JMC 460: Gender and the Media
Spring 2007
Bolton B46

Professor

Carol A. Stabile
stabile@uwm.edu
Office Phone: 414.229.5855
Address: 132 Johnston Hall
Office Hours: Wednesday, 10-12
and by appointment

Teaching Assistants

Angie McManaman
alm5@uwm.edu
Office Phone: 414.229.6308
Address: Johnson 317
Office Hours: Mon/Wed, 2-3 and by appointment

Nicole Pokuta
napokuta@uwm.edu
Office Phone: 414.229.6308
Address: Johnson 332
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2-4 pm and by appointment

Course Description

This course will help students to understand how gender shapes media texts and institutions, as well as how media structure our understandings of gender. Because gender (which encompasses ideologies of both femininity and masculinity) is understood to intersect with other aspects of identity – including race, class, and sexuality – our investigations will include discussions of these
intersections as well. During this semester, students will study gender within the context of a variety of media and media institutions, including advertising, print media, television, film, and the Internet.

**Required Texts**


Additional assigned readings are available on e-reserve for this course at www.uwm.edu/Library/.

Materials for this course (paper assignments, updates, additional readings, etc.) are available on a Desire2Learn (D2L) course Web site, which can be accessed at the UWM home page. You may see these materials there anytime you wish, using a standard Web browser. If you have a PC-compatible computer, it is preferable to use Internet Explorer 6 as your browser for D2L. If you have a Mac, it is preferable to use Mac OS X and Netscape 7.1. You should also make sure that your browser has “Java-scripts” enabled for Java version 1.3 or higher. If you have any questions about these preferences, contact Help by email at help@uwm.edu or by telephone at 414.229.4040.

**Assignments**

1. **Response Papers (40%)**: Over the course of the semester, you will write four short (2-4 pp.) response papers that discuss and apply concepts from lectures, readings, screenings, or media texts you have watched. These papers must contain a well-defined argument and need to conform to standard rules of grammar. There is no reason for spelling or other mechanical errors – please use your word processing program’s spelling and grammar check and proofread your papers carefully. Points will be deducted for these kinds of errors.

   These papers will be graded according to a standard grid, which will be handed out with the assignment. Although we will not provide extensive written comments on your papers, we will be happy to meet with you during office hours to talk about your paper and your grade. Papers must be turned in at the beginning of class on the day they are assigned. We will not accept e-mailed response papers.

2. **Quizzes (40%)**: Instead of a midterm and final examinations, quizzes on the lectures and readings will be administered approximately every other week at the beginning of the lecture. Students who require special exam accommodations should notify the professor during the first week of class. The total number of quizzes will be no less than five and the last
quiz will be administered during lecture time on the 10th of May. They will be closed book and closed note. The goal of these quizzes is to reward you for keeping up with lectures and readings and asking questions when you don’t understand something. We will drop your lowest quiz score for the semester.

3. **In Class Assignments (10%)**: There will be a few pop quizzes and other assignments during lecture. These assignments may cover a reading due on the day of the quiz, any item from the previous two lectures, or other relevant materials. Assignments will require thoughtful feedback from students on a matter discussed in class that day. Although they will be closed book and closed note, in-class assignments are designed to be easy and to reward you for coming prepared to lecture. **Students who require special exam accommodations should notify the professor during the first week of class.** Missed in-class assignments cannot be made up and are not “excused.”

4. **Participation (10%)**: If you attend every class, you will receive an automatic 5%. Beyond that, grades for participation are at the discretion of the instructor and will be determined on the basis of the effort you put into this class. You will have opportunities to participate in every lecture. The professor and teaching assistants will note contributions over the course of the semester. This is a cumulative grade – you can only earn a small portion of it each week. An adequate performance will yield an average participation grade.

**Policies, Rules, Etc.**

1. **Attendance and Participation**: This course is intended for motivated, respectful students who do all the readings and attend classes. You are responsible for asking questions of the professor or TAs if you don’t understand something. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility to get materials covered during that session from a classmate and to make sure you understand what was discussed in your absence. If you fail to meet these very basic expectations, your performance in class will suffer as a result.

2. **Getting to Class Late and Leaving Early**: Late arrivals and early departures distract and disrupt class. Your professor finds them especially annoying. If you know that you have to leave early, let me know before class and please leave the classroom quietly. If you are more than 10 minutes late, do not bother coming to class. Students who are repeatedly late or leave class early will receive reduced a grade for the semester.

3. **Noise-making Appliances**: Cell phones, beepers, and other technologies are not welcome in the classroom. Cell phones must be shut off and put
away during class. The professor reserves the right to take action against such devices.

4. **Seating and Discussion:** Please sit toward the front and center, so that you can hear the lecture and be heard when you ask questions. Despite the fact that this is a large class, we love discussion and encourage you to raise your hand during lecture and ask questions, make comments, or ask for clarification of points you may not have understood. When you do so, please speak up – even if I can hear you, your classmates need to be able to as well.

5. **Assignments and Extensions:** With the exception of in-class assignments, all assignments are listed on the syllabus and will be announced well before they are due. If you know ahead of time that you can’t make a due date for an assignment, please talk to us about this before the due date. Requests for extensions after a due date will be given only in exceptional circumstances and must include (a) one typed, double-spaced page explaining the reason for missing the deadline, and (b) supporting documentation (e.g. an official doctor’s note). Any such written request must be received by us no later than one week after the missed due date. In addition, any assignments that are accepted after the due date may suffer a significant grade penalty.

6. **Missed Quizzes and In-Class Assignments:** You cannot make up missed quizzes or in-class assignments. Your first missed quiz will be dropped from your final grade as your lowest scoring quiz. After that, quizzes can only be excused in exceptional circumstances for which you provide appropriate documentation in a timely manner (see #5 for details).

7. **Missed In-Class Screenings:** Because DVDs and other materials have to be reserved and/or rented, your instructor cannot make these available outside of class. If you miss an in-class screening, it is your responsibility to track down the materials.

8. **Grades:** At the beginning of the class, students will be assigned to a specific grader, who will grade their papers and quizzes throughout the semester. Your professor and teaching assistants work carefully together throughout the semester to ensure that grading is consistent across sections. We use the grading grid for written papers so that we are all applying the same standards for evaluation when reading these papers. We meet on a regular basis to discuss papers and quizzes and read one another’s comments and grades to make sure that grades reflect similar standards of evaluation.

Grades are final. We grade assignments and quizzes on performance, not effort. Effort will be recognized in your participation grade for the course.
We really want you to do well on quizzes and assignments before they are due. Please visit us during office hours to ask us questions when you are working on an assignment or reviewing material. If you have questions about a grade, please see your assigned grader as soon as you have received the grade to get further feedback.

These are the circumstances under which we would change a grade: (a) if we have made an error, or (b) if we have failed to hold you to the same standard as everyone else. If you believe that you have received an undeserved grade, you should make your case in writing to your professor within two weeks of receiving the grade. Under no circumstance will the professor award a grade of “incomplete” for the course.

9. **Accommodations:** If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact us as soon as possible.

10. **Announcements:** Any changes to the syllabus, class cancellations, or other matters pertaining to the class will be posted on the D2L website for the course. You should check this website at least once a week.

11. **Cheating and Plagiarism:** Do not cheat or plagiarize! These forms of misconduct carry serious penalties. Should you plagiarize, you will fail this course. You should familiarize yourselves with UWM’s description of academic misconduct (see www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html).

**Resources**

1. **Yourself:** Listen carefully. Take plenty of notes. Ask questions if you aren’t sure about something. Participate. Take advantage of the professor and TAs’ office hours: we are there to help you do well in this class.

2. **Your Classmates:** It always helps to discuss material with other students enrolled in your class. Also, in the event of an absence, you will need to rely on a classmate to help you get notes on what you missed.

3. **Your Prof and TAs:** We love to field questions. Our office hours are devoted to helping you better understand the course and course material, so please stop by.

4. **Email:** Although our preference is to deal with more complicated questions face to face, we are available via email to field questions as well. Please allow at least 24 hours for a response to your email – longer over weekends and holidays.

5. **Writing Center:** The Writing Center offers an invaluable resource for student writers from all disciplines and skill levels. See www.writingcenter.uwm.edu for information about hours or appointments.
ASSIGNMENTS

**Introduction**

**Tuesday, 23 Jan:** Introduction to Course

*In Class Screening:* “Girls Just Want to Have Sums” (2006) *The Simpsons*
For further consideration, check out articles at:
www.mathsci.appstate.edu/~sjg/simpsonsmath/sums.html

**Thursday, 25 Jan:**


*GRCM,* Kellner, “Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture,” pp. 9-20

**Media Industries and Political Economy**

**Tuesday, 30 Jan:**


**Thursday, 1 Feb:**

*GRCM,* McChesney, “The Titanic Sails On: Why the Internet Won’t Sink the Media Giants,” pp. 677-683

**Tuesday, 6 Feb: Quiz #1**

http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.11/myspace_pr.html

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/4697671.stm

**Ideology and Hegemony**

**Thursday, 8 Feb: Response Paper #1 Due**

*GRCM,* Hall, “The Whites of Their Eyes,” pp. 89-93

*In Class Screening:* Marlon Riggs (1986) *Ethnic Notions*
Tuesday, 13 Feb:

GRCM, Lull, “Hegemony,” 61-66

Thursday, 15 Feb: Quiz #2

http://www.cwluherstory.com/CWLUArchive/polhousework.html

Judy Syfers (1971) “Why I Want a Wife”
http://www.cwluherstory.com/CWLUArchive/wantawife.html

Tuesday, 20 Feb:

In Class Screening: Feminism: Controversies, Challenges, Actions (2006)

Advertising and Gender

Thursday, 22 Feb:

GRCM, Kilbourne, “‘The More You Subtract, the More You Add’: Cutting Girls Down to Size,” pp. 258-268

In Class Screening: “Crack for Good” (2005) Fat Actress

Tuesday, 27 Feb:


Thursday, 1 March:

GRCM, Ouellette, “Inventing the Cosmo Girl: Class Identity and Girl-Style American Dreams,” pp. 116-128

GRCM, Steinem, “Sex, Lies, and Advertising,” pp. 223-229

Television

Tuesday, 6 March: Response Paper #2 Due


Thursday, 8 March:

In Class Screening: “Sexual Harassment” (2006) *The Office*

Tuesday, 13 March:

In Class Screening: “Class Dismissed” (2006) Media Education Foundation

Thursday, 15 March: Quiz #3


In Class Screening: “Class Dismissed” (continued)

**Week 9: SPRING BREAK**

**Television (continued)**

Tuesday, 27 March:


In class screening: “Anne” (1998) *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Season 3, Episode 1)

Thursday, 29 March:


In Class Screening: *In Living Color*

**Sexualities**

Tuesday, 3 April:

GRCM, Gamson, “Sitting Ducks and Forbidden Fruit,” pp. 553-574

In Class Screening: “Camping Out” (1990) *Pee-Wee’s Playhouse*

Thursday, 5 April:

In Class Screening: “Looking Back,” The L Word (Season 1, Episode 11)

[New Media Technologies/Online Identities]

Tuesday, 10 April: Response Paper #3 Due


Thursday, 12 April:


Tuesday, 17 April: Quiz #4


Thursday, 19 April: No class, but teaching assistants will hold office hours during class time to field any questions you have about assignments, class discussion, readings, etc. This is a good time to talk to your assigned grader about the final response paper.

[Media Effects]

Tuesday, 24 April: Response Paper #4 Due

GRCM, Caputi, “Everyday Pornography,” pp. 434-450

Thursday, 26 April:

GRCM, Snitow, “Mass Market Romance: Pornography for Women is Different,” pp. 424-433

Tuesday, 1 May:

**In Class Screening:** *Inside Deep Throat* (2004)

**Thursday, 3 May:**


**In Class Screening: *Inside Deep Throat* (continued)**

**Tuesday, 8 May:**


**Thursday, 10 May: Quiz #5**


**In-Class Screening:** *Tough Guise* (1999)