This course will examine some of the ways in which popular culture organizes female perception and desire. It will focus upon four very successful genres of popular culture, all of which pointedly address a female audience: The Harlequin romance, the contemporary gothic novel, the women's film and the soap opera. We will investigate the social and psychoanalytic ramifications of these four genres as well as their structural and stylistic properties. Attention will also be given to the interpretive process - to the activity of reading a popular novel or watching a film or television program.

REQUIRED READING

Tania Modleski, Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women
Julianne Sleenonor, The Female Gothic

RECOMMENDED READING

Rosemary Guiley, Loveline: The Romance Reader's Guide
Katharine Wibel, Mirror, Mirror: Images of Women Reflected in Popular Culture

GRADING STRUCTURE

75% Four short papers
25% Participation