WS 312-5*/WS 823-5   Women & Films: Films and Theories

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Tues: 10:00-14:50 Harbour Centre

Women’s Studies Department
Simon Fraser University
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The evolution of feminist film theory reflects questions that have engaged the feminist movement as a whole. Problems such as the relevance of Freudian theory, the debate over the definition of "feminine vision" versus the problem of essentiality, issues such as the notion of public and private space, pornography, etc. have been incorporated into the theories and practices of feminist film culture. This course will show how these questions were addressed by feminist filmmakers and critics at the same time as it surveys the evolution of feminist film theory and engages in its debates. Films that have been and are currently pivotal to feminist film theory will complement the seminar discussions.

Required Reading:
Carson, Diane, Linda Dittmar, & Janice R. Welsch, (eds.) Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1994

A binder of additional articles will be available on reserve in the library and/or will be available for purchase at cost.

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

Course Requirements:
55% Papers:
Two Short papers (5-6 pages maximum in length, each worth 15%) and a final paper (8-10 pages in length, worth 25%) are to be submitted at four-week intervals. The topics may be selected by the student, with the instructor’s approval, and should relate to the films viewed in class (or the directors studied), as well as respond to the concepts discussed in class and in the readings.

25% Seminar Presentation:
An oral, research presentation will be required based on the weeks readings and/or topics of discussion. The subject will be chosen in conjunction with the instructor and completed by one or two students per topic (15min in length if one presenter 30min if two). 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.

20% Seminar Participation
Includes regular class attendance, doing the required readings, and the quality of the student’s participation in class discussion.

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.

Graduates: In addition to the above assignments, graduates will be asked to lead the class in a discussion of one week's readings (date to be chosen in consultation with the instructor), and to submit a longer final paper (12-15 pages) on a topic approved by the instructor.

* Students may apply to the School for Contemporary Arts to have this course designated as credit toward their film major.
Grading:

- Presentation of weeks readings: 15%
- Participation: 15%
- Two short papers (10% ea): 20%
- Final paper: 25%
- Semester presentation: 25%

**Recommended Reading:** *(On Reserve at the Belzberg Library)*

- Issues of *Women and Film* and *Camera Obscura.*
- Brunsdon, Charlotte. *Films for Women*
- Clark, Veve A. *The Legend of Maya Deren* (Vol. 1, parts 1 & 2).
- de Lauretis, Teresa. *Technologies of Gender.*
- de Lauretis, Teresa. *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema.*
- Doane, Mary Ann. *Femmes Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, Psychoanalysis.*
- Gledhill, Christine, (ed). *Home is Where the Heart is: Studies in Melodrama and the Women's Film.*
- Haskell, Molly. *From Reverence to Rape.*
- Mayne, Judith. *The Woman at the Keyhole*
- Mayne, Judith. *Directed by Dorothy Arzner*
- Monaco, J. *Glossary of Film and Media Forms*
- Mulvey, Laura. *Visual and Other Pleasures.*
- Penley, Constance (ed). *Feminism and Film Theory*
- Rose, Jacqueline. *Sexuality in the Field of Vision.*
- Weiss, Andrea. *Vampires and Voices*

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