GSWS 205-3: GENDER AND POPULAR CULTURE

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Office hours: TBA
Lecture: Wednesdays 14:30 - 17:20; AQ 4130

Course Description:
In this introductory course, students will learn about some of the key contributions feminists have made to the study of gender and popular culture, primarily within a North American/Western context. 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 print 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 so as long as it is relevant to the course topic(s). Students should also 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.

Educational Goals:
In this course, students will:
• Think critically about how popular culture constructs gendered, classed, and racial identities.
• Explore how feminists have intervened in debates about popular culture.
• Reflect on how we negotiate, identify with, and make meaning of popular culture.
• Consider how we have resisted and/or produced alternative images and forms that challenge mainstream representations.
• Become familiar with and implement critical feminist frameworks through which to analyze the popular culture that they see in their everyday lives.

Course Texts and Courseware:
• Readings will be available on the course Canvas.
• Other readings available on the web.
• A selection of recommended readings/books will be put on course reserve at Bennett Library and/or posted to Canvas.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Attendance and Class Participation – 15%
In-class midterm exam (Week 6) – 25%
Group Presentation – 20%
Final Paper – 40%*
*includes proposal, annotated bibliography, and in-class peer review session

Prerequisite:

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)