

## **Communication 395: Gender, Media and Communication**

Fall 2013  
T/Th 2:00-3:20

Professor Sarah Banet-Weiser  
Office hours: Tuesday 12-1:30 (and by appointment)  
Office: 326B  
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Teaching Assistants:  
Tisha Dejmanee  
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### **Course Description:**

This course examines various images of gender in media focusing on the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Using theories from cultural studies, film and gender studies, and communication studies, we will explore different processes and practices of gender, specifically in terms of media representations of femininity and masculinity. The purpose of the course is to gain insight into the ways in which gender, and its intersections with race, ethnicity and class, is enacted, represented and has an impact on cultural formations and communication. We will explore the socio-cultural mechanisms that shape our individual and collective notions of identity and essentially teach us what it means to be male or female. The media plays a major role in "constructing" gender, and "popular" views of what appropriate gendering is, in turn, shape how we communicate with each other. In examining cultural myths about gender as well as ongoing debates on gender construction, we will consider how gender is tied in with notions of power, identity, voice and other defining identity categories (race, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, etc.)

### **Course Requirements:**

Please keep in mind this is an upper division theory course, and there is a significant reading load. Students are required to attend class regularly, attend all discussion sections, to contribute to class discussions, and to do weekly reading. Attendance in lecture is important: there is significant material covered in lecture that is not in the reading and you cannot pass the course if you do not attend most of the lectures. In addition, there will be frequent screenings in lecture for which you will be responsible. There are several writing assignments for this class, and because the lectures, discussions, reading assignments and course assignments are all vitally linked, it is critical that you keep up with the schedule. **Students who miss more than four lectures or two discussion sections will have their grades reduced and risk failing the course.**

All assignments must be completed and handed in on time at the beginning of class to avoid a grade reduction. If you are unable to turn in an assignment due to illness or a personal emergency, you must provide written documentation that will allow you to be excused, or discuss your situation with me in a timely manner. Do not wait until the end of the term to sort things out.

The final course grade will be based on the following distribution:

Class participation	10%
Class posts (6 total)	25%
Midterm (take home)	30%
Final (in class)	35%

You must complete ALL of these assignments in order to pass the class. **Failure to complete ONE OR MORE of them will result in an F in the class.**

### **Class blog posts:**

You are required to post **SIX** blog posts/journal entries on the course blackboard site. The blog post due dates are marked in the syllabus. If your entries are late, they will be marked down. Entries not posted within a reasonable time frame will receive a "0".

Each time you post, it should include **TWO components (reading + media)**

- 1) **READING:** comment on, analyze or offer a balanced critique of the reading for that week found in the course reader. Here, you must demonstrate that you have done the reading and thought about it. You may choose to write on one article or more than one.
- 2) **MEDIA:** describe and analyze a media artifact(s) (film, television, magazines, newspapers, internet) outside of class screenings. Comment on the ways gender is portrayed and constructed in/by them. Comment on whatever you find interesting, engaging, hopeful, etc. about gender relations in contemporary media culture.

Grades for the post will be based on a 10-point scale (9.5-10 being the highest grade), assessing the completeness of your discussion and analysis (approximately 1-2 pages) and your comprehension and grappling of class readings/discussions/content. The following is a list of potential/suggested questions and topics you may want to write about in your posts:

- Watch a film (in a theater or on video) or a television show and consider the ways in which gender is constructed or gender relationships are portrayed. Do these portrayals seem limiting? Or do they challenge or open up new possibilities for experiencing/understanding gender?
- Go to a magazine stand and study the display of magazines. Which are for men? Which are for women? How do race, class, sexuality come across, if at all? How can you tell?

Describe the display and the covers of the various magazines in as much detail as possible.

- Watch one of the stations that shows primarily music videos (VH1, The Tube, BET, etc), until you see an all-female band. How does their video compare to the all-male bands? What type of program was it aired on? What did the VJ say about it?
- Alter one of the above suggestions with other media...use the web or the radio...

### **Assignments and Grading:**

You are responsible for the material covered in class and in the reading. You will be evaluated on the following:

- 1) the level of your engagement with the class materials (as evidenced in your written work and class participation)
- 2) your capacity to explain your ideas and analysis in articulate and well-written forms
- 3) your ability to creatively explore those theories and methodologies

All of your work will be graded on two primary evaluative scales:

- 1) how well it demonstrates an understanding of the theories and methodologies of the class
- 2) how well it articulates and structures its argument

### **Course Grading Policy:**

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	Outstanding, thoughtful and enthusiastic work
B+/B	Above average work, demonstrating good insight into assignment
B-/C+	Needs improvement on ideas, argument and follow-through
C and below	Fulfilling the bare minimum and showing little understanding of the material

Each assignment will be worth 100 points and will be converted to a percentage score depending upon the weight assigned to each. Your percentage scores on the assignments will be totaled and translated to a letter grade per the scale shown below:

A	= 100-94	C	= 76-74
A-	= 93-90	C-	= 73-70
B+	= 89-87	D+	= 69-67
B	= 86-84	D	= 66-64
B-	= 83-80	D-	= 63-60
C+	= 79-77	F	= 59-0

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must appeal it in writing, stating the reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate, within one week of receiving the graded assignment. No late appeals will be accepted for review.

### **Required Texts:**

*Rebecca Hains, Growing Up With Girl Power: Girlhood on Screen and in Everyday Life*  
Available at campus bookstore and online

Additional readings posted on Blackboard (marked in syllabus with \*)

### **Annenberg School for Communication Academic Integrity Policy:**

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and may be dismissed as a major.

In addition to the formal academic integrity policy, our pedagogical policy is based on mutual respect; all students are encouraged to use the classroom as a space in which to speak and to voice their opinions. Our expectation is that you will respect not only the professors but also your fellow classmates when they are participating in discussion.

Use of computer in the classroom is a privilege. You may use a computer in the classroom ONLY for taking notes. If you abuse this privilege by checking email or going on the Internet, <u>you will be marked as absent for that class period</u> . All other electronic devices (cell phones, MP3 players, etc.) must be turned off and put away during class time.
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### **Disability**

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. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213)740-0776.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, TOPICS & READINGS**

Date	Topic	Readings	Deadlines
T, 8-26	Introduction, Review Syllabus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus</li> </ul>	
Th, 8-28	Defining Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judith Lorber, "Believing is Seeing: Biology as Ideology"*</li> </ul>	
T, 9-3	Gender, Race and the Media: Intersectionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peggy MacIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" *</li> <li>• L.S. Kim, "Representations of Race" *</li> <li>• Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, "Beyond Racism and Misogyny: Black Feminism and 2 Live Crew" *</li> </ul>	
Th, 9-5	Gender, Race and the Media: Intersectionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" *</li> <li>• Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, "Spectatorship, Power and Desire" *</li> <li>• Questlove, "Trayvon Martin and I Ain't Shit" (plus two response articles)</li> </ul>	<b>BLOG POST #1 DUE</b>
T, 9-10	Gender and Childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Messner, "Barbie Girls and Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender" *</li> </ul>	
Th, 9-12	Gender and Childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ellen Seiter, "Buying Happiness, Buying Success: Toy Advertising to Parents" *</li> </ul>	
T, 9-17	Foucault and the Social Construction of Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michel Foucault, from The History of Sexuality, Vol, 1 ("We Other Victorians, "The Repressive Hypothesis, "Scientia Sexualis") *</li> </ul>	
Th, 9-19	Foucault and the Social Construction of Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foucault, "Two Lectures" from Power/Knowledge *</li> </ul>	<b>BLOG POST #2 DUE</b>
T, 9-24	Applying Foucault to Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Susan Bordo, "Introduction: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body" *</li> <li>• Susan Bordo, "Hunger as Ideology"</li> </ul>	
Th, 9-26	Applying Foucault to Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandra Lee Bartky, "Femininity, Foucault and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" *</li> </ul>	
T, 10-1	Masculinity and the Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CJ Pascoe, "Dude, You're A Fag: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse" *</li> </ul>	

Th, 10-3	Masculinity and the Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steven Cohan, "Queer Eye for the Straight Guise: Camp, Postfeminism, and the Fab Five's Makeovers of Masculinity"*</li> </ul>	<b>BLOG POST #3 DUE</b>
T, 10-8	Histories of Gender and Sexuality in the Media: 1960s- 1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lauren Rabinovitz, "Ms.-Representation: The Politics of Feminist Sitcoms" *</li> <li>• Bonnie Dow, selections from <i>Primetime Feminism</i></li> </ul>	
Th, 10-10	Histories of Gender and Sexuality in the Media: 1960s- 1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larry Gross, chapters from <i>Up From Invisibility</i></li> <li>• <b>Guest lecture: Evan Brody</b></li> </ul>	
T, 10-15	Histories of Gender and Media: 1990s-2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebecca Hains, <i>Growing Up with Girl Power</i>, Chapters 1, 2, 3</li> </ul>	
Th, 10-17	Histories of Gender and Media: 1990s-2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hains, <i>Growing Up with Girl Power</i>, Chapters 4, 6</li> <li>• <b>MIDTERM HANDED OUT IN CLASS</b></li> </ul>	
T, 10-22	Gender, Media and Empowerment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hains, <i>Growing Up with Girl Power</i>, Chapters 7, 8</li> </ul>	
Th, 10-24	Gender, Media and Empowerment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Banet-Weiser, "Girls Rule!"</li> <li>• Rosalind Gill, "Postfeminist Media Culture: Elements of a Sensibility"</li> </ul>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM DUE (Beginning of class)</b>
T, 10-29	Producing Gendered Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacy Smith, "Representations of women in Hollywood"*</li> <li>• <b>Guest lecture: Stacy Smith</b></li> </ul>	
Th, 10-31	Producing Gendered Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taylor Nygaard, "Girls Just Want to be "Quality": HBO, Lena Dunham, and Girls' conflicting brand identity." *</li> <li>• Lauren DeCarvalho, "Hannah and her (Entitled) Sisters: (Post) feminism, (post) Recession and Girls" *</li> <li>• Serena Daalmans, "'I'm Busy Trying to become Who I am": Self-entitlement and the city on HBO's Girls" *</li> <li>• Katherine Bell, "Obvie, We're the Ladies!" Postfeminism, Privilege and HBO's latest Girls" *</li> </ul>	<b>BLOG POST #4 Due</b>

T, 11-5	Post-Feminism and Post-Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brenda Weber, "I'm a Woman Now!" Race, Class, and Femme-ing the Normative"</li> <li>• Sarah Banet-Weiser and Laura Portwood-Stacer, "I just Want to Be Me Again! Beauty Pageants, Reality Television and Post-Feminism"</li> </ul>	
Th, 11-7	Post-Feminism and Post-Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ralina Joseph, "Not by This Outside: Selling Post-Race on America's Next Top Model" *</li> <li>• Aisha Durham, "Check on It"</li> <li>• Dayna Chatman, "Pregnancy then it's 'Back to Business': Beyoncé and the Post-feminist Gender Regime"</li> <li>• Miley Cyrus article</li> </ul>	
T, 11-12	Empowering for What? For Whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Susan Douglas, "Introduction," "Warrior Women in Thongs," "The New Girliness" and "You Go, Girl" from <i>Enlightened Sexism</i></li> </ul>	
Th, 11-14	Empowering for What? For Whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Susan Douglas, "Girls Gone Anti-feminist"</li> <li>• Hains, <i>Growing Up with Girl Power</i>, Chapter 9</li> </ul>	<b>BLOG POST #5 DUE</b>
T, 11-19	Gendered Fans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suzanne Scott, "Authorized Resistance: Is Fan Production Frakked?"*</li> <li>• Henry Jenkins, "Star Trek Rerun, Reread, Rewritten: Fan Writing as Textual Poaching"*</li> </ul>	
Th, 11-21	<b>NO CLASS</b>		
T, 11-26	Gender Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inna Arzumanova and Sarah Banet-Weiser, "Authoring the Post-feminist Self"</li> </ul>	
Th, 11-28	<b>THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS</b>		
T, 12-3	Branding the Gendered Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Banet-Weiser, "Branding the Post-Feminist Self: Girls' Video Production and YouTube"</li> <li>• Sarah Banet-Weiser, Chapter 1 from <i>Authentic™</i></li> </ul>	
Th, 12-5	<b><u>FINAL EXAM REVIEW</u></b>		<b>BLOG POST #6 DUE</b>