Course Description:
Media and Gender will address key issues and concerns around how women, men, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals are represented, experience, and engage with various media forms. Drawing insights from feminist, queer, post-colonial, and intersectional theories, this course will engage with current topics such as #MeToo and the rising wave of digital feminist activism, pornography, music, the news, advertising, and speech. The module encourages learning outside the classroom and a ‘hands on’ approach to through crafts and activism. Overall, the module aims to give students the critical tools to assess and critique what they see, read, and hear about gendered bodies through the media in their everyday lives.

Prerequisite(s): Third or fourth year standing in any module

Learning Outcomes:
On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of key theoretical and critical concepts and debates around gender, media, representation, ideology, and critical theories.
- Apply relevant theoretical concepts to analyse the ways in which gender is represented in the media.
- Be aware of ways in which scholars and activists have attempted to challenge, resist, and improve narrow gender representations.
- Critically analyse the ways gender has been represented in the media through academic essays, reflective writing, and oral presentations.
- Develop well-structured and supported arguments using appropriate academic conventions and scholarly practices.
- Contribute to class discussions about gender and media, drawing both from key theoretical concepts and where relevant, personal experiences and observations.
Required Text(s):
Weekly readings are assigned via OWL

Method of Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Type</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentations</td>
<td>Assigned in Week 1</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Essay Plan</td>
<td>7 March 2022</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Portfolio</td>
<td>8 April 2022</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Essay</td>
<td>18 April 2022</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation Breakdown:

**Class Presentation:** Students will select a topic and individually or in a small group (2-3 people) will deliver a presentation in class (10 minutes per person) assigned in Week 1. Students are expected to ground their presentation in academic theory and apply it to contemporary issues or media forms. Students will also be required to present a one-page summary of their presentation with full bibliography of all sources used. Students should draw from a minimum of **five academic sources** for this assignment. Students are particularly encouraged to take a de-colonized approach to the assignment, think about issues of power and privilege, and draw from a wide range of ideas and scholarship, such as that produced by Indigenous scholars and those from the Global South.

Due: Assigned in Week 1 – ongoing throughout the semester

Weight 30%

**Academic Essay Plan:** Students will submit an essay plan, outlining their chosen topic relating to gender and media. Students can choose from pre-set questions, or negotiate their own essay with Dr Mendes. They will begin with brief introduction, outlining up to three key arguments, and identify a minimum of **four academic sources** they will draw from to support these arguments. The assignment should be double-spaced and no longer than 2 pages.

Due: 7 March 2022

Weight 15%

**Reflective Portfolio:** Students are required to submit a short, written reflection on a minimum of one topic addressed in this course. Students have freedom to be creative in their presentation (e.g. as a diary, a blog, a report, a letter, a video, a collage with commentary). Students are encouraged to draw from personal experiences in these reflections and comment on how information, theories, or ideas discussed in the course resonate (or not) with their lives. Students are given flexibility on what they reflect on, including lectures, required or further readings, or seminar presentations. In the assignment, students can focus on aspects they found particularly interesting, problematic, enlightening, or challenging. Although
it is not as formal as an academic essay, students should still draw from a minimum of **two academic sources**. Here, students could address the usefulness/drawbacks/failings of a particular theory or discuss how these theories (do not) relate to their life experiences. Students are particularly encouraged to take a de-colonized approach to the assignment, think about issues of power and privilege, and draw from diverse sources, examples and experiences beyond Europe or the Global North. Recommended length 5-8 pages.

Due: 8 April 2022  
Weight 25%

**Academic Essay:** Students should build from the essay plan in Assignment 2, conducting an in-depth exploration of one of the topics addressed in this course. In doing so, students should incorporate feedback from the original essay plan, building on these arguments drawing from academic literature. Students are also encouraged to draw from personal experiences or observations where relevant, and take a de-colonized approach to the assignment, thinking about issues of power and privilege. This includes drawing from diverse sources, media texts, or experiences such as those produced by Indigenous scholars, and those from the Global South. The paper should support its conclusions with secondary evidence. The paper should include a minimum of **eight academic sources**. Students must cite all relevant sources and include a full bibliography of works cited. The suggested page length is 8-9 pages.

Due: 18 April 2022  
Weight 30%

**How to Contact Me:**
The best way to contact me is by email: Kaitlynn.mendes@uwo.ca

**Contingency Plan:**
Although this course is designed to take place in person, should Public Health guidance change, we will move to online learning, including weekly sessions and office hours.

**How to get important information:**
Please be sure to regularly check the OWL course site regularly for updates, cancellations, and other course-related material.

**Important Policies**

**Policies for Assignment Deadlines:**
For all assignments, small extensions are available for medical or personal emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. If you miss, or know you are going to miss the assignment due date due to illness or
other unforeseen circumstances, please get in touch with myself and your Academic Counsellor as soon as you can. If your problem is medical in nature, be sure to be seen by a doctor. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by medical documentation, you will be allowed to submit your assignment or have your grade re-weighted, depending on the circumstances. If none of these steps are taken, late marks will be deducted by 3% each day.

A Note on Plagiarism:
Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:
All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:
As a courtesy to other students, please be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness
Western’s policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:
https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work
Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a Self-Reported Absence (SRA) form online provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy are met. Two important exceptions to this rule: SRAs will NOT be allowed for final examinations or assessments worth more than 30% of a given course. Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds) to your Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.
All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Accessibility Options:
Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Course Schedule and Readings:

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Jan 12, 2022</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intro: Why media and gender?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 19, 2022</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Masculinity and the Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 26, 2022</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Trans and Queer Identities in the Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2, 2022</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Gendered Politics of Anger and Voice in Contemporary Media (Guest lecture from Dr Jilly Kay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 9, 2022</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Student Choice #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 16, 2022</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Media and Intimacy (Guest lecture from Dr. Tanya Horeck)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23, 2022</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Week – No Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2, 2022</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Student Choice #2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 1: Jan 12, 2022

**Introduction – Why Media and Gender?**

- Introduction to the course, content, assignments and expectations
- Explore what ‘gender’ is and how it differs from ‘sex’
- Introduction to feminist and critical scholarship relevant to the course

**Key Reading:**


Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi (2015) *We Should All Be Feminists*. New York: Penguin. Also see her TED talk: 
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists?language=en

**Further Reading:**


Baxter, Helen (2014) Everything that’s wrong with women in the media. TED Talk. 
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcpBFFCIymY


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLMVqnyTo_0

Key Media’s Portrayal of Gender Roles (2010) YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2bYinZ6RX0


McKay, Finn (2021) Female Masculinities and the Gender Wars: The Politics of Sex. London: IB Taurus (Chapter 1: Let’s talk about sex and babies: What’s logical about biological sex?)


Week 2: Jan 19th, 2022 Masculinity and the Media

- What is (hegemonic) masculinity?
- How are masculinities represented in the media?
- How can representations of men and masculinity be harmful?

Key Reading:


Further Reading:


**Week 3: Jan 26, 2022 Trans and Queer Identities in the Media**

- How are 2SLGBTQ+ communities represented in the media?
- How might media be used to ‘talk back’ to harmful representations?
- What role do digital technologies and dating apps play amongst 2SLGBTQ+ communities?

*Key Reading:*


*Further Reading:*


Fox, Jesse and Ralston, R. (2016) ‘Queer identity online: Informal learning and teaching experiences of LGBTQ individuals on social media,’ *Computers in Human Behavior*, 65: 635-642


DOI: [https://doi.org/10.5117/TVGN2017.4.BERG](https://doi.org/10.5117/TVGN2017.4.BERG)


**Week 4: Feb 2, 2022 The Gendered Politics of Anger and Voice in Contemporary Media**

- This week we have a special guest lecture from Dr. Jilly Kay (University of Leicester. We will explore the ways female anger seems to be registering in ways that it has seldom done in recent decades - and how social media platforms have played a central role in the circulation of this rage. In many ways this seems to be an astonishing development, because women's anger - and especially Black women's anger - has for so long been construed as deviant, monstrous or taboo.
- In this lecture we will explore debates within feminism about the value of anger - for example, whether rage is important for political justice, or detrimental to it. consider claims that the digital media environment is contributing to a more angry, hostile and populist culture - and how we might understand this in relation to gender politics.
- Features guest speaker Dr. Jilly Boyce Kay, University of Leicester.
Key Readings:


Further Readings:
Davies, Will. 2018. 'Anger, fast and slow'. Annual Lecture of the Queen Mary Centre for the History of the Emotions. Available at: [http://www.perc.org.uk/project_posts/anger-fast-slow/](http://www.perc.org.uk/project_posts/anger-fast-slow/)

**Week 5: Feb 9, 2022  Student Choice #1**

- Students can vote on their choice of topic for this week’s session. Choices include:
  - Porn & Power
  - Feminism in the Media
  - Gender and Advertising
  - Gender and Beautiful Bodies in the Media
  - Gender, Intersectionality, and the Music Industry
  - Menstruation, Puberty, and Menopause in the media
  - Gender, Media, and Sexual Violence
  - Gender, Dating & Safety Apps
  - Exploring the Manosphere
  - Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women in the Media

*Key Readings:* TBA

**Week 6: Feb 16, 2022  Media and Intimacy**

- We will have a special guest lecturer Dr Tanya Horeck from Anglia Ruskin University, UK speak about the way sex and intimacy is shown in the media, and the impact intimacy coordinators has had on the TV and film industries

*Key Readings:* TBA

**Reading Week: 21-25th Feb - No Classes**

**Week 7: March 2, 2022  Student Choice #2**

- Students can vote on their choice of topic for this week’s session. Choices include:
  - Porn & Power
  - Feminism in the Media
  - Gender and Advertising
  - Gender and Beautiful Bodies in the Media
  - Gender, Intersectionality, and the Music Industry
  - Menstruation, Puberty, and Menopause in the media
  - Gender, Media, and Sexual Violence
  - Gender, Dating & Safety Apps
  - Exploring the Manosphere
• Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women in the Media

Key Readings: TBA

Week 8: March 9, 2022  Student Choice #3

• Students can vote on their choice of topic for this week’s session. Choices include:

  • Porn & Power
  • Feminism in the Media
  • Gender and Advertising
  • Gender and Beautiful Bodies in the Media
  • Gender, Intersectionality and the Music Industry
  • Menstruation, Puberty, and Menopause in the media
  • Gender, Media, and Sexual Violence
  • Gender, Dating & Safety Apps
  • Exploring the Manosphere
  • Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women in the Media

Key Readings: TBA

Week 9: March 16, 2022  #MeToo and Digital Feminist Activism

• Look at the prevalence of sexual violence, misogyny and rape culture in society
• Explore the creative ways feminists have harnessed digital technologies to challenge sexist oppression
• Explore the potential, promises, and pitfalls of digital feminist activism

Key Readings:


Phipps, Alison (2020) *Me, Not You: The Trouble with Mainstream Feminism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. (Chapter 2: Me, Not You)

Further Readings:


Han, X. (2018) Searching for an online space for feminism? The Chinese feminist group Gender Watch Women’s Voice and its changing approaches to online misogyny, Feminist Media Studies, 18:4, 734-749, DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2018.1447430

Jeong, Euisol & Lee, Jieun (2018) We take the red pill, we confront the DickTrix: online feminist activism and the augmentation of gendered realities in South Korea, Feminist Media Studies, 18(4); 705-717.


**Week 10: March 23, 2022 Gender, Activism, and Media Production – Creative Session**

- This week we will explore why and how activists have created their own media to challenge gender norms, including zines, newspapers, and blogs.
- We will get the chance to create our own media artefacts for activist purposes.
**Key Readings:**


Clarke, Lewis, Cummings, James, Hakim, Jamie, Redfern, Laura, and Young, Ingrid (2021) *Digital Intimacies Zine*. Available at: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SHz9_3nPHogXc4EwrUxRpn-Kp8hocUNd/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SHz9_3nPHogXc4EwrUxRpn-Kp8hocUNd/view?usp=sharing)

**Further Readings:**


**Week 11: March 30, 2022  1-1 Assignment Meeting Support**

- Instead of having class this week, you will get the chance to have a 1-1 meeting to go over questions for your academic assignments.

**Week 12: April 6, 2022  Course Wrap Up**

- This week will give us the opportunity to wrap up, answer any final questions, or review key ideas from the course.
- We will also go over expectations for your final assignments.