

Full Name: The Postcolonial Zombie: Reclaiming A Monster

Short Name: Postcolonial Zombie

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ECTS Weighting: 10

Semester Taught MT/HT: HT 2026-27

Year JS

Module Content:

In the 21st century, zombies reign supreme. From films and television to comics, video games, and even Jane Austen adaptations, flesh eaters have taken over the world. But these monsters are much more than entertaining brain rot: indeed, they challenge traditional humanistic assumptions which divide the natural and unnatural world; the human and nonhuman; the spiritual and secular; the individual and the collective. As such, the zombie unsettles global northern understandings of personhood, agency, and political sovereignty.

Tracing a genealogy of the zombie figure, from its Afro-diasporic origins, to global northern sensationalism and commodification, to postcolonial reclamations of zombie personhood, we will come to view the zombie as, not a monster, but rather a heuristic for understanding the transnational legacies of enslavement and the ongoing project of decolonisation. We will also confront questions pertaining to race, gender, sexuality, climate crisis, epidemiology, capitalism, neo-imperialism, reproductive rights, and the ethics of representation.

The module will have a comparative range, with a primary focus on texts, films and comics from North America and the Caribbean (particularly Haiti). English translations will be provided of all texts, although students are encouraged to consult the original versions whenever possible.

Learning Aims

1. Students will examine the zombie figure as a site of cultural, political, and philosophical production.
2. Students will engage with a range of global media through interdisciplinary methods and frameworks.
3. Students will read and apply postcolonial, feminist, ecological and critical race theory to a wide range of texts and cultural artefacts.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

1. Analyse representations of the zombie across diverse media and cultural contexts using interdisciplinary methodologies.
2. Articulate the historical and cultural roots of the zombie in Afro-diasporic traditions.
3. Apply cultural and literary theory to assess the political significance of the zombie figure in both popular and literary texts.

Assessment Details:

- Number of Components: 1
- Name/Type of Component(s): Essay
- Word Count of Component(s): 5,000
- Percentage Value of Component(s): 100%

Please note:

- Curricular information is subject to change.
- Information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates to the current academic year only and is subject to change.