Women’s Studies graduate certificate course offerings - Spring 2020

WS 5800
Marginalized Sexualities
Mondays 6:00-9:00 pm
Dr Sarah A Rainey-Smithback
Course description:

Why are some sexual behaviors embraced while others are condemned? How do people in sexual subcultures find partners and form community? This course will explore these questions and more, focusing on LGBT people, kink/BDSM, people with disabilities, sex workers, and other groups of people that have been marginalized for their sexual behaviors and/or identities. We will explore the processes of marginalization, assimilation, and resistance, highlighting how various communities have fought for rights, visibility, and, the freedom to be different.

WS 6200
Feminist Theory
Mondays 2:30-5:20 pm
Dr. Sandra Faulkner
Course description:

This course examines feminist theory and its applications in the fields of communication, language, literature, film, religion, philosophy, history, psychology, health, and politics. We will pay close attention to the ways in which feminist thinkers have critiqued and changed traditional academic disciplines, as well as the new bodies of thought (e.g., queer theory, feminist disability studies, etc.) that have emerged from these critiques. Our focus will be on feminist thought since the 1990s, with a particular emphasis on work in the last decade.

POPC 6800/WS 6800
TV Comedy & Gender
Tue/Thurs 1-2:15 pm
Dr. Becca Cragin
Course description:

This course provides an introduction to a variety of American TV comedy formats, including sitcoms, stand-up, sketch, animation, mockumentaries, and fake news. We’ll look at cultural politics (particularly gender and race) and aesthetics, to explore how these each contribute to the political and comedic success or failure of texts.
This graduate level seminar will take an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to aesthetic, social, historical, and political representations of female aggression, rage, volatility, anger, “hysteria,” and/or “madness” both pre and post the #MeToo Movement. Texts to be examined may include Sophocles’ Antigone, the activism and writings of the militant suffragettes, female performance artists like Annie Sprinkle and Lizzo, second wave feminist texts like Valerie Solanas’ Scum Manifesto, more recent novels/films/series like Julia Whelan’s Gone Girl, David Leitch’s film Atomic Blonde (based on the graphic novel The Coldest City), Phoebe Waller-Bridge’s Fleabag, Hulu’s The Handmaid’s Tale, as well as musical artists/activists/performers such as Female-Fronted Punk Bands (i.e. The Slits, Pussy Riot and Riot Grrrl). Using the work of the women psychoanalysts Melanie Klein, Helen Deutsch, Héléne Cixous’, and Luce Irigaray, as well as older studies of female anger (The Dance of Anger by Dr. Harriet Lerner), recently published studies of female rage like Rebecca Traister’s Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women’s Anger and Soraya Chemaly’s Rage Becomes Her: The Power of Women’s Anger as well as contemporary feminist theories addressing anger, aggression, negative affects, and rage in women—for example, Sianne Ngai’s Ugly Feelings, M, Virginie Despentes’ King Kong Theory —the course will think through the relationship between earlier representations of angry women and the contemporary moment in which we are seeing an ever multiplying number of angry, physically aggressive, powerful, and sometimes destructive women depicted in popular media, film, and literature. As we analyze the cultural anxieties circulating in these texts and explore various forms of female agency, oppression, revolt and resistance, we will create a genealogy of female rage and discuss both the specificity of that rage to any given social, political, and historical context while also examining the consistencies and inconsistencies we find between past and present representations.