GSWS 210-3: Gender Today: Gender Representation in Film

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Office hours: TBD
Lecture: Mondays 14:30 – 17:20; Saywell Hall 10061

Course Description:
This course explores the relationship between gender and film genre and the representation of leading female characters of different gender, race, class and sexuality in contemporary narrative cinema. Through the investigation of different genres and sub-genres of film including horror, action, drama, sci-fi, thriller, vampire films and queer cinema, the students will analyze the representation of women on screen and how it shapes and subverts the understanding of the culturally- and socially-constructed masculinity and femininity. We will examine the discourses amongst visual culture, feminist film theory, and female body and sexuality, and explore the various women’s roles in narrative cinema including mothers, wives, working-class women, lesbians, killer adolescents, supernatural beings, cyborgs and of different age, race, class and sexual orientation. This course utilizes film examples from both mainstream and independent cinema and emphasizes the influence of women’s and feminist movements that contributes to and shifts the way we read, consume and analyze film culture. Each weekly session will be comprised of a lecture and a feature-length film screening. Students will give a 15-minute presentation based on the film(s) watched in previous week and the readings assigned of each week.

Educational Goals:
• develop analytical skills and tools to textually and critically analyze female characters on screen in relation to narrativity, aesthetics, cinematic framing, ideology and social differences on screen
• identify the correlations between filmic representation of contemporary narrative cinema and women’s and feminist movements in history
• address issues in the representation of gender in popular cinema and investigate new feminist perspectives and politics in popular culture

Course Texts and Courseware:
• Additional readings will be made available on Canvas.

Notes on Film Screenings:
Students are expected to attend every class and screening, complete assigned readings prior to class and participate in class discussion. As we will be watching two to four feature-length films every week, students are required to screen additional films on their own. It will be made clear on the first day of class the various ways to access all assigned films. Some films are available through the SFU library criterion-on-demand service and/or will be held at library reserves. This course also suggests students to co-create a Netflix or Amazon Prime Instant Video account if they do not have one for the duration of this term.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Bi-weekly Journal + Film Analysis 30%
In-class Presentation 15%
Essay Proposal + Annotated Bibliography 15%
Final Research Paper (7-10 pages) 30%
Attendance and Participation 10%