

**University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film**

Communication and Media Studies COMS 479 L01

Feminist Media Studies

Winter 2019

Thursday, January 10 – Thursday, April 11 (excluding February 17 - 24)

Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00AM – 12:15PM

Room: Studio B, Taylor Institute

Instructor: Dr. Jessalynn Keller
Office: SS 304
Office Phone: 403-220-8728
Email: Jessalynn.keller@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Mondays 3PM – 5PM

Teaching Assistant: Nicolette Little: nicolette.little@ucalgary.ca (office hours TBA, on D2L)

Course Description: This course introduces students to the critical perspectives and practices of feminist studies of media cultures. As an interdisciplinary field, we will employ insights from cultural studies, film and television studies, women's and gender studies, queer studies, disability studies, and critical race studies to interrogate the ways in which gendered, racialized and sexualized subjectivities are produced, circulated and consumed through (primarily) North American media cultures. A range of media texts, including television shows, films, music videos, 'zines, selfies, and celebrities will be used as case studies to explore the relationship between power, media, and our identities. Additionally, the course will teach students to critically assess feminist media studies as a politicized practice, and students will reflect on the politics of doing feminist research in the field of media studies.

Additional Information:

We are fortunate to be able to use the Taylor Institute resources for this course. In following the Taylor Institute's emphasis on inquiry-based and experimental student-centered learning, this class is premised on the active participation of students. As such, regular attendance is expected and is essential for success in this course.

During the course of the semester we will be discussing difficult topics, including sexual violence, racism, and other types of oppression. Please see the professor if you require assistance in dealing with this material.

Objectives of the Course: By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Understand the history of feminist media studies as an evolving scholarly field
- Articulate key theoretical and methodological frameworks for studying media cultures from a feminist perspective
- Analyze the ways in which gendered, racialized and sexualized subjectivities are produced, circulated and consumed through media cultures
- Interrogate the ways in which their own identities shape their engagement with media culture
- Develop both verbal and written analytic skills needed for advanced undergraduate study

Textbooks and Readings: There is no primary textbook for this course. Reading will be posted on D2L and should be read **prior** to the lecture for which they are assigned.

Internet and electronic communication device information: I encourage you to bring your laptop or tablet to lectures and labs for note-taking purposes. Occasionally, you may be asked to use your device for an in-class exercise. However, students who are distracting their peers through the use of their computer/tablet/phone for purposes not related to class will be asked to leave.

****No audio or video recording of any kind is allowed in class without the permission of the professor****

Email policy: Before emailing me, please check that the answer to your question is not in the course syllabus! I aim to answer all email inquiries as soon as possible, but will not reply to emails in the evening or over the weekend. When sending me an email, please specify what course you are in (COMS 479) and include a clear statement of purpose in the subject line. Always be professional and courteous in your emails to me and your teaching assistants. If you want to discuss an assignment or a concern about the course I prefer to meet in person during office hours, as these meetings are often more fruitful than a lengthy email exchange. I encourage you to use my office hours, and hope to meet many of you there throughout the semester.

Respect and Diversity in the Classroom: This course is built around student participation. Lecture periods often contain opportunity for student contributions and I welcome your insightful comments (based on course materials) and questions. During these discussion periods I ask that students be respectful of diverse viewpoints; however, racist, sexist, homophobic, Islamophobic, and other types of discriminatory comments are not permitted in the classroom. Comments of this nature will be dealt with at the professor's discretion on an individual basis.

On pronouns: I respect all students' choice of pronouns. Please alert me to your pronoun and I am happy to oblige.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Weight	Course components	Due
10%	Participation Students are required to participate in daily class discussions, demonstrating a familiarity with the assigned readings and course concepts. Additionally, students are expected to fully engage in group activities and projects (both in class and outside) in order to be successful in this course.	Weekly in class
15%	Feminist Podcast/Website Group Presentation In groups of five, students will research and review a feminist podcast/website, presenting their findings to the class in a 10-minute presentation. Further information about this assignment will be distributed in the first week of class.	As assigned
30%	Midterm Exam Students will have 75 minutes to complete an in-class exam, which will cover all material up to and including class on February 14. More information about the format of the exam will be provided in class.	February 26
25%	Group 'Zine Project Students will work in groups of five to produce a research-informed 'zine (10-15 pages), which will address course concepts and engage feminist media critique. As part of this assignment, each group will sell their 'zine at the class 'zine fair on April 9, which will be open to the university community. More information about this assignment will be provided in early February.	April 9
20%	'Zine Reflection Paper (individually written) Each student will be responsible for an individually-written paper that "fleshes out" some of the key themes and issues raised in their group zine. As part of this paper, students will also reflect on their own experience producing the 'zine and engaging in feminist media critique.	April 11

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: Assignments must be submitted in hard copy directly to the professor in lecture. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous

day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. **Please note that assignments will not be accepted via email unless permission on an individual basis is granted from the professor.**

Please include your name, ID number, and the instructor's name on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. Please see: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments: Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. This includes weekends (e.g. if an assignment is due Thursday and you submit it on Monday you will be penalized four grades).

Late work will not be accepted one week past the original deadline without appropriate documentation (I.e. doctor's note). Late work will not receive written feedback.

Student Accommodations and Deferrals: Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or for another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, please see the following:

- Section N.1 of the *University Calendar*: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html>
- FAQs for Students at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq>

Note that when accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to that of another assignment or test.

For information on deferrals, see the following sections in the *University Calendar*:

- Section G.7 Deferral of Term Work at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>
- Section G.6 Deferral of Final Exam at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

Writing Skills Statement: Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but

also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented using APA style. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film:

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, percentage grades will be used for quizzes, tests and assignments.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* *
4.00	Outstanding performance	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	F	0 - 49.99%	0%

Plagiarism: Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original

wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct: For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics: Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students:

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/

	http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.

Schedule of Readings and Topics

Thursday, January 10: Introduction to course

- No reading

Tuesday, January 15: Feminisms: Then and Now

- Rachel Fudge – Everything you always wanted to know about feminism but were afraid to ask
- Brittny Cooper – Strong female leads

PART 1: TEXTS: REPRESENTATIONS FROM BECHDEL TO THE GAZE

Thursday, January 17: Texts and Representations: Past, Present, Future

- Rosalind Gill – Gender and the Media

Tuesday, January 22: The Male Gaze

- Laura Mulvey – Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema
- GROUP #1 PRESENTATION

Thursday, January 24: Representing “Otherness”

- Stuart Hall – The Whites of Their Eyes
- Patricia Hill Collins – Get Your Freak On: Sex, Babies, and Images of Black Femininity

PART 2: AUDIENCES: PLEASURE, RESISTANCE, ACTIVISM

Tuesday, January 29: Audiences and Pleasure

- Janice Radway – Women Read the Romance
- Kristen Warner – ABC's *Scandal* and Black Women's Fandom

- GROUP #2 PRESENTATION

Thursday, January 31: Identification and Queering Audience Desires

- Summer Kim Lee – Too Close, Too Compromised: Killing Eve and the Promise of Sandra Oh

- GROUP #3 PRESENTATION

Tuesday, February 5: In-class screening of *Don't Need You: Herstory of Riot Grrrl* (2005, Dir. Kerri Koch)

- Mary Kearney – Brought to You By Girl Power

- GROUP #4 PRESENTATION

Thursday, February 7: Producing Resistant Media

- Kristen Schilt – I'll Resist with Every Inch and Every Breath
- Paula Mejia – Rookie brought the inclusive spirit of zines to the internet era

PART 3: MEDIA INDUSTRIES AND WOMEN'S LABOUR

Tuesday, February 12: Making Space for Women in Games

- Alison Harvey and Stephanie Fisher – Making a Name in Games: Immaterial Labour, Indie Game Design, and Gendered Social Network Markets

- GROUP #5 PRESENTATION

Thursday, February 14: Instagram Famous? Gendered and Racialized Digital Labour

- Brooke Erin Duffy – Gendering the Labour of Social Media Production
- Christine Bacareza Balance – How It Feels To Be Viral Me: Affective Labour and Asian American YouTube Performance

- GROUP #6 PRESENTATION

Tuesday, February 19: NO CLASS – READING BREAK

Thursday, February 21: NO CLASS – READING BREAK

Tuesday, February 26: MIDTERM EXAM (75 minutes)

- No reading

Thursday, February 28: 'Zine Workshop #1

- No reading

PART 4: POSTFEMINIST MEDIA CULTURES: BODIES, VISIBILITIES, AGENCY

Tuesday, March 5: Postfeminism

- Angela McRobbie – Postfeminism and Popular Culture

Thursday, March 7: Surveilled Bodies

- Rachel E. Dubrofsky and Megan Wood – Gender, Race, and Authenticity: Celebrity Women Tweeting for the Gaze
- GROUP #7 PRESENTATION

Tuesday, March 12: Diversity and Post-Girl Power Femininities

- Sandrina de Finney – Playing Indian and Other Settler Stories: Disrupting Western Narratives of Indigenous Girlhood
- GROUP #8 PRESENTATION

Thursday, March 14: 'Zine Workshop #2

- No reading

PART 5: MEDIATED FEMINISMS

Tuesday, March 19: Popular Feminism in the 1970s: *Yours in Sisterhood* (2018, Dir. Irene Lusztig) in-class screening

- Amy Erdman Farrell – Like a Tarantula on a Banana Boat: The Origins of *Ms.* Magazine

Thursday, March 21: Popular Feminism in the 1970s Continued

- No reading
- GROUP #9 PRESENTATION

Tuesday, March 26: Millennium Feminisms: *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* in-class screening

- Elana Levine – Buffy and the New Girl Order

Thursday, March 28: Popular Feminism(s)/Popular Misogyny Today

- Sarah Banet-Weiser – Popular Misogyny: A Zeitgeist
- GROUP #10 PRESENTATION

Tuesday, April 2: Digital Feminisms

- Sujata Moorti – Indignant Feminism
- Carrie Rentschler – Bystander Intervention, Feminist Hashtag Activism, and the Anti-Carceral Politics of Care

Thursday, April 4: Mediated Feminism Show-and-Tell

- No reading
- Please bring to class an example of mediated feminism, we will be discussing and analyzing these objects/texts in class

Tuesday, April 9: 'ZINE FAIR

- No reading
- 'Zine due

Thursday, April 11: LAST CLASS

- No reading
- 'Zine reflection paper due in hard copy