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Office Hours: THH 439 TTh 330-450 and by appt.

GESM 120g
Section 35390R
Fall 2015, TTh 5:00-6:20 PM
Von KleinSmid Center 255

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 looks and behaviors were considered appropriate, and how these three categories 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, such as Lena Horne, Marilyn Monroe, and Rita Hayworth. 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.

Texts

You are expected to buy or otherwise have a physical copy of the seven underlined books below: five novels, a play, and a libretto. I suggest that you buy the editions ordered for the bookstore, as this will make it easier for you to follow along in class. You also need to make arrangements to listen to the designated podcasts and to watch the two movies.

Drama

Illica & Giacosa/Puccini	<u><i>Madama Butterfly</i></u> libretto	1904
David Henry Hwang	<u><i>M. Butterfly</i></u>	1988

Fiction

John Luther Long	“Madame Butterfly”	1898
Edith Wharton	<u><i>The Custom of the Country</i></u>	1913
James M. Cain	<u><i>Double Indemnity</i></u>	1935
Raymond Chandler	<u><i>The Big Sleep</i></u>	1939
Joan Didion	<u><i>Play It As It Lays</i></u>	1970
Carol Anshaw	<u><i>Aquamarine</i></u>	1992

Film

Vincente Minelli	<i>Cabin in the Sky</i> (Lena Horne)	1943
Charles Vidor	<i>Gilda</i> (Rita Hayworth)	1946
Howard Hawks	<i>Gentlemen Prefer Blondes</i> (Marilyn Monroe)	1953

John Waters	<i>Female Trouble</i> (Divine)	1974
David Cronenberg	<i>M. Butterfly</i>	1993

Note: We will watch excerpts of most of these movies in class, but you will need to watch *M. Butterfly* at home.

Graphic Novel		
Alison Bechdel	<i>Dykes To Watch Out For</i> (excerpts)	1987-2002

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 <http://www.infiniteguest.org/remember-this/> as well as iTunes. We will listen to the following episodes:

Episode #33: Lena Horne

Episode #31: Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles

Episode #34: How Norma Jeane Became Marilyn Monroe

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

Television

<i>Peyton Place</i> , excerpts	1964
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<i>The Mary Tyler Moore Show</i> , “Love Is All Around”	1970
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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
- Class presentation, with post

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. 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 are encouraged to 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. Please don't spend time on a boring post. Each post 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. 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 do a close reading of quotes in the context of their source text (short essays), and 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:

Midterm: 100 points

Class Presentation: 100 points

Final: 200 points

First Paper (experiential): 200 points

Final paper (analytical): 200 points

Participation (may include quizzes): 200 points

Letter grades on papers and assignments will be converted as follows:

A+ = 99 A = 95 A- = 92 B+ = 89 B = 85 B- = 82 C+ = 79 C = 75 C- = 72 D+ = 69 D = 65 F = 0

These will be adjusted by the points possible for each assignment. For an assignment worth 100 points, a B will earn 85 points; for an assignment worth 200 points, 170 points.

Your final numerical scores will be converted to a letter equivalent thus:

A = 94 - 100 A- = 90 - 93.9 B+ = 87 - 89.9 B = 84 - 86.9

B- = 80 - 83.9 C+ = 77 - 79.9 C = 74 - 76.9 C- = 70 - 73.9

D+ = 67 - 69.9 D = 64 - 66.9 D- = 60 - 63.9 F = below 60

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 should be double-spaced, with 12-pt Times New Roman font and page numbers. MLA format is preferred, 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, you will write an experiential paper that asks them to apply the theoretical concepts abstracted from the texts to an event in their own history. You 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 you have experienced a great number of different expectations yourselves.

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. Students begin working on this paper after the midterm. 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 hand-out 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/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety 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/academic-support/center-programs/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 29 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 and posted on Blackboard.

There will be some hand-outs, 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 hand-outs out from Blackboard or make other arrangements.

Week 1

- 8.25 Introduction. Syllabus. Hegemony. Ideology.
"Girls Gone Wild": What does that mean?
- 8.27 *The Custom of the Country* To Book I, Chapter III 1-25
Taffy Brodesser Akner, "Where Would the Kardashians
Be without Kris Jenner?"
- Week 2
- 9.1 *The Custom of the Country* To Book II, Chapter XI 26-94
In class: Base and Superstructure
- 9.3 *The Custom of the Country* To end of Book II 95-134
Gold Diggers: Is It Appropriate To Be Acquisitive?
R.W. Connell, excerpt
- Week 3
- 9.8 *The Custom of the Country* To end of Book III 135-256
First class presentation posts on reading 24 hours before class.
Please see presentation sheet for future posts and presentations.
- 9.10 *The Custom of the Country* To end of Book IV 257-290
Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination"
Drag discussion
- Week 4
- Special arrangements for the midterm must be made this week.
- 9.15 *The Custom of the Country* To end 291-364
- 9.17 *Double Indemnity* 1-60
The Femme Fatale
- Week 5
- 9.22 *Double Indemnity* 61-111
Projection on Women
Discussion of Midterm
- 9.24 *The Big Sleep* 1-60
Discussion of Paper 1

Week 6		
9.29	<i>The Big Sleep</i> Paper 1 examples	61-120
10.1	No class today, as I will be giving a lecture at SDSU. Instead, you will post on the reading below. Posts are due during class time. <i>The Big Sleep</i>	121-180
Week 7		
10.6	<i>The Big Sleep</i> Paper 1 group discussion	181-240
10.8	Midterm	
Week 8		
10.13	Paper 1 due at the start of class Podcast: <i>YMRT #34: How Norma Jeane Became Marilyn Monroe</i> In class: <i>Gentlemen Prefer Blondes</i>	
10.15	Podcast: <i>YMRT #33: Lena Horne</i> Podcast: <i>YMRT #31: Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles</i> In class: excerpts from <i>Cabin in the Sky</i> or <i>Gilda</i>	
Week 9		
10.20	<i>Play It As It Lays</i> Can Conservative Values Be a Rebellion?	3-47
10.22	<i>Play It As It Lays</i> <i>The Mary Tyler Moore Show</i> , "Love Is All Around"	48-102
Week 10		
10.27	<i>Play It As It Lays</i>	103-157
10.29	<i>Play It As It Lays</i>	158-214
Week 11		
11.3	<i>Aquamarine</i> Fluid Sexuality and Identity	1-50
11.5	<i>Aquamarine</i>	51-100
Week 12		
11.10	<i>Aquamarine</i> Excerpts from <i>Dykes to Watch Out For</i>	101-150
11.12	<i>Aquamarine</i>	151-197
Week 13	Special arrangements for the final must be made this week.	

11.17	"Madame Butterfly" (Luther Long) <i>Madame Butterfly</i> libretto	
11.19	<i>M. Butterfly</i> Harry Mok, "Yellow Porn"	Act I
Week 14		
11.24	<i>M. Butterfly</i> Watch <i>M Butterfly</i> the movie over the weekend, with attention to differences from the play.	Acts I and II
11.26	Thanksgiving Vacation	
Week 15		
12.1	<i>M Butterfly</i>	Acts II and III
12.3	<i>M Butterfly</i> Discussion of Final Exam and Paper	Act III
Final Exam	Thursday, December 10	4:30-6:30 PM