

WOMEN IN HOLLYWOOD
Oakland University, Cinema Studies Program (Fall 2018)
CIN 3900 (CRN 42251) // WGS 3900 (CRN 44742) // LBS 3900 (CRN 44904)
TH 1-3:47 pm, MSC 93

Professor: Dr. Courtney Brannon Donoghue
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Office: O'Dowd Hall 544E
Office Hours: Thursdays 12-2pm, or by appointment

"If you give us the chance, we can perform. After all, Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels." Ann Richards

Course Description (4 credits):

Framed by current calls for gender equity, diversity, and inclusivity in Hollywood, the course examines the creative work, labor, and positionality of women working in the historically male-dominated film industry. Utilizing an intersectional feminist and media industry studies lens, we will explore structural and industrial barriers to the employment, career advancement, and mobility for women working in above-the-line and below-the-line filmmaking jobs. The course is organized into two units. The first unit offers a historical overview of the Hollywood studio system through specific periods. We will examine shifting gendered labor practices and individual female film workers' careers. The second unit addresses the contemporary barriers to gender equity or "gaps" for women working as Hollywood studio and/or independent filmmakers. Using a variety of research methods, students will identify and analyze key industrial factors contributing to gender disparities and explore alternatives for future change.

Course Objectives:

- To explore the history of the Hollywood studio system and how power, access, and privilege shape the history that is told.
- To develop a working knowledge of contemporary debates and industry discourse surrounding gender inequity and filmmaking using an intersectional feminist lens.
- To survey a variety of historical, critical, and methodological approaches for understanding gendered work and division of labor in the Hollywood film industry.

Required Readings:

All readings and course materials available via Moodle.

Course Communication:

- All class materials and required course readings will be available on Moodle.
- I reserve the right to alter the course schedule, readings, or assignments as necessary. All announcements/updates will be announced in class and updated on Moodle.

Assessment:

Participation/Attendance	15 pts
Weekly Nuggets	10 pts
Industry Reflection	5 pts
Herstory Presentation	15 pts
Project 1: Female-Driven Stories	25 pts
<u>Project 2: Industry Initiatives for Gender Equity</u>	<u>30 pts</u>
	<i>100 pts</i>

Grades

Grading for this course will be based on the OU grading scale:

A	94-100 pts	4.0	C+	77-79 pts	2.3
A-	90-93 pts	3.7	C	73-76 pts	2.0
B+	87-89 pts	3.3	C-	70-72 pts	1.7
B	83-86 pts	3.0	D+	67-69 pts	1.3
B-	80-82 pts	2.7	D	60-66 pts	1.0
			F	59 pts or less	0.0

Grades are based on your ability to follow directions, execute the assignment, interpret and comprehend the overall rationale for the course by reading materials with appropriate theoretical approaches. Your projects must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date.

All late assignments will lose points for each day late.

A-range = for work which is outstanding, not just completing the assignment well, but going beyond—perhaps insightfully integrating ideas in the current section, perhaps drawing in readings from other parts of the course in interesting ways, or bringing something else special to the assignment.

B-range = for work which is good, not just meeting the minimum requirements necessary for completing the assignment, but also characterized by the inclusion of something more than the minimum.

C-range = for work which is adequate, meeting most but not all of the basic course/assignment requirements, or meeting the requirements at the bare minimum level without going beyond this.

D-range = for work which is worthy of some credit even though it does not satisfactorily meet the basic course/assignment requirements.

F-range = for work that does not meet the basic course/assignment requirements and/or is not submitted on time.

PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE – Participation means regular attendance at lectures and screenings as well as contributing ideas during class discussions. Your participation grade is made up of the following: regular attendance, discussion, in-class writing and group activities, visiting office hours, etc. An attendance sheet will be passed around at the beginning of class.

You are required **to attend all classes and screenings** and arrive on time. Our classes will sometimes include a great many clips and information not available elsewhere. If you miss a class, please do not email me or ask me if you missed anything. If you need notes, ask one of

your classmates. Additionally, I do not place my lectures notes online. Frequent absences will compromise your ability to understand key concepts, inhibit your contribution to classroom debates, and hinder your performance on exams and assignments.

Classmate contact info:

Name/Email: _____

Name/Email: _____

WEEKLY NUGGETS –

You will post a reading summary/screening thoughts to the Moodle discussion forum each week. The deadline to post is 1 am Tuesday morning. I will review your nuggets and assign a holistic grade to your responses at the end of the semester to track progress and improvement.

Format: For each reading, you should post a one to three paragraph summary that includes a brief review of the reading's objective and argument. What is the author's point of view? What is the style of their writing? What does this reading contribute to this week's topic? Additionally, you should think about how the reading(s) fit with the week's screening? What is most noteworthy about the screening? What do you want to talk about most in class or what questions do you have? ***Weekly nugget assignments start Tuesday, September 18th.***

INDUSTRY REFLECTION–

The first few days of class will allow students to become familiar with contemporary debates about gender equity for women working in the film industry, both in front of and behind the camera. After watching documentaries (*Half The Picture* and *American Cinema* "The Studio System"), students will respond to the assignment prompt students in 600-700-word reflection. See assignment guidelines for more information.

HERSTORY PRESENTATION –

This assignment has two objectives: 1) To explore the sparse history of women working in the film industry and their contributions 2) To analyze how history of women in the film industry is written. Students will review the list and sign-up for one historical figure on a specific presentation date. Based on outside research incorporating at least three scholarly sources, you will give a 10-minute presentation on her life and career at the beginning of class on the assigned date. ***Herstory Presentations begin Tuesday, September 18th.***

PROJECT 1: FEMALE-DRIVEN STORIES –

Specific guidelines will be based out closer to the due date.

PROJECT 2: INDUSTRY INITIATIVES FOR GENDER EQUITY –

In groups of three, you will research, development, and present an initiative that addresses gender inequity in the film industry. Your idea may grow out of class discussions and materials or be inspired by recent news or events. The project consists or a 10-minute presentation in class and a group report based on your research and proposed plan. Specific guidelines will be based out closer to the due date.

INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM POLICIES *(from Dr. Miranda Banks, Emerson College)*

Commitment to Social Justice & Diversity

For the duration of the semester this class is a community. Our class is a space for intellectual exploration and expression. Many of the topics we discuss may be emotionally charged. All students must attend class, show up on time and stay the entire time, keep up on readings, turn in assignments on time, and actively participate in discussion. But just as important, the success of this class as a whole depends on each one of us supporting, encouraging, and respecting each other people in the class. Every student is responsible for adding value to our classroom experience.

Pay attention to your personal reactions and be sensitive to yourself and your classmates. A diversity of opinions contributes to an environment for intellectual expression and exploration. However, opinions that are blatantly racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, classist, or otherwise problematic will be challenged, and we will encourage you to explore and develop your understandings of power-and-privilege dynamics in the classroom and within larger society. Continuing discussion outside of class is highly encouraged, but please be mindful of the privacy of your peers.

Every student in this class will be respected as an individual with distinct and important experiences, opinions, talents, and backgrounds. To that extent every individual in this class is expected to treat others with this same amount of respect. Students will be treated justly regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, socioeconomic status, or national identity. Issues regarding diversity may be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects. Your professor will make every effort to ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment for all students.

Please let me know of the name and gender pronouns you use if they are different from official documents. I will make those changes to my own records and address you that way in all other cases. If any issues arise or you have any concerns or suggestions for improving any aspect of the classroom setting, please do not hesitate to speak with your professor.

Triggers and Warnings

We may discuss potentially sensitive topics during class. Please see me immediately if you feel that you will have difficulties attending class or completing the assignments. It is your responsibility to notify me if you become triggered by readings, films, and/or discussions.

Technology in the Classroom

You are encouraged to use laptops or tablets to aid in taking notes or participation. However, if your use becomes a distraction to yourself or others, you will be asked to put it away. If you are asked more than once, you will lose a significant portion of your participation points for the semester.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Oakland University provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Disability Student Services at (248)

370-3266, TTY: (248) 37-03268, <http://www.oakland.edu/dss>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Oakland University takes the Academic Code of Conduct seriously. Cheating will not be tolerated. Two kinds of academic misconduct are **cheating** on exams and **plagiarism** (such as turning in someone else's work, downloading a paper in part or in whole, copying and pasting from Wikipedia, or paraphrasing or quoting sources without citation). You are responsible to adhere to and be familiar with Oakland's Academic Code of Conduct. Information on academic integrity and disciplinary action is available at <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=1610&sid=75>

WRITING AND RESEARCH RESOURCES

The Cinema Studies program requires you to follow Chicago Style of using footnotes for all writing assignments. For more information on Chicago, please see:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Since this course relies on research and writing skills, you are encouraged to look for outside resources and support. I strongly recommend that you contact The Writing Center here on campus (located in the Kresge Library; phone 471-6222). The Center offers individualized assistance to students. Their website offers information about scheduling appointments and how to prepare for your visit at: <http://www.oakland.edu/ouwc>

CONTACTING DR. BRANNON DONOGHUE

Please take advantage of my office hours. I also will be available for a few minutes before and after lectures to answer questions. When sending an email, please address me as Dr. Brannon Donoghue or Professor Brannon Donoghue. My pronouns are she/her/hers. Please only email to contact me for quick questions or if you need to schedule an appointment. Depending on your question, I may request that you see me during office hours. If you are having difficulties, you should see me ASAP and not after assignment has been completed. Your success in this course is important to me. I am willing to make appropriate accommodations for any student who experiences problems understanding the material or meeting course requirements as long as he/she demonstrates a genuine desire to learn and takes the initiative to seek my help. I look forward to getting to know each of you during this semester!

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 Course Introduction

Th 9/6

Screen: *Half the Picture* (2018, dir. Amy Adrion, US, 94 min)

Read: Dowd, "The Women of Hollywood Speak Out," [New York Times](#)
Lauren, "The Celluloid Ceiling Report, 2017" [Women in TV and Film](#)

Week 2 Contemporary Film Industry Issues

T 9/11 CLASS DOES NOT MEET (work on Industry Reflection)

Screen: *American Cinema* (1995, 56 min) "[The Studio System](#)" (watch on your own)

Th 9/13

DUE: Industry Reflection

Topics: Studying the media industries, What is feminist media industry studies?, contemporary industry climate and barriers, intersectionality, privilege and power

Read: Havens and Lotz, "Key Concepts in Media Industry Studies"
McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"
Siede, "If you like *Return of the Jedi* but hate the Ewoks, you understand feminist criticism" [AV Club](#)

REC: Schatz and Perren, "Hollywood"

Resource: [Women Film Pioneer Project](#)

Week 3 Silent Cinema (1900s-1927)

T 9/18

Screen: Selection of silent films

Herstories: Alice Guy Blaché, Lois Weber, Mary Pickford, Mabel Normand, Marion Wong

Read: Mahar, "True womanhood in Hollywood: Gendered business strategies and the rise and fall of the woman filmmaker, 1896-1928"
Hill, "Introduction" and "Paper Trail: Efficiency, Clerical Labor, and Women in the Early Film Industry"

Listen: "Mabel Normand" [episode](#), *You Must Remember This* podcast

Th 9/20

Screen: *Dance, Girl, Dance* (1940, dir. Dorothy Arzner, 90 min)

Week 4 Classical Hollywood Cinema (1920s to 1960s)

T 9/25

Herstories: Dorothy Arzner, Ida Lupino, Hedy Lamarr, Anita Loos, Virginia Van Upp, Dorothy Dandridge

Read: Smyth, "Introduction: The Equal Right to be the Best"
Hill, "Studio Girls: Women's Professions in Media Production" (pp. 164-194)
Mayne, "Lesbian Looks: Dorothy Arzner and Female Authorship"

Listen: "Ida Lupino" [episode](#), *You Must Remember This* podcast

Th 9/27

Screen: *Wanda* (1970, dir. Barbara Loden, 102 min)

Week 5 New Hollywood (1967-1980) into the 1980s

T 10/2

Herstories: Elaine May, Barbra Streisand, Jane Fonda, Julie Dash, Nora Ephron, Kathryn Bigelow

Read: Schatz, "New Hollywood"
Smukler, "Liberating Hollywood"
Wood, "Images and Women" (pp. 337-344)
Olsen, "Why these films by women directors from the 1970s and '80s need to be seen" [Los Angeles Times](#)

Listen: "Barbara Loden" [episode](#), *You Must Remember This* podcast

Th 10/4

Screen: *The Watermelon Woman* (1996, dir. Cheryl Dunye, 90 min)
Girlfight (2000, dir. Karyn Kusama, 110 min)

Week 6 1990s to 2000s Indie Cinema

T 10/9

Herstories: Christine Vachon, Cheryl Dunye, Nicole Holofcener, Sofia Coppola,
Gina Prince-Bythewood, Patricia Cardoso

Screen: *Girlfight* (finish screening)

Read: Lane, "Just Another Girl Outside the Neo-Indie"

Mason, "Queering the Mammy"

Vary, "I'm Not Going Away People." [Buzzfeed](#)

Th 10/11

Screen: *Clueless* (1995, dir. Amy Heckerling, 97 min)

Week 7 Commercial chick flicks to rom coms

T 10/16

Screen: *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001, dir. Sharon Maguire, 97 min)

Read: Hunting, "Furiously Franchised: *Clueless*, Convergence Culture, and the Female-Focused Franchise"

Ferriss and Young, "Introduction: Chick flicks and chick culture"

Th 10/18

Screen: *In A World...* (2013, dir. Lake Bell, 93 min)

Week 8

T 10/23 Independent Research Day (Project 1)

Th 10/25

Screen: *The Door* (2013, dir. Ava DuVernay, 9 min)

A Wrinkle in Time (2018, dir. Ava DuVernay, 110 min)

Week 9 Employment and Mentorship Gap

T 10/30

DUE: Project 1: Female-Driven Stories

Read: Henderson, "The Culture Behind Closed Doors: Issues of Gender and Race in the Writers' Room"

Banks, "Gender Below-the-Line: Defining Feminist Production Studies"

Hill, "Studio Girls: Women's Professions in Media Production" (pp. 195-211)

Warner, "Introduction: The Cultural Politics of Colorblind TV Casting"

Th 11/1

Screen: *I'll See You In My Dreams* (2015, dir. Brett Haley, 92 min)

Week 10	Financing and Leadership Gap
T 11/6	
Read:	Louie, “Four Ways Women Get a Raw Deal in Hollywood” Vulture Chevigny, “Can She Pull It Off? (Or, How to Hire Women Directors)” Filmmaker Magazine Slaughter, “Why Women Still Can’t Have It All” The Atlantic
Th 11/8	
Screen:	<i>Battle of the Sexes</i> (2017, dir. Jonathan Dayton & Valerie Faris, 121 min)
Week 11	Gatekeeper and Film Festival Gap
T 11/13	
Read:	“Venice Festival Head Defends Lack of Women in Lineup” Hollywood Reporter “LA Film Festival Adds Inclusion Initiatives” Variety “Women at the Director’s Chair at TIFF” TIFF News “Men Who Dominate Reviewing Shortchange Women Directors” Hollywood Reporter Keegan, “Why the second movie is the biggest hurdle” Los Angeles Times
Th 11/15	
Screen:	<i>Fifty Shades of Grey</i> (2015, dir. Sam Taylor-Johnson, 125 min)
Week 12	Bankability and Distribution Gap
T 11/20	
Screen:	<i>Magic Mike XXL</i> (2015, dir. Gregory Jacobs, 115 min)
Read:	Warner, “Exploring Women’s Pleasure in <i>Magic Mike XXL</i> ” Antenna Brannon Donoghue, “Shop, Makeover, Love: Transformative Paratexts and Aspirational Fandom For Female-Driven Franchises”
Th 11/22	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break
Week 13	#metoo & Time’s Up: One Year Later
T 11/27	
Screen:	<i>Insecure</i> (HBO, 2016, Season 1, Episode 1 “Insecure as Fuck,” 28 min) <i>Vida</i> (Starz, 2018, Season 1, Episode 1, 32 min) <i>Big Little Lies</i> (HBO, 2017, Season 1, Episode 1, “Somebody’s Dead,” 51 min)
Read:	Koblin, “Reese Witherspoon’s Second Act: Big-Time Producer” New York Times
Listen:	“Showrunner Tanya Saracho on Vida” episode , KCRW’s <i>The Business</i> podcast
Th 11/29	TBD
Week 14	
T 12/4	Independent Work Day (Project 2)
Th 12/6	
DUE:	Project 2: Industry Initiatives for Gender Equity