

ENG 6138
Studies in the Movies:
Feminist Theory in the Visual Field
(Section 8BM2-26201)

Professor Barbara Mennel

Office Hours: M 11:30am-12:30pm and F 9:00am-10:30am

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Meeting times: F 6-8th period (12:50-3:50pm) TUR 2334

Screening period: Screening: W 9-11 (4:05-7:05pm) Rolfs 0115

Course Description:

This graduate seminar is animated by two interlocking questions. One, the seminar asks about the relationship among feminist approaches across different disciplines concerned with visual culture, from art history, film studies, television studies, and photography to visual digital media. What are commonalities that result from a centering of gender and sexuality as categories of analysis? What are media-specific differences and divergencies? Two, the seminar also explores the relationship between canonical feminist texts that initiated a concern with visual culture and contemporary explorations in the different visual fields. The seminar explores the productivity of early texts for the current moment. How can we think the development of feminist theory together with the transformation of visual media?

Foundational text will include canonical titles, such as Linda Nochlin's *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?* Contemporary case studies might include current books, such as Maggie Hennefeld's *Death by Laughter: Hysteria and Early Cinema* (2024), Yiman Wang's *To Be an Actress: Labor and Performance in Anna May Wong's Cross-Media World* (2024), Claire Bishop's *Disordered Attention: How We Look At Art and Performance Today* (2024), Genevieve Yue's *Girl Head: Feminism and Film Materiality* (2021), and excerpts from *The Crafty Animator: Handmade, Craft-based Animation and Cultural Value* (2019), and other current scholarly texts that develop feminist approaches to contemporary visual culture.

The seminar includes a screening block and will be accompanied by regular film screenings with some exceptions throughout the semester.

The requirement consists of one scholarly research paper of a minimum of 12 pages. Depending on the graduate student's area of expertise and progress in their respective program, they may instead complete a final digital, art, film, video, or creative writing project of the same intellectual rigor and demand on academic or creative labor. All final projects must be discussed and approved by the instructor and relate to the seminar's theme.

Course Goals and Objectives:

Graduate students will become familiar with feminist approaches to visual culture across the disciplines of art history, photography, film and television studies, and new media. They will be able to outline threads across the diverse disciplines and identify differences in approaches as well.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/> If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me.

Special Dispensations:

If you have a learning disability, hardship, or other dispensation approved by the Office of Student Affairs, please provide documentation as early in the term as possible. The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodation for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>.

Accommodations for students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. See the “Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site: <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>

It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

Statement about Online Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluer.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation

period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Statement on Harassment:

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sexual, racial, ethnic, gender, and religious discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguie/studentconductcodephp#s4041>

Class demeanor expected by the professor

I expect you to arrive on time and stay until the end of class. I expect you to focus on the topic of class and not surf the internet either on your phones or laptops. I expect you to be prepared for class.

In-class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal education use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and deliver by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty during a class session. Publication without permission from the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless, of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Required Reading:

All readings are available in Canvas on the assigned date or through e-reserves linked to Canvas.

The only book not available as electronic copy through UF is:

Claire Bishop. *Disordered Attention: How We Look at Art and Performance Today*. London: Verso, 2024. [It is available as eBook on the Verso website for \$9.99.]

Grading:

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Presentation on Object	10%
Proposal for Final Paper	20%
Final Paper	50%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92.9
B+	87-89.9
B	83-86.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	73-76.9
C-	70-72.9
D+	67-69.9
D	63-66.9
D-	60-62.9
F	0-59.9

See: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/#gradtext>

Due Dates:

Presentation on an Object	Friday, October 10
Abstract for Final Paper	Thursday, November 6 @ 5pm
Final Paper	Monday, December 8 @ 5pm

Attendance:

Attendance at all class periods is required and will be checked with the attendance function in Canvas, which amounts to 10% of your grade. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies.

See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for:

Attendance Policies

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencetext>

Religious Holidays

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#religiousholidaystext>

Illness Policy

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#illnesspolicytext>

Twelve-Day Rule

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#twelvedayruletext>

Participation:

I will evaluate your contributions to the seminar considering that participants come with different disciplinary and knowledge backgrounds. All students are encouraged to participate and engage at their level and contribute whether they are a specialist or a novice to the material. The aim of the course is to learn from each other and share interdisciplinary conversations at different levels of familiarity with the materials. Your oral participation will reflect the consistency of your contributions, the precision of your analysis, the level of attention to details, the complexity of questions that drive your academic inquiry, the application of the vocabulary that pertains to disciplines discussed in this seminar, the level of preparedness, engagement with the course materials, such as viewings and readings, and the quality and quantity of your contributions to the seminar, including the productive engagement with your colleagues. I will give you an oral participation grade at the midterm point that reflects your performance up to that point in the semester.

Presentation on an Object:

Every seminar member will present on one object. The presentation should be theoretically informed but presented informally. Objects can include paintings, photographs, short clips, sculptures, a social media post, or an everyday object, among other possibilities. Your choice of object should be the first step in engaging material for your final paper project. Creative writers or artists may present a creative engagement.

Abstract for final paper:

Students are required to submit a proposal abstract for their final paper, which consists of a tentative title, a short abstract, and a tentative bibliography of scholarly sources. The proposal should be approximately one-two paragraphs in length (150-250 words). A complete proposal has to include the following:

1. Tentative title of your final paper
2. One-two paragraph description of your topic, including your research questions
3. A list of titles of objects, art pieces, videos, or films that you will discuss
4. A tentative bibliography, including at least two scholarly texts not covered in the seminar

Creative scholars may choose to submit an abstract for a creative project. For such a project, you must also include a tentative title and abstract. If you will not use theoretical and scholarly texts for your work, there is no need to include them. However, please consult me before submitting the abstract, in case I would require a short scholarly piece to accompany the creative work.

The abstract has to be typed in 12pt font, single-space with 1-inch margins and include your name.

Due: Thursday, November 6 @ 5pm

Final Paper:

The final paper needs to respond to the course material. It needs to be a minimum of 12 pages. Graduate students in an academic discipline are required to submit a research paper related to the course. Seminar participants in a creative track may choose a creative option. You should develop the topic throughout the semester, and your argument should go beyond class discussion. The final paper has to be typed in 12pt font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, include your name and page numbers. There is no maximum page limit. If you are working on a larger project, e.g. MA thesis or drafting a dissertation chapter, you may submit a longer work. Submitting work that will be integrating into a larger project (article, MA thesis, dissertation) is not considered plagiarism. However, submitting work that has been or is being submitted in another course is considered plagiarism. Final papers will be evaluated according to the status of your work and advancement in the program. For example, a 12-page paper by an incoming graduate student that is developed from course materials has equal chances to receive a letter grade A as a 20-page paper by an advanced MA or PhD student who enriches a chapter with course material.

Due: Monday, December 8 @ 5pm

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION

Friday, August 22 Introduction to the Seminar

Read: Linda Nochlin. "Why Have there Been No Great Women Artists?"

WEEK 2 WOMAN AS SPECTACLE

Wednesday, August 27

Alfred Hitchcock. *Vertigo* (1958, 129 min)

Julie Dash. *Illusions* (1983)

Friday, August 29

Read: Laura Mulvey. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema."

S.V. Hartman and Farah Jasmine Griffin. "Are You as Colored as That Negro?: The Politics of Being Seen in Julie in Julie Dash's *Illusions*."

Corinne Columpar. "The Gaze as Theoretical Touchstone: The Intersection of Film Studies, Feminist Theory, and Postcolonial Theory."

WEEK 3 PHOTOGRAPHING THE SELF

Friday, September 5

Read:

Andre Bazin. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image."

Walter Benjamin. "Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."

Laura Mulvey. "A Phantasmagoria of the Female Body: The Work of Cindy Sherman."

Sofia P. Caldeira, Sofie Van Bauwel, and Sander De Ridder. "Everybody Needs to Post a Selfie Every Once in a While": Exploring the Politics of Instagram Curation in Young Women's Self-Representational Practices."

WEEK 4 NEW APPROACHES TO EARLY CINEMA

Wednesday, September 10

J. Elder Willis. *Tiger Bay* (1934)

Friday, September 12

Read: Yiman Wang. *To Be An Actress: Labor and Performance in Anna May Wong's Cross-Media World*.

WEEK 5 ART IN THE AGE OF THE DIGITAL

Friday, September 19

Read: Claire Bishop. *Disordered Attention: How We Look at Art and Performance Today*.

WEEK 6 MARGINAL VISUALS, ARCHIVES, AND 1980S FEMINISM: Visit by Dr. Margaret Galvan (Department of English)

Friday, September 26

Read: Margaret Galvan. *In Visible Archives*.

WEEK 7 CORRESPONDENCES AMONG ART, FILM, AND MUSIC VIDEO

Wednesday, October 1

Julie Dash. *Daughters of the Dust* (1991)

Beyonce. *Lemonade* (2016)

Pipilotti Rist. *Ever Is Over All* (1997)

Friday, October 3

Read: Jamie Ann Roberts. "Diasporic Communion and Textual Exchange in Beyonce's *Lemonade* and Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust*."

Alexandra Grieve. "Material Afterlives: The Quilted Poetics of *Daughters of the Dust* (1991) and *Lemonade* (2016)."

WEEK 8 SHORT ANALYTICAL OR CREATIVE PRESENTATIONS ON OBJECTS (MATERIAL OBJECTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, SHORT VIDEOS, FILM CLIPS, SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS)

Friday, October 10 In-class presentations

WEEK 9 HOMECOMING -- NO CLASS

Friday, October 17
HOMECOMING – NO CLASS!

WEEK 10 CRAFT, ART, ANIMATION, AND SLOPPINESS

Wednesday, October 22
Lotte Reiniger. *The Adventures of Prince Ahmed* (1926)
Elizabeth Beech and Carla Patullo. *Lotte That Silhouette Girl* (2018)

Friday, October 24
Read: Maria Elena Buszek. "Introduction: The Ordinary Made Extra/Ordinary."
Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art.
M. Anna Fariello. "Making and Naming The Lexicon of Studio Craft." *Extra/Ordinary: Craft and Contemporary Art*.
Caroline Ruddell and Paul Ward. "Introduction." *The Crafty Animator: Handmade, Craft based Animation and Cultural Value*.
Katharina Boeckenhoff and Caroline Ruddell. "Lotte Reiniger: The Crafty Animator and Cultural Value." *The Crafty Animator: Handmade, Craft-based Animation and Cultural Value*.
Elaine C. Paterson and Susan Surette. "Introduction." *Sloppy Craft: Postdisciplinarity and the Crafts*.

WEEK 11 IMMERSION, STREAMING, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, AND CANCEL CULTURE

Friday, October 31
Read: Sarah Keller. "What Women Want: Immersion and Distraction in and around the Movies."
Martine Beugnet and Lily Hibberd. "Absorbed in Experience: New Perspectives on Immersive Media: Introduction."
Kathleen McHugh. "Genre as Feminist Platform: Diagnosis, Anger, and Serial T.V."
Elizabeth Farries, Paraic Kerrigan, and Eugenia Siapera. "Introduction to the Special Issue: The Platformization of Cancel Culture."

WEEK 12 SOCIAL MEDIA, RACE, GENDER, AND TECHNOLOGY: Visit by Alison Walsh (Ph.D. Student, ABD, Department of English)

Friday, November 7

Read: Sarah Sharma. "Introduction: A Feminist Medium Is the Message."

Wendy Hi Kyong Chun. "Introduction: Race and/as Technology; or, How to Do Things to Race."

Rebecca Wanzo and Reem Hilo. "Editors' Introduction: The Long History of Social Media."

WEEK 13 FEMINIST PEDAGOGY AND THE AESTHETICS OF EXCESS: Visit by Dr. Jillian Hernandez (Dept. of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies)

Friday, November 14

Read: Jillian Hernandez. *Aesthetics of Excess: The Art and Politics of Black and Latina Embodiment*.

WEEK 14 ALTERNATIVE SCHOLARLY MODES AND MODALITIES

Friday, November 21

Discussion of feminist videographic essays and digital humanities projects