Women’s Studies 310-4: Inside and Outside The Box: Feminist Television Studies

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The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the various feminist approaches to studying television, specifically representation, genre, fans and audiences. In particular, we will explore the ways in television constructs women, focusing on issues such as race and sexuality, as well as the relationship between gender and genre, or ‘feminine genres’. Special attention will also be paid to the notion of ‘postfeminism’ and ‘girl power’ as expressed in popular TV shows like *Sex and the City* and *The Powerpuff Girls*. The second part of the course will move towards a consideration of the social contexts of women’s television viewing, signaling a more general move in feminist television studies away from abstract speculation towards the concrete everyday practices of female audiences. By the end of this course, students will be able to: articulate a feminist critique of television; identify the different approaches used by feminist television critics; use and post on a blog; develop and/or improve their analytical and presentation skills.

Students are encouraged to critically reflect upon their own relationship to television as a cultural medium both in class and in their writing assignments.

Class time will consist of a combination of lecture, screenings, and class discussion. Participation in a course blog will also be mandatory outside of class time. Students are expected to do their weekly readings and come to class prepared to contribute to class discussions.

**Required Readings:**
Custom Courseware available at the bookstore (including critical essays by Tania Modleski, Annette Kuhn, Herman Gray, Laurie Ouellette, David Morley, and Andrea Press).
Some readings will also be available for download on the library website.

**Marking Scheme:**
- **Course blog and mini-assignments** 15%
  *Weekly participation will be mandatory in a course blog; some weeks will include assigned questions.
- **Television Review** (4-5 pages) 20%
  *Students will be required to write a short paper that critically analyzes a television show of their choice, using one of the feminist perspectives discussed in class.
- **Paper Proposal** (1 page) 5%
  *Students must prepare a 1 page proposal outlining their research topic for the final paper. A list of acceptable topics will be handed out in class prior to the due date.
- **Final Research Paper** (12-15 pages) 35%
  *Students must research and write a final paper which builds upon their paper proposal. Students must adhere to the proposal – final papers which diverge significantly from the proposal will be penalized.
- **Oral Presentation** 10%
  *Students are expected to present a 10-15 minute oral presentation based on their final paper. Students will sign up during the second week of class.
- **Attendance and Participation** 15%

**Prerequisites:** 60 credit hours

The Department of 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.