Film Programme
School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
Te Kura Tāonga Kōrero Ingarihi, Kiriata, Whakaari, Pāpāho

FILM 336: Women and Film

Trimester 2 2011
11 July to 12 November 2011

20 Points

TRIMESTER DATES
Teaching dates: 11 July to 14 October 2011
Mid-trimester break: 22 August to 4 September 2011
Study week: 17 to 21 October 2011
Last piece of assessment due: 25 October 2011

WITHDRAWAL DATES
Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS
Dr Liz Watkins
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Room: 85 Fairlie Terrace, room 103
Office Hours: teaching weeks Tuesdays 1-3
Outside of teaching weeks office hours please email me to arrange a time.
Tutors: tba

In the Cut (Jane Campion, 2003)
CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures and Screenings
Tuesday         9-12       Hugh Mackenzie lecture theatre 104
Friday          9-12       Hugh Mackenzie lecture theatre 104

Tutorials
Friday          1-2, 2-3, 3-4 85 Fairlie Terrace, room 108

Further details will be posted on S-Cubed.

COURSE DELIVERY

The course is taught through lectures, seminars, screenings, and set reading. Teaching provides a theoretical, historical and critical context for each session. Each week a question is set to frame the readings and to provide a focus for student discussion.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information concerning the course, including changes, will be posted on Blackboard, by e-mail and announced in class. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

COURSE PRESCRIPTION

Topics that may be covered in this course include the history of women's involvement in filmmaking; the relation between feminism and filmmaking; definitions of feminist film; feminist film theory; genres associated with female audiences; and the representation of women, sex and gender on screen.

COURSE CONTENT

The course sustains three main approaches throughout. These include women's film history which recovers the role women have played as directors and screenwriters as something that has tended to be overlooked; feminist film theory which reads for the fractures and disturbances in film texts. For example, in certain films colour can be read as both an element of design and as a subtext. In classic Hollywood cinema colour can be addressed as integral to the organisation of the image where it tends to highlight the female body. However, instances where a single colour floods the screen also offer a subtext around female characters which disturbs narrative progression and so can form the basis of a counter-reading. In this sense an attention to cinema as an apparatus of fantasy that is complicit with a sexually imbalanced world also extends to other filmic elements. These include theories of the voice and music in representations of female subjectivity and agency in films such as Mildred Pierce (Curtiz, 1945) and The Cat People (Jacques Tourneur, 1943). Film examples for this topic will cover classic melodrama and film noir moving through to contemporary revisions by directors such as Jane Campion. The course also engages with different filmmaking practices, such as the counter cinemas that have emerged in response to feminist debates of the 1970s and 1980s and which have begun to explore new languages of desire. It is here that the course moves toward a contemporary focus on both the impact of the digital on questions of spectatorship, phenomenology and embodiment.

Screenings provide a historical view of Hollywood cinema, its major forms and practices, and its moments of rupture and difference. The course also addresses films by women directors made in Hollywood and beyond to the filmmaking practices that have emerged through feminist critique. Case studies include a focus on specific directors including Hitchcock, Douglas Sirk, and Sally Potter, and individual films such as Morocco (Josef von Sternberg 1930), Now Voyager! (Irvin Rapper, 1942), The Brave One (Neil Jordan, 2007) and In the Cut (Jane Campion, 2003).
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are to undertake a thorough historical, theoretical and critical reading of contemporary issues in feminist film theory. The films and texts covered address a feminist problematic around spectatorship, desire, narrative, and the cinematic apparatus, through to theories of embodiment, and the impact of the digital on the ways in which we access and study the cinematic archive. By the end of the course, students should be able to formulate an informed and coherent argument that demonstrates their understanding of the major paradigms in feminist film theory and sexual difference for the way they affect the study of classic texts and feminist counter-cinema.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The university anticipates that you should be able to devote approximately 200 hours to a 20 point course. Therefore you should probably expect to spend, on average, about 10 hours per week (apart from class time) in reading, preparation, viewing films and essay writing. You are expected to attend all lectures, screenings and tutorials. **You are expected to attend all lectures and tutorials.** Please note that Assignment 1 depends on your attendance at tutorials. I do strongly recommend that you attend all of the screenings for this course.

READINGS

**Essential texts:** although there are no required text books for this course, readings will be set for each week. Some readings are available in closed-reserve in the Rankine Brown Library; others will be available for you through Blackboard. A question has been set to offer a focus for the reading for each week. You are asked to bring the notes that you make in response to this question and the readings to the tutorial each week.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

**Assignment 1: Critical Response** (5-10 minute individual response to a set question and 1000-1500 word written copy of this work) (weighting 30%).

This assignment involves each student preparing a spoken response (5-10 minute) to a set question. The spoken response will be given in the tutorial. A written copy of the spoken response should be submitted one week after your response. From weeks 4-11 you will each be assigned one week each to give a 5-10 minute presentation in response to the tutorial question that has been set. You should submit a written version of your work 1 week after your presentation. The spoken response to the set question and the written component will be assessed.

Assessment criteria.

This assignment is asking you to:

- Give a concise response to a set question that is informed by the theories covered on FILM336.
- Relate the theories that form the basis of your short essay to the analysis of a film.
- Include accurate and complete references for all the relevant sources using footnotes and a bibliography.

Relation to learning objectives.

This assignment will enable you to develop:

- Your ability to engage critically with written and film texts.
- Your ability to relate theoretical concepts to an analysis of film
- Your understanding of the historical, theoretical, and critical reading of contemporary issues in feminist film theory.
- Your ability to develop a coherent argument. Include accurate and complete references for all the sources relevant to this assignment.
Assignment 1 deadlines: The individual presentations will take place in tutorials between weeks 4 and 11. You should submit a written version of your work 1 week after your presentation (for example: if your presentation is in the Friday tutorial of week 4 your written work will be due on the Friday of week 5). There will be no presentations in week 6.

Assignment 2: Research Plan (1000-1500 words) (weighting 25%). This assignment outlines the research and focus of the work you will undertake for the final essay. The Research Plan (2000 words in total) should consist of the following: a research question that you have identified in response to the topic set; 1) a short abstract of the research you will undertake, 2) details of how you will undertake this research (analysis of one or more sequences or films studied on FILM 336 – you should state which films and sequences - the concept(s) you are working with, the theorists, resources and essays you anticipate will be most useful) and why this methodology is appropriate; 3) a short critical reading of 5 written texts that you consider relevant to your research essay; 4) a bibliography.

Assessment criteria.
This assignment asks you to:
- Write a clearly defined research question and short abstract in response to one of the topics set.
- Undertake research using library resources (electronic journals, text books, and the databases available through the University library catalogue).
- Make a detailed reading of the five texts identified through your research that you anticipate will be most relevant to your Research Essay.
- Include accurate and complete references for all the relevant sources using footnotes and a bibliography.

Relation to learning objectives.
This assignment enables you to develop:
- Your understanding of the major paradigms in feminist film theory and sexual difference.
- Your ability to identify and clearly and concisely express the ideas you intend to explore in the final assignment.
- The effectiveness of your research skills in identifying a research question and the resources (journal articles, books, films, archival materials) that you will need to support the work undertaken in assignment 3.

The deadline for Assignment 2: the Research Plan is Monday 5th September 2011.

Assignment 3: Research Essay (3000 words) (weighting 45%). This assignment allows you to develop the idea(s) identified in your Research Plan into a sustained logical argument by writing a Research Essay.

Assessment criteria.
This assignment asks you to:
- Develop a sustained coherent and logical argument based on your Research Plan.
- Demonstrate your understanding of a particular aspect of the historical, cultural and critical issues in feminist film theory.
- Undertake additional research and reading and analyse the film sequence(s) that will enable you to write your Research Essay.
- Integrate the main points from feedback on your Research Plan in to your Research Essay.
- Include accurate and complete references for all the relevant sources using footnotes and a bibliography.
Relation to learning objectives.
This assignment builds on:

- Your understanding of a particular aspect of the historical, cultural and critical issues in feminist film theory.
- Your critical and creative thinking.
- Your ability to further utilise your research skills to effectively support and inform the work you undertake.
- Your ability to integrate feedback on your research proposal into your Research Essay.

The deadline for Assignment 3: the Research Essay is Tuesday 25th October 2011

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS
Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office in 83FT. Remember to fill in your tutor’s name.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES
Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor’s certificate) where appropriate. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS
To be eligible to gain a pass in this course you must: Complete all of the assignments specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work). Please note that Assignment 1 depends on your attendance at tutorials.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES
A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person’s name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY
You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. Work submitted during the course (i.e. work that is internally assessed) should be typed or prepared on a computer. Where handwritten work is required you are expected to write clearly. If this is deemed ‘illegible’, you will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM
Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University’s learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University’s reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.
The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else’s work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. ‘Someone else’s work’ means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University’s website: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

**TURNITIN**

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine http://www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

**WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

**COURSE PROGRAMME**

**WEEK 1 Woman/Image/Desire**

Tuesday 12th July (9-12 o’clock)

Lecture: Woman/Image/Desire

Screening for Time, Desire and the Woman’s Film: *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (Max Ophuls, 1948)

Friday 15th July (9-12 o’clock)

Lecture: Time, Desire and the Woman’s Film

Screening for ‘Problems of Enunciation’: *Now Voyager!* (Irvin Rapper 1942)

Friday 15th July

Tutorial: there are no tutorials in week one. You will find it useful to read the extract from Mary Ann Doane’s book *The Desire to Desire* and to re-visit Laura Mulvey’s ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ in this week as we are move on to new material throughout the course.

Reading:

LINK:
http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=6466&recCount=10&recPointer=2&bibId=1315086

WEEK 2 Questions of Spectatorship and the Text
Tuesday 19th July (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: ‘Problems of Enunciation’
Screening for Cinematic Structure: The Gaze and the Spectator: Morocco (Josef von Sternberg 1930)

Friday 22nd July (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: Cinematic Structure: The Gaze and the Spectator
Screening for The Female Spectator and the Progressive Women's Film: Coma (Michael Crichton, 1978)

Friday 22nd July
Tutorial Question: What’s the problem of feminine subjectivity and sexuality in Hollywood Cinema?
Reading:
- Elizabeth Cowie, Representing the Woman: Cinema and Psychoanalysis, (1997), pp. 261- 281 - Extract

WEEK 3 Women’s Progressive Films and Female Protagonists
Tuesday 26th July (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: The Female Spectator and the Progressive Women's Film
Screening for The Female Protagonist and Point of View? Blue Steel (Kathryn Bigelow 1990)

Friday 29th July (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: The Female Protagonist and Point of View?
Screening for ‘Give me back my pleasure’: Feminism and Counter Cinema: Thriller (Sally Potter, 1979)

Friday 29th July
Tutorial Question: are films that show women as ‘agents’ progressive?
Reading:
- Teresa de Lauretis, 'Desire in Narrative', Alice Doesn’t, Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (Indiana University Press, 1984), pp.103-113 – EXTRACT (also for week 11)

Assignment 1: Critical Response.
From weeks 4-11 you will each be assigned one week each to give a 5-10 minute presentation in response to the tutorial question that has been set. You should submit a written version of your work 1 week after your presentation.
WEEK 4 Feminist Counter- Cinema  
Tuesday 2nd August (9-12 o’clock)  
Lecture: ‘Give me back my pleasure’: Feminism and Counter Cinema  
Screening for Cinematography, Choreography and Representation: YES (Sally Potter, 2004)  

Friday 5th August (9-12 o’clock)  
Lecture: Cinematography, Choreography and Representation  
Screening for The Female Spectator: Stella Dallas (King Vidor, 1937)  

Friday 5th August  
Tutorial Question: what is feminist counter-cinema?  
Reading:  
- Please see Cornelia Parker’s ‘Pornographic Images’ (Rorschach Test type- images made by dissolving pornographic video tapes that had been confiscated by customs) ONLINE at http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/ViewWork?cgroupid=99999961&workid=25957&searchid=11096  

WEEK 5 Cinematic Apparatus  
Tuesday 9th August (9-12 o’clock)  
Lecture: The Female Spectator/ Masquerade  
Screening for Machines of Projection: Rebecca (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940)  

Friday 12th August (9-12 o’clock)  
Lecture ‘Machines of Projection’  
Screening for Film Noir and Sadism in Narrative: Mildred Pierce (Curtiz, 1945)  

Friday 12th August  
Tutorial question: what is specific about Hitchcock’s use of the cinematic apparatus?  
Reading:  

WEEK 6 Film Noir and Sadism in Narrative  
Tuesday 16th August (9-12 o’clock)  
Lecture Film Noir: Sound and Image  
Screening for Sadism in Narrative The Cat People (Jacques Tourneur, 1943)
Friday 19th August (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture Sadism in Narrative
Screening for Colour Feminity and Desire: Black Narcissus (Powell and Pressburger, 1947)

Friday 19th August
Tutorial question: how does voice-over work in Mildred Pierce – to advance or undermine women’s subjectivity?
Reading:
- Mary Ann Doane, ‘Woman’s Stake: Filming the Female Body’, October, 17, Summer 1981, pp.22-36

Mid-Trimester Break: Monday 22 August to Sunday 4 September 2011
Deadline for Assignment 2: The Research Plan Monday 5th September 2011

WEEK 7 Colour and Desire
Tuesday 6th September (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: Colour, Femininity and Desire
Screening for Colour and Sexual Difference: Marnie (Alfred Hitchcock, 1964)

Friday 9th September (9-12o’clock)
Lecture Colour and Sexual Difference
Friday Screening for Fractures and Subtexts in Narrative All that Heaven Allows (Douglas Sirk, 1954)

Friday 9th September
Tutorial question: Can we read subtext of colour against Hitchcock’s design?
Reading:

WEEK 8: Melodrama
Tuesday 13th September (9-12 o’clock)
Guest Lecture: Dr Olivia Macassey: Fractures and Subtexts in Narrative
Screening for Class, Gender and Race in 1950s Melodrama: Is This a Feminist Topic?: Imitation of Life (Douglas Sirk, 1958)

Friday 16th September (9-12 o’clock)
Guest Lecture: Dr Olivia Macassey: Class, Gender and Race in 1950s Melodrama: Is This a Feminist Topic?
Screening for Postcolonial Feminist Theory: Velvet Dreams (Sima Urale, 1999)
Friday 16th September

Tutorial question: why do feminists consider Sirk a progressive filmmaker?

Reading:
Please read the texts by Willemen and Mulvey and either the essay by Walter C. Metz or Beth Haralovich
- Laura Mulvey, ‘Delaying Cinema’, Death 24 x a Second, pp.144-160

WEEK 9 Postcolonial Feminist Film

Tuesday 20th September (9-12 o’clock)

Guest Lecture: Dr Jo Smith: Postcolonial Feminist Film (2 hour lecture)

Friday 23rd September (9-12 o’clock)

Screening ONLY for Dorothy Arzner and Discourse: Christopher Strong (Dorothy Arzner, 1933)

Friday 23rd September

Tutorial Question: When discussing the vexed legacy of racism and patriarchy Carribean-American writer, poet and activist Audre Lorde made the now famous statement that, “The Master’s tools will never dismantle the Master’s house”. (Sister Outsider 1984). Consider this quotation in relation to the history of the Dusky Maiden stereotype and consider how filmmaking practices – and scholarly criticism – might address the problem Lorde identifies.

Reading:

WEEK 10 Women Direct Hollywood: Arzner and McLaughlin

Tuesday 27th September (9-12 o’clock) Lecture Dorothy Arzner and Discourse

Screening for The Gaze and Cinematic Pleasure in Counter Cinema: She Must Be Seeing Things (Sheila McLaughlin 1986)

Friday 30th September (9-12 o’clock) Lecture The Gaze and Cinematic Pleasure in Counter Cinema

Screening for Embodiment, Perception and Sexual Difference: In the Cut (Jane Campion, 2003)

Friday 30th September

Tutorial question: how does the gaze in these films shift the terms of cinematic pleasure?

Reading:
- Jacqueline Suter, ‘Feminine Discourse in Christopher Strong’, Camera Obscura, 1979 no 3/4, pp.135-150
- Alison Butler, ‘She Must be Seeing Things: Interview with Sheila McLaughlin’, Screen, 1987, vol.28 no 4, pp. 20-29
WEEK 11 Perception

Tuesday 4th October (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: Embodiment, Perception and Sexual Difference
Screening for Questions of Female Agency and Desire in Narrative Cinema: The Brave One (Neil Jordan, 2007)

Friday 7th October (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: Questions of Female Agency and Desire in Narrative Cinema
Screening for Memory and Archive: Exotica (Atom Egoyan, 1998)

Friday 7th October

Tutorial Question: Do these films question the privileging of vision in the spectator’s interpretation of the film and they way in which we identify with the female protagonist? Can cinematic representations of the female body question or disturb the ‘to-be-looked –at-ness’ (Mulvey 1975) of the image of woman in classic Hollywood narrative cinema?

Reading:
- Elizabeth Grosz, ‘Refiguring Bodies’, Volatile Bodies, Toward a Corporeal Feminism (Indiana University Press, 1994), pp.3-5 - EXTRACT

WEEK 12 Feminism, Memory and Archives of the Everyday

Tuesday 11th October (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture: Memory and Archive
Screening for Archives of the Everyday (two of Jane Campion’s short films): Passionless Moments (Jane Campion, 1984), A Girls Own Story (Jane Campion, 1983)

Friday 14th October (9-12 o’clock)
Lecture/screening: Archives of the Everyday
Includes two of Jane Campion’s short films: Peel (Jane Campion, 1982) The London Story (Sally Potter, 1986)

Friday 14th October

Tutorial Question: What is an archive? What is the relationship of an archive to memory?

Reading:

Study Week: Monday 17 October to Friday 21 October 2011

Deadline for Assignment 3: the Research Essay Tuesday 25th October 2011 Examination Period: Friday 21 October to Saturday 12 November 2011