Gender, Culture, and Representation

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Examines how gender is represented in cultural texts and artifacts; introduces students to theories of representation

From discussions of cultural appropriation to #MeToo and fake news, the relations between media, culture, and power have increasingly visibility. Through the framework of feminist media analysis, this course offers students tools to navigate this media landscape.

This course explores the relations between representation and power by using feminist media analysis to open up discussions of gender, race, sexuality, disability, fatness, and transness in the United States. Students will be introduced to tools for feminist media criticism in the first half of the course. The second half of the course illustrates the wide applicability of these methods in specific examinations of representations of gender in science and representations of criminality. In final projects, students will practice applying these methods to media and topics of their own choosing. In addition to reading academic essays, students will also learn from podcasts and documentaries throughout the semester. The course takes a capacious approach to media and representation, discussing Instagram, fine art, advertising, news reporting, television, GIFs, and even textbooks.

This course is the gateway to the Gender and Media minor.

Course Objectives

- Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production. [AHo]
- Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies. [AHp]

By the end of the course, you will also be able to:

- Identify how gender, race, and sexuality are socially constructed, especially through media and representation
- Apply major techniques of feminist media analysis to critically analyze media
- Evaluate media and representation in relation to power and identity
- Identify and describe the arguments of academic and cultural texts