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Office Hours: THH 433, M4-5, W1-2, and by appt.

Seminar in Humanistic Inquiry
GESM 120, Section 35388
Fall 2016, MW 5:00-6:20 PM
Leavy Library 3Y

Girls Gone Wild: A Century of Bad Behavior

What made girls and women “bad” and “wild” in the twentieth-century United States, and how did such judgments change over time? As we progress chronologically through the twentieth century, we engage closely with novels, short stories, movies, comics, podcasts, and an opera with an eye to what behaviors were considered appropriate, and how they interrelated with sexual attraction, with economics, and with love. For instance, we consider how certain kinds of sexiness were correlated with being a “bad girl” and could keep a woman from marriage—and marriage was often essential to a woman’s economic security. But if a woman appeared too concerned with money as a motivation for marriage, she was perceived as a gold digger, and therefore “bad.” We examine the relationship between being configured as a sexual object (a recipient of desire) and a sexual subject (a possessor of desire), and come to a critical understanding of how the “proper” and “improper” forms of both were constantly in flux. We make our analysis more complex by asking how race, ethnicity, and queerness interacted with hegemonic concepts of beauty and desire over the century, both in art and in the experience of women who made their living by being objects of desire. We also ask whether “masculinity” and “femininity” are necessarily attached to men and women—whether, for instance women can be masculine and men can be feminine, and what happens when they are. To form the basis of our discussion, we read some theories of sex and gender, and look closely at concepts of projection and male hegemony—and we ask how men as well as women are shaped by rules of appropriate behavior.

Required Texts

You are expected to buy or otherwise have a physical copy of the books below. E-books may not be used in class. I suggest that you buy the editions ordered for the bookstore, so you may follow along easily in class.

Novels

Stephen Crane	<i>Maggie: A Girl of the Streets</i>	ISBN: 9780140437973	1896
James M. Cain	<i>Double Indemnity</i>	ISBN: 9780679723226	1935
Truman Capote	<i>Breakfast at Tiffany's</i>	ISBN: 9780679745655	1958
Joan Didion	<i>Play It As It Lays</i>	ISBN: 9780374529949	1970
Toni Morrison	<i>Sula</i>	ISBN: 9781400033430	1973
Rita Mae Brown	<i>Rubyfruit Jungle</i>	ISBN: 9781101965122	1973

Drama

Illica/Giacosa/Puccini	<i>Madama Butterfly</i>	ISBN: 9780793526147	1904
David Henry Hwang	<i>M. Butterfly</i>	ISBN: 9780452272590	1988

Additional Texts

You do not need to buy the following, but you are still responsible for those that are assigned. Written material will be provided you as a hand-out or a download. Visual and audio material will be either be readily available, posted on Blackboard, or experienced in class.

Short Stories

Kate Chopin	"The Story of an Hour"	1894
Mary Gaitskill	"Something Nice," "Trying to Be"	1988
A.M. Homes	"A Real Doll"	1990

Film and Video

You will be expected to watch these first two movies in full: the first in class, and the second before class. You will need to make arrangements to see this readily available movie.

Howard Hawks, director	<i>Gentlemen Prefer Blondes</i> (Marilyn Monroe, Jane Russell)	1953
Blake Edwards	<i>Breakfast at Tiffany's</i> (Audrey Hepburn)	1961

We will watch excerpts from some (not all!) of the following.

Alfred E. Green, director	<i>Baby Face</i> (Barbara Stanwyck)	1933
Dorothy Arzner	<i>Craig's Wife</i> (Rosalind Russell)	1936
Vincente Minelli	<i>Cabin in the Sky</i> (Lena Horne)	1943
Charles Vidor	<i>Cover Girl</i> (Rita Hayworth)	1944
Charles Vidor	<i>Gilda</i> (Rita Hayworth)	1946
Edward Dmytryk	<i>Crossfire</i> (Gloria Grahame)	1947
Douglas Sirk	<i>Written on the Wind</i> (Dorothy Malone)	1956
John Waters	<i>Female Trouble</i> (Divine)	1974
David Cronenberg	<i>M. Butterfly</i> (John Lone)	1993

<i>Peyton Place</i> , episodes 1-3 (Dorothy Malone, Mia Farrow, Barbara Parkins)	1964
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Comics

Alison Bechdel	<i>The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For</i>	1987-2002
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Podcasts

To help us discuss what was for much of the century the epitome of public desire—the female movie star—we will listen to episodes of the Karina Longworth podcast, *You Must Remember This*, which you may find at <http://youmustrememberthispodcast.com> or at SoundCloud or iTunes. We will listen to the following episodes:

Episode #18: The Many Loves of Howard Hughes, Chapter 4: Jane Russell

Episode #31: Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles

Episode #33: Lena Horne

Episode #34: How Norma Jeane Became Marilyn Monroe

Course Requirements

- Thoughtful reading of the material by the due date listed on the syllabus
- Class attendance and participation
- 2 papers: one experiential, one analytical
- In-class midterm and final
- Student presentations

Students must complete all the above to pass the class.

Please note that adjustments may be made over the course of the semester to allow for the specific needs of the class. If so, they will be announced.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance and Absence

Students are expected to attend both lecture and section on time, and absences and tardiness will be factored into semester grades. Absences due to religious holidays or illness are excused only if I am notified in advance. An exception will also be made for students who join the class late or otherwise miss the first class.

Five absences is sufficient cause for failing the class, and more than two absences—excused or not—will detract from your grade. This holds for students who take the class pass/fail. Excessive lateness is equivalent to absence, as is consistently not bringing required books and texts to class.

In all cases, students are responsible for all missed work. I encourage you to exchange contact information with other students and if not, to seek it out through Blackboard.

Class Presentations

Throughout the semester, students make class presentations that identify a particular issue in that day's reading and make a compelling, original argument with proof drawn from specific examples from the text. Presentations have a written component that is posted on the class electronic blackboard 24 hours before class. Students must bring a copy of this written argument to class for all students: 20 copies is sufficient. Students may apply their student presentation to their final paper.

Additional Instructions:

- Each presentation must have an argument. An argument must not be a fact and should be something that could be disagreed with by a reasonable person. Each presentation must include at least two quotes, and must explain and analyze the quotes to illustrate your argument.
- Each presentation should primarily be about the argument.
- Each presentation must have a title, which should relate to the argument.
- Be as specific as possible. You will find that going into depth limits your scope; I am looking for depth, not breadth.

Electronic Devices

Computers, phones, and other electronic devices may not be used in lecture. (I have put some studies about computer use in the classroom on Blackboard, and you are welcome to read them.) Class texts may not be read off of laptops or phones. This rule will be strictly enforced. Those who require their computers for reasons of disability may find directions below.

Exams

There will be a midterm and final. Both ask students to identify and conduct a close reading of quotes in the context of their source. Students may be asked to use those quotes as an anchor for a longer essay that asks them to evaluate abstract concepts from a variety of perspectives.

Students who require extra accommodations for exams—both the midterm and the final—must arrange these at least two weeks in advance. Informing myself at the start of the semester is not sufficient; you need to confirm your special accommodations within two to three weeks of the exam. I am happy to make special arrangements for you, but I will only do so with appropriate notice. Students must have their letters of verification in hand before making special accommodations. See “Statement for Students with Disabilities,” below.

Extra Credit

There is none.

Grades

There are 1000 possible points that may be earned in this class, distributed as follows:

Class Presentation: 100 points

Midterm: 100 points

Final: 200 points

First Paper (experiential): 200 points

Final paper (analytical): 200 points

Participation (may include quizzes): 200 points

Office Hours

My office hours are posted on the first page of the course outline. I hope that you will come by with any general or particular questions about the class. Please feel free. You may make an appointment by email if you want to reserve a specific time, but this is not necessary. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, we will make other arrangements.

Papers

All papers must be double-spaced, with 12-pt Times New Roman font and page numbers. MLA format is expected, with in-text citations. Late papers are not accepted as a rule; you are better off turning off an “eh” paper on time than a wonderful paper late. Please read that sentence again. Specifics of when and how papers should be turned in will be announced.

Experiential Paper (4-5 pages) Halfway through the semester, students will write an experiential paper that asks them to apply the theoretical concepts abstracted from the texts to an event in their own history. Students are asked to define what “appropriate gender behavior” is in the context of the narrative, and then to explain how the experience fits or does not fit their definition. This allows students to engage with the overarching theme of our class: how the hegemonic rules of gender behavior change by time, place, and class. By this point in the semester, we will have discussed many different and contradictory sets of rules for appropriate

gender behavior, and of course students have experienced a great number of different expectations themselves.

The assignment is to break these expectations, without breaking the law or putting yourself at risk. Whatever you do, the incident must be related specifically for this assignment. In other words, while the content of the story does not need to be "new," the writing of it does. Complexity is your friend here, and while the tendency will be to shape your story to fit a preconceived thesis, you are almost certainly better off with the messiness of reality.

Students are graded primarily in terms of the strength of their close reading, though in this case they read a real-life event. A thesis *is* required: You can't just tell a story. Instead, you must explain whether your experience succeeded in breaking the rules—and why and how.

Analytical Paper (6-7 pages) At the close of the semester, you are asked to write a long paper that identifies a complex issue in more than one text and present a persuasive, original argument. If appropriate, I will provide the class with a more specific topic.

Your paper will be graded in terms of the strength of its close reading and the strength and interest of its claim. You will receive a handout with some suggestions about the final paper late in the semester.

Participation

Class participation is a full fifth of your grade, and students should not expect to do well in class if they do not speak, regardless of the grade they receive on other assignments. Students should expect to speak regularly in class. I will keep track of participation.

If class participation fills you with dread, please come see me. I sympathize. Nonetheless, class participation is an essential skill, and I do require it.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the submission of any material under your own name that you did not create by yourself. Plagiarism is not only poor form but also academically criminal. Passing off someone else's words or ideas as your own is the theft of someone's intellectual property. These are the general rules:

- You must give credit in your paper for ideas that are not your own—whether you directly quote or paraphrase—unless the information is considered common knowledge. Any direct quotes, paraphrases, or summaries, including those found on the internet, including Wikipedia, must be cited.
- A paper you have used for another class anywhere is not eligible for submission, even with minor revisions.

Plagiarism will result in automatic failure of the assignment and possible failure of the course.

Policies and Procedures for the University at Large

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/will> provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible.

Student Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. These strictures may extend to behaviors outside the classroom that are related to the course.

Syllabus

There are 28 classes over 15 weeks. Please note that the following schedule may and probably will change. You are responsible for keeping track of these changes, which will be announced in class.

There will be some handouts, which usually will be available on Blackboard. As time and opportunity allows, I will make copies for you. That said, copies will only be available the day they are distributed. If you miss class or otherwise lose your free copy, you will need to print the handouts out from Blackboard or make other arrangements.

Week 1

8.22 Introduction. Syllabus. Hegemony. Ideology.
"Girls Gone Wild": What does that mean?
"Ideology" and "Hierarchy"

8.24 *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, Chapters I-X, pages 1-57
Projection

Week 2

8.29 *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, Chapters XI-XVIII, pages 58-86
Handout on "Projection" On Blackboard.

8.31 *The assignments for today are on Blackboard*
Mary Gaitskill, *Bad Behavior*: "Trying to Be," "Something Nice" Please note that these stories are fairly explicit.

Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour"

Week 3

9.5 Labor Day

9.7 *Double Indemnity*, chapters 1-7, pages 1-54

Week 4 Special arrangements for the midterm must be made this week.

9.12 *Double Indemnity*, chapters 8-13, pages 55-115

Paper 1 Assigned
"Anonymous" papers handed out.

9.14 The Femme Fatale

In class: *Baby Face* and other excerpts
"Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend," "Put the Blame on Mame" (if time)

Discussion of "Anonymous" Papers

Week 5

9.19 YMRT #34: How Norma Jeane Became Marilyn Monroe
Optional: #18: The Many Loves of Howard Hughes, Chapter 4: Jane Russell

In class: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*.

9.21 Podcast: YMRT #31: Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles
Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and podcasts discussion

In Class: *Cover Girl*

Paper 1 due

Week 6

9.26 *Breakfast at Tiffany's* 1-60

9.28 *Breakfast at Tiffany's* 61-111

Week 7

10.3 *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (film). You are expected to watch this before class. The film is readily available.

Midterm Review

If time: *Peyton Place* (television)

10.5 Midterm

Week 8

10.10 *Play It As It Lays*, pages 3-47
Conservative Values and Rebellion

10.12 *Play It As It Lays*, pages 48-157

Week 9

10.17 *Play It As It Lays*, pages 103-157

10.19 *Play It As It Lays*, pages 158-214

Week 10

10.24 *The two assignments below are on Blackboard:*
Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination"
Alison Bechdel, *Essential Dykes to Watch Out For*: Introduction.

In class: Wonder Woman and Drag

10.26 *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Part 1: 1-48

Week 11

- 10.31 Final Paper assigned
Rubyfruit Jungle, Part 2: 49-118
- 11.2 *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Part 3: 119-159.
Ken Corbett, "A Murder over a Girl," pages 15-22. On Blackboard.
- Week 12
- 11.7 *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Part 4: 163-end
In class: *Female Trouble*
- 11.9 *Sula*, 1-48
- Week 13
- 11.14 Special arrangements for the final must be made this week.
Sula, 49-111
YMRT #33: Lena Horne
- 11.16 *Sula*, 112-174
Discussion of Final Exam
- Week 14
- 11.21 *Madame Butterfly* libretto
"Un Bel Di" On Blackboard.
"Ancora Un Passo" On Blackboard.
M Butterfly, Act I
- Optional: John Luther Long, "Madame Butterfly." This was the original short story that the libretto drew upon. On Blackboard
- 11.23 Thanksgiving Vacation
- Week 15
- 11.28 *M Butterfly*, Act II
Harry Mok, "Yellow Porn." On Blackboard.
- 11.30 *M Butterfly*, Act III
Final Paper due
- Final Exam Wednesday, December 7 4:30-6:30 PM
If an extension has been granted, the final Paper is due at the Final Exam.