

FILM 336 Women and Film

Trimester 2 2012

16 July to 17 November 2012

20 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates:	16 July to 19 October 2012
Mid-trimester break:	27 August to 9 September 2012
Last piece of assessment due:	Monday, 29 October 2012

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator: Pansy Duncan

Email: Pansy.duncan@vuw.ac.nz

Phone: 463 6520

Room: 85 Fairlie Terrace Room 107

Office hours: tbc

Tutors: to be announced on Blackboard

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Wednesday	10-1pm	77 Fairlie Terrace Room 306
Friday	10-12pm	77 Fairlie Terrace Room 306

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the FILM 336 site on Blackboard: go to "Tutorials" and then follow the instructions under the "SCubed - Tutorial Enrolment Instructions" link. Please read the instructions carefully. Tutorial rooms will be listed on S-Cubed, Blackboard and on the bulletin board outside the SEFTMS Reception, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

TEACHING LEARNING SUMMARY

The course is taught through lectures, seminars, screenings and set readings. Teaching provides a theoretical, historical and critical context for each film screening. Each week a question is set to frame the readings and to provide a focus for student discussion during tutorials. Students are expected to attend all tutorials.

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. In 2012, this course sustains three critical approaches. A focus on women's film history, which recovers the role women have played as directors and screenwriters; feminist film theory, which reads for the fractures and disturbances in film texts; and different filmmaking practices, such as the counter cinemas that have emerged in response to feminist debates. The course moves toward a contemporary focus on the impact of the digital on questions of spectatorship, phenomenology and embodiment. Film examples for this topic range from women's pictures, melodrama, and film noir, to the more recent revisions of classic film form.

COURSE CONTENT

The purpose of this course is to provide a critical overview of the developments in feminist-orientated film theory and cinematic practice from the 1970s to the present day. Opening with analyses of the founding theoretical texts in feminist film theory, this paper initially demonstrates the ways in which feminist engagements with classical Hollywood cinema—from the suspense thriller to the maternal melodrama—provided the filmic infrastructure for a series of psychoanalytically-informed analyses of the vicissitudes of female spectatorship. It then proceeds to explore the various filmic and theoretical approaches that have built on these theoretical foundations. On the one hand, the paper addresses the filmmaking practices that have delivered a feminist agenda in cinematic form—whether within mainstream Hollywood, through the progressive women's film, or within feminist counter-cinematic practice, through the work of Sally Potter and Laura Mulvey. On the other, it elaborates the series of critiques that classical psychoanalytic feminist film theory has sustained from within the ranks of feminist film criticism more generally—critiques which have enabled us to see feminist issues of spectatorship, gender, desire and embodiment in a more expansive light. These critiques span Feminist Cultural Studies, which recovers the often-surprising role that

women have, historically, played as directors, screenwriters, actors and fans; Queer Theory's interrogation of feminism's heterosexual bias; the anti-essentialising work of Judith Butler on sex and gender; Post-Colonial criticism's effort to articulate feminist theories of gender with the position of the subaltern other; and new theories of embodiment, phenomenology and affect in the cinema. Throughout the lectures, this theoretical drama will be played out through analyses of a broad range of film texts—from the classic Hollywood cinema of Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958), to the contemporary neo-realism of Selima Makhmalbaf's *At Five in the Afternoon* (2003).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate their grasp of the major paradigms in feminist film theory, from the 1970s to the present day, articulating a sense of the shifts and continuities within these paradigms.
- Identify and explore productive gaps, problems or dilemmas within the existing research.
- Clearly and concisely articulate the focus of proposed research in order to develop a sustained and coherent argument.
- Undertake independent research.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20 point course is 200 hours spread evenly over the 12 week trimester and breaks, or 13 hours per teaching week.

You are expected to attend all lectures, screenings and tutorials. Please note that Assignment 1 depends directly on your attendance at tutorials. I do strongly recommend that you attend all of the screenings for this course.

READINGS

Recommended Reading:

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 will be 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 20%.

From Weeks 4-11, each student will be assigned a week to prepare and deliver a spoken response (5-10 minute) to a set question informed by some of the material covered in the course. The spoken response should draw on both theoretical and film texts, and will be given in the tutorial. A written copy of the spoken response should be submitted one week after your response. Both the spoken and written responses will be assessed.

Assessment Criteria

In this assignment, you will be assessed on your ability to:

- Give a concise response to a set question, and express yourself in a clear and direct manner
- Comprehend and deploy some of the theories covered in FILM 336
- Relate these theories to an analysis of a film
- Use audiovisual aids
- Understand and apply relevant film-studies terms (shot-length, etc)
- Include accurate and complete references for all the relevant sources using footnotes and a bibliography/filmography

Relation to Learning Objectives

This assignment enables you to develop:

- Your ability to engage critically with theoretical and film texts
- Your ability to relate theoretical concepts to an analysis of a film
- Your understanding of (some of) the key issues in feminist film theory
- Your ability to construct accurate and complete references

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 in the Friday tutorial of week 4, your written work will be due on the Friday of week 5.)

Assignment 2: Research Plan (1000-1500 words.) Weighting 30%.

This assignment involves developing a clear research question, and evolving a Research Plan in response to this question. Because new ideas and approaches are introduced continually throughout the course, you may choose to change your key question and focus when the time comes to develop it into your final Research Essay; the purpose of the assignment, however, is to equip you with the scholarly and intellectual tools necessary to undertaking the kind of independent research the final essay will require. The Research Plan should consist of the following: 1) A research question that you have identified in response to one of the topics set; 2) A research description that explains and fills out this question, and may begin to answer it in the form of a "thesis"; 3) A methodology that details the research you will undertake in exploring your

question (the film texts, concepts, theorists, resources and essays that you anticipate will be most useful), and an explanation as to why this methodology is appropriate; 4) A series of short critical reading of 5 written texts that you consider relevant to your proposed research; 5) A bibliography.

Assessment Criteria

In this assignment, you will be assessed on your ability to:

- Compose a clearly defined research question and research description that together identify an interesting and productive area of exploration
- Construct a methodology appropriate to the proposed research
- Express yourself in a clear and direct manner
- Undertake research using library resources (electronic journals, text books, and the databases available through the University library catalogue)
- Think independently and critically, showing evidence of originality and creativity in your research
- 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/filmography
- Master the “genre” of the research proposal

Relation to Learning Objectives

This assignment enables you to develop:

- Your understanding of the major paradigms in feminist film theory.
- Your capacity to identify and explore productive gaps, problems or dilemmas within the existing research.
- Your ability to clearly and concisely articulate the focus of proposed research.
- Your capacity to identify and locate the resources (journal articles, books, films, archival materials) that you will need to explore your research question

The deadline for Assignment 2: Research Plan is due Friday 21 September 2012

Assignment 3: Research Essay (3000 words). Weighting 50%. This assignment allows you to deploy the skills acquired in composing your Research Plan through the development of a Research Essay, a sustained and logical argument based around a single question. In writing this essay, you may or may not choose to stick with the question identified in your Research Plan.

Assessment Criteria

In this assignment, you will be assessed on your ability to:

- Develop a sustained, coherent and logical argument, expressed in a clear and direct manner
- Demonstrate your understanding of a particular aspect of the historical, cultural and critical issues in feminist film theory by synthesising a range of research materials
- Engage in close textual analysis to support your thesis, applying relevant film-studies concepts (shot-length, mise-en-scene, etc)
- Think independently and critically, showing evidence of originality and creativity in your thesis and argumentation
- Undertake the background research, reading, and film-watching that will underpin your argument, using reputable academic sources
- Integrate the feedback offered on your Research Plan
- Include accurate and complete references for all the relevant sources, using footnotes and a bibliography

Relation to Learning Objectives:

The Assignment enables you to develop:

- 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 effectively support the argument you make through close textual analysis and the use of theoretical materials
- Your ability to integrate feedback on your research proposal

The deadline for Assignment 3: The Research Essay is due Monday 29 October, 2012

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. 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	16 July	The Emergence of Feminist Film Theory
Week 2	23 July	The Turn to the Woman's Film: Paranoia and Masochism in the Female Gothic and the Love Story
Week 3	30 July	Breakthroughs in Theorizing Female Spectatorship: The Case of the Weepee
Week 4	6 August	The Progressive Woman's Film and the Question of Female Authorship
Week 5	13 August	Feminist Counter-Cinema: Thinking the Voice
Week 6	20 August	Problematizing Sex: From Foucault to Butler
Mid Trimester Break: Monday 27 August to Sunday 9 September 2012		
Week 7	10 September	Towards Queer Theory
Week 8	17 September	Cultural Studies Approaches: Rudolph Valentino and Female Fandom
Week 9	24 September	Feminist/Postcolonial Theories
Week 10	1 October	Rethinking the "Male" Gaze: A Return to Psychoanalysis
Week 11	8 October	Phenomenology and the Embodied Spectator
Week 12	15 October	Contemporary Theories of Affect and Emotion: Irritation, Literary Adaptation and Gentle Jane in Contemporary Women's Culture

WEEK 1: The Emergence of Feminist Film Theory

Wednesday 18 July (10-1pm)

Screening: *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958)

Friday 20 July (10-12pm)

Lecture: The Emergence of Feminist Film Theory.

Reading:

Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1975): 6-18.

Laura Mulvey, "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema'",
Framework 15/16/17 (1981):12-15

WEEK 2: The Turn to the Woman's Film: Paranoia and Masochism in the Female Gothic and the Love Story

Wednesday 25 July (10-1pm)

Screening: *Rebecca* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940)

Friday 27 July (10-12pm)

Lecture: The Turn to the Woman's Film: Paranoia and Masochism in the Female Gothic and the Love Story

Reading:

Mary Ann Doane, "The Desire to Desire," in *The Desire to Desire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 1-37

Secondary Film Texts:

Letter from an Unknown Woman (Max Ophuls, 1948)

WEEK 3: Breakthroughs in Theorizing Female Spectatorship: The Case of the Weepee

Wednesday 1 August (10-1pm)

Screening: *Stella Dallas* (King Vidor, 1937)

Friday 3 August (10-12pm)

Lecture: Breakthroughs in Theorizing Female Spectatorship: The Case of the Weepee

Reading:

Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," *Screen* 23, no. 3-4 (1982): 74-88

Linda Williams: "Something Else Besides a Mother: *Stella Dallas* and the Maternal Melodrama," *Cinema Journal* 24, no. 1 (Autumn 1984): 2-27

WEEK 4: The Progressive Woman's Film and the Question of Female Authorship

Wednesday 8 August (10-1pm)

Screening: *Blue Steel* (Kathryn Bigelow, 1989)

Friday 10 August (10-12pm)

Lecture: The Progressive Woman's Film and the Question of Female Authorship

Reading:

Linda Rascaroli, "Steel in the Gaze: On POV and the Discourse of Vision in Kathryn Bigelow's Cinema,"
Screen 38, no. 3 (1997): 232-241

WEEK 5: Feminist Counter-Cinema: Thinking the Voice

Wednesday 15 August (10-1pm)

Screening: *Riddles of the Sphinx* (Laura Mulvey, 1977); *Thriller* (Sally Potter, 1979)

Friday 17 August (10-12pm)

Lecture: Feminist Counter-Cinema: Thinking the Voice

Reading:

Mladen Dolar, "The Linguistics of the Voice," in *The Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 12-33.

Kaja Silverman, "The Fantasy of the Maternal Voice: Female Subjectivity and the Negative Oedipus Complex," in *The Acoustic Mirror* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 101-134.

WEEK 6: Problematizing Sex: From Foucault to Butler

Wednesday 22 August (10-1pm)

Screening: *Imitation of Life* (Douglas Sirk, 1959)

Friday 24 August (10-12pm)

Lecture: Problematizing Sex: From Foucault to Butler

Reading:

Judith Butler, "Lana's Imitation: Melodramatic Repetition and the Gender Performative," *Genders* 9 (1990): 1-18.

Judith Butler, "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion," in *Bodies That Matter: On The Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 121-142.

Secondary Film Text:

Paris is Burning (Jeannie Livingstone, 1990)

WEEK 7: Towards Queer Theory

Wednesday 12 September (10-1pm)

Screening: *All About Eve* (Joseph Mankiewicz, 1950)

Friday 14 September (10-12pm)

Lecture: Towards Queer Theory

Reading:

Jackie Stacey, "Desperately Seeking Difference," *Screen* 28, no.1 (1987): 48-61

Blakey Vermeule, "Is there a Sedgwick School for Girls?" *Qui Parle*, 5, no.1 (Fall/Winter 1991): 53-72.

WEEK 8: Cultural Studies Approaches: Rudolph Valentino and Female Fandom

Wednesday 19 September (10-1pm)

Screening: *The Sheik* (George Melford, 1921)

Friday 21 September (10-12pm)

Lecture: Cultural Studies Approaches: Rudolph Valentino and Female Fandom

Reading:

Jackie Stacey, "Feminine Fascination," in *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1994), 126-175.

Miriam Hansen, "Male Star, Female Fans," from *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Cinema* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 249-268

WEEK 9: Feminist/Postcolonial Theories

Wednesday 26 September (10-1pm)

Screening: *At Five in the Afternoon* (Samira Makhmalbaf, 2003)

Friday 28 September (10-12pm)

Lecture: Feminist/Postcolonial Theories

Reading:

Sara Mills, "Postcolonial Feminist Theories," in *Contemporary Feminist Theories*, ed. Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 98-112.

Hain Bresheeth, "Two Theses on the Afghan Woman: Sarina and Hana Makhmalbaf Filming Agheleh Farahmand," *Third Text* 24, no. 1 (2010): 25-38.

Supplementary Film Text:

The Joy of Madness (Hana Makhmalbaf, 2003)

WEEK 10: Rethinking the "Male" Gaze: A Return to Psychoanalysis

Wednesday 3 October (10-1pm)

Screening: *Lost Highway* (David Lynch, 1997)

Friday 5 October (10-12pm)

Lecture: Rethinking the "Male" Gaze: A Return to Psychoanalysis

Reading:

Joan Copjec, "The Orthopsychic Subject: Film Theory and the Reception of Lacan," *October* 49 (Summer, 1989): 53-71.

Todd McGowan, "Looking for the Gaze: Lacanian Film Theory and its Vicissitudes," *Cinema Journal* 42, no. 3 (2003): 27-47.

WEEK 11: Phenomenology and the Embodied Spectator

Wednesday 10 October (10-1pm)

Screening: *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (Tobe Hooper, 1974)

Friday 12 October (10-12pm)

Lecture: Phenomenology and the Embodied Spectator

Reading:

Linda Williams, introduction to *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press: 1994), 1-21.

Vivian Sobchack, "What my Fingers Knew: The Cineasthetic Subject, or, Vision in the Flesh," in *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 53-84.

WEEK 12: Contemporary Theories of Affect and Emotion: Irritation, Literary Adaptation and Gentle Jane in Contemporary Women's Culture

Wednesday 17 October (10-1pm)

Screening: *Pride and Prejudice* (Joe Wright, 2005)

Friday 19 October (10-12pm)

Lecture: Contemporary theories of affect and emotion: Irritation, Literary Adaptation and Gentle Jane in Contemporary Women's Culture

Reading:

Sianne Ngai, introduction to *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 1-37.

Sianne Ngai, "Envy," in *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 126-174.