

Lecture 8: Stylizing Identity: Social Media, Celebrity, & Construction of the Self Pt. 2

COMM 103F, Dr. Collins

Class Announcements

- Paper Proposal Grading Complete by end of weekend
- Course Evaluations
 - Tuesday 9/3 In-Class COMM Eval
 - CAPE Extra-Credit Opportunity → if 90% of class completes a CAPE evaluation by Friday 9/6 8:00 am, 5 points (+2.5%) <http://www.cape.ucsd.edu/>
- Tuesday 9/3 → Guest Lecture
 - Rachel Fox, Scholar of Fat Studies, Disability Studies, STS, Medical/Health Narratives
 - Discuss Creating Academic Arguments About Film
 - Graphic Content Warning
- Final Paper (No late assignments accepted)
- Next Week's Office Hours → OUTSIDE CCC as it will be closed
- Final Class
 - Planned Attendance? (In Class Paper Writing Lecture and Q&A, Attendance Optional)
 - Potluck?

Discussion Question

On Tuesday we began discussing the intersection of media, celebrity, and identity at length. Why do you think we spent so much time examining cultural theory in a course about reading film?



Films and Their Broader Contexts

- Motion pictures a major part of daily life
- Films are *designed* to create experiences for viewers
- The “cultural work” of film from public amusement, to commercial industry, to social commentary...



Key Takeaways

- As a critical element of visual culture films often make, or are used to make, social commentary about issues relevant to their time
- People often discuss the nature of celebrity, identity, and image within their culture and society
- Celebrity is inextricably linked to media; as media changes so does celebrity
- Films are a central medium of celebrity (from the status of actors to the thematic content of films)
- Our interaction with film as a mass media can play a role in our construction and editing of the self



- 2002
- USA, Germany, Canada
- Comedy, Crime, Musical
- 1 hr 53 mins
- Written By: Bill Condon (screenplay, *Dreamgirls*); Bob Fosse (book, *Cabaret*)
- Directed By: Rob Marshall (*Into the Woods*)
- Starring: Catherine Zeta Jones (*Traffic*), Renee Zellweger (*Bridget Jones Diary*), Richard Gere (*Pretty Woman*)
- \$45 Million Budget
- \$306 Million Worldwide Gross
- Two death-row murderesses develop a fierce rivalry while competing for publicity, celebrity, and a sleazy lawyer's attention.

Questions to Consider...

- **Film History** → How would you describe the cinematic lineage of this film? For example, did you notice elements of film noir or other stylistic movements?
- **Film Form** → Does this film's narrative structure follow and/or upend the monomythic Hero's Journey? How and why?
- **Cinematic Language** → How does the film's mise-en-scene (especially its costumes, make-up, and settings), editing, and sound techniques help the film world-build in a particular manner?
- **Meaning Making** → What broader ideological statement(s) does the film make, especially regarding notions of celebrity, media, and the construction of the self?