder capitals."
- **Thriller Video (14 minutes)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOnqjkJTMaA> This 1983 short film made it possible for more videos from African American artists to be shown on the Music Television (MTV) channel and has been cited as the best video of all time by many persons.
- **The Life of Spike Lee (8 minutes)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OzFqIkRxx4> This is a brief biography of famed director Spike Lee.
- **What was Life Like for Black Americans During the 1980s (1 hour 30 minutes)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTFW7rwpEx0> This video discusses the music, television, politics, and social justice issues for Black Americans during the decade of the 1980s.

Reading Assignments:

- *Horror Noire*: Chapter 6 We Always Die First-Invisibility, Racial Red-Lining, and Self-Sacrifice and Chapter 7 Black is Back! Retribution and the Urban Terrain
- *Reserve Reading*: 'Tales From the Hood' Director Rusty Cundieff: Why It Took 20 Years to Make a Sequel to His Black Horror Anthology

Things to Do:

- *November 1st Discussion Post*

- *November 8th Reflection Paper*

Module 6 Black Women as Monstrousness Experiential Learning Activity

Films:

- **Module 6 Lecture:** Dr. Austin provides additional information about the experiential learning assignment and discusses horror films that have featured Black actresses.
- **Black Femininity as the Monstrousness** is a brief black womanhood, sexuality, and working class culture were presented as “abnormalities” in horror films.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_BofpqqCTA (13.52 minutes)
 Watch the “Black Women as Monstrousness” video and a horror film with an African American actress in a leading role. You can choose one from the list or watch another that you’re familiar with <http://www.blackhorrormovies.com/scary-sistas-a-brief-history-of-black-women-in-horror-films/>. After defining the term “Black women as monstrousness,” refer to the specific scenes in the film when answering the first question, “How well did the filmmaker examine the theme of the Black woman as “monstrousness”? In other words, what was your overall opinion of it (such as whether it was entertaining, funny, or good quality, stereotypical, or of poor quality). Second, what did the film teach us about Black female empowerment? Finally, what can we, as audience members, do to ensure that more horror films with Black female leads are made?

Things to Do:

- *November 15th Experiential Learning Activity Due*
- *November 22nd No Assignment Due*
- *November 29th No Assignment Due (Enjoy your Thanksgiving Holiday)*

Module 7 The Artistry of Nia DaCosta and Jordan Peele

Films:

- **Module 7 Lecture:** In this presentation, Dr. Austin discusses the context behind the *Get Out* and *Candyman: Day of the Dead* films. By discussing the overall themes of each film and specific scenes, she discusses the question that many individuals have debated about each film [i.e., what messages were these young African American filmmakers trying to convey in these films?]
- **Get Out (2017)** was released during the transition from the Obama to the Trump administration. Director and screenwriter Jordan Peele was the first African American to win an Academy Award for writing an original screenplay. After President Obama’s elections, many questioned whether we lived in a post-racial society. The film examines contemporary race relations in America.
- **Candyman (2021)** was written by Jordan Peele and directed by African American female director Nia DaCosta (the first African American woman to have a film debut at number

one on opening weekend). It is the third installment of the Candyman series. An artist explores the urban legend of the Candyman who terrorized the Cabrini Green housing development for many years. This film discusses the negative consequences of racial stereotyping and gentrification.

Reading Assignments:

- *Horror Noire*: Chapter 9 Growing Painz: 2000s
- *Horror Noire*: Chapter 10 Representation, Recognition, and Renaissance: 2010s to Present.

Things to Do:

- *December 6th Reflection Paper*. Because you have to watch two films for this assignment, the deadline is later than the other weekly deadlines you have had this semester.

Module 8 Reflections on Black Horror and Social Justice

Module 8 Lecture: In this presentation, Dr. Austin provides additional information about the best way to address the questions in the final reflection essay.

Things to Do: *December 13th Final Essay*