GSWS 318-4: Special Topics in GSWS: Misogyny

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Lecture: Tuesdays 8:30 – 12:20
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“What’s the worst possible thing you can call a woman? Don’t hold back, now.
You’re probably thinking of words like slut, whore, bitch, cunt (I told you not to hold back!), skank.
Okay, now, what are the worst things you can call a guy? Fag, girl, bitch, pussy. I’ve even heard the term “mangina.”
Notice anything? The worst thing you can call a girl is a girl. The worst thing you can call a guy is a girl. Being a woman is the ultimate insult.”

Jessica Valenti, Full frontal feminism: A young woman’s guide to why feminism matters, p. 5

Course Description:
Scholars have identified misogyny (the hatred of women) as one of the foundations of sexism. While the overt expressions of misogyny may be recognizable, the covert manifestations are often invisible. Using the example of children’s socialization, students will examine the covert expressions of sexism and misogyny in order to understand how these expressions become normalized in society. To do so, we will study the popular culture and media culture targeting school-aged children to explore the ways in which misogyny is normalized. We will examine how elements of misogyny emerge in youth culture in ways that construct relations of sexism (and concurrent relations of oppression such as racism and classism) as normal, and in some cases, as desirable. Concepts will be studied via case studies of “texts” from youth culture that include: toys and dolls, tween magazines, beauty and body, fashion, pop music and music videos, and tween movies.

This course serves as an introduction to key concepts and authors in fields including social justice education, critical pedagogy, media studies, gender and sexuality studies, sociology, and cultural studies. It will provide undergraduate students an interdisciplinary set of conceptual tools and language with which to examine, understand, and respond to the educative and normalizing power of popular youth culture.

Prerequisite: Prerequisites: 30 units, including 3 units in GSWS/WS/GDST.
Faculty Note: (it is strongly recommended that students have completed at least one equity-related class in any department that addressed racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, or other form of oppression).
Course Texts and Courseware:


*** Additional readings will be required week-to-week. These will be articles from the SFU library database. You should be familiar with accessing library databases to acquire journal articles. ***

Course Evaluation and Assignments:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance, Participation, Homework*</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>In class pop quizzes</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>Textual analysis (individual or group)</td>
<td>Week 8 (TBD)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final project</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>25%</td>
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*you will regularly collect data via field assignments – viewing music videos, trip to a toy store, drug store, etc.*