jmc 6333 • gender and media
spring 2021 syllabus

professor: Meenakshi Gigi Durham
E338 Adler Journalism Building
335-3355
gigi-durham@uiowa.edu (email works best)

class meets: 1:30 – 4 p.m Mondays
Zoom link is on the ICON course website

drop-in hours: 11 a.m. - noon Mondays
1 – 3 p.m. Wednesdays
(Zoom — please email me to confirm that you’ll be dropping in)

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication office is located in E305 AJB. The Director of the School is Prof. David Ryfe, who may be contacted at (319) 335-3482.

course overview and learning goals

Constructions of gender and sexuality in the media are complex, politically charged and materially significant. In this graduate seminar, we will explore theorizations of gender and sexuality in the media from a variety of perspectives, including contemporary ideas of cybergenders and sexualities in an era of transnational and digital media. Using feminist media theory and queer theory, we will examine media production, texts, and audiences and the dynamic interrelationships among these sectors. The seminar is intended for doctoral students with a research interest in gender and sexuality studies. In addition to weekly readings and responses, and student-led discussions of the material, a final research paper will be required.

texts

There are two required books for this class:

All other course readings are available on the course ICON website under “Modules.”
Highly recommended (available as an ebook through the UI Libraries):

accommodations for disabilities

UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible for all students. If you have a disability that needs accommodation, please come to my office hours to discuss it as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements in advance. A student seeking academic accommodations first must register with Student Disability Services and then meet with a SDS counselor who determines eligibility for services. A student approved for accommodations is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ I can only make accommodations for students who have been evaluated by SDS, following that office’s specific recommendations.
nondiscrimination in the classroom

UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, race, religious or other identities. Towards this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin and other identity categories set forth in the University Human Rights Policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (diversity.uiowa.edu)

electronic communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, II.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

course web site

The class has an ICON/Canvas site that students can access using their Hawk IDs. The site is password protected. Each student has access to his/her grades on this site, as well as all the course information that is online (syllabus, course calendar, etc.)

To access the ICON site, go to:

icon.uiowa.edu (please note that there is no “www” at the beginning of this URL)

log on to ICON using your Hawk ID and password
[Note: The login ID for each new account will be your HawkID. If you don’t know your HawkID, you can find out what it is by calling the Customer Information Desk (384-0800), looking it up in WebISIS (http://isis.uiowa.edu/) or calling the ITS Help Desk (384-4357)].

Select the appropriate semester.
Click on “JMC 6333 Gender and Media”

Most course readings will be under the “Modules” link in the left sidebar.

To upload your files once you are in the course web site:
Click on “Discussions” in the navigation sidebar.
Go to the appropriate discussion (e.g. “Week 1: Bordo, Crenshaw, Foucault”) and click on it. You should be able to upload a file or copy and paste text into a dialog box.

For other assignments, please upload to “Assignments” in the sidebar.

If you have any difficulties with ICON/Canvas, please check the Canvas Student Guide or call (319) 384-4357. But technical problems are not an acceptable reason for late work! Please plan on uploading your final paper at least an hour before the deadline so that there are no hiccups!

class recordings: privacy and sharing

Class sessions will be recorded or live-streamed. Such a recording or streaming will only be available to students registered for the course. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty, and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit written consent of the faculty member. Students may not share these sessions with those not in the class; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and, in some cases, a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Classroom policy is to have video turned on during the class session. If you have technical difficulties, please let me know.
general expectations

General expectations for all students include consistent class attendance, adequate preparation for in-class and out-of-class assignments, constructive participation (especially during article workshops), and completion of all reading and writing assignments on deadline. Please turn on your video during class time. Because the class is online, accessing ICON and Zoom with a computer tends to work better than a phone. For purposes of class communication and fulfillment of assignments, you’ll need an email account and regular access to a computer and the Internet.

Important note: Deadlines are absolutely sacred in this class (as they are in the “real world” of journalism)! Late work will be penalized at the rate of one letter grade per hour. No make-up work will be allowed, except in the case of an excused absence (see the policy on absences, below). In addition, final grades of “Incomplete” will not be given unless in exceptional and dire circumstances.

Other important notes: Remember that printers break, computers crash, and dogs eat homework, so plan ahead. This is both professional and courteous, and it will also save you a lot of trouble.

Be sure to back up your work, for the same reasons. Many students have lost their only copies of final projects at the very last minute, so be smart and back up.

And, finally, cell phones and other communication devices must be turned off during class.

A word on COVID: For in-person instruction, all students are expected to follow the protocols specified in the document “The Steps Forward: Returning to Campus, Fall 2020.”

ethics

Follow basic academic principles of honesty and transparency. Be original, be creative, and be true to your values: show me that you are a person of integrity and principle. Your writing will reflect who you are as a person. Remember that we will form lasting impressions of each other this semester.

The only real crime in this class would be cheating. It is expected that all work submitted for a grade in this course reflects the original work of the student submitting it. Students are encouraged to discuss their work with others (inside and outside of class), and to exchange drafts of papers with one another for comments and criticisms. But keep in mind that if you borrow an idea from someone else, you must cite the source, even if it is based on a conversation or correspondence. In graduate classes, citation guidelines must be strictly followed.

Plagiarism and any other activities that result in a student presenting work that is not his or her own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is reported to the departmental DEO and then to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Services in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences who deals with academic fraud according to these guidelines: https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook//ix.shtml

This course is given by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. This means that class policies on matters such as requirements, grading, and sanctions for academic dishonesty are governed by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s Code of Academic Honesty. Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through UI email. Visit this page for information: https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code).

Any student who does not fully understand the standards of academic honesty should speak to me in advance of submitting coursework.
clas final examination policies

Final exams may be offered only during finals week. Students should not make travel plans until they are certain of their final exam schedule. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. For more information, visit https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies. Questions may also be addressed to the CLAS Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.

understanding sexual harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

student rights

Students have the right to make suggestions or complaints and should first visit with the instructor, then with the course supervisor if appropriate, and next with the departmental DEO. All complaints should be made within six months of the incident. https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities

student classroom behavior

We will be dealing with complex and sometimes controversial subjects during the semester, and the classroom must be a place where everyone feels secure and empowered to express their views and feelings on these subjects. Our classrooms will be a “safe space” in which diverse perspectives are respectfully engaged and acknowledged as well as a “brave space” that supports and facilitates courageous and candid expression. Please be respectful and courteous of your classmates’ points of view, even when you disagree with them, and articulate your differing ideas thoughtfully and kindly. I use trigger warnings to alert students to potentially traumatic readings or other materials, and we can make alternate arrangements if necessary.

The ability to learn is lessened when students engage in inappropriate classroom behavior, distracting others; such behaviors are a violation of the Code of Student Life. When disruptive activity occurs, a university instructor has the authority to determine classroom seating patterns and to request that a student exit the classroom, laboratory, or other area used for instruction immediately for the remainder of the period. One-day suspensions are reported to appropriate departmental, collegiate, and Student Services personnel (Office of the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students).

The guidelines for civility extend to written work, as well. Please avoid gratuitous obscenity and racist, sexist, and other discriminatory language in your writing, unless there are exceptional circumstances where such content is essential to the story. Communicate clearly with your instructor about such circumstances.

resources for students

mental health

http://counseling.studentlife.uiowa.edu
http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/services/psychiatry
https://hr.uiowa.edu/livewell/managing-stress-and-behavioral-health
https://www.jccrisiscenter.org/24-hour-crisis-line/
24-Hour Crisis Line via The Johnson County Crisis Center
Hours: Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
Phone: (855) 325-4296; (319) 351-2726
sexual assault/domestic violence

If you have been the victim of a sexual assault or domestic violence on or off campus, or you know someone who has been assaulted and you want to find out more about available resources please contact the Rape Victim Advocate Program (RVAP), or Monsoon United Asian Women of Iowa, the UI Campus Police, or the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP).

Resources:
RVAP: (319) 335-6000 http://www.rvap.org/home/
Monsoon: (866) 881-4041 https://monsooniowa.org/programs-services/on-campus-victim-services/
DVIP: (800) 373-1043 http://dvipiowa.org/resources/
Campus Police: (319) 335-5022 https://police.uiowa.edu/police/reporting-sexual-assault

academic resources for students

Writing Center: 110 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0188, http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/
Speaking Center: 12 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0205, http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/students/speaking-center
Mathematics Tutorial Laboratory: 314 MacLean Hall, 335-0810, http://www.math.uiowa.edu/math-tutorial-lab
Campus Inclusion Team https://inclusionteam.uiowa.edu/
Student Disability Services: (319) 335-1462 https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/
Office of Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator: (319) 335-6200 https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/

CLAS Academic Programs and Student Development: (319) 335-2633 https://clas.uiowa.edu/students
Academic Resource Center: (319) 335-1497 https://uc.uiowa.edu/student-success/arc
Conversation Center: https://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/conversation-center
TRIO Student Support Services: (319)335-1288 https://diversity.uiowa.edu/trio-sss

course requirements

class participation (5% of final grade):

Class participation is an important part of this class. You will be encouraged to voice your ideas and thoughts and to contribute to the discussion of every topic. Even the shy ones will be given an opportunity to speak and interact with their classmates and the professor. Respect for others’ feelings, beliefs and values are essential to the success of the class, so please be considerate of your classmates’ different backgrounds and experiences as you discuss various points of view.

Those who are usually silent in class, or whose participation is unrelated to the readings or conceptual terms discussed in the class, will not earn the portion of the grade that is based on class participation.

attendance and compliance with deadlines (5% of final grade):

Attendance will be taken in every class. Excused absences are granted only for the following reasons: serious illness (which must be documented with a doctor’s certificate), a death in the family (again, documentation is required), or a religious holiday or Holy Day obligation. You may also request an absence for a school-related event that requires your presence, but these will only be excused if you make arrangements with the professor well in advance (examples of such events might be an out-of-town official university athletic event in which you are required to participate, or a job interview). In order for an absence to be excused, documentation must be provided (a note from a coach, letter scheduling the interview, etc.). Please let me know by email if extraordinary circumstances arise that prevent you from attending class. You may use the CLAS absence form to aid communication with the instructor who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused. The form is on ICON in the top banner under "Student Tools.” More information is at https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences .
The following types of situations are not considered excused absences: covering events for the DI or any other organization, social events, meetings of Greek or service organizations, entertaining out-of-town visitors, holiday plans, going to visit relatives, or any other circumstance that is extracurricular and at which your attendance is optional and secondary to your coursework.

**A note for Spring 2021**: In the absence of Spring Break this semester, the University of Iowa has scheduled two free days: Tuesday, March 2, and Wednesday, April 14. No classes will be held on these days.

responses to the readings/other in-class assignments (15% of final grade)

**Reading responses**
The ability to engage with the theoretical interventions provided by the assigned readings, to synthesize information, and to use the concepts as optics for your own research, are critical to your success in this class.

You will have assigned readings in this class throughout the semester, and you will be asked to provide written and oral responses to the readings. Your written responses will be posted to the appropriate Discussion board every week on ICON, so that all seminar participants can engage with your ideas. **Responses must be posted by 5 pm the Sunday before class meets each week.**

Each assigned seminar group should respond to their own group members' responses. Responses should make it clear that you have read and reflected on the entirety of the assigned articles. Reading assignments will be heavier at the beginning of the semester and ease up as you work on your research papers. All readings will be on the course ICON/Canvas site under “Modules.”

Only half credit will be given for assignments turned in in absentia (unless it is an excused absence; see above).

**Format for responses**: You are expected to respond with 100-200 words of analysis for each set of assigned readings, in which you will identify key theoretical concepts, research problems, and original ideas advanced by each reading and provide an analytical overview that compares, contrasts, and/or synthesizes these themes.

Please be prepared to discuss your responses in class. Late work will not be graded, except for excused absences. Responses will be graded on the basis of your grasp of the key points or interventions made by the readings and your ability to trace lines of connection, difference, and contributions to media studies in your analysis.

leading class discussions (15% of the final grade)

Every week, groups of students will be asked to serve as discussion leaders for the assigned readings. The seminar discussion leaders will be co-hosts for that day’s class. To lead the seminar, you will need to do some additional background reading and research on the author(s) whose work we are discussing in that class. The seminar leader groups can present a Power Point with an overview of the readings; you can also develop probe questions to spark class discussion and explore the various dimensions of the readings. If there are video supplements that will aid in your presentation, that’s great. It would also be a good idea to connect the day’s readings with the work we’ve read previously, explaining how it fits into the context of the seminar themes to date.

follow the footnotes essay (20% of final grade)

You will develop a research paper as the final product for this class, and at mid-semester, you will craft an essay reflecting on the theoretical framework for that paper. This essay will be developed by “following the footnotes,” as detailed here:

Your “Follow the footnotes” essay should have as its starting point a refereed journal article from this class that addresses a topic close to your core interest within the broad area of
“gender and media.” You will select an important concept from the article and read the source cited for this article. Then, you will select a footnote from that article and read it. You will do this until you have three key articles altogether. Using these three articles, you will write a 3- to 5-page essay describing the theoretical grounding of your topic. Your essay will link the three articles you’ve read — comparing, contrasting, synthesizing their theoretical contributions to your topic. Your essay will thus present the theoretical grounding of your specific topic. Each essay must adhere to a standard style manual (APA, Chicago, MLA, or Harvard). Detailed guidelines for this assignment will be provided in class.

final research paper (40% of final grade)
The final paper will be done in stages throughout the semester, with each stage counting for a portion of the grade, viz.:
1. Overarching research question/problem + specific supporting questions (5 points)
2. Justification of the significance of the research question, with reference to existing scholarship or societal phenomena that rationalize investigating your question (5 points)
3. Theoretical framework, that must be based on a concept from the class readings but should also include the supporting readings that you have done for the midterm essay (10 points)
4. Review of the literature (5 points — to be drawn from your annotated bibliography)
5. Method of analysis, including texts to be analyzed and analytical protocols (5 points)
6. Brief analysis of one artifact (5 points)
7. Theoretically grounded conclusions (5 points)

grading
Set high standards for yourself, as grading will be rigorous in this course. You will be assessed on the basis of your grasp of theoretical concepts, the clarity and rigor of your writing, the originality and strength of your research, and your overall contributions to the seminar.
course calendar

- This semester, all readings are online under “Modules” on the ICON/Canvas course website, except for the two required books.
- Please note that this schedule is subject to change depending on circumstances. It is the student’s responsibility to attend class and check email and the ICON site regularly to be sure to keep up with any changes.
- If readings are assigned, then written reading responses must be posted by 5 pm the Sunday before class, even if the syllabus doesn’t specify it.

week one

Monday, 1/25 — Introductions; syllabus; approaches to critical/cultural media studies of gender and sexuality. Lady Eva. Feminist, Media, Criticism, Is.

Readings to be completed for the next class (responses to be posted by 5 pm, Sunday, 1/31):

Optional:

week two

Monday, 2/1
Discussion of Bordo, Crenshaw, and Foucault; Crenshaw, “The urgency of intersectionality.”

Readings for next week (please post your responses by 5 pm on Sunday, 2/7):

week three

Monday, 2/8
Discussion of Foucault, governmentality, biopolitics of power, etc.
Discussion of Driver and Bartky as exemplars of Foucauldian analysis.

Readings for next week:
week four
Monday, 2/15
Discussion of Cahill and Butler, Part I

Readings for next week:

week five
Monday, 2/22
Discussion of Butler, Part II

Readings for next week:

week six
Monday, 3/1
Discussion of Butler, Part III and Conclusions

How do Judith Butler’s concepts of gender, sexuality and performativity apply to media studies?

Readings for next week:

Optional:

week seven
Monday, 3/8
Discussion of readings vis-à-vis the politics of media representation.

Readings for next week:


Assignment: “Follow the footnotes.”

week eight

Monday, 3/15
Discussion of readings vis-à-vis the politics of media production.

Readings for next week:


week nine

Monday, 3/22
Discussion of readings vis-à-vis the politics of the media audience. Dr. Kendra Strand on manga/anime.

“Follow the footnotes” assignment due on ICON by midnight.

week ten

Monday, 3/29
Discussion of “Follow the footnotes”

Readings for next week:


week eleven
Monday, 4/5
The feminist pornography debates.

Readings for next week: (agniappe, methods, closing thoughts)

week twelve
Monday, 4/12
(Final paper research question and abstract uploaded by 5 p.m. Sunday, 4/11).

Feminist/intersectional/decolonizing methodologies in media studies
In-class workshopping of paper topics, conceptual frameworks, and methodology.

week thirteen
Monday, 4/19—Draft papers
Paper drafts due by 5 p.m.

week fourteen
Monday, 4/26— Paper draft workshop

week fifteen
Monday, 5/3—Post-workshop revisions to papers

week sixteen
Monday, 5/10 — Final papers due (uploaded to ICON by 5 p.m.)