

ENG 4/596: *Feminist Film/Video Criticism*
Tuesdays and Thursdays 4 - 5:50pm

Spring 2017
MCK 214

Prof. Miller | PLC 529
Office Hours | T/TH 8 - 9:30

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This course introduces students to the legacy of feminist film criticism, which we approach in the context of queer trans media studies, production, and fandom. Focusing on film, video, and multimedia addressing women, we examine camp, melodrama, action, musical, and documentary productions. Students learn the vocabulary of gender and genre studies while contemplating questions of composition, vernacular, “new” media criticism, and supposedly obsolete obsessions. Adopting a variety of feminist approaches, we explore how constructions of race, class, sexuality, and ability mediate the influence of feminist criticism, feminist film/video, and feminist criticism of feminist film/video. **Texts under study include** nudity, sex, violence including coercive sex and misgendering, profanity, harassment, and a variety of sensitive issues like social and sexual taboo transgression, expressive sexuality, social variance, sex work, discrimination, and oppression. If this may present a problem for you, please see me, speak up, +/or register for another class. Material may appear without notice of content.

Expectations | Read and study assigned texts in preparation for class meetings. Prepare questions and comments for class discussion. Arrive to meetings on time. Respect your classmates’ different backgrounds, insights, and frames of reference.

Course Work Attendance, Participation, Homework, Quizzes [10 pts.]
Essay 1 [15 pts.] due May 12
Midterm Exam [20 pts.] on May 11
Final Essay [25 pts.] due June 9
portfolio of *In the Life* annotations [30 pts.] due June 14

in class screenings

The Color of Money
Circumstance
The Grace Lee Project
When a Woman Ascends the Stairs
Desperately Seeking Susan
Black Orpheus
Valencia

outside screenings

ASAP *Queen Sugar*, Season 2
wk6 Athina Rachel Tsangari: *Attenberg*

Reading assignments are on the course **canvas** site.

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Course Schedule subject to change

Week 1

T April 4 Introduction; *Color of Night*

TH April 6 Robbins, *Great Women Superheroes*, Ch. 6; Kleinhans, "Aunt Alice"

Week 2

T April 11 Brettschneider, "Critical Attention to Race"; Christian, "Race for Theory"

TH April 13 Lee, "Pussy Ballistics"; Ahmed, *feministkilljoys.com*; Fink + Miller, "tmm"

Week 3

T April 18 Puar, "US Homonormativities"; Tuck + Ree, "Glossary of Haunting"

TH April 20 Samar Habib, "Women" + "Queer-Friendly"; *Circumstance*

Week 4

T April 25 Shimizu, *The Hypersexuality of Race*, Chapter 1; Park, *Re Jane* Ch. 1

TH April 27 hooks, "Celebrating Blackness"; Eichorn, "The 'Scrap Heap' Reconsidered"
The Grace Lee Project

Priscilla Layne

Week 5

T May 2 Bryan-Wilson, "Some Kind of Grace"; Barlow, "Feminism 101"

TH May 4 Russell, "The Japanese Women's Film of the 1950s"

*When
a Woman
Ascends
the Stairs*

Week 6

T May 9 meet @ gerlinger lounge

Athina Rachel Tsangari

TH May 11

exam @ 4pm

Attenberg
bijou on 13th @ **6:30pm**

essay due Friday, 4pm * paper copy

T May 16 *Desperately Seeking Susan*

Michelle Citron, "Women's Film Production: Going Mainstream," in *Female Spectators: Looking at Film and Television* (45-63)

Jackie Stacey, "Desperately Seeking Difference: Desire Between Women in Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 28 (48-61)

Sarah Street, "*Desperately Seeking Susan: Textures of Transformation*" in *Costume and Cinema: Dress Codes in Popular Film*" (55-71)

TH May 18

In the Life Media Ecology Project lab 1

T May 23 *Black Orpheus*

Alili Sharon Larkin, “Black Women Film-makers Defining Ourselves: Feminism in Our Own Voice,” in *Female Spectators: Looking at Film and Television* (157-173)

Sarah Berry, “Subversive Habits: Minority Women in Mani Ratnam’s *Roja* and *Dil Se*” in *Fashion on Film* (301-319)

TH May 25 *In the Life Media Ecology Project lab 2*

T May 30 *Valencia*

Liz Clarke and S. Topiary Landberg, “Valencia: The Movie/s” (164-175)

Robin Warhol, “Reading—and Feeling,” *Having a Good Cry* (ix-xvii)

David J. Getsy, “Queer Exercises: Amber Hawk Swanson’s Performances...” (465-485)

TH June 1 *In the Life Media Ecology Project lab 3*

Week 10

T June 6 Francis, “The Asexual-Single and the Collective”

TH June 8 Doane, “Desire to Desire” |

final essay due Friday, 4pm * paper copy

| Note: screenings include nudity, sex, expressive sexuality, violence, and culturally sensitive matters such as discrimination, oppression, social variance, coercive sex, and sex work. If this may present a problem for you, please see me, speak up in class, +/- register for another course.

|| **Expectations** * Read, re-read, and study all assigned texts in preparation for class.

* Prepare questions and comments for discussion. Bring materials to meetings. * Respect people’s space, backgrounds, contributions, names, pronouns, and frames of reference.

Policies | Your final grade drops if you miss more than two class meetings. After two, each absence will lower your final grade a notch (A- to B+, etc.). All assignments must be submitted in order to pass the course. Contact the professor at least two days in advance to ask for an extension. Essay grades drop a full mark for every day past due. You are responsible for meeting Student Conduct Code and Community Standards.

Please discuss with me any concerns; absent yourself for trigger mitigation; avoid plagiarism; and let me know as soon as you can of any accommodations you may need.

| Students who observe religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with their instructor. | If bad weather or an emergency requires cancelling a class, I will notify you by email or put a note on the door. | Always use your own discretion in class + en route.

Screenings:

The Color of Night (Rush, 1994, 139 min.)

Circumstance (Keshavarz, 2011, 107 min.)

The Grace Lee Project (Lee, 2005, 68 min.)

When a Woman Ascends the Stairs (Naruse, 1960, 111 min.)

Attenberg (Tsangari, 2010, 97 min.)

Desperately Seeking Susan (Seidelman, 1985, 104 min.)

Black Orpheus (Camus, 1959, 100 min.)

Valencia (Tea, 2013, 105 min.)

Additional features of interest:

Caramel (Nadine Labaki, 2007, 92 min.)

Dance, Girl, Dance (Dorothy Arzner, 1940, 90 min.)

Dancer in the Dark (Lars Von Trier, 2000, 140 min.)

Daughter Rite (Michelle Citron, 1978, 53 min.)

Faat Kiné (Ousmane Sembène, 2000, 121 min.)

Hedwig and the Angry Inch (John Cameron Mitchell, 2001, 95 min.)

Me and You and Everyone Else We Know (Miranda July, 2005, 91 min.)

Set It Off (F. Gary Gray, 1996, 123 min.)

Vagabond (Agnes Varda, 1987, 105 min.)

Water (Deepa Mehta, 2005, 117 min.)

The Women (George Cukor, 1939, 103 min.)