Academic Summer School
SOAS University of London
2021

Media and Gender: Representations, Subjectivities and Power Handbook

Mode of Attendance: Full-time
Duration: 2
SOAS Accredited: This course is worth 15 UK credits

Programme Description

This two-week interdisciplinary course engages with questions of power, representation and media in relation to gender and sexuality as being in flux. The course will help students to understand what is 'gender' from an intersectional and decolonial feminist perspective, how gender shapes and informs different forms of media and communications, and how media (understood to include all forms and genres of communication) structure our understandings of gender. The course will draw on critical theories in gender, cultural, and media studies, centring non-hegemonic contexts, in order to examine questions of culture, subjectivity, gender, sexuality, class, and race. The course will introduce students to methods of textual, aural, visual, and discursive analysis in order to examine social constructions of gender and sexuality. The course acknowledges individual, collective agency, and lived experiences in diverse socio-cultural contexts in examining the role of media in power relations and subjectivity. We will examine the production, distribution, and circulation of gendered representation in and through a variety of media economies and scapes. We will ask how these operations have the capacity to reproduce as well as challenge gender ideologies and identities that intersect with other social identities, class, and race. At the same time, we will address how the social construction of gender is continuously challenged in different media genres and forms and by whom, thus acknowledging individual and collective agency and livedexperiences in different socio-historical contexts.

The first week is centred on the intersection of gender and media. This week offers students an understanding of the importance of studying gender and media and will introduce them to critical works and approaches in gender studies, media studies, and cultural studies. The second week will introduce students to critical work on the gaze, visual and auditory analysis, celebrity studies, intersectional feminist methods, queer and affect theories. The entire course will enable students to develop a dialogue between theory and contexts. With a view that "theory" and "practice" are intrinsically linked, the course takes a hands-on approach, with several workshops including on storyboarding, film festival and queer curation, and navigating affect in relation to big data and AI.

Topics covered will include the politics of representation transnational contexts; celebrity and influencer culture; subalternity and othering; affect, AI, and big data; and the mediated intersections of gender and sexuality with race and class. All the topics examine continued dynamics of power and knowledge in the study of gender and media addressing contexts and theories navigating questions of "coloniality/decoloniality" and the "Global North/South" divide.

Programme Schedule

Week 1

Day 1   Gender and Media: Course Overview and Roadmap

Day 2   Intersectionality and Gender Theories

Day 3   Critical Media and Cultural Studies

Day 4   Storyboarding Gender and Media*

Day 5   Thinking Like a Feminist: Reflections & Methodology in Relation to Gender and Media

Week 2

Day 6   Troubling the Gaze

Day 7   'Brown Skin Girl' (Beyonce, 2020): Celebrity, Race and Gender

Day 8   Theory in Praxis: Queer Theory and Activism in Global Media Circuits*

Day 9   AI, and 'Big Data through Affect Theory in Gender and Media*

Day 10   Course Review and Concluding Reflections

* This day will include group workshops and activities with invited guests

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, students should be able to

- Understand key theories and methods of studying media, power, and social identities

- Examine the role of media in constructing gender and its intersections with race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality

- Address and recognize the persistence of gendered media industries

- Address the role of new media technologies in challenging and/or reaffirming traditional constructs of gender

Assessment

Each course is assessed by two online assessments ('e-tivities'*) comprising of 30%, the remaining 70% is formed of a 2,500 word essay. The e-tivities provide formative and summative feedback to students as a

means of monitoring their progress and encouraging areas which they can improve. On successful completion of the assessments, students will receive a transcript confirming the credit awarded. Students that do not require credit are strongly encouraged to take part in the e-tivities, but are not required to complete the assessments.

* An 'e-tivity' is a framework for online, active and interactive learning following a format that states clearly to the students its 'Purpose'; the 'Task' at hand; the contribution or 'Response' type; and the 'Outcome'

Course Convenors
Kyoung Kim, J. Daniel Luther

Suggested Readings

Ahmed, S., 2016. *Bringing Feminist Theory Home, in: Living a Feminist Life*. Duke University Press

Beauchamp, Toby (2019). Introduction: Suspicious Visibility, *Going Stealth*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Combahee River Collective (1977). The Combahee River Collective Statement. Available at:

Crenshaw, Kimberlé (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), pp. 1241-1299.
Feminist Principles of the Internet (2016). Available at: https://feministinternet.org/en/download

Hall, Stuart (2009 [1973]). Encoding/Decoding, in: Durham, M.G., Kellner, D.M. (Eds.), Media and Cultural Studies: Keyworks. John Wiley & Sons. 1973 essay available at:
http://epapers.bham.ac.uk/2962/

Haraway, Donna (1988). Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575–599.

hooks, bell (1992). The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators. In *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston: South End Press, pp. 115-131.

Kim, Jin B. (2017). Toward a Crip-of-Color Critique: Thinking with Minich's "Enabling Whom?", https://csalateral.org/issue/6-1/forum-alt-humanities-critical-disability-studies-crip-of-color-critique-kim/.

Lewis, Gail (2017). Questions of Presence. Feminist *Review*, 117, pp. 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41305-017-0088-1.

Loist, S., 2012. A complicated queerness: LGBT film festivals and queer programming strategies, in: *Coming Soon to a Festival near You: Programming Film Festivals*. St Andrews Film Studies, St. Andrews, Scotland, pp. 157–172.

Masola, Athambile (2016). On black excellence: Charlotte Mannya Maxeke. *Mail & Guardian,* 19 October. Available at: https://thoughtleader.co.za/athambilemasola/2016/10/19/on-black-excellence-charlotte-mannya-maxeke/.
Mohanty, Chandra Talpade (1988). Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse *Feminist Review*.

Özlen, Lara. ""No TERFs On Our TURF:" Building Alliances Through Fractions on Social Media in İstanbul ". *Kohl: a Journal for Body and Gender Research* Vol. 6 No. 3 (18 December 2020): pp. 369-386. (Last accessed on 31 March 2021). Available at: https://kohljournal.press/no-terfs-our-turf.

Pereira, Charmaine (2017). Feminists Organising --- Strategy, Voice, Power". Feminist Africa 22 pp 16-30. Available at: http://www.agi.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/429/feminist_africa_journals/archive/22/fa22_editorial.pdf.

Tan, Jia (2017). Digital Masquerading: Feminist Media Activism in China' (2017) 13(2) Crime, Media, Culture, 13(2), pp. 171-186. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1741659017710063.