GSWS 205-3: Gender and Popular Culture

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Office hours: Tuesdays 13:30 – 14:20
Lecture: Tuesdays, 14:30-17:20, BLU 10921

Course Description:
This is an introductory course that explores the ways how popular culture shapes our common sense regarding gender, sexuality and race. Throughout the course, we will look into the images we see in popular culture, and explore the inception and spread of these images, the pros and cons of the social impact of them, and the ways how gender and sexuality are represented, and how gender is intersected with other crucial cultural issues such as race, nationhood, globalization, and class. We will be discussing the cultural texts such as film, television, advertising and fashion magazine, club scenes and icons. This course will use a variety of teaching and learning tools including lectures, discussions, group work, guest speakers and related media. Students will be expected to complete the required readings prior to class and to come to each lecture prepared with questions and comments on the assigned materials.

Educational Goals:
- Improved ability to use gender and sexuality as central terms to analyze popular culture.
- Broadened vision and narrowed focus on gender in popular culture from East to West.
- Enhanced critical thinking ability and consolidated construction of new knowledge.

Course Texts and Courseware:
- Custom Courseware
- On-line Readings

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Attendance and Participation: 10%
Research Paper: 30%
Midterm Exam: 30%
Final Exam: 30%

Prerequisite: none

- A two page proposal (double spaced) outlining the thesis and major arguments of the paper should be submitted two weeks prior to the research paper. Failure to submit the proposal will result in a deduction of 5% from the final mark of the paper. External resources are not required for this assignment; however any materials used must be properly referenced. Students are encouraged to discuss ideas for the paper with the instructor during office hours or by appointment in advance of submitting their proposal.

During the last day of class, students will present their research based on their approved research proposal with a one-minute long Q&A session.

Research Paper (30%): due August 04, 2015

Students will be required to complete a research paper, which should be between ten and twelve double-spaced pages (2,500-3,000 words). They will be expected to extensively research one of the contemporary issues relating to gender, race, sexuality, and politics addressed in the weekly topics of the course within a specific geographic context. The paper should specifically indicate how gender, race, sexuality and/or social justice are implicated or affected politically within this context.

- Students are encouraged to select a topic from the themes provided in the syllabus, but are also welcome to examine other issue-areas with the permission of the instructor. The student will be expected to utilize course materials and a minimum of eight to ten external academic resources.

- If you are unclear on what constitutes an academic resource, please consult the instructor.

- All materials must be properly referenced in your chosen documentation style (APA, MLA or Chicago). Emailed submissions will not be accepted. All submissions should include a title page with the author’s name, student number, date of submission and title along with numbered pages. All electronic submissions must be in Word, HTML or PDF format.

Attendance and Participation (10%):

- Attendance: Students are expected to attend class every week. Attendance will be checked in the beginning and/or at the end of the class.

- Presentation and Roundtable Discussions

  During the first day of class, students will choose a topic based on the weekly readings on the course syllabus and sign up on the provided sign-up sheet. From Week 3 through Week 12, there will be three to four students each week in a group to give a 30-minute PPT presentation in class followed by a 10 minute long Q&A session.

  Pursuant to the course syllabus, we will hold in-class roundtable discussions on a selected opinion piece. The date of the round-table discussion and some of the opinion pieces have been made available to students in the course syllabus.

  Students’ commentary will be evaluated on the comprehension of the key issues of the piece, the linkages made to the major themes and theories of the course and communication of individual perspectives. The instructor reserves the right to discredit any unreasonable, offensive, incomplete or plagiarized comments.

Midterm Exam (30%): June 16, 2015

- Students will be required to complete a one-hour long midterm exam during class. The midterm exam serves to examine students’ basic knowledge of the theatrical frame works introduced in the first half of the semester. The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions.

Final Exam (30%): Date/Time TBC (August 12-21)

- Students will be required to complete a final exam, which will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar before or during the official examination period. The final exam will be cumulative and will consist of multiple-choice questions, short answer and essay questions. Multiple-choice questions will be worth 30% of the total of the final exam. Answers should be written in an essay format and integrate materials introduced throughout the course.