

University of Pittsburgh
WOMNST 0100 (W)
Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in the Media
Spring 2011
Tuesday evenings 6-8:30 p.m., Posvar 2201

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Course Description: Throughout early reports of its demise and constant criticism of its “unwomanly” actions, the women’s movement has undoubtedly been one of the most successful activist movements in United States history. It brought women the right to vote, encouraged women to experience the freedom to both work and have a family, and has fundamentally changed the way that society views gender, sexuality, and female sexuality, in particular, even if many expectations of purity and modesty still overtly exist. As the women’s movement enters the 21st century, its consciousness-raising goals and forms of activism have had to shift as well so that their newer goals—rights for women of all racial backgrounds and sexual orientations and the understanding of differences in masculinity—have been able to remain within both a safe tide of new media and within the vanguard of old media. Media coverage and the quest for publicity has always shaped women’s voices, even if they were shaping those voices to avoid mainstream publicity. Learning to navigate the media and view it analytically as a major force for social creation rather than as ubiquitous background noise will allow today’s generation of feminists to recognize that a coalition still exists. This recognition can lead women to join today’s movement on its own terms and use mediated tools to change society’s perception of gender and sexuality.

Course Goals:

1. Learn a brief history of the women’s movement and how women have used media sources throughout their history.
2. Understand how media shapes perceptions of gender and how the women’s movement has and still does use various media sources to guide public perception of gendered topics and ideas.
3. Collaboratively create a media source for discussion of the women’s movement and its goals so that we can understand both how the media shapes audiences and how audiences can shape the media.
4. Understand how to view activist movements through an analytical frame.
5. Synthesize reading and research on gender and sexuality into a new contribution to the study of the women’s movement interactions with media.

Required Texts:

Rosen, Ruth. *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America*. New York: Penguin, 2006.

Other assigned readings will be posted on Blackboard or handed out in class. Please note that I am mindful of the cost of books and have worked hard to keep your costs at a minimum.

Please respect that effort on my part and either find a way to share a copy of this book with a friend in the class or actually buy the book, please. There is only a snippet view of the book on Google books. I will also endeavor to put a copy on course reserve in the library.

Assignments and Grading:

Percentage Scale for Final Grades

98-100	A+
93-97	A
90-92	A-
88-89	B+
83-87	B
80-82	B-
78-79	C+
73-77	C
70-72	C-
68-69	D+
63-67	D
60-62	D-
59 and below	F

Grading Structure and Assignments

Class and blog participation (including attendance)	10 percent
Three Blog postings	25 percent
Midterm	15 percent
FINAL ESSAY: Thesis and outline	5 percent
FINAL ESSAY: Synthesis draft	20 percent
FINAL ESSAY: Finished draft	25 percent
Total:	100 percent

Class participation and attendance (10 percent): This class has a lot of reading that requires students to think critically about their own perceptions of gender and their media consumption. All students will be expected to have read all readings for the day and to be able to interact knowledgably about the course materials. Also, I will give in-class group work that will require your participation and an ability to apply the course materials to questions and situations that are relevant to contemporary American lives. I will give daily marks for discussion and involvement in class, so your active participation will help to bolster your grade.

Three Blog Postings and Blog Responses and Class Questions (25 percent): As we are studying how media influences the creation of gendered norms and the ways that the women's movement has been viewed, it's important for us to also be involved in the creative mediation process so that we can see the ways that norms are perpetuated from both sides of the equation. To this end, the students in this class will build and maintain a group of writings and contributions on a course blog. Students will have to contribute three posts each. The first post is a simple-one page (about 300 words) introduction to yourself. The second post (500-750 words) will be in response to one of the course readings. The final post (500-750) will be in response to a gender- or media-

related event. I will provide a list of the Women's Studies Department's events for the term and a list of other possibilities for these second postings. There will be an assignment sheet giving specifics for blog post requirements. In addition to the blog posts, students will sign up for weeks to respond to other student's postings. These responses must be analytical and interact with the other student's ideas in some way. At the same time, the response must also raise at least two questions for the class to consider during our meeting time on Tuesday.

Midterm (15 percent):

The midterm essay will ask students to write a five-page paper on a topic to be assigned at that time. The midterm will require students to synthesize and discuss the readings in the class up to the time of the midterm, so it's highly recommended that you take notes on our class discussions and highlight pertinent sections of each reading.

Final Essay (50 percent):

Thesis statement and outline: 1-2 pages

Synthesis Draft: 5-7 pages

Final Draft: 10-15 pages

You will receive more specific instructions for each of these assignments a minimum of three weeks before they are each due. The full assignment for the final essay will be given with the assignment for the thesis statement and outline, and we will discuss potential topics in class. Your topic will need to be approved by me. Both the Thesis Statement and Outline and the Synthesis Draft are meant to help you complete the final essay, and the synthesis draft should serve as a major portion of your final draft. Briefly, the synthesis will require students to use a minimum of two course documents and two researched external sources to create a coherent conversation about your chosen topic. We will discuss how to do this in class. This is a skill that all academic writers should know, and I hope that it is one that you will be able to carry into your analytical writing for other courses.

All parts of this final essay are required. I will not accept the final essay if I have not previously received both the thesis statement and outline and the synthesis draft.

Course Policies

Class participation: I expect every student to help keep class interesting by adding his or her own perspective and research to class time. All students must do their homework and be prepared to contribute during class time. I enjoy hearing what you have to say, and I'm sure your fellow students will appreciate your participation also, since it means hearing less of your professor's voice.

Ground Rules for Class Discussion and Participation: Class discussion relies on students feeling comfortable expressing a variety of viewpoints, and sometimes those viewpoints may be controversial. Therefore, in order to build a supportive class environment that encourages student participation and camaraderie, please observe these ground rules:

1. Please show respect to both me and your fellow classmates by avoiding offensive language.
2. Please offer your input for class discussions when it is appropriate. This will help the class to see different viewpoints.
3. Be an active listener and respectfully listen to viewpoints that you both agree with and disagree with.
4. Remember that we do not need to agree at all points in time. Sometimes we can agree to disagree.
5. You may question your fellow students in a respectful manner if you want to understand their standpoint better.
6. You do not need to answer any question if it makes you uncomfortable.
7. If you feel uncomfortable speaking in class, it is your responsibility to speak with me outside of class time.

Attendance and tardiness: Because this class hinges on your involvement, attendance is mandatory. You are allowed two absences without penalty, with no questions asked. After the second absence, your final grade will begin to go down by ½ letter grade for each additional absence (i.e. A- to B+, B-to C+, etc.). Absences that are excused per university policies require written notice from an activity/athletics advisor in advance of the absence. More than four absences (the equivalent of two weeks of class) could be grounds for automatically failing the course. Please also be considerate and show up for class on time. **If you miss a day of class, it is your responsibility to get notes from another member of the class. Please find a class partner whom you can contact in the event that you must miss a class period. Unless it's a special circumstance, I will not respond to e-mails asking me for what we went over in class (particularly if they are phrased as, "did I miss anything?" You missed class! Yes, you missed something.).**

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: According to University policy, "Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity [<https://www.pitt.edu/~provost/ai1.html>]. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity."

More specifically: Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Plagiarism is a form of academic theft. It is defined as using another person's unique words or ideas without giving that person credit. Academic dishonesty is a slightly broader category encompassing a range of issues, including double-dipping without instructor approval, cheating on an exam, fabricating information or sources, or helping another student to cheat (aiding and abetting).

This class has a no-tolerance policy on plagiarism. The first time a student is caught in either plagiarism or academic dishonesty, he or she will receive an automatic F in the course. If you have questions about anything you think might be a grey area, please talk to me immediately. I'm happy to discuss anything you think is unclear before it becomes a problem for your grade.

My disclaimer: Please be aware that I want you to follow simple rules. Deadlines and specifications are part of my grading system. When I say "4 pages," I want to see students deliver a 4-page document—not a minute and a half or 10 minutes. Please refer to your assignment sheets for information on what I expect and feel free to contact me about anything that is unclear. Please refer to my grading rubric for more information on what I expect out of your speeches and writing.

Late Work: All work is due at the beginning of the class period on the day for which it is assigned, and presentations must be delivered on the day you are scheduled. Presentations may not be missed for any reason except documented illness or family emergency.

Standard grade deductions for missed assignments are as follows: Any assignment that is missed without a documented illness or family emergency will receive an automatic deduction of 10 points per 24 hour period until the student comes to my office hours with the assignment. The first deduction is taken immediately after the class during which the assignment was due. The next deduction is then taken at the time class might begin the next day. (For example, if you're in a Monday 9 a.m. section, your next grade deduction will be taken Tuesday at 9 a.m.) The deductions continue every 24 hours as outlined above. **An assignment will not be accepted if a student has not come to my office hours or arranged a makeup time within a week after the original due date.**

It is your responsibility to get homework assignments for any class you miss. An excused absence does not excuse a late homework assignment. Also, all homework must be in a format that I can accept. I cannot accept your laptop computer because your printer died an hour before class (Yes, this has actually been tried.), nor will I accept computer discs.

Homework: Handwritten homework is not acceptable. Please submit all homework in 12-point Times New Roman font, and remember that double spacing is important for written work. Homework will not be accepted via e-mail. It must be submitted in hard copy during class.

Grade Grievances: If you would like to dispute a grade, please allow at least 24 hours after receiving the grade sheet. All disputes must be addressed in person during my office hours or at another time that we arrange.

Cell phones and laptops: As you enter the class, please turn off your phone as a courtesy to your fellow classmates. A student whose phone rings during class will have to endure either myself or a fellow class member answering the phone and taking a message. If you don't know how to turn your cell phone off, please either leave it at home or read the owner's manual.

Please remember that having a laptop in class is a privilege. Laptops can be a useful educational tool, but they're often misused. On an average day, you should not need a laptop in this class. If you find that you need one on a particular day, you're welcome to use it. However, I will feel free to frequently check that you are not surfing the net, doing homework for other classes, e-mailing, or IMing friends. If I catch anyone doing any of these activities, I will revoke the privilege of laptops on average class days for everyone. (Laptops will still be allowed for presentations.)

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability for which you may need or want accommodations, you will need to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 (telephone), 412-383-7355 (TDD), or 412-624-3346 (Fax). DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. NOTE: Your instructor cannot make accommodations for your disability unless you contact DRS and receive instructions from that office. You must accomplish this within the first two weeks of class, or your instructor may not be able to accommodate your disability to your satisfaction.

Office hours: Please think of my office hours as your time to discuss your concerns with me. My office hours are free and no appointment is required. Please feel free to drop by. I'd love to speak with each of you. Remember, it is easier to discuss something before it becomes a crisis than it is to troubleshoot a problem after it has become a major issue.

E-mail policy: Please allow me 24-48 hours to respond to your e-mail. I will usually get back to you before that time. If I have not responded within that time, assume that I have *not* received your e-mail and resend it.

Final notes: Have fun! I want this class to be a place where you learn to write fantastic speeches, wow an audience, and enjoy yourself all at once. If you're having fun and contributing, I guarantee we'll have a great class.

Campus Resources

The Oral Communication Lab: Offers assistance with speech anxiety, delivery, organization, choosing topics, and other speaking-related issues.

1109 Cathedral of Learning.

Call 412-624-6570 or e-mail mbannon@pitt.edu

The Writing Center: Offers writing consultation services for undergraduates, graduates and faculty. Papers in all stages, from brainstorming to "final" product, are welcome.

www.english.pitt.edu/writingcenter 412-624-6556

Disability Resources and Services: Offers assistance to students who need documentation of and accommodations for disabilities of any kind.

www.drs.pitt.edu 412-648-7890

The Office of International Studies: Offers support for international students and students studying abroad. <http://www.ois.pitt.edu/>

Writing and Citation Resources

The University of Pittsburgh RefWorks training: Pitt provides its students with a free, online citation tool that allows students to build and maintain their own reference dictionaries. To sign up for training, go to

http://www.library.pitt.edu/services/classes/infoliteracy/refworks_training.html.

The Purdue University OWL: One of the most comprehensive citation and writing resources available on the web. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>.

Duke University Library Citation site: My favorite citation Web site because it puts five citation styles side by side. <http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/>.

Class Schedule: Introduction to Women's Studies, Spring 2012

*Please note that this schedule is subject to change depending on class needs.

Section 1: Media, gender, and the foundations of the women's movement

Week 1, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2012

Introduction to each other and to the history of the women's movement

Week 2, Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2012: Foundations

1. Mary Wollstonecraft, "A Vindication of the Rights of Women," 1792. Available from <http://www.bartleby.com/144/>.
2. Charles F. Wingate, ed., "Mrs. Jennie C. Croly (Jennie June)," in *Views and Interviews on Journalism*, New York: F.B. Patterson, 1875, pp. 146-150.
3. Angela Davis, "Class and Race in the Early Women's Rights Movement," in *Women, Race & Class*, New York: Random House, 1981.
4. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments," presented at *Seneca Falls Conference*, 1848. Available from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp>.
5. Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I A Woman?" presented at the *Women's Conference*, Akron, Ohio, 1851. Available from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/sojtruth-woman.asp>.

Week 3, Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012: The Mid-20th Century

1. Selections from, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*, by Ruth Rosen. Part 1, "The Dawn of Discontent," and a timeline of the women's movement."

Week 4, Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2012: Globalized and racialized feminism

1. Linda La Rue, "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation," *The Black Scholar* Vol. 1 (May 1970): 42. This can be found online at <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/blkmanif/#black>. All of the writings on this page are of interest to our class and to the women's movement in general. However, I am only requiring La Rue. Please read the others if you have time.
2. Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement," in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*, ed. Zillah Eisenstein, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978.
3. Chandra Tolpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Critical Discourse," *Feminist Review*, vol. 30 (Autumn 1988): 65-88.

Week 5, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2012: Mediated feminism

DUE: TOPIC PROPOSAL FOR FINAL PAPER

1. Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," *The Second Sex Conference*, New York, Sept. 29, 1979.
2. Sisterhood, Interrupted, selections TBA.

Section 2: How Media Creates Gender: Examining visual media as text. hypocritical

Week 6, Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2012: *The Celluloid Closet* (1995)

1. Anthony Slide, "The Silent Closet," *Film Quarterly* vol. 52, 4 (Summer 1999): 24-32.
2. Brett L. Abrams, "Latitude in Mass-Produced Culture's Capital: New Women and Other Players in Hollywood, 1920-1941," vol 25, 2 (2004): 65-95.

In class: Watch *The Celluloid Closet*

Week 7, Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2012: CLASS CANCELLED. MONDAY CLASSES HELD ON TUESDAY IN OBSERVANCE OF FALL BREAK.

Week 8, Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2012: Gendered advertisements

DUE: THESIS AND PROPOSED OUTLINE

1. Diana Crane, "Gender and Hegemony in Fashion Magazines: Women's Interpretations of Fashion Photographs," *The Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 40.4 (Fall 1999), 541-564.
2. Alison Quart "X-Large and X-Small" p 129-142

In class: watch *Killing Us Softly: Advertisings Images of Women*

PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE A SECTION OF CLASS TODAY IN WHICH WE EXAMINE PRO-ANA AND PRO-MIA WEB SITES. THESE SITES CAN BE A MAJOR TRIGGER FOR PEOPLE WITH EATING DISORDERS. BECAUSE OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THIS ISSUE, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO TEXT ME AT 303-408-1445 TO TELL ME THAT YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH THIS ISSUE, AND I WILL TEXT YOU DIRECTIONS FOR HOW TO DEAL WITH TODAY'S CLASS. REMEMBER THAT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOUR PHONE NUMBER IS, SO YOUR TEXT WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS. PLEASE DO NOT E-MAIL ME AS THAT WILL VIOLATE YOUR PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY. IF YOU NEED RESOURCES FOR DEALING WITH AN EATING DISORDER OR YOU NEED TO SPEAK WITH SOMEONE, I WILL BE HAPPY TO DIRECT YOU TO SOME OF THE WONDERFUL RESOURCES AVAILABLE HERE IN PITTSBURGH.

MARCH 4-11, 2012: Spring Break, No Class! Get some rest.

Week 9, Tuesday, March 13, 2012: *Boys Don't Cry* (1999); and *The True Story of Brandon Teena* (1998)

*We will be watching large sections of both of these films in class and examining them as texts in and of themselves. I'd like students to particularly observe how each source handles

the story of Brandon Teena and how different mediations can substantially change images of sexuality and gender.

DUE: THESIS AND PROPOSED OUTLINE

Week 10, Tuesday, March 20, 2012: Masculinities

1. Bryant Keith Alexander, "Passing, Cultural Performance, and Individual Agency: Performative Reflections on Black Masculine Identity," *Performing Black Masculinity: Race, culture, and queer identity*, Lanham, MD: AltaMira, 2006: 69-98.
2. Jackson Katz "Advertising and the Construction of White Masculinity: from Eminem to Clinique for Men" p 349-358.

Case Studies:

3. *Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia* at Ferris State University. <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>. This online museum is a fantastic resource for exploring the development of raced and racist gender portrayals. Please click "enter" at the main page, then scroll down to the links for racist caricatures. While we are concentrating on masculinities today, and therefore I'd like you to concentrate on the sections on the Brute, the Picaninny, the Tom, the Nigger and Caricatures, the Coon, Golliwog, and the Nat. However, please be sure to peruse the feminine caricatures as well, including the Mammy and the Sapphire. For class discussion, be sure to have read the entirety of "New Racist Forms" so that we can discuss the continuity of media and how mediated images of lasting impact on gendered identities.
4. Avital Norman Nathman, "Pink Scare: What's Behind the Media Scare about 'Princess Boys?'" <http://bitchmagazine.org/article/pink-scare>

Section 3: Gendered Bodies Creating Media

Week 11, Tuesday, March 27, 2012: Activist Women in Media

1. Mary Celeste Kearney, "Brought to you by Girl Power: Riot Grrrl's Networked Media Economy," in *Girls Make Media*, New York: Routledge, 2006, 51-90.
2. Phaedra Pezzullo, "Resisting, 'National Breast Cancer Awareness Month': The Rhetoric of Counterpublics and their Cultural Performance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, vol. 89.4 (Nov. 2003), 345-365.

Case Study: Slutwalk

Official Web site: <http://www.slutwalktoronto.com/>

Rebecca Traister, "Ladies, we have a problem":

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/24/magazine/clumsy-young-feminists.html?pagewanted=1>

Week 12, Tuesday, April 3, 2012: Zines and Grrrl Culture

DUE: SYNTHESIS DRAFT

1. Alison Piepmeier, *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism*, New York: New York University Press, 2009, pp. 23-56.

URLS and zines to examine:

2. Katherine Bayerl, "Mags, Zines, and gURLs: The Exploding World of Girls' Publications," *Women's Studies Quarterly* vol. 28, no. ¾ (fall-winter 2000), 287-292. *NOTE: While this publication is old, it does list several good gURLs. Please look through this list and find some of the gURLs that Bayerl refers to. Make some observations about the writing. What does each site write about? Does it have any indication about how much traffic the site receives? Are there bulletin boards? What are the writers discussing on the boards? How do these sites create intentional feminist communities?
3. www.gurl.com
4. www.forcoloredgurls.com

Week 13, Tuesday, April 10, 2012: The Blogosphere

1. Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181. Available from <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/HPS/Haraway/CyborgManifesto.html>. NOTE: Print this off! It's a very dense piece and just reading it online will be very difficult for most people.
2. Lori Kido Lopez, "The Radical Act of 'Mommy Blogging': Redefining Motherhood Through the Blogosphere," in *New Media and Society*, Vol 11: 5 (Aug. 2009): 729-747.

Blogs to peruse:

1. Pittsburgh Women's Blogging Society: <http://pghwomenbloggers.blogspot.com/>.
2. <http://www.topmommyblogs.com/pages/index.php> This is a listing of the highest-ranked mommy blogs on the web. Please just choose a few to examine before class.

Week 15, Tuesday, April 17, 2012: Project presentations

FINALS WEEK, Tuesday, April 24, 2011. Final paper due by 5 p.m. You must turn in both a digital copy on Blackboard and a hard copy in my mailbox in the Women's Studies office. I will not accept late final papers.