Women’s Studies 7740
Theorizing Gender Representation, Spring 2013
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Office hours: Tues. 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

This course introduces students to feminist theoretical work on the representation of gender/race/class/sexualities in visual and narrative culture and to methodologies for analysis. Our topics will include autobiography, visual culture, and postfeminism. This class will be conducted as a seminar, structured by discussion, with occasional mini-lectures as needed.

Students who need to have an accommodation for disability are responsible for contacting the professor as soon as possible. The Office for Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall; 292-3307; 292-0901 TDD) verifies the need for accommodations and assists in the development of accommodation strategies.

Required texts (at SBX only):


Online texts (Web E-books through OSU library):

**Required outside screenings:** These DVDs can be streamed from drm.osu.edu, but I recommend Netflix or your local library for a better and more reliable screening.

*I’m the One That I Want* (Cho, 2000)
*Rebecca* (Hitchcock, 1940)
*Out of Sight* (Soderberg, 1998) (streamable on Netflix and Amazon)

**Essays on Carmen:**

Requirements and assignments:

1) Attendance, engaged participation, and daily discussion questions: As with any graduate seminar, you are responsible for attending every class and engaging in the discussion. For each reading, please bring to class a written discussion question about a concept or passage from the text that you think should be complicated, explicated, or otherwise analyzed. Expect to be called on. Because I am assigning a grade for participation, please be courteous in giving your colleagues in the seminar an opportunity to make thoughtful responses. Even though this is a small class, raise your hand and wait to be called on. Your participation grade will reflect your oral responses but also the quality and thoughtfulness of your written questions. Participation is 10% of final grade.

2) Short response paper (2 pp. double spaced) and leadership of the first hour of class discussion: On the first day of class, you’ll sign up to be responsible for presenting a short paper responding to the day’s readings and leading the first hour of class discussion. These slots are marked on the syllabus as “Respondent/discussion leader.” The paper can make connections, explore and complicate one or more issues, or make an application to a text. Email your response paper to me by 8 p.m. the night before class so I can post it on Carmen and everyone can read it before class time. In class, please sum up the main points of your paper and use them to launch discussion. Short paper and leading discussion are 20% of final grade.

3) Two short analysis papers (2 pp. double-spaced):

These short papers on The Cancer Journals (due Jan. 31) and a film (due March 7/8) are exercises in applying a theoretical approach we have discussed in class.
• For the Lorde book, focus on one or two passages or episodes and show how they can be interrogated, complicated, or opened by way of one of the theories we have been exploring. This is an exercise in close reading through autobiographical theory. Your “pay-off” statement should explain why this particular theory offers us a significant insight into this memoir.
• For the film analysis, choose I’m the One that I Want, Rebecca, or Out of Sight and write a short paper explaining how this text can be explicated through a theoretical framework not covered in the class readings about the text you chose. (That is, your choices for frameworks are narrative theory, psychoanalytic theory, or analysis of performance and stardom. Because our readings on Rebecca are extensively psychoanalytic, this film is not an option for a psychoanalytic-theory paper. Ditto star/performance theory for Out of Sight.) The point of this exercise is to have you apply a theory to a text on your own. For a paper this short, you will not be able to do an in-depth analysis of the entire film/performance. Instead, think of this paper as a...
two-page introduction to a longer paper. Your introduction should persuade readers, by pointing to specifics in the visual text and in the theoretical apparatus, that your approach can yield an insightful interpretation. Please quote at least one of the theorists we have read in class. If you choose to use star/performance theory, you will need to use some preliminary additional research.

- Use the documentation style you know best, so long as you use it consistently. In the Humanities, the styles most often used are MLA and Chicago.
- Bring a paper copy of the essay to class. Each paper is 15% of final grade.

4) Final paper: 15-20 pp. due April 25

Your paper should draw on the theories and methods we have discussed in class in order to focus on a text or issue in visual/narrative/digital culture. On the last day of class, April 18, each of you will present a ten-minute version of your paper (5 pages), conference style, to the class. Think of this presentation as a draft for which you can get feedback from the class.

Your paper proposal containing a one-paragraph description of your project, your research questions, your methodology, and a beginning bibliography of at least 5 items, is due April 4. The paper proposal will be graded and is 10% of your final grade.

For your research, I recommend the following databases: Academic Search Premiere, Academic Search Complete, Communication & Mass Media Complete, Gender Studies, GLBT Life With Full Text, MLA Bibliography, and the Film-Television Literature Index.

Research format: You may use either Chicago or MLA style for your papers.

Final paper is 30% of final grade.

SCHEDULE: (essays are on Carmen except for book or book chapters as noted)

I. Self-representation

Jan 10 Feminist readings/textual study; in-class exercises

Jan. 17 Theories of autobiography
Scott, “Evidence of Experience”
Benstock, “Authorizing the Autobiographical”
Perreault, “Autobiography/Transformation”
Gilmore, “Autobiographics”

Jan. 24 Respondent and discussion leader:
Assigned outside screening: I’m the One that I Want
McKay, “The Narrative Self”
Kaplan, “Resisting Autobiography”
Smith, “Autobiographical Manifestos”
Bacalzo, “The One That She Wants”
Jan. 31  
**Paper I due: Lorde, Cancer Journals**

Feb. 7  
**Gender and Visual Culture**  
LaTorre, “Gender, Indigenism”  
Crow, Visible Signs, 10-174  
Guest: Guisela LaTorre, first hour of class

Feb. 14  
**Feminist narratology**  
Bechdel, Fun House  
Warhol, “A Feminist Approach” and “The Space Between”  
Guest: Robyn Warhol, last hour of class

Feb. 20:  
*Everyone is invited to a Skype session with Tania Modleski on postfeminism and chickflicks hosted By Prof. Dana Renga in French & Italian. Details forthcoming.*

II. Media Representations

Feb. 21  
Respondent and discussion leader:  
**Assigned outside screening: Hitchcock, Rebecca (1940)**  

Feb. 28  
Respondent and discussion leader:  
**Assigned outside screening: Soderbergh, Out of Sight (1998)**  
Ovalle, “Mobilizing the Latina Myth” and  
“Jennifer Lopez and Racial Mobility” (from Ovalle’s book online)  
Beltran, “Mas Macha”

4 p.m. *WGSS grad Lakesia Johnson (Ph.D 2008) will speak about her book, Iconic: Decoding Images of the Revolutionary Black Woman, at the Ohio Union, Traditions Room*

March 7  
**Paper II due as a draft in class with final version emailed to me by the end of day, March 8.** I will be at the SCMS conference on class day, so please use class time as the opportunity to present a draft and get feedback for revision.  
In-class screening: Twilight: Los Angeles 1992 (2001) in preparation for Itagaki class on March 21

**SPRING BREAK**
March 21  Lynn Itagaki, “Witnessing and Performances of Proximity” (Carmen)
Prof. Itagaki will be with us for the first hour of the class.

III. Postfeminism and Technologies of the Self

March 7  Respondent and discussion leader:
**Postfeminism Part One**
Negra, *What a Girl Wants*

March 21  Respondent and discussion leader:
**Postfeminism Part Two**
Radner, 1-25; 190-97 (from Radner’s online book)

March 28  Respondent and discussion leader:
Weber, Chaps. 3, 4, 5 and Conclusion

April 4  Respondent and discussion leader:
Nakamura, *Digitizing Race*, Intro. and Chapters 1, 2, 3
**Paper Proposals due**

April 11  Respondent and discussion leader:
Nakamura, Chaps. 4, 5, and epilogue

April 18  In-class conference: ten-minute versions of your final paper

April 25  Final papers due by 4:30 p.m., my mailbox in 286 Univ. Hall

**Plagiarism:** As defined in University Rule 3335-31-02, plagiarism is “the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas.” It is the obligation of this department and its instructors to report all cases of suspected plagiarism to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. After the report is filed, a hearing takes place and if the student is found guilty, the possible punishment ranges from failing the class to suspension or expulsion from the university. Although the existence of the Internet makes it relatively easy to plagiarize, it also makes it even easier for instructors to find evidence of plagiarism. It is obvious to most teachers when a student turns in work that is not his or her own and plagiarism search engines make documenting the offense very simple. Always cite your sources’ always ask questions **before** you turn in an assignment if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism. To preserve the integrity of OSU as an institution of higher learning, to maintain your own integrity, and to avoid jeopardizing your future, **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!**