

**Women's Studies WMST339 Lec.60**  
**Gender in Popular Culture**  
**Summer 2013**  
**M/W/F 12:30-14:20 PF118**  
**(no class Heritage Day August 5)**

**Instructor:** Christine Mains  
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**Web Page:** Blackboard  
**Office Hours:** M/W 3-4:30pm

### **Course Description**

Popular culture is not only entertainment, but also a powerful force in society, providing representations, messages, images, and ideas about gender identities. In this course, we will think critically and analytically about alternative constructions of femininity and masculinity, drawing from a variety of cultural forms, including film, video, popular music, television, advertising, and the internet. Through lectures, class discussions, written assignments, presentations, and class activities we will work to critique the popular representations that shape our beliefs about gender.

### **Objectives of the Course**

- To develop strong critical thinking and analytical skills in order to assess popular culture.
- To gain a historical perspective on popular culture and on representations of gender.
- To examine the ways popular culture simultaneously establishes, reinforces and challenges gender stereotypes.

### **Textbook and Readings**

Milestone, Katie and Anneke Meyer, *Gender & Popular Culture*, Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2012.

Students will also be expected to do substantial reading of articles and blogs in addition to assigned readings from the textbook. A schedule of readings, based on the three parts of the textbook, will be posted regularly through Blackboard announcements; students should make a habit of checking Blackboard twice a week. Students should also feel free to suggest additional readings or questions for Blackboard's Discussion Boards

## Assignments and Evaluation

Participation	throughout	10%
Proposal for Research Paper	July 8	5%
Personal Essay	July 12	20%
Research Paper	August 2	30%
Presentation	Aug. 7-14	15%
Final Take-Home Exam	August 16	20%

**All written assignments will be submitted through Digital Dropbox on Blackboard.** All written assignments will be submitted and returned through Digital Dropbox on Blackboard. No assignments will be submitted in hardcopy, whether handed to the instructor, dropped at the main office, or slid under office doors, nor will assignments be accepted through email attachment. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment, and to check email regularly for notices of missing assignments. All assignments must be submitted, or a grade of F may be assigned at the instructor's discretion.

### **Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO**

**Participation:** Students are expected to participate fully in the class discussion both in the classroom and through Blackboard's Discussion Board, and serving as audience for presentations. In order to participate, students must attend class; occasional absence for illness or emergency is unlikely to affect the grade, but repeated absence for work or other commitments probably will.

**Proposal for Research Paper:** This assignment consists of a few paragraphs explaining the chosen research paper topic along with a working thesis statement, and an annotated bibliography of 5-6 potential secondary sources.

**Personal Essay:** This assignment is an essay of ~1000 words, requiring no secondary research or use of sources other than the student's experience.

**Research Paper:** This assignment is a researched essay of 2000-3000 words, requiring research into secondary sources on theories and topics discussed in class. In their research, students will be expected to go beyond the readings in order to develop a fuller understanding of a particular topic. All sources must be properly cited, and the research paper must be well organized and well edited.

**Presentation:** Students will choose from one of two options: a) A brief presentation of the findings of the Research Paper assignment or b) A brief presentation on an entirely new topic unrelated to the Research Paper assignment, which may take the form of a creative work.

**Take-home Exam:** Questions for the take-home exam will be based on class discussion following the presentations. Students will choose from a set of questions, and will write short essay responses illustrating their understanding of the questions with examples. While students will have access to their readings, notes, and returned assignments, and will be able to make use

of their own computer technology in completing the exam, they are not expected to write more than would be required in a typical sit-down final exam.

### **Policy for Late Assignments**

Assignments are due through Digital Dropbox on the stated due date. Assignments may be submitted after the deadline only with the emailed permission of the instructor, and may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

### **Writing Skills Statement**

All written assignments (including 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. Research papers must be properly documented, using either MLA or APA style correctly and consistently.

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 System**

In this class, you will receive grades in the 4-point GPA scale *rather than* percentages.

	Grading Scale	GPA
A+	96-100	4.0
A	90-95.99	4.0
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3.0
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2.0
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1.0
F	0-49	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. Readers must be able to tell

exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

Students may use laptops to take notes, but not to do any other personal work (such as Facebook or checking email) in order not to distract other students. At no time may students use cell phones for any reason whatsoever.

### **Ethics**

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site: <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics> or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

### **Academic Misconduct**

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link; <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

### **Academic Accommodation Policy**

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course. For further information, please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/46>

### **Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points**

Please note the evacuation points for this particular classroom. All classrooms on campus exit to specific places in case of emergency. The emergency assembly points differ depending upon where your classroom is located. For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

### **"SAFEWALK" Program**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 403-220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

**Students' Union**

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

**Student Ombudsman**

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by using their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam.

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.