Teens in Cinema: WGST Film Series

What makes a film a “teen movie?” Are movies about teens the same as teen movies? And what is a “teen,” for that matter? Come watch classic and new films and examine the genre through the lens of gender, race, sexuality, and class. We’ll discuss the invention of the teenager and its relation to film.

Conversation on Clueless (1995) September 9th, 6:00-7:00pm: An instant teen classic when it came out, Clueless developed a teen world full of its own language, fashion, and rules. Based on Jane Austen’s Emma, Clueless tells the story of Cher, a rich, fashion-forward highschooler and her friends. Join Professors Nino Testa and Randa Tawil as we discuss friendship, language and materialism is shaped by, and shapes the teenage experience in Clueless. Available to stream on Netflix, and zoom before the conversation.

Conversation on Scream (1996) September 23rd 6:00-7:00pm: A masked knife-wielding killer stalks teenagers in middle-class suburbia. In this instant-classic, Wes Craven reinvented the slasher film as through clever, funny, and terrifying moments in otherwise pristine white teenage life. Join Professors Colin Tait and Randa Tawil as we discuss feminism, queer critique, and middle class teen life in the thriller Scream. Available on Amazon and will be made available before the conversation.

Conversation on But I’m a Cheerleader (1999) October 7 6:00-7:00pm: Megan considers herself a typical American girl. She excels in school and cheerleading, and she has a handsome football-playing boyfriend, even though she isn't that crazy about him. So she's stunned when her parents decide she's gay and send her to True Directions, a boot camp meant to alter her sexual orientation. Join Professors Nino Testa and Randa Tawil to discuss queerness in Teen Movies, subverting gender norms, and more. Available to rent on Amazon, Hulu, and zoom before the conversation.

Conversation on Girlhood (2015) October 21st 6:00-7:00pm: Set in the projects outside Paris, Girlhood follows Marieme as she becomes friends with a fierce group of girls. A celebration of the resilience of black youth in Paris, the movie explores the lack of choices young working class black teen girls face and the ways they navigate their way into womanhood. Join Professors Ben Ireland and Randa Tawil to discuss race in France, migration, and what it means to grow up in the French banlieues. Available to stream on Kanopy.

Conversation on Mosquita y Mari (2012) November 11th 6:00-7:00pm: Mari moves into Yolanda’s Mexican American neighborhood in L.A. and the two quickly develop a close bond. Director Aurora Guerrero’s autobiographical film follows the two as their immigration status, sexuality, and class trouble their otherwise close relationship. Come discuss the ways that immigration and sexuality intersect in Mosquita y Mari. Available to stream on Kanopy.