

GSWS 2002/LGBT 2400  
 Fall 2019  
 Temple University  
 Tuesday 5.30-8.00pm  
 Anderson Hall | Room 00806

Instructor: Dr. Maria Murphy  
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 Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 2.00-3.15pm  
 Anderson Hall | Room 815



### **Sexual Difference in the Cinema/Gender in the Cinema**

Laura Mulvey's pathbreaking article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" identified how visual representation constructs the concept of woman and determines how "the meaning of woman is sexual difference." How does the medium of cinema conceive of women as "to-be-looked-at"? And how do other cinematic trends define, produce, and shape our understandings of gender and difference more broadly? This class takes up the social and political production of sexual difference and its relationship with feminism. With special attention to sexual difference in relation to sexuality, race, and class, we will examine fundamental and more recent texts in feminist film theory with readings of Hollywood films, independent films, international films, short films, and documentary films. We will critique ideological assumptions that are created, reinforced, and subverted in a variety of films while building skills to analyze cinematic techniques, genres, and forms, including developing technical language to discuss cinematography, film grammar, sound design, mise-en-scène, narrative, etc.

### **Objectives**

- Analyze film through writing and in-class discussion
- Engage with a range of debates and underlying theories of cinematic work
- Expand vocabulary to articulate cinematic techniques and conventions
- Understand the basics of storytelling craft in the construction of fiction, documentary, and alternative films
- Develop persuasive arguments about the construction, (re)production, and subversion of sexual difference in cinema

## Course Requirements

Class Engagement, Discussion, and Attendance: 30%

Screening Reports: 15%

Midterm Movie Review: 15%

Research Paper Draft: 5%

Research Paper Presentation: 10%

Final Paper Submission: 25%

## Class Engagement

Class participation comprises the most significant portion of your grade. Participation is integral in this class and I expect you to contribute thoughtfully to class discussion throughout the semester. Most importantly, this means that **attendance is mandatory**. I recognize there can be a variety of extenuating circumstances that can prevent attendance. Please be in touch with me early in the semester so we can discuss accommodations. In class, I encourage you to ask questions, make clarifications, and share your thoughts about the readings, recordings, and viewings. To prepare for class, take notes while you are reading, listening to, and watching course materials. Look up names or concepts that are unfamiliar to you. I recommend keeping a running list of keywords/terms that we encounter throughout the semester. Laptops are permitted in class but should not be a distraction to me or other students.

## Difficult Content & Classroom Etiquette

In this class, we will be discussing some difficult topics. As your teacher, I will never do anything to intentionally shock or upset; it is also my intention to create a challenging and intellectually stimulating environment, which will occasionally involve unpacking and processing difficult topics. If you are having difficulty dealing with a class discussion, reading, viewing, or listening excerpt, you may voice these concerns in class or you may discretely step out of class (in this event, please send a quick email to me afterward). Also, be mindful of others' experiences when you speak. Avoid making assumptions about anyone's experience. Respect each others' names, preferred gender pronouns, and expressed identities; no one is required to share information about their identities or experiences. Do not hesitate to approach me if you feel there are measures I can take to make the classroom a safer space for you.

## Assignments

Canvas Screening Reports:

Over the course of the semester you will be expected to submit 1 short (450-500 words) screening report for each unit. In the screening report, you will write a response focusing on 2-3 cinematic techniques that are featured in the film and post your report on canvas 48 hours before the beginning of class (Sunday at 5pm).

Leading Discussion:

As part of your class engagement grade, you will each sign up for 1 session where you will be primarily responsible for leading discussion about the assigned reading. You will provide a short summary of key points from the film and/or readings and beginning seminar discussion with 1-2

questions posed to the group. You may also select clips to watch together as a group for discussion.

#### Midterm Movie Review:

For the midterm, you will write a 1500-word review of a film you will attend in a movie theatre. In addition to writing about some of the techniques we have been discussing in class, you may also want to address the experience of watching this film live with an audience in the theatre. Remember for a review you do not want to give too much away about the film, since your readers may be reading your review to determine whether or not they want to go see it—and they won't want any spoilers! You may want to comment on the actors' abilities, technical aspects of the production, character development, and storyline.

#### Research Paper:

For the final assignment, you will write a research paper that focuses on a particular film, technique, director, or genre, etc. Your essay will be predicated on a research question to direct the paper. You will address elements such as narrative, plot and character development, but also provide detailed analyses of particular scenes, with attention to the medium of the moving image itself. What effects or emotional responses are generated from particular cinematic techniques? Are there any unique or unusual qualities or tactics used in the film? As part of your final paper, you will present a short 8-10 minute presentation outlining your proposed thesis, evidence, and examples from your chosen film.

#### Canvas

There is a Canvas site for this course, for which you are automatically registered. Go to <https://canvas.temple.edu> to sign in. It is essential that you check Canvas regularly. All class readings unless otherwise noted will be available on Canvas. I will use the site to post additional reading and listening assignments (always noted in the syllabus or indicated in class) and to announce important information about the class. There will also be a Canvas page dedicated to student content and discussion. I encourage you to post terms, share links, and comment on topics from class.

#### Academic Integrity

Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Essential to intellectual growth and the university's core educational mission is the development of independent thought and respect for the thoughts of others. Academic honesty fosters this independence and respect. Academic dishonesty undermines the university's mission and purpose and devalues the work of all members of the Temple community. Every member of the university community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are responsible for adhering to the principles of academic honesty and integrity. Please familiarize yourself with it in its itinerary: <https://www.temple.edu/secretary/sites/secretary/files/policies/03.70.12.pdf>

#### Accessibility & Accommodations

If you need specific accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. I am available to discuss course accessibility in person, via email, or on the phone. To make arrangements for accommodations through Temple, please contact Disability Resources and Services (DRS) at

215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to learn more about the resources available to you. I will work with DRS to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

## Student Resources

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has a policy on Student and Faculty and Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy #03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.temple.edu/secretary/sites/secretary/files/policies/03.70.02.pdf>

You are also encouraged to visit the Writing Center in the Student Success Center as you prepare your research paper: <https://www.temple.edu/class/programs/writing/tutoring.html>

## Grading / Point Scale

93 – 100 = A	83 – 86 = B	73 – 76 = C	63 – 66 = D
90 – 92 = A-	80 – 82 = B-	70 – 72 = C-	60 – 62 = D-
87 – 89 = B+	77 – 79 = C+	67 – 69 = D+	00 – 59 = F

## Class Schedule

### Unit 1: Gazing

27 August **Introduction to Film Analysis**

03 September **The Gaze**

- Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958)
- Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In *Feminist Film Theory: A Reader*, edited by Sue Thornham, 58-69. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
- McCabe, Janet. "Introduction to Feminist Film Studies: Woman is not Born but Becomes a Woman." In *Feminist Film Studies: Writing the Woman into Cinema*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, 1-13.

10 September **Lesbian Fantasy**

- Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972)
- Viewing in class: Barbara Hammer's *Dyketactics* (1979)
- Silverman, Kaja. "Fassbinder and Lacan: A Reconsideration of Gaze, Look, and Image." In *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*, edited by Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey, 272-301. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1994.

17 September **Looking to Oppose**

- Julie Dash's *Illusions* (1982)
- Lizzie Borden's *Born in Flames* (1983)
- hooks, bell. "Oppositional gaze: Black Female Spectators." In *Movies and Mass Culture*, edited by John Belton, 247-264. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

24 September **Imperial Gaze**

- Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's *Black Narcissus* (1947)
- Viewing in class: Excerpts from Sydney Pollack's *Out of Africa* (1985)
- Kaplan, Ann. "Hollywood, Science, and Cinema: The Imperial and the Male Gaze in Classic Film." In *Looking for the Other: Feminism, Film and the Imperial Gaze*. New York: Routledge Press, 1997, 56-98.

## **Unit 2: Performing**

01 October **Ballrooms**

- Jennie Livingston's *Paris is Burning* (1990)
- Butler, Judith. "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion." In *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge Press, 1993, 121-142.

08 October **Facing Shame**

- Alice Wu's *Saving Face* (2004)
- Metzger, Sean. "Saving Face, or the Future Perfect of Queer Chinese/American Cinema?" In *Futures of Chinese Cinema: Technologies and Temporalities in Chinese Screen Cultures*, edited by Olivia Khoo and Sean Metzger, 223-240. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009.

15 October **Posing, Singing, Mourning**

- Sebastián Lelio's *A Fantastic Woman* (2017)
- Viewing in Class: Excerpts from "Love is the Message" (Season 1, Episode 6, 2018) *Pose*
- Reading TBA

## **Unit 3: Becoming**

22 October **Rural Difference**

- Kimberly Peirce's *Boys Don't Cry* (1999)
- Henderson, Lisa. "Introduction" and "The Class Character of *Boys Don't Cry*." In *Love and Money: Queers, Class, and Cultural Production*. New York: New York University Press, 2013, 1-30.
- Halberstam, Jack. "The Transgender Look." In *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press, 2005, 76-96.

29 October **Masculinities**

- *Moonlight* (2016)
- Als, Hilton. “‘Moonlight’ Undoes Our Expectations.” *New Yorker*, October 17, 2016. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/24/moonlight-undoes-our-expectations>
- Copeland, Kameron J. “Film Review: *Moonlight*.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 65, no. 5 (2018): 687-689.
- Sexton, Jared. “Shadow and Myth: On *Stranger Inside* and *Moonlight*.” In *Black Masculinity and the Cinema of Policing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 161-194.

05 November **Friendly Intimacies**

- Todd Haynes’ *Carol* (2015)
- Bradbury-Rance, Clara. “Looking at Carol: The Drift of New Queer Pleasures.” In *Troubling Visibility: Lesbian Cinema after Queer Theory*.

12 November **Sex Work on Screen**

- Sean Baker’s *Tangerine* (2015)
- Green, McKinley. “Film Review: *Tangerine*, Directed by Sean Baker.” *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 1, no. 1 (2016): 119-122.
- Joiner, Lottie. “How Transgender ‘Tangerine’ Actress My Taylor Stopped Being Afraid.” *The Atlantic*, December 1, 2015. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/how-transgender-tangerine-actress-mya-taylor-stopped-being-afraid/433512/>.
- Newton, Casey. “How one of the best films at Sundance was shot using an iPhone 5S.” *The Verge*, January 28, 2015. <https://www.theverge.com/2015/1/28/7925023/sundance-film-festival-2015-tangerine-iphone-5s>.

19 November **Paper Presentations**

26 November **FALL BREAK—NO CLASS**

03 December **Final Class & Paper Presentations**