GSWS 823-5: Graduate Seminar in Feminist Art/Literary Criticism

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Lecture: Tuesdays 10:30 – 15:20 SFU Vancouver
Office hours: TBA
Office: TBA

Course Description:
Feminist film theory and practices mirror debates that have engaged the feminist movement as a whole. As critic Laura Mulvey points out, film has been ‘the crucial terrain’ on which feminism’s debates over culture, identity and representation have been fought. Questions such as ‘Are positive images enough?’ ‘Is Freudian theory useful?’ ‘Is there a ‘feminine vision,’ ‘feminine pleasures?’” ‘What role do other identities such as class, race, ethnicity and sexuality play in women’s cinema and do we still need to promote a separate women’s filmmaking?’ and ‘Is sexual display inimical to feminism?’ continue to be addressed by feminist theorists and filmmakers. In class discussions, group presentations, blogs and papers, we will explore these questions and engage in the debates. The particularity of film as a medium to address these questions will form the perspective of our study. Screenings of films by women – both classic and contemporary – will focus the seminar discussions.

Graduates students will meet together outside of class time and present their research for feedback from other graduate students.

Course Texts and Courseware:
- Additional readings available online.

Note: Readings will average from 40 to 50 pages per class.

***Provisional***
Course Evaluation and Assignments:

15% Short Paper: A response to issues raised in the readings and in discussions in the first five weeks of class.

25% Group Presentation:
An oral group research presentation based on the week's readings and/or topics of discussion. The subject will be chosen in conjunction with the instructor and normally completed by two or three students per topic (15-20 min. in length + discussion). An outline of the presentation and a bibliography of the works consulted must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the class on the day of the presentation. Student feedback will contribute to assessing the grade for this assignment.

15% Lead class in a discussion of a course reading.

30% Term Paper:
A critical paper, 15-20 pages in length, relating the work of a woman director viewed in class to films viewed outside of class and to concepts discussed in the readings. The choice of topic is up to the student and will be developed in a presentation to the other graduate students. (Presentation is worth 20% of the term paper grade.)

15% Attendance and Seminar Participation:
Includes regular class attendance, doing the required readings and coming to class prepared to join actively in discussions, and contributions to the class blog.

NOTE: All work must be submitted on time; late papers will be penalized. Three or more unexcused absences could result in failure of the course.

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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)