



CIEE Global Institute - Copenhagen

Course name:	Media, Gender and Identity
Course number:	COMM 3009 CPDK
Programs offering course:	Copenhagen Open Campus
Open Campus Track:	Communications, Journalism, and New Media Track
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

In this course, students will apply a critical lens to representations of gender and identity in contemporary media. Taking gender and sexuality as a critical starting point, we will examine the construction of identities under the simultaneous influence of race, class, and nationality. By focusing on popular representations in both the US and the country where the course is taking place, we will gain a deeper understanding of identities as both culturally specific and influenced by global media. Instead of suggesting that contemporary identities are determined by what we see on TV screens, computers, and in local movie theaters, the course seeks to describe the complex interactions between national audiences and concrete media productions, and analyzes how different audiences reproduce or challenge traditional concepts and stereotypes of gender, race, sexuality, and class. By combining the study of theoretical texts with examples from the advertisement industry, television, the movies, and other forms of contemporary cultural expression, it offers a comprehensive and thorough introduction to contemporary studies of the media and identity.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Examine how gender is central to sexuality, class, and race operating in the wider socio-cultural context since the 19th century
- Develop and acquire knowledge of theories of articulation and hegemony, and apply to representations of gender and identity in popular culture
- Examine popular culture as a site of struggle and contestations, seeing representations, for example, as attempts to stabilize social meanings *and* subject to socio-historical change.
- Critically analyze classical theories and approaches to studying gender, sexuality and race, and apply them to case studies.
- Contextualize the links between popular culture and debates about “identity”
- Evaluate how subjective understandings of gender, race and sexuality affect experiences of popular culture

Course Prerequisites



An introductory-level communications or gender studies course is helpful but not required.

Methods of Instruction

The course follows largely a Cultural Studies approach to studying popular culture. Students will learn the different theoretical ideas underlying the study of representations of gender, sexuality, race, and class identity, and apply these concepts to case studies. The course hopes to equip students with the theoretical tools to conduct their own analysis of popular culture representations in the future.

Students will be encouraged to challenge pre-existing assumptions about gender, sexual and racial norms as they are represented in popular media. Through class discussions and debates, critical readings of key primary and secondary texts, and students' written reactions, the students will enhance their ability to "read" popular media culturally and sociologically. Engaged student participation is crucial, and productive controversy will be encouraged.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Critical Responses to Popular Cultural Forms	20%
2. Individual Presentations	20%
3. Midterm Essay	15%
4. Final Exam	25%
5. Participation	20%

Course Requirements

Individual Presentation x 2:

Each student will make two 7 minute presentations for this course, once at the start and once at the end of the schedule. For the first presentation, each student will present a brief comparison between their experience of their gender and/or sexuality group within their own cultural context, against the perceived and/or experienced foreign context of Denmark. The discussion must compare the perceived and real within both cultures and draw comparisons and differences between the two. The discussion should highlight examples from the media from both contexts for illustrative purposes. This first presentation does not require a theoretical framework, but is rather a reflexive exercise using existing vocabularies to unpack various concepts related to this course. For the second presentation, each student will repeat as for presentation 1, but reflect on how their experiences in Denmark have impacted on that initial perception. The discussion should follow the same requirements, but must now be supported with additional theoretical proof using the vocabulary provided during the course. Presentations should be between 5 and 10 mins.

Critical Response to Popular Cultural form x 2:



Each student is required to write two critical engagements:

1. A 1000-word response to a Danish advert from the streets of Copenhagen.
2. A 1000 word response to an episode of Skam 1-4.

Each Critical Engagement needs to address the following 3 questions:

Q1): How are gender, sexuality and ethnicity being represented? [i.e. What are the characteristics, or features, of representation? Are certain devices, or strategies used? Such as irony, humour, stereotypes, gender transgression, shock tactics etc.]

Q2): What is the role of this popular cultural form? [NB: There can be more than one role]

Q3): Who is the intended audience? [NB: There can be more than one audience. For example, public service announcements can be pitched to more than one audience]

Students will be graded according to how successfully they support their analyses of their chosen popular cultural forms.

Essay:

The Essay (Midterm: 1500 words) will critically discuss the representation of one of the following topics, either gender, sexuality, race or class in the Danish context. The discussion must include an analysis of a media example from either television, film, animation, comics, radio, internet sites, photography, music, magazines, newspapers, theatre or literature. Each essay must cover a different topic using a different media example. Students must consider and propose their own titles and topics which need to be approved by the instructor before they submit the final copy.

Exam:

Students will complete a final exam composing of three long essay questions to complete in the allotted time.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance Policy



Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements

10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; written warning
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic course failure , and possible expulsion

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to take advantage of current experiential learning opportunities.

Week 1 Orientation

Class 1:1 Introduction

This week introduces the key terms and concepts that we will utilize throughout the course, such as practices of representation, popular culture and hegemony. Our main point of discussion is that representations of gender, race/ethnicity and sexuality connect meaning and language to culture and that there are numerous theoretical approaches to analysing representations in popular culture.

Gender equality as a Danish brand? You will get a thorough introduction, a tour through the Danish history of feminist movements and related debates about gender equality, race and sexuality from 19th century up to the 21st century. This introduction will give you a background for understanding how different the approaches have been at different times – and how the Danish culture today on one hand regards itself as one of the most equal countries in the world and on the other have popular culture representations telling another story.

Discussions on Making Media – the preface, 4 chapters and the statistics.
Introduction to the assignments.

Class 1:2 Popular Culture Messages

Together we will discuss the messages we receive from popular culture in Denmark by using our eyes 24/7 – and in the course of the discussions you will step by step enter into the theory and reflections of gender, race and sexuality – and get a more profound understanding of how the Danish society and culture approaches equality – and we will also relate this to a US context
An introduction to Danish feminist movements and public debates on gender,

race and sexuality from 19th century to the 21st century. Presentation of Nordic Women's Literature as a bridge building project between research and politics.

Discussions on reading Hall (2014): "The Work of Representation"; Lull (2011) "Hegemony"; Fiske (2005): Popular Discrimination

Individual Presentation 1 due.

Week 2

Class 2:1 Journalism and bodies in the political arena

This week we discuss various approaches to the study of representations of bodies in the political arena in Danish and American journalism - and the impact on democracy.

Discussion of "Global Media Monitoring Project", "Nordic Journalism with Gender Parity and Problems" by Maria Edström and "A Theoretical Framework: News Sources, Gender and Majority-Minority in Danish TV News Programs" by Christina Fiig.

Class 2:2 Female Political Power

Discussion of the female politicians in "Borgen" in relation to "Misrepresentation" and the last election in US. The day ends with a walk to Christiansborg to have a look at the official portrait of Helle Thorning-Schmith, Denmark's first female prime minister. Co-curricular activities: Visiting Ditte Giese, editor at Politiken (not confirmed)

Response Paper 1 due

Week 3

Class 3:1 Gender theories – From Ideology to Psychoanalysis

This week we discuss various approaches to studying representations of gender in popular culture, including treating representations as reflective of dominant social ideologies and as manifestations of underlying psychoanalytical tendencies. Implicated in these are different ways of imagining the subject and audiences. By applying these theories to case studies, we critically assess their value and limitations.

Discussion of readings Mulvey (1988) Visual pleasure and narrative cinema and application to US and a Danish context.

Class 3:2 Men Versus Women in Representation

While feminist critics largely spearheaded analyses of representations of gender, we will also study the representations of men and masculinity in movies. We will also question whether representations of gender are intertwined with other themes and discuss the limitations of focusing solely on issues of gender. Co-curricular activities: Visiting CEO Katrina Schelin at DOX BIO at the Danish Film Institute

Discussion of Gauntlett (2008) Background debates (Chapter 2) and classroom debate about the related theory and movies we have seen.

Midterm Essay Due

Week 4

Class 4:1 Marginality and Sexuality – Problems of Essentialism

This week expands on the previous week's discussions and complicates these discussions with issues of sexuality as intertwined with representations of gender norms. Through a critical reading of Butler's theories on gender and sexuality. On one hand we will question the underlying problems of essentialism in mainstream gender discourse and consider how these are used to marginalize sexual minority groups.

Discussion of readings of Butler (1996) "Gender performance: An interview with Judith Butler" and Sara Ahmed (2004) "Shame Before Others" - and "Skam", 3 (2016).

Class 4:2 Performing Gender

We will attempt to rethink gender and sexuality as performance. By applying these ideas to case studies in popular media, we will consider how heterosexuality and sexual minority identities are performed, and look at how the performances may differ according to the performer and ideas about audiences. We will question underlying assumptions about how the sexuality of performers affects their representations of sexuality.

Discussion of Butler (1993) "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" and personal experiences within a US and Danish/Nordic cultural context.

Response Paper 2 Due

Week 5

Class 5:1 Race - and how "The Danish song is a young, blond girl"

Together with theories of gender and sexuality emerging from feminist

studies, attention on racial representations expanded the focus of Cultural Studies beyond class issues. This week we discuss representations of different ethnicities and race in popular cultures. In a vein similar to that of previous weeks, we challenge race and ethnicity as an essential category and critically analyse the representations of the different races – or the lack of it – in popular culture.

Discussion of readings Hall (1996) and Rikke Andreasen (2013)

Class 5:2 Race and Ethnicity in Denmark

Beyond representations of race and ethnicity in Denmark, we will also look at how other minority races are portrayed. This involves both how mainstream media portray ethnic minorities as the 'other' and how minority races represent themselves. Ultimately, we consider how representations of race, gender, sexuality and class are intimately linked and cannot be analysed separately. Co-curricular activities: Khaterah Parwarni, Danish (Brown) Feminist and activist (not confirmed)

Discussion of Hall (1996) continued with classroom debate and personal impressions comparing the US and Denmark contexts - and in relation of Skam 4 (2017) and the article of Astrid Henry (2014).

Individual Presentation 2 Due

Week 6

Class 6:1 Moving forward – Challenges, Summary, and Discussion

In this final week, we will consider the course topics from the millennium perspective drawing on Queer theory and the concept of fluidity in terms of gender, sexuality, and cultural and ethnic identities. Adding to and informing the discussion will be the context of generation and age. We will also consider how the role of popular culture has changed since the rise of the Internet and mobile technology and as these have become more integral to everyday life. An introduction to Emma Holten – a young Danish feminist and activist on revenge porn and hacked photos on social media.

Discussion of Gauntlett (2008) "Queer Theory and Fluid Identities" (Chapter 7) and a discussion of the lived realities of such identities within the US and Danish context.

Class 6:2 Final Exam

Final Exam Due

Course Materials

Readings

Each week's core readings will come from the course's main textbook and one or two other articles that will be available on Canvas. These core readings are compulsory and the reading, understanding and analysis of them constitute a major part of the course's assessment. There will also be a list of supplementary readings for students to use on their coursework (essays and presentations).

- Ahmed, S., 2004. "Shame Before Others" in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 101-121
- Andreassen, R. (2013) "Muslim Women and Interracial Intimacies" in *The Journal of Nordic Migration Research*, Vol 3, pp. 117-123.
- Butler, J., 1996. "Gender as Performance". In P. Osborne, ed. *A critical sense: interviews with intellectuals*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 109–125.
- Butler, J., 1993. "Imitation and Gender Insubordination". In H. Abelove, M. A. Barale, & D. M. Halperin, eds. *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, pp. 307–320.
- Edström, M. et al, 2014 Making Change. Nordic Examples of Working Towards Gender Equality in the Media. Göteborg: Nordicom.
(<http://www.nordicom.gu.se/sv/mediefakta/nordic-gender-media-forum/making-change>)
- Fiig, Christina, 2017 "Media and Gender in a Danish Context. What do we Know?" FREIA Working Paper Series 87/2016. Aalborg University, pp. 1-18.
- Fiske, J., 2005. "Popular Discrimination". In R. Guins & O. Z. Cruz, eds. *Popular culture: a reader*. London, Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, pp. 215–222.
- Gauntlett, D. 2008. *Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, S., 1998. "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'". In J. Storey, ed. *Cultural theory and popular culture: a reader*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, pp. 442–453.
- Henry, Astrid (2014) Fittstim Feminists and Third Wave Feminists: A Shared Identity between Scandinavia and the United States, *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2014), pp. 659-687
- Hill-Collins, Patricia and Bilge, Sirma 2016. *Intersectionality*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- Lull, J., 2011. "Hegemony". In G. Dines & J. M. Humez, eds. *Gender, race, and class in media: a critical reader*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, pp. 33–36.
- Mulvey, L. 1988. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In *Feminism and Film Theory*. Ed. Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. pp. 57-68.
- Who Makes the News, <http://whomakesthenews.org/>
- Documentary and TV-series:
Borgen, season 2, <https://itunes.apple.com/us/tv-season/borgen-the-complete-series-english-subtitles/id1029876007>
SKAM, season 3 & 4, <https://www.dailymotion.com/englishskam/>
<https://skamenglish.tumblr.com/>
Misrepresentation <http://therepresentationproject.org/film/miss-representation/>

Supplementary readings

- Ahmed, S. (2004) *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press
- Andersen, Margaret L. & Collins, Patricia Hill. *Race, Class, & Gender: An Anthology*. Cengage Learning. 2012. Print.
- Andreassen, R. (2005) *Gender, Race, Sexuality and Nationality. An Analysis of the Danish News Media's Communication about Visible Minorities from 1971-2004*, <http://rikkeandreassen.dk/phd-afhandling.pdf>
- Andreassen, R. & Myong, L. 2017. Race, Gender, and Researcher Positionality Analysed Through Memory Work. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 7(2): 97-104.
- Bissenbakker, Mons (2014) How to bring your daughter up to be a feminist killjoy : Shame, accountability and the necessity of paranoid reading in Lene Kaaberbøl's *The Shamer Chronicles* . *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 16.01.2014.
- Butler, J., 1988. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory". *Theatre Journal*, 40(4), p.519.
- Butler, J., 1993. *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex"*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J., 1999. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Campbell, Richard, Martin, Christopher R. & Fabos, Bettina. *Media & Culture: Mass Communication in a Digital Age*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013. Print.
- Dines, Gail & Humez, Jean M. *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2014. Print.
- During, S. ed., 1999. *The cultural studies reader*. 2nd ed. London, New York: Routledge.
- During, S., 2005. *Cultural studies: a critical introduction*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Fine, Cordelia. *Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011. Print.
- Foss, Sonja K., Domenico, Mary E. & Foss, Karen A. *Gender Stories: Negotiating Identity in a Binary World*. Illinois: Waveland Press, 2012. Print.
- Gauntlett, David. *Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Goodman, Alan H., Moses, Yolanda T. & Jones Joseph L. *Race: Are We So Different*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. Print.
- Grewal, Inderpal and Caren Kaplan. *An Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World*. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2006.
- Guins, R. & Cruz, O.Z. eds., 2005. *Popular culture: a reader*. London, Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications.
- Hall, Stuart. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage Publications Inc, 2013. Print.
- Hall, S., Morley, D. & Chen, K.-H. eds., 1996. *Stuart Hall: critical dialogues in cultural studies*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Healey, Joseph F. *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2013. Print.
- Healey, Joseph F. *Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class: The Sociology of Group Conflict and Change*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2011. Print.

- Higgins, M., Smith, C. & Storey, J. eds., 2010. *The Cambridge companion to modern British culture*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hodkinson, Paul. *Media, Culture and Society: An Introduction*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Ltd. 2010. Print.
- Jhally, S., Hall, S. & Media Education Foundation. *Race the floating signifier*. Northampton, MA: Media Education Foundation, 2002.
- McLuhan, M., 1964. *Understanding Media*. London: Routledge. Print.
- Medhurst, Andy. *A National Joke: Popular Comedy and English Cultural Identities*. London: Routledge, 2007. Print.
- Nordic Women's Literature, <https://nordicwomensliterature.net>
- O'Shaughnessy, M. and Stadler, J. 2012. *Media and Society*. (5th ed.) Melbourne: Oxford University Press. Print.
- Patterson, Philip & Wilkins, Lee. *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*. McGraw-Hill Education. 2013. Print
- Seidman, Steven. *The Social Construction of Sexuality*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009. Print.
- Sinfield, Alan. *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*. London: Bloomsbury, 2007.
- Stallybrass, P. & White, A., 1986. *The politics and poetics of transgression*, Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press.
- Storey, J. ed., 1996. *What is cultural studies?: a reader*. London, New York : Arnold.
- Strinati, D., 2004. *An introduction to theories of popular culture*. 2nd ed., London, New York: Routledge.
- Unesco ed., 1980. *Sociological theories: race and colonialism*. Paris: Unesco.
- West, Cornel., 1990. "The new cultural politics of difference", in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, ed. Russell Ferguson et al. Cambridge: MIT Press in association with the New Museum of Contemporary Art, 19–36.