What is entertainment? Why are some forms of entertainment more pleasurable than others? What is the relationship between politics and entertainment? This course will examine the entertainment industry in ancient Rome, and will seek to answer these questions by examining the ancient city's festivals, circuses, and games, which included theatrical performances, burlesque, farce, acrobatics, athletic competitions, chariot races, wild-beast fights, gladiatorial contests, and staged naval battles. We will examine the infrastructure of entertainment, both the 'infamous performers' associated with sport and spectacle—namely, prostitutes, gladiators, and actors—as well as Rome's most famous venues, the Colosseum and the Circus Maximus. Through a close analysis of material remains and literary texts, we will seek to better understand the pleasures of entertainment, its socio-economics, and the attitudes of those who abhorred the industry. In addition we will investigate the emergence of parallel forms of entertainment in the modern world, most notably the American circus in the 19th and 20th centuries, and more recent circus movements, such as Bread and Puppet and Cirque du Soleil.

Primary Questions: How does entertainment reflect and reinforce structural hierarchies and group identities within a society, and what role does it play in naturalizing the unnatural, i.e. social constructs that shape the way we interact and perceive the world around is? How do these questions enable us to better understand antiquity and the limitations of our own self-expression within a society?

Texts: All readings will be posted on the class website.

Requirements: You must attend regularly. This class meets twice a week. You are expected to be in class both days. You must participate. You must complete all written assignments. You must think. You must the website often.

Grading: There are five different types of assignments for which you will be graded.

1) Written work to be prepared for class = 5% each (there are a total of 5).
Work to be prepared for class is marked by **** in the syllabus. I will be checking that you have this work completed when you arrive in class.

2) Drafts = 5% each (there are a total of 2 collected by me).

3) Final Drafts = 10% each (there are a total of 5).

4) Daily Comments = 10% (you are responsible for 13 comments).
There are comments concerning the reading, specifically what you found most interesting and why. These comments are not meant to super long—only 100-200 words. You must submit them via email to me by 11.00 am on the day of class in order to receive credit. You are only responsible for submitting these on days when there is no written work to be prepared for class. There are a total of 17 of these class days. You must submit 13 comments. You are responsible for keeping track of many you have done.

5) Class Discussions = 5% (you will be responsible for leading one class discussion). In lieu of a reading comment, on your day to lead the class you will submit discussion questions to me by email.

• Writing mentor
• Honor code: online tutorial must be completed by Sept. 13.
Readings and Assignments

The following is an outline of anticipated readings. The syllabus is subject to change. The assignments appear on the day they will be discussed in class.


First Class! Introductions/Mahoney, 'Introduction'.

Unit One: Feasts and Festivals

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<th>Week One:</th>
<th>(M 9 Sept) Mahoney, 'Origins and Foundations', 1-10.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Come to class with a rough draft of your paper or outline. This will be a work session.</td>
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Assignment 1, draft (F 19 Sept, 11.59 pm): *How can we use Geertz, Fagan, and Kyle to explain the function of ritualized violence in Ancient Rome? Is there evidence for this phenomenon today?*

Unit Two: Featuring... (focus on the players/victims)

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<td>(W 25 Sept) Library Session (tutorial/workshop, ask a question/seek an answer/****response due 30 Sept, 11.59 pm).</td>
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Assignment 1, final draft (F 2 Oct, 11.59 pm)

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<th>Week Four:</th>
<th>(M 30 Sept) Gladiators, part two: Dunkle, 'Gladiator Games in Action', 98-152.</th>
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<td>(W 2 Oct) The Venues: Futrell, 52-83.</td>
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Assignment 2, draft (F 11 Oct, 11.59 pm): *Library research paper.*

Unit Three: Financed by whom? Fun for whom?

|-----------|--------------------------------------------------|
Assignment 2, final draft (F 18 Oct, 11.59 pm)

Week Seven:  (M 21 Oct) No class!

Unit Four: Function

****(W 30 Oct) Paul Plass, 'Games and Liminoid Ritual', The Game of Death in Ancient Rome, 25-28. Bring an informal write up of the various positions of the individuals involved in the entertainment industry, why the individual would hold that position, and the theories that could be employed to support this person's position.

Week Nine:  **** (M 4 Nov) Bring a draft of your letter to class. You will be paired with another person in the class to determine the strengths and weaknesses of your argument.

Assignment 3 due (F 8 Nov, 11.59 pm): Let's pretend that there were op-ed sections of newspapers in Ancient Rome. Imagine that you are either a politician, patron, or a member of the plebs. Would you support the tradition of bread ad circuses, or would you argue that they should be discontinued. Why?

Unit Five: Future Circus!

Week Ten:  (M 11 Nov) Davis, 'Respectable Female Nudity', selections.
(W 13 Nov) Davis, 'From King of Beasts to Clowns in Drag', selections.

Unit Four:

Week Eleven:  (M 18 Nov) Group work session.

Week Twelve:  (M 25 Nov) In-class presentations.

Assignment 4, due (25 Nov, in class)
Part One: In your small groups, imagine that you are circus performers creating a Roman inspired circus performance. What would a modern version of a Roman circus look like? You must consider the cultural demands that inform the entertainment needs of the community as you bring forward the Roman 'circus' to the present. This means that you must keep in mind the shifts in performance and structure of the modern circus in America. The presentation of your final results can take the shape of a diorama, a video, a live performance...

Week Thirteen:  (M 2 Dec) From Bread and Circus to Bread and Puppet!
(W 4 Dec) Utopia! (readings and discussion questions TBA)

Assignment 5, due (13 Dec, 11.59 pm): Flash forward: A circus utopia. Having considered the cultural shifts that have led to the modern circus, what would a circus utopia look like? First you must consider what a utopia is, structurally, and in terms of gender, class, and race. How would the various aspects of your utopia play out in the circus? You will want to consider not only acts and performers, but also props and costuming. What function will your circus play in your utopia?
Quick Reference, due dates:

***All papers must be double spaced, 5-6 pages, times/helvetica, emailed to me as word documents or as a PDF, and they must be submitted by 11.59 pm unless indicated otherwise.

Sept. 19, 11.59 pm: Assignment 1, draft
Oct. 2, 11.59 pm: Assignment 1, final draft
Oct. 11, 11.59 pm: Assignment 2, draft
Oct. 18, 11.59 pm: Assignment 2, final draft
Nov. 8, 11.59 pm: Assignment 3
Nov. 25, in class: Assignment 4 (not a paper)
Dec. 13, 11.59 pm: Assignment 5