

# WGSS 250

## Media Representations of Women, Men, and Sexuality

MWF 11:00-11:50

LA 138

### Instructor Information:

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| 3. Office Hours: MWF 12-1, T 11-12, R 11-11:30,<br>and by app't                            | 3. Office Hours: MW 9:30-11, R 9-12  |
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### Required Texts:

1. *Feminism and Pop Culture* by Andi Zeisler (Seal Press, 2008)
2. *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader* (4th Edition), ed. Gail Dines and Jean M. Humiez (Sage Publications, 2014)
3. Additional readings available on Moodle

### Course Description:

This course is intended to be a survey introduction to a variety of issues related to gender and sexuality in the mass media. The goal of the course is to familiarize students with the breadth of these issues while at the same time providing tools to critically analyze and engage modern media. The course will focus largely on mass mediated forms such as television, film, music, sports, news, advertising and new media. An underlying understanding within the course is a recognition of the inextricable interconnections between gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation and so forth. Therefore, the course is invested in exploring the ways in which differences in identity produce different mediated representations and experiences of media.

The course will be comprised largely of class discussions based on readings, class presentations, and viewing and interpreting various mediated texts and documentaries. The course readings are both practical and theoretical, and while many of them focus on specific case studies, they are intended to provoke thoughtfulness in each student such that it can be applied to a variety of media.

This course may be used as part of the Minor and Major in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. If you enjoy this course and would like to know more about the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, please contact me or drop by the WGSS Office, LA 138A-B, or visit the [Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Website](#).

### Learning Objectives

1. Learn to critically examine media representations and their role in shaping, reinforcing, or challenging our concepts of sexuality and gender.
2. Acquire skills to analyze sexuality and gender issues in media organizations and understand diverse audiences' responses to media representations.
3. Learn about different theories and approaches to doing research on sexuality, gender, and the mass media.
4. Develop the ability to speak and write honestly, sensitively, and critically about sexuality and gender.
5. Understand that media content is produced within particular social, political, and cultural contexts.

### Methods:

This class is not a lecture course. It is a reading and discussion course. I will present certain background information to provide you with a context for your readings, discussions, and writings. I will propose my own interpretations of the texts we read and the topics we discuss, but you are not expected to accept these interpretations blindly. Each reader

brings his or her own experiences to a literary text. If you disagree with my reading of a text, you should feel free to say so. Your active participation is essential and counts as part of your grade.

You will hear many different opinions and ideas during this course, some of which you may disagree with. I expect each student to respect the opinions and beliefs of his or her classmates and for the level of discourse in class to remain civil and academic. A failure to respect your classmates and/or the professor will have an adverse impact on your grade.

**Classroom Etiquette:**

Students should arrive on time and not leave until class is over. All cell phones must be turned off. Students may use laptop computers to take notes. Students should not text while in class, and internet use is limited to topics related to discussion topics. Any use of cell phones or other electronics during class to text, check social media, etc. will result in the student being counted tardy for the first offense and absent for any subsequent violations of this policy.

**Attendance:**

This is a discussion course and attendance is required. After 2 unexcused absences, your participation grade will be lowered one notch for each subsequent absence (A to A-). An excess of 6 absences may result in an F in the course. A failure to prepare and participate may also be grounds for being counted absent. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Two tardies will equal one absence. There will be NO make-up assignments or late submission of homework for unexcused absences. If you are sick or have some other emergency, please contact me. Failure to attend the first two classes will result in the student being dropped.

**Trigger Warning:**

This course will touch on some difficult topics, including gender-based violence and sexual assault. You should feel free to talk to me about any issues you have with the topics we are discussing and ask for excused absences.

**Statement of Inclusivity and Diversity:**

This classroom is a hate-free zone, and is part of WGSS’s commitment to addressing and redressing racism, Islamophobia, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, anti-Blackness, and all systems of privilege and oppression in our classes, in our academic units, and in higher education.

**Assessment:**

1. Preparation and Participation: 10%
2. Moodle Discussions: 20%
3. Class Presentation: 5%
4. Major Project: 40% (20% for each component)
5. Journals: 25%

**Grading Scale:**

Percentage	Grade
93-100%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
67-69%	D+
63-66%	D
60-62%	D-
59% and below	F



**Preparation and Participation:**

This is not a lecture course. It is a course that requires your active participation. Coming to class prepared (i.e. having read all material, written your reading journal, and prepared to participate in discussions) is essential and counts for a large percentage of your final grade. Participation does not merely mean responding when called upon but showing a willingness to raise your hand and enter discussions. Classroom work will include both general discussions and small group discussions. Quizzes on the readings and discussions may be given at the beginning of class as necessary. Attendance is required. You will be allowed two unexcused absences. Your final grade will be dropped one notch for each subsequent absence.

**Moodle Discussions:**

You will alternate weeks posting a piece of media related to that week's readings to the designated Moodle Discussion Forum by **Wednesday at midnight**. By **Friday 10am**, all students must reply to two of your classmates' media postings with a brief reaction/analysis of the posted media. Replies should be at least 5 sentences in length and must provide analysis, not just a reaction to the posted media. A reading about Educationally Valuable Postings will be provided.

**Class Presentation:**

Related to the Moodle Discussions, you will choose one week to present your media posting to the class on Friday with a brief analysis and explanation of how it relates to the readings. A sign-up sheet will be distributed the first week of class.

**Major Project:**

- **Research Component:** Deconstructing Media Messages. You will choose five pieces of media to deconstruct using advanced deconstruction questions. A handout will be provided. You will submit a 5-7 page, double-spaced paper deconstructing your media.
- **Creative Component:** Creating Counter Ads. As a follow-up to the research component of this project, you will create a series of five counter examples for your chosen media.

**Journals:**

This course will raise many questions in your minds. It may challenge your personal opinions, and at times it may outrage you. Your reading journal is a place to share the questions, thoughts, and reactions you have to the readings, discussions, and media viewings. It will give you an outlet to express your opinions, always maintaining an academic voice (i.e. no text speak or overly informal writing). You should write one page per week about topics related to the readings, discussions, or media viewings. Entries must be typed and double-spaced. Entries may be submitted in class or uploaded to Moodle by class time every Friday, unless otherwise indicated. Uploaded files must be in one of the following formats: .rtf, .doc, .docx, .pdf.

**Disability Accommodations:**

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments (Subject to Change)

(FPC=Feminism and Pop Culture; Reader=Gender, Race, and Class in Media)

### Week 1: Intro and Background

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>In Class Films/Viewings</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
August 29	Introduction to Course Background: What is Media? What is Feminism?	<i>Advertising and the End of the World</i> (1998)		
August 31	Intersectionality; Pop Culture; Postfeminism		<b>FPC</b> Prologue and Ch. 1 <b>Reader:</b> Part I Intro, pp 1-6 Kellner, "Cultural Studies," pp 7-18 Lull, "Hegemony," 39-42 Bellamy, et al, "Internet's Unholy Marriage," 43-50	Moodle Postings
September 2	Making Change	<i>Miss Representation</i>	<b>Moodle Readings :</b> --Miss Representation Website and Resources --"Generation M2" --Gender Stereotypes in TV and Film <b>Reader:</b> Murray, 285-296	Journal 1

### Week 2: Making Change

September 5	<b>No Class--Labor Day</b>			
September 7	Making Change	<i>Miss Representation</i>	<b>Moodle</b> Gill, "Postfeminist Media Culture" "What if we judged sexist sports coverage as an Olympic sport"	Moodle Postings
September 9	Making Change	<i>The Mask You Live In</i>	<b>Moodle:</b> Sweney, "Unilever vows to drop sexist stereotypes from its ads"	Journal 2

### Week 3: 1920s-1990s

September 12	Feminist History of Pop Culture: 1920s-1960s		<b>FPC</b> Chapter 2 <b>Reader:</b> Lipsitz, "Meaning of Memory," pp 20-27	
September 14	1960s-1980s		<b>FPC</b> Chapter 3 <b>Reader:</b> Ouellette, pp 258-270	Moodle Postings
September 16	1990s		<b>FPC</b> Chapter 4 <b>Reader:</b> Jenkins, pp 69-77	Journal 3

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>In Class Films/Viewings</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>Week 4: 1990s-Today</b>				
September 19	1990s-2000s		<b>Moodle:</b> Buffy and Xena Articles: choose 3	
September 21	Today	<i>Magazines</i>	<b>FPC</b> Chapter 5 <b>Reader:</b> Palmer, pp 51-57	Moodle Postings
September 23	Media Today: Theory	<i>The Codes of Gender Identity and Performance in Pop Culture</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Croteau, et al, "Economics," 28-38 Warner, 194-202, Jhally, 246-250	Journal 4
<b>Week 5: Media Today</b>				
September 26	Media Today, continued		<b>Reader:</b> Schor, 251-257 Steinem, 271-277 Butsch, 507-516	
September 28	Media Today, continued		<b>Reader:</b> Fuchs, 594-599 Jenkins, 587-593	Moodle Postings
September 30	Male Gaze and Sexual Subjectification		<b>Reader:</b> Gill, 278-284 Tait, 556-564 <b>Moodle:</b> --Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"	Journal 5
<b>Week 6: Masculinity</b>				
October 3	Constructions of Dominant Masculinity	<i>Tough Guise 2</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Katz, 157-162	
October 5	Constructions of Dominant Masculinity		<b>Reader:</b> Nylund, 227-240	Moodle Postings
October 7	Constructions of Masculinity	<i>Game Over: Gender, Race &amp; Violence in Video Games</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Sanbonmatsu, 473-483 <b>Moodle:</b> Beres, "Leading Women Are Becoming Less Sexualized in Video Games, Study Finds" Lynch, et al, "Sexy, Strong, and Secondary"	Journal 6
<b>Week 7: Masculinity</b>				
October 10	Constructions of Masculinity	<i>Not Just a Game</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Schut, 484-490 Nakamura, 620-626	
October 12	Constructions of Non-Hegemonic Masculinity	<i>Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Hall, 104-107	Moodle Postings

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>In Class Films/Viewings</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
			David, 187-193 Rose, 386-391	
October 14	Constructions of Non-Hegemonic Masculinity		<b>Reader:</b> Drew, 167-174 Smith, 524-535 Wang, 536-544	Journal 7
<b>Week 8: Pornography</b>				
October 17	Pornography		<b>Moodle Readings:</b> --Marcotte, "Larry Flynt, Hugh Hefner, and Bob Guccione" --Carillo-Gailey, excerpt from <i>Pornology</i> --Ciclitra, "Pornography, Women and Feminism" --Frank, "This is What a Feminist Porn Magazine Looks Like"	<b>Media Project due (Midterm)</b>
October 19	Pornography		<b>Reader:</b> Dines, 366-372 Caputi, 373-385	Moodle Postings
October 21	Pornography		<b>Reader:</b> McKay et al, 118-127	Journal 8
<b>Week 9: Dominant Sexuality</b>				
October 24	Constructions of Dominant Sexuality		<b>Moodle</b> Valenti, excerpt from <i>The Purity Myth</i>	
October 26	Constructions of Dominant Sexuality	<i>Purity Myth</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Petersen, 342-353 Collins et al, 354-365	Moodle Postings
October 28	Constructions of Dominant Sexuality		<b>Reader:</b> Radway, pp 58-68	Journal 9
<b>Week 10: Non-Hegemonic Sexualities</b>				
October 31	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities	<i>Further off the straight and narrow: new gay visibility in television 1998-2006</i>	<b>Moodle</b> Streitmatter, excerpt from <i>From Perverts to Fab Five</i> <b>Reader:</b> Booth, 409-418	
October 31	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities			
November 2	<b>No Class—DiverseU</b>	You must attend 1 DiverseU session	<b>Reader:</b> Rogers, 128-131 Siebler, 132-142 Padva, 203-209	Moodle Postings
November 4	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities			Journal 10

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>In Class Films/Viewings</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
November 7	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities		<b>Reader:</b> Han, 220-226 Farrell, 464-472	
November 9	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities		<b>Moodle Readings</b> <b>Reader:</b> Clarkson, 391-397 Kessler, 600-609 Moore, 210-219	Moodle Postings
November 11	<b>No Class – Veteran’s Day</b>			
November 14	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities		<b>Reader:</b> Ng, 610-619	Journal 11
November 16	Non-Hegemonic Sexualities		<b>Reader:</b> Brookey, et al, 398-408	Moodle Postings
November 18	Constructions of Femininity	<i>Killing Us Softly 4</i>	<b>Moodle</b> Excerpt from <i>The Beauty Myth</i> <b>Reader:</b> Lee, et al, 143-156 Cuklanz, et al, 175-186 Fairclough, 297-305 Dines, 433-440	Journal 12
<b>Week 13: Femininity and Thanksgiving</b>				
November 21	Constructions of Femininity		<b>Reader:</b> Shome, 108-117 Cole, et al, 648-656	
November 23	Thanksgiving			
November 25	Thanksgiving			
<b>Week 14: Femininity</b>				
November 28	Constructions of Femininity	<i>Generation M: Misogyny in Media and Culture</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Goldman, 441-448 Durham, 455-463	
November 30	Constructions of Femininity	<i>Playing Unfair: The Media Image of the Female Athlete</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Rahman, et al, 318-236 Bertozi, 491-502	Moodle Postings
December 2	Constructions of Femininity		<b>Moodle:</b> Excerpts from Pipher, <i>Reviving Ophelia</i> ; Martin, <i>Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters</i>	Journal 13



<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>In Class Films/Viewings</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>Week 15: Media and Childhood</b>				
December 5	Constructions of Femininity	<i>Reviving Ophelia</i>	<b>Moodle</b> Levy, excerpt from <i>Female Chauvinist Pigs</i>	
December 7	Media and Childhood	<i>Consuming Kids: The Commercialization of Childhood</i>	<b>Reader:</b> Intro, 419-422 Lemish, 423-432	Moodle Postings
December 9	Media and Childhood	<i>Mickey Mouse Monopoly</i>	<b>Reader :</b> Artz, 449-454	
December 12	Media and Childhood			Journal 14

**Wednesday, December 14 at 8am: Creative Project Due during Final Exam time**

**(Students will present final projects during this time)**