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8:00 PM

**WOMEN'S STUDIES 50C  
GENDER AND POPULAR CULTURE**

**SPRING 2008**

Tuesdays & Thursdays

5:00 to 6:20 PM

100 HIB

Gender and popular culture permeate almost every aspect of our lives. The moments and ways they come together are powerful in shaping how we come to think of who we are and what we should aspire to be. This course will teach you to critically analyze gender as it has been encoded primarily in US popular culture and as it interrelates to commonly held and frequently unquestioned assumptions about race, class, and sexuality.

Modes of popular culture enable certain ways of being in the world while marginalizing others. How is your sense of gender constructed by the kinds of popular media and consumer goods that surround you? How are your desires shaped by what is available to watch, play, listen to, and buy? How are your relationships with others influenced by the popular amusements that surround you? To answer these questions, we will carefully study how our negotiations of gender norms are shaped through several prominent sites of popular culture: advertising, sports, television, film, music, print media, and the Internet. You will learn to decode the gendered messages and meanings in select examples from each of these sites. You will also learn to understand how political and economic inequalities in the culture industries structure our choices, especially in terms of what it means to be a "normal woman" or a "normal man."

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

All readings that can be downloaded VIA the course website and Langson Library Course Reserves. Students are strongly encouraged to download and print out the readings well in advance of their designated dates on the syllabus in order to avoid last-minute technical problems.

**COURSEWORK:**

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1) Attendance, Preparation and Participation  | 300        |
| points  |            |
| This includes your demonstrated preparedness for lecture and discussion sections by 1) completing all assigned readings and making written notes, 2) active and informed contribution to the discussions, 3) quizzes, and 4) any other weekly assignments, such as Noteboard posts. |            |
| 2) Critically Decoding Advertisements Essay   | 200 points |
| 3) Mid-Term Exam  | 200 points |
| 4) Final exam (cumulative) Thursday 6/12 4-6 PM   | 300        |
| points  |            |

Total Points available  
1000 points

**Note: The instructor of record reserves the right to change grading  
criteria.**

## **COURSE FORMAT & POLICIES:**

### **READING, WRITING, & THINKING:**

On the course website, the professor will post a list of key terms, concepts, and questions that will be covered in each week's lectures, videos, and readings. Students are expected to go online to EEE, print out this list, complete the designated readings, take written notes, and be prepared to discuss them thoughtfully during class meetings. The instructors will not print out and distribute hard copies of these lists. Refer to the worksheet on "How to Read Critically" on the course EEE website. Students need to bring electronic and/or hard copies of the readings, and lecture/video notes to each discussion section meeting.

**ATTENDANCE:** Regular attendance, promptness and mature attentiveness at lectures and discussion sections are mandatory. Students registered in this course are expected to attend both the FIRST and SECOND CLASS MEETINGS of the course or they may be required to drop the course electronically by the end of the second week of the quarter. Every time a student misses a discussion section meeting, 50 points will be deducted from this portion of the course grade. Those with more than TWO unexcused absences will not earn a passing grade in the course. There will be unannounced quizzes on the course materials in lectures and discussion sections. Students may use 1 **printed page** of notes for quizzes. The professor will **not** post lecture notes on the Internet or via e-mail for students who miss the lectures. Students must come to office hours to view the professor's lecture notes.

**EXAMS:** All exams must be taken on the dates and times designated on the syllabus. Students are responsible for retaining the hard copy of their graded papers and marked exams. The final exam will be given according to the university schedule, without exception.

**ADD/DROP:** Students may add or drop a course in the School of Humanities up to the end of the **second** week of classes with the instructor's signature. Requests to drop after the second week will be granted only for exceptional circumstances. No incompletes will be granted for the course except in cases of valid & documented emergencies and prompt notification. The professor will **not** sign grade option change forms after Week 4. All school and major requirements must be taken for letter grades.

**DISABILITY:** Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Center at 949/824-7494 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the University of California, Irvine. All information taken directly from or based upon any published sources, another student's paper, the professor's lecture, or the Internet must be clearly identified and properly credited. Exams will be closely monitored for cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are grounds for being assigned an "F" on the assignment and in the course. Cheating, forgery, dishonest conduct, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities erode the University's educational, research, and social roles. They devalue the learning experience and its legitimacy not only for the perpetrators but also for the entire community. It is essential that all members of the academic community subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and accept individual responsibility for their work. Please familiarize yourself with the UCI Policy on Academic Honesty: [http://www.senate.uci.edu/9\\_IrvineManual/3ASMAppendices/Appendix08.html](http://www.senate.uci.edu/9_IrvineManual/3ASMAppendices/Appendix08.html)

This course is open to a variety of ways of interpreting and analyzing popular culture, and students are encouraged to share their questions and ideas in lectures and discussion sections. Since there will be differences and disagreements, students are expected to show respect to the comments and positions of the instructors and your fellow students. Students are

strongly encouraged to share their questions and concerns about the course in person with the TAs and the professor during office hours and/or by scheduling an individual meeting.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1 Introduction to Feminist Cultural Studies

**TU 4/1**

Read: 1. Douglas Kellner, "Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and Media Culture," *Gender, Race, Class in Media*, eds. Gail Dines and Jean Humez, (Sage, 2003): 9-20.

**TH 4/3**

**Viewing of clip from *Rich Media, Poor Democracy*.**

Read: 1. Larry Gross, "The Mediated Society," from *Up from Invisibility: Lesbians, Gay Men, and the Media in America*. (Columbia University Press, 2001): 1-20.

### Week 2 Advertising and Consumer Culture

**TU 4/8**

**Viewing of clips from *The Ad and the Ego*.**

Read: 1. Sut Jhally, "Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture," in *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*, eds. Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk (Blackwell, 2002): 327-336.  
2. Joseph Turow, "Confronting New Worries," *Niche Envy: Marketing Discrimination in the Digital Age*. (The MIT Press, 2006): 21-44.

**TH 4/10 Viewing of clips from *The Persuaders*.**

Read: 1. Philip Rayner, Peter Wall and Stephen Kruger, "Ideology and Advertising," from *Media Studies: The Essential Resource* (Routledge, 2004): 78-93.  
2. Jean Kilbourne, " 'The More You Subtract, The More You Add': Cutting Girls Down to Size," from *Deadly Persuasion: Why Women and Girls Must Fight the Addictive Power of Advertising* (Free Press, 1999): 128-154.

### Week 3

### Marketing

#### Difference & Co-opting Resistance

**TU 4/15**

Read: 1. Clint C. Wilson, Felix Gutierrez, and Lena M. Chao, "Advertising: The Media's Not-So-Silent Partner," from *Racism, Sexism, and the Media: The Rise of Class Communication in Multicultural America* (Sage, 2003): 137-167.  
2. Minjeong Kim and Angie Y. Chung, "Consuming Orientalism: Images of Asian/American Women in Multicultural Advertising," *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 28, No.1, (March 2005): 67-91.

**TH 4/17**

READ: 1. Suzanna Danuta Walters, "Consuming Queers: Advertising and the Gay Market," from *All the Rage: The Story of Gay Visibility in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2001): 235-272.  
2. Rosalind Gill, "Empowerment/Sexism: Figuring Female Sexual Agency in Contemporary Advertising," *Feminism & Psychology*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (2008): 35-60.

### Week 4 Magazine Readers & Hollywood Bodies

**TU 4/22**

**DUE: Critically Decoding Advertisements Essay-5:00 PM.**

Read: 1. Laurie Oullette, "Inventing the Cosmo Girl: Class Identity and Girl-Style American Dreams," *Media, Culture, and Society* Vol. 21 (1999): 359-383.  
2. Kenon Breazeale, "In Spite of Women: *Esquire* Magazine and the Construction of the Male Consumer" *Signs* Vol. 20 No. 1 (Autumn 1994): 1-22.

**TH 4/24**

Read: 1. Linda Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess." *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 4, (Summer 1991): 2-13.  
2. Mary C. Beltrán, "The Hollywood Latina Body as Site of Social Struggle: Media Constructions of Stardom and Jennifer Lopez's 'Cross-Over' Butt," *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 19 (2002): 71-86.

**Week 5 Television Genre and Gender****TU 4/29**

Read: 1. Richard Butsch, "Ralph, Fred, Archie, and Homer: Why Television Keeps Re-creating the White Male Working-Class Buffoon," in *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*, ed. Tracy E. Ore (McGraw-Hill, 2003): 376-385.  
2. Sean Brayton, "MTV's *Jackass*: Transgression, Abjection and the Economy of White Masculinity," *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol.16, Issue 1 (March 2007): 5 -72.

**TH 5/1**

Read: 1. Margaret DeRosia, "The Court of Last Resort: Making Race, Crime, and Nation on *America's Most Wanted*," in *Reality Squared: Televisual Discourses on the Real* (Rutgers University Press, 2002): 236-255.  
2. Vicki Mayer, "Soft-Core in TV Time: The Political Economy of a 'Cultural Trend'," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, Vol.22, No.4 (October 2005): 302-320.

**Week 6 Television & Mid-Term****TU 5/6**

Read: 1. Jane Arthurs, "Sex and the City and Consumer Culture: Remediating Postfeminist Drama," *Feminist Media Studies*, Vol.3, No.1, (2003): 83-98  
2. Katherine Sender, "Queens for a Day: *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* and the Neoliberal Project," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (June 2006): 131-151.

**TH 5/8 Mid-Term Exam-**

**Please bring 1 large Blue Book. Do not write your name on the front as you will swap your Blue Book with another student.**

**Week 7 Audio Cultures****TU 5/13 Viewing of *Money for Nothing: Behind the Bu\$ine\$\$ of Pop Music***

Read: 1. Herman Gray, "Popular Music as a Social Problem: A Social History of Claims Against Popular Music," in *Images of Issues: Typifying Contemporary Social Problems*, ed. Joel Best (NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1989): 143-158.  
2. Stan Hawkins and Richardson, John (2007) 'Remodeling Britney Spears: Matters of Intoxication and Mediation', *Popular Music and Society*, 30:5 (2005): 605-629.

**TH 5/15 Viewing of *Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*.**

Read: 1. Imani Perry, "The Venus Hip Hop and the Pink Ghetto: Negotiating Spaces for Women," from *Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004): 155-190.  
2. Vincent Stephens, "Pop Goes the Rapper: A Close Reading of Eminem's Genderphobia," *Popular Music*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2005): 21-36.

## Week 8 The Sports/Media Complex

**TU 5/20**

Read: 1. Varda Burstyn, "Societies, Bodies, and Ideologies: Terms and Approaches," from *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport* (University of Toronto Press, 1999): 13-44.  
2. Sut Jhally, "The Sports/Media Complex," *Media, Sports, and Society*, ed. Lawrence A. Wenner (Sage, 1989): 70-93.

**TH 5/22 Viewing of clip from *Wrestling with Manhood: Boys, Bullying and Battering*.**

Read: 1. Michael Messener, "Center of Attention: The Gender of Sports Media," *Taking the Field: Women, Men, and Sports*. (University of Minnesota Press, 2002): 91-134.  
2. Pat Griffin, "Changing the Game: Homophobia, Sexism, and Lesbians in Sport," *Women and Sports in the United States: A Documentary Reader*. eds., Jean O'Reilly and Susan K. Cahn (Northeastern University Press, 2007): 217-234.

## Week 9 Internet & Cybercultures

**TU 5/27 Viewing of *Growing Up Online*.**

Read: 1. Joseph Turow, "The Internet as a Test Bed," from *Niche Envy: Marketing and Discrimination in the Digital Age* (The MIT Press, 2006): 71-98.  
2. Danah Boyd, "Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life," *Macarthur Foundation Series on Digital Learning- Youth, Identity, and Digital Media Volume*, ed. David Buckingham (The MIT Press, 2007): 1-26.  
[http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/publications/2007/Why\\_Youth\\_Heart\\_Social\\_Network\\_Sites](http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/publications/2007/Why_Youth_Heart_Social_Network_Sites)

**TH 5/29**

Read: 1. Lori Kendall, "Oh No! I'm a Nerd! Hegemonic Masculinity on an Online Forum," *Gender & Society*, 14 (2000): 256-74.  
2. Vicki Tobias, "Blog This! An Introduction to Blogs, Blogging, and the Feminist Blogosphere."  
(<http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/fc/fcblogs1.htm>)

## Week 10 Video Games

**Tu 6/3 Viewing of *Game Over: Gender, Race & Violence In Video Games*.**

Read: 1. Mia Consalvo, "Hot Dates and Fairy-tale Romances: Studying Sexuality in Video Games," in *The Video Game Theory Reader*, ed. Wolf & Perron (Routledge, 2003): 171-194.  
2. Roger Stahl, "Have You Played the War on Terror?," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, Vol.23, No.2 (June 2006): 112-130.

**Th 6/5 Final Exam Review.** Students in designated groups will present definitions of the terms and answers to questions from the Final Exam Review Sheet that will be passed out in Week 9.

## Finals Week

**Th 6/12 \*\*FINAL EXAM\*\* 4:00 to 6:00 PM**

**\*\*Please bring one unmarked large Blue Book. Do not write your name on the front page as you will swap your Blue Book with another student.**