

WOST 201: 001 Issues in Feminism

Spring Semester 2014
T 4:15 – 6:45pm Dumbach 04

Scope of Course

Gender is one of the primary ways that people, both historically and now, attribute identity and distribute power. It is a key element in defining human relationships. It has often been used to subjugate one sex, usually women. This course is designed to introduce you to ways in which gender can be understood as a social construction and the results of that construction. At the end of this course, you will have a better understanding of feminist theory and feminism as a socio-political perspective on social change. You will be more attuned to what it means to be male or female in society. No less importantly, you will be equipped with concepts and skills that will enable you to appreciate the capacities and contributions of both women and men.

This particular section of WOST 201 employs narrative and documentary film to explore these feminist issues. Films and film excerpts are used in two ways: first, as illustrations of the issues themselves and, second, as illustrations of how popular culture functions as part of the hegemonic process both in terms of maintaining such social structures as patriarchy but also in terms of challenging them.

Faculty

Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy
Cuneo Hall 306
773.508.8431

Office Hours: T-TH 12:30-2:00pm
or by appointment
bmurphy@luc.edu

Texts

From Reverence to Rape, Haskell [H] *

Readings on Sakai

Tentative list of films to be screened in their entirety:

Iron Jawed Angels

Queen Christina **

Stella Dallas **

Adam's Rib **

All About Eve **

*The Tender Trap***

Rachel, Rachel **

An Unmarried Woman **

*Antonia's Line***

*Passion Fish***

TBD

*Highly recommend that you get this through Women & Children First, located at 5243 N. Clark St. Books can be ordered online <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/>

** These films will be on reserve in Cudahy Library. They should also be available online, through Netflix and some area video stores [e.g. Video Adventure in Evanston] and other libraries [e.g. community].

Evaluation

- 9 quizzes on texts [readings & films] 30% [3.33% each]
 - In-class written quizzes on the assigned readings and screening for that day.
 - Criteria for evaluation: accuracy
 - Purpose is to encourage preparation for informed class discussion
- 2 exams 40% [20% each]
 - In-class written examinations on the readings, supported by examples from films.
 - Criteria for evaluation: coherence of explanation and support for arguments
 - Purpose is to ascertain student understanding of basic principles and concepts
- Group Presentation 20%
 - In-class group presentation about a particular grouping of films [e.g., genre, theme, director] See Sakai for suggested topics.
Presentation must include a detailed outline with bibliography
 - Criteria for evaluation: clarity of presentation, strength of supporting arguments and illustrations, and incorporation of readings
 - Purpose is to give students opportunity to learn more in depth about certain topics that are of interest to them
- Film review 10%
 - 2-page review of an assigned film from a feminist perspective
 - Criteria for evaluation: coherence of argument and support
 - Purpose is to refine critical thinking regarding a particular instance of popular culture

Participation is required. Much of the learning in this class occurs as a result of discussion. Failure to participate deprives all students of potentially beneficial interaction. It also deprives the individual student of certain assignment experiences. Thus, lack of substantive participation in in-class group activities, whether through absence or ill-preparedness will be penalized.

Late work will be penalized unless *prior* arrangements have been made. I can be contacted through phone, voice mail email, office hours and appointment.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines stated in the undergraduate studies handbook. You are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism. Penalties range from a grade of zero for the specific assignment involved to failure in the course and notification of the appropriate dean[s] with the possibility of further action.

Proposed Schedule

| Date | Topic & Primary Film | Text/ Assignment |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 – January 14 | Course Introduction: feminist issues & film criticism | <i>Iron Jawed Angels</i> |
| 2 – January 21 | Hegemony as social process Images of women’s rights advocates | H, 1-2 Week Two Readings |
| 3 – January 28 | Films of the 30’s <i>Queen Christina*</i> | H, 3 Week Three Readings Quiz #1 |
| 4 – February 4 | “Women’s Films” <i>Stella Dallas*</i> | H, 4 Week Four Readings Quiz #2 |
| 5 – February 11 | Films of the 40’s <i>Adam’s Rib*</i> | H, 5 Week Five Readings Quiz #3 |
| 6 – February 18 | Entering the 50’s <i>All About Eve*</i> | H, 6 Week Seven Readings Quiz #4 |
| 7 – February 25 | Exiting the 50’s <i>The Tender Trap*</i> | Mid-term Exam |
| MARCH 3-8 SPRING BREAK | | |
| 8 – March 11 | Films of the 60’s/70’s <i>Rachel, Rachel*</i> | H, 8-9 Week Eight Reading Quiz #5 |
| 9 – March 18 | Films of the 70’s/80’s <i>An Unmarried Woman*</i> | Week Nine Reading Quiz#6 |
| 10 – March 25 | Gender & Relationship <i>Passion Fish*</i> | Week Ten Readings Quiz #7 |
| 11 – April 1 | Gender and Values <i>Antonia’s Line*</i> | Quiz #8 |

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| 12 – April 8 | Gender & Power <i>TBD</i> | Week Thirteen Readings Quiz #9 |
| 13 – April 15 | Group Presentations | |
| 14 – April 22 | Group Presentations | |
| 15 – April 29 | Group Presentations | Film Review Final Exam |

* These films need to be viewed BEFORE each class.

