HI 450: TOPICS IN PACIFIC HISTORY
“Gender and Film in the Pacific”
F 5:30-7:45pm at HSS 302
University of Guam

Instructor: Dr. Keith L. Camacho
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Office Hours: MTW 9:00-11:00am or by appointment

Course Description
This course explores the rise of film in the Pacific Islands during the twentieth century, paying attention to the politics of gender, history and representation. The objective is twofold: to introduce students to the basic concepts in film and gender studies, and to engage students in textual and visual readings of feature-length films about the Pacific. Class discussions, film screenings, lectures, self-reflexive essays and research papers comprise the interpretative lens through which students will examine the aesthetic, cultural, economic, gendered, historical and political dimensions of films.

Course Requirements
1. Attendance and Participation (15 points): Attendance is taken seriously in this course. For every class you miss, five points will be deducted from your final course grade. Students are required to read all materials, and to voice their views on a daily basis. They are also required to respond to the content and form of films; that is, students must raise questions about the meanings of gender, history and representation in three feature-length films about the Pacific: Tabu (1931), South Pacific (1957) and Utu (1988).

If you consistently participate in class discussions, then you will automatically earn fifteen points. However, every time a student fails to address a comment or question posed by somebody, then he or she will automatically be deducted five points from his or her final course grade. Indeed, one’s success in this course is measured in large part by one’s willingness to read the materials and to participate in weekly discussion sessions. The objective of these attendance and participation policies, then, is to foster a critical, meaningful and respectful environment for the sharing of ideas and opinions.

2. Seven Reaction Papers (5 points each): Students are required to write papers based on their reactions to assigned readings. Students may write creatively and freely so long as they address every article or book in their papers; failure to reflect upon all of the readings will result in ten points being deducted from one’s final grade.

The papers must be typed, single-spaced, 12 font, edited and one page in length (but no more than two pages). Students are also required to xerox copies of their papers for the entire class, including the instructor. These copies, filed in a student’s folder, must then be submitted to the instructor’s office, HSS 120I, by no later than 12:00pm, Thursday, on the week the reading is due. Every folder must also have the name of the student clearly printed on it. A small cardboard box, located near the door of HSS 120I, will be provided...
by the instructor as a container for student papers. Thus, students are required to have read their peers’ essays by the time class begins. The objective of this activity is to urge students to criticize constructively their peers, as well as to appreciate receiving criticism.

3. One Facilitated Discussion (30 points): In groups of no more than two people, students are required to facilitate one class discussion based on the assigned readings. They must meet at an agreed place and time on university grounds to prepare for their discussion; in short, they must come prepared to facilitate the sharing of ideas and opinions.

On the second day of class, January 27, students must sign-up for one of the seven designated presentation dates: February 10, February 17, March 3, March 10, March 17, April 7, and April 21. During these sessions, students must address the following criteria for at least sixty minutes:

A. Speak clearly, confidently and concisely.
B. Briefly summarize the reading assignment.
C. Address the key/common themes of the reading assignment.
D. Foster respectful dialogue and debate among the students.
E. Call on students to explain their interpretations of the readings and films.
F. When discussing the meanings of films, encourage students to focus on:
   I. Representation of colors, images and sounds
   II. Representation of “male” and “female” relations
   III. Representation of cross-cultural relations in the Pacific
   IV. Representation of historical events, figures and problems.

Do note that the lack of active student participation will result in a group letter grade of no higher than a “C” or 21/30 points. It is imperative that every student cooperates with the group’s facilitation of ideas, and vice versa. The objective of the group presentation activity is to persuade students to achieve shared intellectual and social goals, despite the various challenges posed by internal group divisions, conflicts or interests.

4. One Research Paper (100 points): Students are required to write one research paper on a feature-film about the Pacific Islands. They may choose films like *Blue Hawaii, Once Were Warriors, Lilo and Stitch*, or *Rapanui*. Students may also select from a wider variety of films about the Pacific, provided they first seek approval from the instructor. The research paper must be typed, double-spaced, 12 font, edited and twelve to fifteen pages in length. Graduate students are required to abide by these same criteria, but their papers must be eighteen to twenty-five pages in length.

Throughout the duration of this course, students will be encouraged to conceptualize their arguments and thoughts for their research papers. To this effect, students are required to submit the following materials and to attend the following meetings on these dates:

A. Abstract (Due on February 24): Your abstract should include a title, a thesis statement, a film to review, a methodology, a summary of your project and a
tentative conclusion. The length of your abstract should be between 300 and 400 words.

B. Visit to RFK (February 24): We will meet at the RFK library on this date. And we will learn how to use the variety of research resources at RFK.

C. Revised abstract, bibliography, and outline (March 24): Your revised abstract, one-page bibliography and one-page outline is due on this date. Also, every bibliography must include a section on gender, history and representation, as well as five resources (articles/books) from RFK’s interlibrary loan service.

D. Individual meeting with the instructor (March 31): Students will meet with the instructor in his office, HSS 120I, to discuss their research papers. The instructor will be available for consultation during the following time slots: 10:00am -12:00pm and 2:00pm - 8:00pm. Each session will run for at least 20 minutes in which the instructor will provide feedback on student work.

E. Research Paper (April 28): Student research papers are due on this date.

F. Sign-up for Research Presentation (April 28): Students are required to present their research findings on either May 5 or May 12. They must then sign-up on April 28 so as to ensure as smooth a presentation schedule as possible.

The objective of the research paper activity is to urge students to read films contextually, and with a specific attention to the politics of gender, history and representation.

5. One Research Presentation (20 points): Students must reveal their research findings with the class on either May 5 or May 12. Each presentation should be between ten to fifteen minutes, and each presentation should include a two to three minute film clip (along with a textual and visual reading of the scene). A question and answer forum will conclude each day of individual research presentations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Distribution</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven Reaction Papers</td>
<td>35 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Facilitated Discussion</td>
<td>30 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Research Presentation</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Research Paper</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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Grading Scale
A: 200 – 180 points
B: 179 – 160 points
C: 159 – 140 points
D: 139 – 120 points
F: 119 – 0 points

Americans with Disability Act
The Americans with Disability Act requires that reasonable accommodations be made for any student with a disability. Notify the instructor in advance for further information and assistance.

Respetu
Respetu, or respect, is the cornerstone of this history course. Any infringement upon this concept will result in embarrassment, consultation or severe disciplinary action. Disrespectful behavior toward your peers, tardiness, improper citation methods and cheating, and the use of cell phones will not be tolerated. For example, if a student says something that the instructor interprets as disrespectful, then the student will receive one
verbal warning from the instructor. The second time the student acts rudely, then the
instructor will inform the student to withdraw from the class and to seek counsel with his
or her advisor; questions on this matter can be addressed by the university’s registrar.

Also, students who plagiarize the ideas of others from the internet, books, magazines,
student essays or other sources will receive an “F” letter grade for the course or 0/200
points. Following Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary (1981), this syllabus defines
“plagiarize” as “to steal … (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own” (page 870). For
more information, read the “Student Code of Conduct” section in the U.O.G. Student
Handbook (2006), pages 49 to 62. Lastly, no late or make-up work will be accepted,
unless the student has a compelling excuse presented in writing.

**Required Texts**

- Alison Jones, Phyllis Herda and Tamasailau M. Suaalii, eds., *Bitter Sweet: Indigenous
- Pacific Studies, Special Issue, “Imaging, Representation, and Photography of the Pacific
  Islands,” 20, no. 4 (December 1997).
- Robert A. Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History*

*The other required readings (e.g., articles) are located in labeled folders, under the
instructor’s name and course title, at the RFK periodical room. You may peruse and/or
make copies of these articles at your convenience, provided that you read all assignments
and write reaction papers before 12:00pm, Thursday, on the week the reading is due.

**Film List**


**Video List**

- *Paradise Bent: Boys will be Girls in Samoa*. 1999. 50 min. New York: Filmmakers
  Library.
  Foundation.
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

PART ONE:
FILM, GENDER, HISTORY

Week One: January 18
Introduction

Week Two: January 27
The Politics of Representation

Video: Representation and the Media (55min.)
*Sign-up for the group discussions on assigned readings.

Week Three: February 3
Historicizing Gender, Engendering History

Week Four: February 10
Film, Gender, History

Discussion 1
A. Sherry B. Ortner, Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture, entire
B. Robert A. Rosenstone, Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History, entire

PART TWO:
COLONIALISM, PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE RISE OF PACIFIC FILMS

Week Five: February 17
Visualizing the “Pacific”

Discussion 2

Week Six: February 24
Acquiring Resources: Collections, Online Journals and Interlibrary Loan Services at RFK

*We will meet at the front entrance of RFK library at 5:30pm. We will then tour the various research resources available at RFK.
*Your research paper abstract is due on this date.
Week Seven: March 3
Colonialism, Photography and the Rise of Film

Discussion 3
A. Pacific Studies, 1-103 and 187-202
B. Bitter Sweet: Indigenous Women in the Pacific, 17-32

Week Eight: March 10
Film Screening of Tabu: A Story of the South Seas (80 min.)

Discussion 4
A. Bitter Sweet: Indigenous Women in the Pacific, 93-120
B. Pacific Studies, 125-150

Optional Reading:

PART THREE: MILITARISM, SEXISM AND RACISM IN PACIFIC FILMS

Week Nine: March 17
Militarism, Sexism and Racism in War Films

Discussion 5

Week Ten: March 24
Film Screening of South Pacific (150 min.)

*Your revised abstract, bibliography (one page, single-spaced), and paper outline is due on this date. Also, sign-up for an appointment with the instructor for March 31.
Week Eleven: March 31
Reviewing Your Research Paper

*Students will meet with the instructor in his office, HSS 120I, to discuss their research papers. The instructor will be available for consultation during the following time slots: 10:00am - 12:00pm and 2:00pm - 8:00pm. Each session will run for at least 20 minutes.

PART FOUR:
HOMOSEXUALITY, INDIGENIETY AND MASCULINTY IN PACIFIC FILMS

Week Twelve: April 7
Contesting Homosexualities

Discussion 6

A. Bitter Sweet: Indigenous Women in the Pacific, 61-72 and 121-122

Video: Paradise Bent: Boys will be Girls in Samoa (50 min.)

Week Thirteen: April 14
No Classes/Easter Break

Week Fourteen: April 21
Indigeniety, Masculinity and the Image of “Warriorhood” in the Pacific

Discussion 7

Week Fifteen: April 28
Film Screening of *Utu* (122 min.)

*Your research paper is due on this date. Also, sign-up for your presentation on either May 5 or May 12.*

Week Sixteen: May 5
Individual Presentations

Week Seventeen: May 12
Individual Presentations

**Reading List**


Alison Jones, Phyllis Herda and Tamasailau M. Suaalii, eds., *Bitter Sweet: Indigenous*


Johanna Schmidt, “Redefining Fa’afafine: Western Discourses and the Construction of


