This course will begin with a discussion of popular culture as capitalist culture, that is, as the symbolic expression of a particular social organization. The theoretical context will be explored through a consideration of both the critique of "mass" culture and a view of popular culture as embodying the potential for subversion. Within this contextual overview we will consider how popular, capitalist culture has served as a mechanism of oppression, that is, how "woman" is constructed and "placed" within and through popular forms. We will also investigate the use women can make of popular forms as a means of resisting traditional images. While the focus will be primarily, although not exclusively, popular film, our discussions will include women and genre (melodrama, horror) and concepts and issues (sexual disguise, pornography and censorship) which reach beyond a particular medium.

REQUIRED READINGS

D. Hebdige, Subculture: The Meaning of Style, (Methuen)  
Doane, Mary Ann, The Desire to Desire: Women's Films of the 1940s, (Indiana U. Press)  
LeGuin, U., The Dispossessed, (Avon)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (on reserve)

Atwood, M. The Handmaid's Tale, (M&S)  
Kuhn, The Power of the Image (Rutledge & Kegan Paul)  
Burstyn, ed., Women Against Censorship (Douglas & McIntyre)  
Copp & Wendell, ed., Pornography and Censorship (Prometheus)  
Modleski, Loving With a Vengeance: Mass Produced Fantasies for Women (Methuen)  
MacCabe, ed., High Theory/Low Culture, (Manchester U. Press)

As well other books and articles will be placed on reserve.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Two essays (7-10 typed pages):  
#1 - due Wed. Feb. 24 - 35%  
#2 - due Wed. Mar. 30 - 35%  
Take-home exam - (analysis of film screened in last week of classes) Due: Mon. April 11 - 25%  
Attendance/participation: 5%

*NOTE: Tutorial time for this course includes compulsory film screenings.

THIS COURSE MAY BE APPLIED TO THE CERTIFICATE IN LIBERAL ARTS