

McGill University
Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies
WMST 402: Feminist Media Production
FERR 456; Tuesdays, 2:35-5:25 pm.
Winter 2014

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Groeneveld
Office: IGSF, 3487 Peel St., Room 301
Phone: (514) 398-4400 x. 089632
Email: elizabeth.groeneveld@mcgill.ca
Office Hours: Mondays 3:00-4:00, or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines social movement-based sites of knowledge production through feminist media, in order to imagine new and more complex ways to think about feminist media histories; the relationship between feminism and popular culture; and the politics of feminist media making. The course will draw on theorizations of the relationships between reading, affect, identity, and commercial culture and examine the relationships between print and online media and social change, with a focus on feminist media production. Key questions will be: What role does media play within social movements? What are the promises and pitfalls of feminist interventions in the realm of commercial culture?

Students enrolled in the course will produce their own feminist media.

Approach

This class will be run as a seminar course, and will thus be focused on in-class discussion and student presentations, with the occasional mini-lecture. Read the assigned materials in advance and be prepared for critical discussion. Bring hard copies of the readings to class. Students are encouraged to begin thinking about their final assignments early on in the semester, and to discuss with the class how their projects relate to course readings.

Required Texts

Groeneveld, Elizabeth, ed. "Feminist Media Production." Course Package. Montreal, QC: McGill University, 2014. [CP]
Piepmeier, Alison. *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism*. New York UP, 2009.

Marks Breakdown

Weekly Discussion Points	10% (5 x 2%)
Participation	15%
Comparative Essay	20%
Work-In-Progress Presentation	15%
Final Assignment	40%

Assignments

All written assignments must:

- be typed and double-spaced using 12 pt. Times New Roman font
- have one-inch margins
- use MLA formatting
- have the student's name, the instructor's name, course code, date, and word count printed in the top left-hand corner of the first page (no title page is necessary)
- have numbered pages
- be submitted as a hard copy; email submissions will not be accepted

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information)."

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Weekly Discussion Points

Value: 10% (5 x 2%)

Due Dates: Submit these weekly, by noon on Tuesdays, via MyCourses

Description: This assignment is designed to: motivate students to reflect on the readings in advance of class; prompt wider ranging discussion and/or to highlight shared points of interest or concern; engage quieter contributors in class discussions; and keep everyone on top of the readings. You earn credit for submitting a discussion point to MyCourses; therefore, you should see this assignment as a starting point for your thoughts on the readings that you can develop through discussion in class.

Ideas for how to do this assignment if you're feeling stuck: Select a short passage from one of our assigned readings that you would like to discuss further. Write a little bit about what made this passage jump out at you: is it representative of the author's argument? Do you particularly like this passage? Does it seem to point to a limitation of the author's argument? If we have a difficult reading, perhaps select a passage that seems particularly difficult, but important for the author's argument. Finally, can you make any connections across readings that we've already completed for the class?

Participation

Value: 15% (10% in-class participation + 5% launch participation)

Description: This course relies on seminar participation because part of learning involves being in the world with others. Learning is social, and one of the goals of a Women's Studies education is to foster a social and intellectual community of feminist learners and to develop your critical voice. Your participation grade will be based on the quality of your contributions to the class. Classroom contributions included engaging in discussions; asking critical questions; giving feedback to your peers; listening actively and respectfully; showing up on time; and helping to build accountable space.

Critical Reflection

Value: 20%

Length: 1500 words (+/- 10%)

Due Date: Tuesday 11 February, at the beginning of class

Description: This assignment is designed to develop your critical reading skills; to encourage you to explore connections between the readings; and to link these connections to broader cultural context.

Based on the readings we have completed up to and including Week 6, write a critical reflection that links 2-3 of our readings together. It is up to you to make an argument about how these readings are linked and to persuade the reader of your argument. You might also examine how a

set of readings addresses a particular topic or issue from different angles. Finally, you must comment on the significance of your argument (why it matters). This final part could involve connecting the readings to your own interests; events (in popular culture or the news); or Women's Studies in general (i.e. make connections between the reading and a broader context).

This assignment will be assessed on the basis of comprehension, critical analysis, and critical reflection: do not just summarize what you believe the reading to be about; you must demonstrate that you understand why key ideas within the reading are important and worth engaging with.

Work-In-Progress Presentation

Value: 15%

Due Dates: 18 and 25 March and 1 April

Length: 15-20 minutes (presentation + discussion; these may be integrated)

Description: Present your work in progress on your final assignment. This is an opportunity to both teach the class something about your subject matter and to receive critical feedback from your peers in advance of submitting the final assignment. At this point, you should be able to tell the class what argument you will be making within your assignment, what your goals are, and what questions you are still working through. You will be assessed in three areas: argument; evidence of preparation; and engagement with the class.

Final Assignment

Value: 40% (10% Creative + 20% Analytic + 10% Reflective)

Due Date: Tuesday 8 April

Description: Create a feminist media text and distribute/publish it. Feminist media texts include, but are not limited to: zines; magazines; pamphlets; videos; songs; websites; and blogs. You may work alone or collaborate with other students in the class. These assignments will be showcased at a launch party at the end of the semester. Assignments will be assessed as follows:

Creative Component (10%): This is an assessment of the media text itself. The media production will be assessed on the basis of the clarity/effectiveness of its message; the innovativeness of its content or design; and its engagement with feminist concepts.

Analytic Component (20%): Submit a 1000 word (+/- 10%) analysis of the media text, situating your cultural production in relation to course materials and feminist media making more broadly. Draw on course materials to support your claims. Make a case for how your media production is feminist and/or contributes to a politics of anti-subordination.

Reflective Component (10%): Submit a 250-300 word self-evaluation that reflects on what you learned through the project and what you might do differently next time. Optional: If you worked with other students, you may also reflect on the process of working with others.

Policies and Guidelines

How to Interpret Grades in this Course

Your professor is eager to help you do well on assignments before they are due. Please visit the professor during office hours to ask questions about material for the course and assignments on which you are working.

Grades are assigned based on the scale set out in the Arts and Sciences calendar. Grades in the "A" range are awarded only for superior work (and not merely sufficient performance). Grades in the "B" range are awarded for work that is above satisfactory. In the "C" range they are awarded for satisfactory/sufficient work. And in the "D" range, they are awarded for unsatisfactory work.

Final grades will be based on the McGill University scale, reproduced here:

85-100% = A	60-64% = C+
80-84% = A-	55-59% = C
75-79% = B+	50-54% = D (Conditional Pass)
70-74% = B	0-49% = F (Fail)
65-69% = B-	

Grades are never given out over email or the telephone. Students can check their grades via the course website.

Disability Services

If you have a disability, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities at 398-6009 (www.mcgill.ca/osd).

Unfortunately, the instructor's office is not accessible for visitors with mobility impairment, but meetings at alternate locations will be happily arranged.

Email Policy

If you have a question for the professor, please check the course syllabus first to see if the information you require is on it. If the question involves more than a yes/no answer, please ask during office hours instead. If you are unable to meet with the professor during office hours, please feel free to make an appointment.

Please do not email the professor on the weekends or after business hours.

Late Policy

All assignments will be penalized at 5% per day late. If you have a late assignment, please submit it to the IGSF (3487 Peel St.) during regular business hours (9am-5pm). You may wish to call the IGSF in advance at 514-398-3911 to confirm that the Institute is open, as we occasionally close during special events. Do not email your assignment to your professor. *This late policy does not apply to the Weekly Discussion Points assignment.*

If you have extenuating circumstances that can be documented (medical emergencies, etc.), simply attach a copy of your documentation to the assignment. If you do not have documentable and exceptional circumstances that prevent you from submitting your paper, you need to accept the fact that late marks will be applied.

Grade Appeals

Assignments are graded on performance, not effort. Grades are final, except where a mistake has been made in calculation. Here are the circumstances under which the professor would change a grade: (a) if an error has been made at the level of calculation, or (b) if you have not been held to the same standard as everyone else. If you seek clarification on a grade you have received, you should visit your professor during office hours, keeping in mind the criteria of evaluation on which your assignment was graded. The professor will neither defend nor contest the evaluation; she will instead discuss ways in which you can understand the evaluation and improve upon your performance.

In the event that you feel you received an undeserved grade and wish to dispute it, you must make your case **in writing** within one week (7 days) of receiving the grade. The case in writing must detail the grounds on which you are making an appeal, accompanied by the original assignment (make a photocopy for yourself). The letter must be typed, single-spaced and printed on paper; email submissions will not be accepted. Grade complaints will not be considered after the week deadline, or if they are not made in writing. If the professor agrees to review your assignment and re-evaluate its grade, keep in mind that your grade could remain the same, be elevated, or be reduced.

Guidelines for Productive Discussion

Our class times are dedicated to in-depth discussion. Following a few basic discussion guidelines will help insure that this time is productive, enlightening and fun for all of us.

1. Experience and anecdote do not constitute evidence in a scholarly argument. While you each bring interesting experiences to the classroom, ONLY bring up your personal experience when it is relevant to class discussion; think carefully about this before you speak about your experience. If you bring up your own experience in class, recognize that it becomes a public topic for discussion. Others may interpret your experience differently than you do, and they are free to respectfully disagree with your interpretation. Furthermore, ask yourself what point you seek to make by talking about yourself. Is it really relevant? Do you want others to know this about you?
2. Work to create a shared climate of friendly and lively discussion. Avoid personal attacks, jabs, and grandstanding behaviors. Also avoid overly personalizing the topic under discussion. The point is to build knowledge together, not to look good or act smarter than everyone else or endlessly talk about yourself.
3. Disagreements are natural and welcome in scholarly discussion. So are arguments. But arguments are not contests. Grant your fellow course participants courtesy and respect, whether you agree with what they say or not.
4. As much as possible, avoid purely negative critique in your comments. Our goal in discussion is to understand the texts we read and how they might be useful to us – in addition to cultivating our skills in critique. Understand first; criticize second.
5. Wait your turn – do not interrupt others.
6. You do not have to express your own opinion on a subject. You are also free to change your mind on any topic at any time.

Weekly Schedule

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE (TUESDAY 7 JANUARY)

No Readings

I. Key Concepts in Feminist Media Studies

WEEK TWO: INTERSECTIONALITY (TUESDAY 14 JANUARY)

Cho, Sumi, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall. "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies." *Signs* 38.4 (Summer 2013): 785-810.

Edut, Tali, with Ophira Edut and Dyann Logwood. "HUES Magazine." *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*. Ed. Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997. 83-98.

Nguyen, Mimi, ed. *Evolution of a Race Riot* 1 (n.d.). Access Online:
<<http://issuu.com/poczineproject/docs/evolution-of-a-race-riot-issue-1>>

Piepmeyer, Alison. "'We are not All One': Intersectional Identities in Girl Zines." *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism*. New York University Press, 2008. 123-54.

We will also read through and analyze several issues of *HUES: Hear Us Emerging Sisters* in this class.

WEEK THREE: PUBLIC CULTURES (TUESDAY 21 JANUARY)

DiCenzo, Maria. "Part 1: Publics, Social Movements, and Media History." *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals, and the Public Sphere*. Maria DiCenzo, with Lucy Delap and Leila Ryan. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011. 21-72. [Access through the McGill Library]

Fraser, Nancy. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy." *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the 'Postsocialist' Condition*. New York:

Routledge, 1997. 69-98.

Keller, J. M. "Virtual Feminisms: Girls' Blogging Communities, Feminist Activism, and Participatory Politics." *Communication and Society* 15.3 (2012): 429-47.

Wood, Elizabeth. "Consciousness Raising 2.0: Sex Blogging and the Creation of a Feminist Sex Commons." *Feminism and Psychology* 18.4 (2008): 480-87.

Show and tell: your favourite feminist blog (if you have one). In what ways does your blog cultivate a feminist public? Or does it?

WEEK FOUR: FEMINIST AFFECT THEORY (TUESDAY 28 JANUARY)

Ahmed, Sara. "Happy Futures." *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2010. 160-198.

Licona, Adela. "Embodied Intersections: Reconsidering Subject Formation Beyond Binary Borders." *Zines in Third Space: Radical Cooperation and Borderlands Rhetoric*. Albany: State U of New York P, 2012. 65-98.

Piepmeyer, Alison. "Doing Third Wave Feminism: Zines as a Public Pedagogy of Hope." *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism*. New York UP, 2008. 155-92.

Browse: a selection of Zines

*****Sign Up for Work-In-Progress Presentations*****

WEEK FIVE: POPULAR CULTURES AND CONSUMPTION (TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY)

Taylor, Natalie Fuehrer. "The Personal is Political: Women's Magazines for the 'I'm not a Feminist But' Generation." *You've Come a Long Way, Baby: Women, Politics, and Popular Culture*. Ed. Lily Goren. University Press of Kentucky, 2009. 215-31.

D'Enbeau, Suzy. "Feminine and Feminist Transformation in Popular Culture." *Feminist Media Studies* 9.1 (2009): 17-36.

Licona, Adela. "Queery-ing Consumption and Production: Critical Inquiries and Third-Space Subversions."

Zines in Third Space: Radical Cooperation and Borderlands Rhetoric. Albany: State U of New York P, 2012. 99-130.

McRobbie, Angela. "Young Women and Consumer Culture." *Cultural Studies* 22.5 (2008): 531-50.

II. Doing and Documenting

Week Six: Feminist Identity Production (Tuesday 11 February)

Kinser, Amber. "From Pronatalism to Mommy Blogs." *Motherhood and Feminism*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2010. 95-130.

Kearney, Mary Celeste. "Grrrl Zines: Exploring Identity, Transforming Girls' Written Culture." *Girls Make Media*. New York: Routledge, 2006. 135-87.

Piepmeyer, Alison. "Why Zines Matter: Materiality and the Creation of Embodied Community" and "Playing Dress-Up, Playing Pin-Up, Playing Mom: Zines and Gender." *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism*. New York UP, 2008. 57-86 and 87-122.

*****Comparative Essay Due*****

WEEK SEVEN: FEMINIST MEDIA ARCHIVES (TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY)

Cvetkovich, Ann. "In the Archive of Lesbian Feelings." *An Archive of Feelings*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2003. 239-69.

Eichhorn, Kate. "Archiving the Movement: The Riot Grrrl Collection at Fales Library and Special Collections." *Make Your Own History: Documenting Feminist and Queer Activism in the 21st Century*. Eds. Bly, Liz, and Kelly Wooten. Litwin Books, 2012. 23-38.

Freedman, Jenna. "Self-Publication with Riot Grrrl Ideals: Zines ≠ Vanity Press Publications." *Make Your Own History: Documenting Feminist and Queer Activism in the 21st Century*. Eds. Bly, Liz, and Kelly Wooten. Litwin Books, 2012. 13-22.

Tour of QPIRG-McGill's and UGE's zine libraries

III. Genre Case Studies: Manifestos and Magazines

Week Eight: Manifestos (Tuesday 25 February)

Combahee River Collective. "A Black Feminist Statement." April 1977. Online:
<<http://www.sfu.ca/iirp/documents/Combahee%201979.pdf>>

Morgan, Robin. "Goodbye to All That." 1970. Online:
<<http://faculty.atu.edu/cbrucker/Amst2003/Texts/Goodbye.pdf>>

Nussbaum, Emily. "The Rebirth of the Feminist Manifesto." *New York Magazine* (30 October 2011).
Online: <<http://nymag.com/news/features/feminist-blogs-2011-11/>>

Redstockings Manifesto. *Redstockings*. 7 July 1969. Online:
<http://www.redstockings.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=76&Itemid=59>

Slutwalk Toronto. "Racism and Anti-Racism: Why They Matter to SlutWalks." 31 October 2011. Online:
<<http://www.slutwalktoronto.com/racism-and-anti-racism>>

Wallace, Michelle. "Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman." *Feminism in Our Time*. Ed. Miriam Schneir. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. 295-309.

Reading Break

WEEK NINE: MID-CENTURY MAGAZINES (TUESDAY 11 MARCH)

Farrell, Amy Erdman. "Attentive to Difference: *Ms.* Magazine, Coalition Building, and Sisterhood." *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the U.S.* ed. Stephanie Gilmore. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2008. 48-62.

Flannery, Kathleen. "Going Public with Pandora's Box: Feminist Periodicals." *Feminist Literacies, 1968-1975*. U of Illinois P, 2005. 23-59.

Hollows, Joanne. "*Spare Rib*, Second-Wave Feminism, and the Politics of Consumption." *Feminist Media Studies* 13.2 (2013): 268-87.

In Class: Browsing second-wave feminist magazines.

IV. Feminist Media in Action

WEEK TEN: FEMINIST MEDIA IN ACTION (TUESDAY 18 MARCH)

Final Project Work-In-Progress Presentations
Launch Planning

WEEK ELEVEN: FEMINIST MEDIA IN ACTION (TUESDAY 25 MARCH)

Final Project Work-In-Progress Presentations
Launch Planning

WEEK TWELVE: FEMINIST MEDIA IN ACTION (TUESDAY 1 APRIL)

Final Project Work-In-Progress Presentations
Launch Planning

WEEK THIRTEEN: CONCLUSION OF THE COURSE (TUESDAY 8 APRIL)

Final Thoughts on the Class and Submission/Launch of Final Assignments