GSWS 205-3: GENDER AND POPULAR CULTURE

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Lecture: Tuesdays 14:30 – 17:20; BLU 10921

Course Description:
In this introductory course, students will consider some of the key contributions feminists have made to the study of gender and popular culture. The course is divided into two sections: part one will provide students with the theoretical tools necessary to critique gender and popular culture, and part two, will explore specific forms and debates, from film and TV, to the Internet and social media. We will approach the study of gender and popular culture using an intersectional approach, in order to better understand how identity shapes our consumption and participation in popular culture.

Students will be evaluated on their ability to use theoretical arguments, key concepts and terms, and to explain and analyze various aspects of popular culture. Students are encouraged to utilize their personal experiences to facilitate critical thought as long as it is relevant to the course topic(s). Students should also be able to demonstrate an understanding of the various feminist perspectives and approaches to interpreting popular culture. Finally, as this course deals with current issues and topics of interest in feminism, gender, and popular culture, students are expected to familiarize themselves with relevant cultural forms and current events (i.e., TV shows, films), and to be able to draw on these examples to illustrate critical points.

- Students will think critically about how popular culture constructs gendered, classed, and racial identities
- Students will explore how feminists have intervened in debates about popular culture
- Students will reflect on how we negotiate, identify with, and make meaning of popular culture
- Students will also consider how we have resisted and/or produced alternative images and forms that challenge mainstream representations
- Students will become familiar with and implement critical feminist frameworks through which to analyze the popular culture that they see in their everyday lives

Educational Goals:
For more detailed information please see the GSWS website: http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/courses/Educational_Goals.html

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Attendance & Classroom Etiquette – 10% In-class Group
Work/Discussions – 20% In-class Midterm Exam – 30%
Final Paper – 40%*
*In-class peer review session (10%)
*Final paper (30%)

Prerequisite: none
Course Texts and Courseware:
- Readings will be available on the course Canvas.
- Other readings available on the web.

Part 1: Reading Popular Culture

Week 1: Introduction and Course Overview; syllabus and expectations
Week 2: Contemporary pop culture and the importance of feminist critique
Week 3: Femininities, Feminism, and Postfeminism
Week 4: Men and Masculinities
Week 5: Sexualities and Queer Theory
Week 6: Critical Race Theory and Pop Culture
Week 7: In-class midterm exam – no discussion groups

Part 2: Forms and Debates

Week 8: Music
Week 9: Advertising
Week 10: Reality Television
Week 11: Internet Technology & Social Media
Week 12: In-class Peer Review Session
Week 13: Topic TBD - Course Evaluations