TOWSON UNIVERSITY FALL 2019

EMF 205.001 GENDER IN FILM & MEDIA

Lecture/Discussion: *MON/WED* 2:00pm-3:15pm, Media Center 201

Screenings: *THURSDAYS*
3:30-5:30 PM, Van Bokkelen 204 (auditorium)

Instructor: Dr. Michael S. Duffy
Contact: mduffy@towson.edu
Office: Media Center 105

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 12:30pm-2:00pm and by appointment

Course description:
This class will explore historical and contemporary treatment of gender issues in film and media, from silent movies to contemporary storytelling. We will examine some major trends in related film theory and analysis since the late 1960’s, and look critically at images of gender produced by Hollywood, independent, and international filmmakers, all the while, asking the question… “Who is Madeleine?” (You’ll know what I mean when we get there.)

Course Format:
The course will consist of lecture, discussion (hopefully lots!), and focus-film screenings.

Course Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss some of the ways in which group or “optimal” distinctiveness is defined in social contexts.
2. Demonstrate understanding of a perspective other than their own (even if they are members of a group whose experience is emphasized in the course).
3. Present and respond to a position with which they differ in a fair and balanced argument.
4. Define at a general level some of the challenges and opportunities presented by the existence of diversity and difference.
5. Articulate their own outlook in relation to the topics discussed, and make explicit their associated beliefs and assumptions.

ALL REQUIRED READINGS are posted to Blackboard and should be read and reasonably interpreted for discussion by the date under which they appear on the syllabus. (Readings and supplemental video/articles are numbered on Blackboard by weeks and increments 1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.)
**Required Assignments:**

1. **Reading Quizzes:** At least two surprise quizzes or reading responses based on assigned readings and films will be given throughout the semester. These assessments will be given at the beginning of class, if a quiz. Anyone coming late to class will not be allowed to take the quiz and will receive a zero. (*Please be on time!*) Reading focus questions will also periodically be posted to Blackboard/PowerPoints. Students are asked to use these questions while reading to help them interact with the material and prepare for quizzes/exams or assigned written responses. Students will be responsible for class discussions based on these questions.

2. **Letter of Response (learning outcomes 2, 3, and 4):** Students will write a short “letter” responding to one of the films screened during the first half of the semester. Papers should address how said film and a chosen character utilizes non-classical techniques, and more importantly, why you might have felt that more traditional techniques are/were *inadequate* to represent the character’s perspective. What are the challenges the filmmakers saw in using *classical* form to express a *feminist* or *oppositional* voice? Even if you disagree with them, you’ll need to fully explain the position with support from films we’ve screened and/or outside examples. You also should be able to explain why you do or do not agree with their stance, and some possible solutions for positive change. More specific details will be provided.

3. **Research Paper (learning outcomes 1 and 5):** One 7-9 page essay will be submitted. The paper should focus on and apply at least one of the theories/approaches analyzed in class to a new text (film, television show, video game) by comparing and contrasting it with a text originally discussed in class. Proper citations of articles used in class and your own research are required. More specific details will be provided.

4. **Midterm and Final Exams (learning outcomes 1 and 3):** Two Exams will cover material presented in lectures, screenings and readings. Length and format will be discussed in class.

**Class/Campus Rules and Conduct:**

**Attendance/tardiness and class participation:** Students are expected to be in class and at all screenings. Attendance will be taken at each meeting, even if not noticeable. If you know you will be absent from a class ahead of time, you should contact me and provide reasonable documentation, if requested. Make-up exams will not be given without prior notice of an absence with a valid, documented excuse.
Civility –

All EMF students, staff, and faculty are committed to collegial and academic citizenship demonstrating high standards of humane, ethical, professional, and civil behavior in all interactions.

We need to be aware of the relationship between our personal conduct and the quality of campus life. What we do and say always has an effect on others, whether we see it or not. Civility means more than respecting campus facilities and grounds. Civility means consistently treating people with consideration and respect. It means being courteous, polite, and fair. It means recognizing diversity and honoring differing points of view. When our behavior is guided by concern for others in our community, we are being civil. Practicing civility requires thoughtful behavior and checking our assumptions and perceptions of others’ race, gender, culture, and belief systems.

Civility Code

EMF places a priority on learning. We value the inherent worth and dignity of every person, thereby fostering a community of mutual respect. Students have the right to a learning environment free of disruptive behaviors. Faculty have the right to define appropriate behavioral expectations in the classroom and expect students to abide by them. Faculty have the responsibility to manage and address classroom disruption. Staff have the right and responsibility to define appropriate behaviors necessary to conduct any university activity free of disruption or obstruction.

We believe that in order to achieve these ideals, all EMF students, staff, and faculty are expected to exhibit and practice civil behaviors that exemplify: (1) respecting faculty, staff, fellow students, guests, and all university property, policies, rules and regulations; (2) taking responsibility for one’s choices and actions; (3) delivering correspondence—whether verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic—with respectful language and in complete sentences; and (4) accepting consequences of one’s inappropriate choices and actions.

The use offensive, threatening or abusive language, writing, or behavior will not be tolerated and can lead to academic dismissal. Further information about civility can be found in Appendix F of the university catalog.

Demonstrating civility in the classroom as a student include:
  Being respectful of the professor and other students.
  Not texting or using cellular phones and other electronic devices.
  Not using your laptop for activities other than class work.
  NO computers/electronics during screenings.
  Not eating or drinking in class. (eating and drinking during the screenings is permitted)
  Not reading newspapers or listening to music during the class.
  Not sleeping in class.

Demonstrating civility in the classroom as a faculty member include:
  Being respectful of the students.
  Attempting to understand individual student needs and learning styles.
  Discussing civil behavioral expectations during the first class.
  Taking time to talk with students whose behaviors negatively affect the classroom.
  Encouraging students to follow your civil behavior.
EMF Policy about Multitasking in the Classroom

The EMF Department recognizes the utility of laptop computers and other electronic devices in the classroom, but only for academic purposes related to the course and under the direction of a faculty member to enhance learning. Student use of electronic devices for personal or other, non-course related activities, such as texting, e-mailing, Internet surfing, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, gaming, etc., is disruptive to fellow students, disrespectful to the professor, and detrimental to the student’s own academic performance.

Recent research findings indicate students who multitask perform significantly worse than do those who don’t multitask – with multitasking students performing at the same level as those who never come to class.

See some recent research linked here:


For these reasons, the Department of Electronic Media & Film fully supports faculty if they implement a course policy prohibiting or limiting the use of personal electronic devices in the classroom. The Department of Electronic Media & Film also fully supports any penalties, stated in the syllabus, assessed against students who violate the course policy.

My policy is:

Laptops are permitted if you have special accommodations, but discouraged otherwise. Please make every attempt to engage in class discussion and put away your phones for the duration. If you are distracting yourself or anyone else too much, I will take notice and your Attendance/Participation grade will be affected (possibly without even notifying you).

Weapons Policy:

To promote a safe and secure campus, Towson University prohibits the possession or control of any weapon while on University property. The term weapon includes any potentially dangerous object or substance or replica thereof. The full policy can be found at this link:

https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/documents/polices/06-01-11-weapons-prohibited.pdf

Emergency Text Alerts:

All students must sign up for the Campus Emergency Alert Text Message Notification System. Go to following link for instructions to do so:

http://www.towson.edu/publicsafety/notification/index.html
Submitting Assignments: All late assignments will be lowered by 5% per business day (a day begins at 12:00am) with a maximum penalty of 50%. This penalty may be waived in cases of illness or emergency documented to my satisfaction. Computer/technology problems are NOT necessarily valid excuses for late work. If you do not have reliable access to a computer (Towson’s campus is equipped with MANY open computers for general use), you should reconsider taking the course. **NO assignment will be accepted after 5:00 pm on Mon., December 9th (last day of Fall 2019 classes).**

Here are Blackboard tutorials, if you’re new to the system: [https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/students.html](https://www.towson.edu/technology/training/blackboard/students.html)

**Pre-existing factors:** Students cannot repeat a TU course more than once without the permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

If you have been diagnosed with a learning disability or you play for a Towson team you are required to inform me at the beginning of the semester.

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**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:**

While at Towson University, you are expected to pursue an academic career with honorable integrity and honesty.

You should review the University policy linked on-line at: [https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/documents/polices/03-01-00-student-academic-integrity-policy.pdf](https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/documents/polices/03-01-00-student-academic-integrity-policy.pdf)

You are expected to understand this document.

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated.

Anyone feeling that they still do not understand the policy or have specific questions should arrange to meet with me.

Anyone caught plagiarizing will automatically receive a grade of **F** on the assignment in question, and **may be given a failing grade for the course**.

Plagiarism is defined in Diana Hacker’s *A Pocket Style Manual* as follows: “(1) Failing to cite quotations or borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words.” Any suspicious phrases or passages of text will be checked through Google, “turnitin.com,” Amazon.com’s “Search Inside the Book” and other tools at our discretion.
Writing Resources:

You are expected to work on improving your writing about film during the course. You may meet individually with me to discuss your writing. Those desiring assistance outside of class may also benefit from using one of the following resources:

- **The Writing Support Program** helps native English speakers with sentence-level and grammar skills. Phone 410-704-3426 or to schedule an appointment. Liberal Arts 5330.  
  [http://www.towson.edu/cla/centers/writing/](http://www.towson.edu/cla/centers/writing/)
- **English Language Center** (for non-native English speakers):  
  [https://www.towson.edu/academics/international/english-language-center/](https://www.towson.edu/academics/international/english-language-center/)
- **Academic Achievement Center**: [http://www.towson.edu/aac/](http://www.towson.edu/aac/)

Grading:

It is possible to earn 500 pts. in this class weighted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Response</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>125 pts</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>125 pts</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>125 pts</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>500 pts</td>
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The following percentage scale will be used to assign the final grade (your total/500=%):

- 94-100 A
- 90-93 A-
- 87-89 B+
- 84-86 B
- 80-83 B-
- 77-79 C+
- 70-76 C
- 67-69 D+
- 60-66 D
- 59 or below
CLASS CALENDAR

Monday Aug. 26th, Wednesday Aug. 28th

Introductions, and...

1. The Love Witch (2016) screens Thursday, Aug. 29th @3:30pm in VB204

Readings:
Graeme Turner, “Film Languages” chapter
Also review: Heyward, “Key Concepts for Studying Gender” PowerPoint
+Three interviews/articles with Anna Biller on her film The Love Witch
(All of the above available on Blackboard)

Monday, Sept. 2nd: LABOR DAY – NO CLASSES

Wed. Sept. 4th (+ Screening Thursday, Sept. 5th)

2. It (1927): Clara Bow, “sex appeal” and the classical/silent “romantic comedy”
Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1.2 on Blackboard)
2.1 Sharot, “New Woman Star Personas and Cross-Class Romance Films in 1920s America”

Recommended:
2.2 Orgeron, “Making It in Hollywood: Clara Bow, Fandom and Consumer Culture”
2.3 Wagner, “Silent Comediennes and the Tragedy of Being Funny”
+ “How Women Worked in the US Silent Film Industry”

https://wfpp.cdrs.columbia.edu/essay/how-women-worked-in-the-us-silent-film-industry/
Sept. 9th, 11th (+ Screening Thurs. Sept. 12th)

3. **Cat People** (1942) 1940s America, film noir, xenophobia, wartime anxiety

Creed, “Horror and the Monstrous Feminine”

E. Ann Kaplan, “Race, Displacement and Metaphor in *Cat People*” from E. Ann Kaplan’s book *Women and Film Noir*

Sept. 16th, 18th (+ Screening Sept. 19th)

4. **Imitation of Life** (1959) Race and gender in 1950s America

Charisse L’Pree, “Imitation of Life”

*Recommended:*

Spigel, “Waves of Feminist Media Studies”

Sept. 23rd, 25th (+ Screening Sept. 26th)

5. **Vertigo** (1958) The psychology and pathology of Alfred Hitchcock

Karen Hollinger, *Feminist Film Studies* (Blackboard), “Introduction, Chapter 1 and Films in Focus: Vertigo”, 1-34

*Letter of Response Assignment Due*

Sept. 30th, Oct. 2nd (+ Screening Oct. 3rd)


Davin Grindstaff, “The Fist and the Corpse: Taming the Queer Sublime in *Brokeback Mountain*”

Thomas Piontek, “Tears for Queers: Ang Lee’s *Brokeback Mountain*, Hollywood, and American Attitudes toward Homosexuality”

+ excerpts from the documentary *The Celluloid Closet* (1995), based on Vito Russo’s book of the same name (screened in class)
Oct. 7th, 9th (+ Screening Oct. 10th)

Susan Sontag, “Notes on Camp”
+ Two Bruce LaBruce Contemporary Responses to Camp

MIDTERM EXAM

Oct. 14th, 16th (+ Screening Oct. 17th)

8. Once Were Warriors (1994)  New Zealand, Maori family and conflict
Davinia Thornley, “White, Brown or ‘Coffee’? Revisioning Race in Tamahori's Once Were Warriors”

Oct. 21st, 23rd (+ Screening Oct. 24th)

Jack Boozer: “Seduction and Betrayal in the Heartland: Thelma and Louise”
Recommended:
Sue Thornham, “The Case for Feminist Media Studies”

Oct. 28th, Oct. 30th (+Screening Oct. 31st)

10. Precious (2009)  Inspirational individuality or stereotypical gaze?
bell hooks, “The Oppositional Gaze”
Darryl Lorenzo Wellington, “Sex, Race, and Precious”
Nov. 4th, 6th (+ Screening Nov. 7th)


Kate Ellis, “Fatal Attraction: Or the Post-Modern Prometheus”

William Park and Gilberto Perez, “The Madwoman in the Loft: Fatal Attraction”

Recommended:

Susan Bromley and Pamela Hewitt, “Fatal Attraction: The Sinister Side of Women’s Conflict About Career and Family”

Bonnie J. Dow, “The Traffic in Men and the Fatal Attraction of Postfeminist Masculinity”

Nov. 11th, 13th (+ Screening Nov. 14th)


Rong Cai, “Gender Imaginations in Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon and the Wuxia World”

Nov. 18th, 20th (+ Screening Nov. 21st)

13. Pariah (2011)   Independent voices among friends and family

“Pariah and Black Independent Cinema: A Roundtable Discussion.”

Recommended:

Williams, “Why I Did Not Want to Write This Essay”

*ESSAY DUE*

Mon. Nov. 25th

Catch-up.

Wed. Nov. 27th – NO CLASSES OR SCREENING, THANKSGIVING BREAK
Dec. 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 4\textsuperscript{th}


Viki Zavales Eggert, “Authentic Monsters and Artificial Mothers: Maternal Frustration in \textit{All About My Mother}”

Recommended:

E. Ann Kaplan, “Global Feminisms and Film Theory…”

Monday, Dec. 9\textsuperscript{th}: \textbf{LAST DAY OF CLASSES + FINAL REVIEW}

\textbf{FINAL EXAM:}

\textbf{MONDAY, DEC 16\textsuperscript{TH}, 3:00pm-5:00pm} \textbf{MC 201}