

# ENG 4134 12G4

## Women in Film

### Spring 2019

## Professor Maureen Turim

Office: 4330 TUR / Tuesday and Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> period or by appointment  
 email: [mturim@ufl.edu](mailto:mturim@ufl.edu)

T | Period 5 - 6 (11:45 AM - 1:40 PM) [ROL 0115](#)

R | Period 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40 PM) [ROL 0115](#)

Screening:

M | Period E1 - E3 (7:20 PM - 10:10 PM) [ROL 0115](#)

Most required readings will be essays available on ERES, and are listed individually on the syllabus. I suggest you download them as your course packet ahead of time. You must bring readings to class either as printed out or as electronically accessible in class.

E-books for reference:

*Feminism and Film*

*Feminist Film Theory a Reader* 1999

*And the Mirror Cracked: Feminist Cinema and Film Theory* Anneke Smelik, 1998

For Film Analysis Review see:

<http://classes.yale.edu/film-analysis/>

*Film Art: An Introduction*, David Bordwell and Kristen Thompson (ERES)

This course will examine how women have been represented in film, how they have participated in film production, and how they consume film images. We will look at several feminist approaches and the range of debates as to how to address these issues.

The course will have several goals;

To introduce you to the history of women in film,

To increase your skills in viewing and reading film, and in reading critical writing about film,

To increase your understanding of feminist theory and women's issues, historically

To teach you how to appreciate different genres of filmic expression

To engage you in debates and discussion, and to stimulate you to think

To give you a deeper understanding of the struggles of women in the twentieth century

To help you write your best research papers

Emphasis will be on such basic issues as viewer identification, the articulation of social values, and the function of cultural context, as currently formulated through various feminist and post-structuralist methodologies. We will explore how feminism intersects with psychoanalysis, ideology, deconstruction, and related approaches. We will examine the conjuncture of theoretical issues with an experience of specific films. We will look at the function of these films in the past, and in present reworkings of history.

Canvas for the course will post the syllabus, assignments, and additional study material. Your assignments will be uploaded to Canvas

#### Course Requirements:

Two research papers of 8 pages each, using theories and methods of analysis of film covered in this course. 70%

Participation in class discussion and canvas participation, possible quizzes on readings, lecture material and scenes from films. 30%.

Discussion: Participation in class discussion is essential. Since discussions will critically evaluate readings and films, assigned texts must be read prior to scheduled meetings. Unannounced quizzes may test your degree of preparation.

Attendance: I will take attendance using Canvas at the beginning of class. If you come in late, you must email me an apology to get credit for late attendance. For every unexcused absence over three hours total, your final grade will be reduced one letter. Only written, verifiable medical or family emergency excuses are acceptable.

#### Policies and Procedures:

Films/Lectures: Normally, a feature length film will be screened each Monday evening, with lectures, discussion, and occasional short films on Tuesday and Thursday. Attendance will be taken at film screenings; in cases of illness, you are to make up the screening at the library, or by renting the DVD, **then emailing me** to verify the time and date of your individual screening.

Films as Texts: No written description of any film can be assumed accurate unless confirmed by your own eyes. Learn to think visually and be able to rely on your own active viewing of the films.

Note taking: Most films seen in class may be rescreened at the Library reserve room; good notes are crucial your ability to critically discuss and write about what you have seen. During or immediately after each film, learn to note specific shots and sequences, perhaps by diagramming action or editing patterns or sketching a shot composition. In your papers, work from your notes to develop arguments carefully, supported by specific examples from individual films.

Additional Notes on Course Policy: Your ability to speak and write clearly and effectively, as well as the strength of your historical, theoretical, and analytical argument, will be the basis for evaluating discussion and papers. You should use film terms and critical concepts properly and develop interpretive analyses. Italicize

film titles. In addition, your own independent thinking is crucial; needless to say, plagiarism (the unacknowledged copying or paraphrasing of another's work) will be penalized severely. Base your analysis and argument on specific images and sounds in the films.

Attention in class: You may use your computers or other electronic readers or tablets to take notes, or to refer to the readings as pdfs. You may not be distracted by emails, or net surfing, etc, which defeats the purpose of coming to class and is rude. I will enforce this by subtracting from your participation grade.

Upload a bio powerpoint slide with a recognizable photo of yourself, your name, major, year, previous Film and Media Studies classes, other Dept of English classes, and WS courses, and any other courses you feel provide background for this class.  
Due Jan 10

### **WEEK 1 January 8-10 Introduction, Women in Silent Cinema**

Films: *Way Down East*, D.W. Griffith, 1920 Lilian Gish

In class: *The New York Hat*, D.W. Griffith, 1912 writers Anita Loos Frances Marion

Read:

"Suffering and Suffrage: Birth, the Female Body, and Women's Choices in D. W. Griffith's *Way Down East*," Virginia Wright Wexman *Velvet Light Trap*, 29, 1990 53-65.

"Seduction and Elegance: The New Woman of Fashion in Silent Cinema." Maureen Turim

Introductory powerpoint due January 10: one slide with recognizable photo, name, previous experience with film and media courses, English, Women's Studies, or Art courses. Upload to canvas please.

### **WEEK 2 January 15-17 The Diva, the Movie Star**

Film: *The Temptress*, Fred Niblo, 1926 Greta Garbo

Read:

"Film Melodrama: Greta Garbo as Art Deco Icon," *Designing Women: Cinema, Art Deco, and the Female Form* Lucy Fischer 91-122

"Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," Mary Ann Doane,

"Masquerade Reconsidered," Mary Ann Doane, 1991

"1926: Movies and Divine Stars, Defining Gender," Maureen Turim

**January 21: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Screening will take place in class.**

### **WEEK 3 January 22-24 Women as Mass Ornaments and the Fetishization of Women**

Film: *Dames*, Ray Enright and Busby Berkeley, 1934

Read:

"Chorus Girls: Legends in Their Own Time," Angela J. Latham

“Partiality of the Drives and the Pleasures of the Look in Cinema's Voyeurism”  
*Representing the Woman: Cinema and Psychoanalysis*, Elizabeth Cowie, 1996 166-221

“The Image of Woman as Image: The Optical Politics of Dames,” Lucy Fischer.  
 “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” Laura Mulvey

#### **WEEK 4 January 29-31 Women Filmmakers: The Impact of Dorothy Arzner**

Film: *Christopher Strong*, Dorothy Arzner, 1934

Read:

“Dorothy Arzner: Critical Strategies,” Claire Johnston

“Lesbian Looks: Dorothy Arzner and Female Authorship,” by Judith Mayne

"Emergencies: the 30s and 40s" Nancy Wolloch

“A queer feeling when I look at you’: Hollywood stars and lesbian spectatorship in the 1930s,” Andrea Weiss

"Feminine Discourse in Christopher Strong," Jacqueline Suter

"Odd Couples, Judith Mayne "

**Prospectus for first paper due Feb 3 online**

#### **WEEK 5 February 5-7**

Film: *Mildred Pierce*, Michael Curtiz, 1946

Read:

“Duplicity in Mildred Pierce,” Pam Cook *Women in Film Noir*, E. Ann Kaplan ed. 47-80

“Pleasure Machine” *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* Annette Kuhn, 21-42

“Feminist Film Theory: Mildred Pierce and the Second World War,” Linda Williams 12-30

“Female Desires: The Meaning of World War II,” Marilyn Lake

“Mildred Pierce: Warner Bros., and the Corporate Family,” Catherine Jurca

**Optional outline due Feb 10 by email.**

#### **WEEK 6 February 12-14 Racism as a Feminist Issue**

**Film:** *Imitation of Life*, Douglas Sirk, 1959

Scenes in class from *Imitation of Life*, John Stahl, 1934

Read:

“Three Way Mirror,” Lucy Fischer, *Imitation of Life*

“Divided Images: Black Female Spectatorship and John Stahl's *Imitation of Life*,” Miriam Thaggert

"National Brands/National Body: *Imitation of Life*." Lauren. Berlant

"What's the Matter with Sara Jane?' Daughters and Mothers," Marina Heung,

"*Imitation(s) of Life*: The Black Woman's Double Determination as Troubling 'Other.'" Sandy Flitterman-Lewis 44–57.

**WEEK 7 February 19-21 Women in Screwball Comedy and Satire**

Film: *The Women*, George Cukor, 1939

Read:

“Screwball Comedies: Constructing Romance, Mystifying Marriage,”

David R. Shumway, *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Summer, 1991), pp. 7-23

Queerness, Comedy, and *The Women*, Alexander Doty

"A Queer Feeling When I Look at You": Gender and Sexuality in Three Films by George Cukor, Elyce Rae Helford

Latitude in Mass-Produced Culture's Capital: New Women and Other Players in Hollywood, 1920-1941, Brett Abrams

**First Paper due on canvas February 25 and then hard copy in class February 28****WEEK 8 February 26-28 Gender Switching and Creative Postmodernism**

**Film:**

*Orlando*, Sally Potter, 1992 (From the Virginia Woolf novel)

Read:

Translating Generic Liberties: *Orlando* on Page and Screen,” Floriane Reviron-Piégay

Biography, Volume 32, Number 2, Spring 2009, pp. 316-339

“Twin Pleasures of Feminism: Orlando Meets My Twentieth Century

Imre, Aniko,” *Camera Obscura*, 54 (Volume 18, Number 3), 2003, pp. 176-211

“Redirections Challenging the Class Axe and Lesbian Erasure in Potter's *Orlando*, Hankins, Leslie K." *Re: Reading, Re: Writing, Re: Teaching Virginia Woolf*.

“Sex Change and Media Change: From Woolf's to Potter's 'Orlando'”

Susan Watkins, *Mosaic* (Winnipeg), Vol. 31, 1998

“Postmodernism and *Orlando*.” Humm. *Feminism and Film*

**Spring Break March 2-9****WEEK 9 March 12-14 Women and Independent Production**

**Film:** *Friends with Money*, Nicole Holofcenc, 1996

Read:

Independence at what cost? Economics and female desire in Nicole Holofcenc's *Friends with Money* (2006) / Michele Schreiber

“No Fixed Address: The Women's Picture from *Outrage* to *Blue Steel*,” by Pam Cook

**WEEK 10 March 19-21 Race and Me, Too Awareness**

Film: *Eve's Bayou*, Kasi Lemmons, 1997

Read:

“Kasi Lemmons's *Eve's Bayou* as Conduct Text,” Gwendolyn Audrey Foster

“And still they Rise Black Women Directors : Euzhan Palcy, Julie Dash, Leslie Harris, Darnell Martin, Kasi Lemmons, Millicent Shelton, Troy Beyer, Cheryl Dunye, Maya Angelou” Melvin Donalson.

“Mirroring Narrative/Reflecting Past: *Eve's Bayou*, Tradition, Preservation,” Sandra M. Grayson.

“With the Boundries Between Us Still Intact: Memory and the Incest Taboo in *Something about Amelia, Lone Star*, and *Eve's Bayou*,” Sarah E. S. Sinwell

### **WEEK 11 March 26-28 Women's Experimental Cinema**

Films: *Sink or Swim*, Su Friedrich, 1990

*Meshes of the Afternoon*, *Rituals in Transfigured Time*, Maya Deren

Read:

“The Ethics of Form: Structure and Gender in Maya Deren's Challenge to the Cinema,” Maureen Turim

“Sink or Swim,” Michael Zryd *Senses of Cinema*

“Su Friedrich's Swimming Lessons” Judith Mayne, *Framed: Lesbians, Feminists and Media Culture*, 193-211

"The Violence of Desire in Avant-Garde Films" Maureen Turim,

“Su Friedrich: Breaking the Rules,” Janet Cutler

“Su Friedrich,” William Wees

### **Prospectus for final paper due March 29 online**

#### **WEEK 12 April 2-4 Feminism and Class**

Film: *Sans toit, ni loi*, (Vagabond), Anges Varda, 1985

Read:

“Beyond Recognition: Witnessing the Other in Anges Varda's *Vagabond*,” Kelly Oliver

“Agnes Varda and the Woman Seen,” Sandy Flitterman-Lewis

#### **WEEK 13 April 9-11 Lesbian Desires and Coming of Age**

Film: *Naissance des pieuvres*, (Water Lillies), Céline Sciamma, 2007

Read :

“Film and the Visible,” Teresa de Lauretis

“Introduction,” *Lesbian Rule*, Amy Villarjo,

“Governing Lesbian Desire,” Patricia White

“Young Cinema and First Timers” Tim Palmer

“Fantastic Desires,” Clare Whatling

### **Optional outline for final paper due April 12 email**

#### **WEEK 14 April 16-18 Transgender Feminism**

Film: *Boys Don't Cry*, Kimberly Pierce, 1999

Read:

“The Transgender Look,” Judith Halberstam

“Branding Teena: (Mis)Representations in the Media.” Annabelle Willox,

“Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” Judith Butler

“Film Theory and the Visual Body,” Jan Campbell

#### **WEEK 15 April 23 Women and Imperialism**

Film: *Chocolat*, Claire Denis, 1988

Readings:

The Spatial Politics of Racial and Cultural Identity in Claire Denis' *Chocolat*,  
Janice Morgan

“Screening Exlie,” Martine Beugnet

“Border Controls: *Chocolat* and *No Fear, no Die*,” Judith Mayne

**Final paper due April 22 uploaded to canvas and in hard copy in class April 23 .**

[http://www.hyperhistory.com/online\\_n2/History\\_n2/a.html](http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/History_n2/a.html)

<http://www.fsmitha.com/h2/index.html> History Online

film credits and reviews: <http://us.imdb.com/search/>