Department of Communication, Media and Film

COMS 479 (L01): Feminist Media Studies

WINTER 2021: January 11 – April 15 (excluding Feb. 14 – 20; Apr. 2 and 5)

Lecture: MW 9:30 to 10:45

Asynchronous lecture upload on Mondays;
<u>Synchronous</u> Zoom sessions on Wednesdays.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON COURSE DELIVERY FOR WINTER 2021:

This Winter 2021 course will be offered entirely online as part of the University's plan to ensure everyone's safety during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please read the outline carefully to see which course components will be offered synchronously (where you are expected to participate at the usual scheduled course time) and which components will be offered asynchronously (to be completed on your own time). Synchronous course sessions will normally be hosted on Zoom, a video-conferencing program. To access scheduled Zoom course sessions, go to D2L, click on the COMMUNICATION tab, and select Zoom 5 or 10 minutes before class is scheduled to begin.

If you will not be able to participate in scheduled synchronous class sessions owing to time differences, then you should arrange to take this course when it is offered in person in the future.

Note that the time indicated on course outlines for all timed quizzes and exams in CMCL, COMS, and FILM courses includes 50% extra time to allow for technical difficulties.

Instructor:	Dr. Samantha Thrift
Email:	samantha.thrift@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Wednesdays, 11:00-1:00 (by appt.)

Course Description
Introduces critical perspectives and practices of feminist media studies and interrogates how gendered, racialized and sexualized subjectivities are produced, circulated and consumed through media cultures and texts. A key focus will be relationships between power, media and identity.

Additional Information
This course has both asynchronous and synchronous components. PowerPoint lectures will be posted to D2L weekly (Mondays). We will meet synchronously via Zoom on Wednesdays. The weekly schedule of topics and readings can be found at the end of this outline or on D2L.

Please be aware that some of the material we study will involve difficult topics, including sexual violence, racism, and other types of oppression. Please contact the instructor if you require assistance in dealing with this material.

Students are responsible for reading and following all course and university policies discussed in this outline. Prerequisite: COMS 371.

Objectives of the Course
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Understand the history of feminist media studies as an evolving scholarly field
- Articulate key theoretical and methodological frameworks for studying media cultures from a feminist perspective
- Analyze the ways in which gendered, racialized and sexualized subjectivities are produced, circulated and consumed through media cultures
- Interrogate the ways in which their own identities shape their engagement with media culture
- Develop both verbal and written analytic skills needed for advanced undergraduate study

Textbooks and Readings
A digital course pack has been prepared and will be available on the COMS 479 course website (D2L).

Learning Technologies and Requirements
& Policy on the Use of Electronic Communication Devices
This is an online course. In order to complete online (or blended) courses, University of Calgary students are required to have reliable access to the following technology:
- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates, with current antivirus software enabled;

- Broadband internet connection, and a current and updated web browser;

- A webcam (built-in or external);

- A microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone. If you need access to other software programs to complete assignments, your instructor will provide relevant information and links.

If you have technical difficulties, contact the university's IT department. For more information, see https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/student-campus-services-information-technologies-it.html

Instructors may arrange to record synchronous zoom class sessions for lesson capture; however, students are not to share recordings with others. Please carefully review the section on Instructor Copyright at the end of this outline.

Email
When corresponding with the instructor via email, students should include the course name (COMS 479) in the subject line. If you do not include the course name in your email's subject line, your message may get overlooked in the instructor's inbox and go unread. Please maintain a respectful tone in your correspondence with the instructor.

Email is most useful for specific inquiries. If you have more detailed questions about the course material, assignments, or grades, please schedule an appointment to speak with the instructor (via Zoom) during office hours.

The instructor will respond to emails during the week, usually on a first-come, first-served basis. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends will not be read (or replied to) until the next working day.

Respect and Diversity in the Classroom: This course is built around student participation. Lecture periods often contain opportunity for student contributions and I welcome your insightful comments (based on course materials) and questions. During these discussion periods I ask that students be respectful of diverse viewpoints; however, racist, sexist, homophobic, Islamophobic, and other types of discriminatory comments are not permitted in the classroom. Comments of this nature will be dealt with at the professor's discretion on an individual basis.

On pronouns: I respect all students' choice of pronouns. Please alert me to your pronoun and I am happy to oblige.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Assessed Components	Due
40%	**Discussion Response** Based on that week's material and discussion (in Zoom meeting), students will submit a 1.5-2 page written response to the topics and issues raised. To be successful, the responses should connect to the ideas and concepts raised by the assigned material. More information will be provided in class. Four submissions are due, each worth 10 points. Submissions are due to the D2L Dropbox at 11:59pm on the dates indicated. Please note, students may choose to submit their fourth response on a date of their choosing.	Feb 4; Feb 25; Mar 25; Student Choice.
15%	**Ignite Presentation** For this assignment, students will work in groups to create and deliver a 10-slide, 10 minute Ignite presentation that will be delivered during one of our synchronous Zoom sessions. The slides will advance every 1 minute, encouraging speakers to make their point efficiently. The presentation will explore an idea, theory or concept from the week's reading or lecture in relation to a media example, current event, or relevant historical example. The presentation must also include two discussion questions for the class (subject to instructor approval). Groups will be formed during the second week of class. **NOTE:** Groups must receive topic approval by the Monday prior to their presentation date (5% of grade). Presentations dates: Jan 27, Feb 3, Feb 24, Mar 3, Mar 10, Mar 31, Apr 7.	TBD
20%	**Video Chainletter** Students will work in groups of 5-6 to produce a research-informed video chainletter, which will address course concepts and engage feminist media	Apr 12

	critique. Each chainletter will be approx. 5-10 minutes in length. Bonus awarded to groups who include a "table of contents" designed in the style of a 'zine! More information about this assignment will be provided in class.		(11:59pm)
25%	**Chainletter Reflection** Each student will be responsible for an individually-written paper (5-6 pages) that expands on some of the key themes and issues raised in their group chainletter. As part of this paper, students will also reflect on their own experience producing the chainletter and engaging in feminist media critique.		Apr 14 (11:59pm)

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Note: You must complete all assignments and exams or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

If you miss a required course component, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Submission of Assignments
Please submit all assignments electronically by uploading them to the designated D2L Dropbox (unless instructed otherwise in the assignment guidelines). Include your name and ID number on all assignments.

It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act***. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recorded for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% or a partial letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Student Accommodations
Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that

a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the *University Calendar*: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html. Also see FAQs for Students: https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq

Expectations for Writing
Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the *University of Calgary Calendar* section on writing across the curriculum: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale
The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, letter grades will be used for assessing the Ignite presentations, the video chainletters, and reflection essay. Point scores will be used to grade discussion responses.

In calculating final grades in this course, the calculated percentage grade will be translated to the corresponding letter grade according to the Department of CMF grade scale equivalents (ex. a calculated percentage score of 84% will receive a final letter grade of B+).

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*
4.00	Outstanding performance	**A+**	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent performance	**A**	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70	Approaching excellent performance	**A -**	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30	Exceeding good performance	**B+**	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good performance	**B**	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70	Approaching good performance	**B-**	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance	**C+**	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory performance	**C**	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance	**C-**	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	**D+**	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	**D**	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	**F**	0 - 49.99%	0%

*   Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. **In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin**. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support or the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) Research and Citation Resources at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://success.ucalgary.ca/home.htm

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation
Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct
For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the *University of Calgary Calendar* at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Research Ethics
Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal
For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the *University Calendar:* https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html

Student Support Services and Resources
Please visit https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

In this following schedule, synchronous classes are indicated with a (Z) beside the date.

Date	Topic & Reading	Deadlines
Jan 11	**Feminisms, Past & Present** Rachel Fudge. 2005. "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Feminism But Were Afraid to Ask" Roxane Gay, "feminism (n.) plural" (2014)	
Jan 13 (Z)	**Course Introduction**	
Unit I: Media & Representations		
Jan 18	**Traditions in Feminist Media Analysis** (Lecture on D2L) Rosalind Gill, "Gender and Media" (2007)	
Jan 20 (Z)	**Discussion**	
Jan 25	**The Male Gaze** (Lecture on D2L) Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975)	
Jan 27 (Z)	**Ignite & Discussion**	
Feb 1	**BLM & Intersectional Media Analysis** (Lecture on D2L) Chloe Banks, "Disciplining Black activism: post-racial rhetoric, public memory and decorum in news media framing of the Black Lives Matter movement" (2018)	

Feb 3 (Z)	Brittney Cooper, "Why Are Black Women and Girls Still an Afterthought in Our Outrage Over Police Violence?" (June 2020) Viewing (7 min): Kimberly Jones, "How Can We Win" (June 2020) Viewing (19 min): Kimberlé Crenshaw. (2016) "The Urgency of Intersectionality," Ted Talk, October. Available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_ the_urgency_of_intersectionality **Ignite & Discussion**	Submit Discussion Response (Feb. 4, 11:59pm)
Feb 8 Feb 10 (Z)	**Mainstream Media & MMIWG** (Zoom lecture) Reading: TBA **Guest speaker, Nicolette Little** (Ph.D. Candidate, Dep't. of CMF)	
Feb 15-17	Reading Break	
Unit II: Mediated Feminisms		
Feb 22 Feb 24 (Z)	**Popular Feminism in the 1970s** (Film in lieu of lecture) Screening (1hr, 41min): *Yours in Sisterhood* (2018, Dir. Irene Lusztig) Amy Erdman Farrell, "From a Tarantula on a Banana Boat to a Canary in a Mine: "Ms. Magazine" as a Cautionary Tale in a Neoliberal Age" (2011) **Ignite & Discussion**	Submit Discussion Response (Feb. 25, 11:59pm)
Mar 1 Mar 3 (Z)	**We Need To Talk About Postfeminism** (Lecture on D2L) Rosalind Gill, "Postfeminist Media Culture: Elements of a Sensibility" (2007) Recommended: Cathryn B. Lucas & Matthew R. Hodler, "#TakeBackFitspo: Building Queer Futures in/Through Social Media" (2018) **Ignite & Discussion**	
Mar 8	**Popular Feminism, Now** (Lecture on D2L)	

	Sarah Banet-Weiser, "Popular Misogyny: A Zeitgeist" (2015) Viewing (30 min): Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie, "We Should All Be Feminists" Ted Talk (2012). Available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists?language=en#t-1428	
Mar 10 (Z)	**Ignite & Discussion**	
Unit III: Making Feminist Media		
Mar 15	**Music, Zines, & Making Subcultural Scenes** (Zoom Lecture) Screening (50 min): *Don't Need You: Herstory of Riot Grrrl* (2005, dir. Kerri Koch) Kristen Schilt, "'Riot Grrrl Is…': The Contestation over Meaning in a Music Scene" (2004) Frances Corry, "LADY U SEND ME YR MOVIE": constructing Joanie4Jackie's feminist distribution network" (2020) Surf: http://www.joanie4jackie.com	
Mar 17 (Z)	**Assignment Discussion**	
Mar 22	**The Ga(y)mes We Play** (Lecture format TBA) Reading: TBA	Submit Discussion Response (Mar. 25, 11:59pm)
Mar 24 (Z)	**Guest lecture, Sam Stockton** (M.A. Candidate, Dep't. of CMF)	
Unit IV: Digital Feminisms		
Mar 29	**Hashtag Activisms** (Lecture on D2L) Jackson et al., "#GirlsLikeUs: Trans advocacy and community building online" (2018) Carrie Rentschler, "Bystander intervention, feminist hashtag activism, and the anti-carceral politics of care" (2017) Recommended viewing (16 min): Rahaf Harfoush, "United We Stan: Anonymous, Witches, and the KPop Stans" (2020)	
Mar 31 (Z)	**Ignites & Discussion**	

Apr 5	**Stat Holiday** (No lecture posted)	
Apr 7 (Z)	**No Zoom (Group Project Work)**	
Apr 12	**Group Project Work** (No new material/lecture) • Video Chainletters due (11:59pm)	Video Chainletter Projects & Reflections due
Apr 14 (Z)	**Chainletter Showcase** • Chainletter Reflection due (11:59pm)	