GSWS 331-4: QUEER GENDERS:
FEMMES, QUEENS, AND FANTASIES OF FEMININITY

Professor: Dr. Mary Shearman
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Office: Harbour Centre
Office hours: Wednesdays 16:30 - 17:20
Lecture: Wednesday 17:30 - 21:20; HC 2510

Course Description:
This course critically interrogates genders and presentations that engage with femininity. We will explore how femininity and queerness meet at intersections of race, class, age, location, and ability and how these intersections so frequently framed as points of oppression can also be sites of bodily resistance and identity empowerment. We will dissect dominant cultural representations of femininity and explore ‘femme’ as both a political and de-politicized identity, category and label. We will use feminist and queer theories to unpack the linkages between femininity, weakness, sensitivity and other supposed inherent traits with their corresponding loaded meanings. Our studies will include creative works as we both pursue and destabilize the holistic femme identity.

At the end of the course students will be able to: develop an understanding of current debates on gender difference, from a queer feminine perspective; critically engage with femininity and feminism- including supportive points and those of discord; challenge dominant and normative cultural products reifying feminine oppression and gender based violence; and explain and understand the historical and contemporary context of femininity and its points of both oppression and privilege.

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

Course Texts and Courseware:
Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity. Julia Serano
Red Light: Superheros, Saints, and Sluts. Edited by Anna Camilleri
Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity. Edited by Chloe Brushwood Rose and Anna Camilleri
Other available on-line through the SFU library.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Attendance and Participation: 20%
Leading Discussion: 15%
Mid-term Exam: 15%
Film Review: 20%
Photo Essay: 20%
Photo Essay Presentation: 10%

Prerequisite: 30 units, including three units in GSWS. Students who have taken GDST 301, or WS 301 Special Topics: Theorizing Queer Genders may not take this course for further credit.

THE DEPARTMENT OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING. STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT.
IN ADDITION, THE DEPARTMENT WILL FOLLOW POLICY T10.02 WITH RESPECT TO “INTELLECTUAL HONESTY,” AND “ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE” (WWW.SFU.CA/POLICIES/TEACHING)
List of Topics Covered/Lecture Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Week 2: (Queer) Femininity and/in History

Week 3: Femininity and Feminism

Week 4: Intersectionality and Femininity

Week 5: Femininity and Violence

Week 6: Activism and Academics

Week 7: Femmes in and outside the LGBTQI++ community

Week 8: Femininity and Embodiment

Week 9: Femininity and Literature

Week 10: ‘Mid-term’

Week 11: Photo Essay Presentation

Week 12: Photo Essay Presentation

Week 13: The Future of Femininity Class Party