



CIEE Global Institute - Paris

Course name:	Media, Gender and Identity
Course number:	(GI) COMM 3009 PAFR
Programs offering course:	Paris Open Campus (Communications, Journalism, and New Media Track)
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2018

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 France, 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:

- Understand 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

None. 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

Assignment	Grade %
Critical response to popular cultural forms (2 x 10%)	20%
Group Presentation	15%
Participation	20%
Midterm essay	20%
Final Essay	25%

Course Requirements

Critical Response to Popular Cultural forms

Each student is required to write two critical engagements:

1. A 500 word response to a French public service announcement:
<http://gadgets.boingboing.net/2009/08/21/mind-the-gap-a-compe.html> (Links to an external site.)
2. A 500 word response to two AIDS posters (one from Britain and one from elsewhere) from The Wellcome Collection's online archive:
<http://wellcomecollection.org/aids-posters-0> (Links to an external site.)

Each Critical Engagement needs to address the following 3 questions:

Q1): How are gender, sexuality and ethnicity being represented? [ie. 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.

Group Presentation

Each group of students will present on the relationship between two French popular cultural forms and the course themes. Eg. Television, film, radio, internet memes and blogs, photography, music, magazines, pantomime, theatre and literature. Students can choose any two popular cultural forms but their presentation must link to at least two of the course themes: Comedy and stereotypes as central devices in French pantomime, French theatre, popular music etc., the 'low' status of popular culture as central to how it is simultaneously produced *and* consumed, and the role of the audience in popular culture.

Class participation

As part of their work in this course, students should demonstrate learning beyond the submission of written assignments or presentations. As such, all students receive grades based upon participation.

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilising the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students receive grades based upon their contributions both in the classroom and in the Canvas course.

Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed by the Instructor, in advance of each class session. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials where directed.

This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Essays

Each of the two essays (Midterm: 1500 words; Final: 2000 words) will analyse the role of French popular culture. Suggested essay titles are provided but students are allowed to design their own titles. But if students decide to write their own titles, they must get their titles approved with the instructor before they submit the final copy.

Class Attendance and Punctuality

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 sessions will also result in a lower final grade.*

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 will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

An absence in a CIEE course will only be considered excused if:

- a doctor's note is provided
- a CIEE staff member verifies that the student was too ill to attend class
- satisfactory evidence is provided of a family emergency

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	No academic penalty
10 – 20%	2	Reduction of final grade
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 4 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 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 and sexuality connect meaning and language to culture and that there are numerous theoretical approaches to analyzing representations in popular culture. We also discuss how the emergence of Cultural Studies in Britain during the late 1960s challenged prevailing ideas of popular culture as an inherently 'low' cultural form because Cultural Studies as a theory and practice, through people like Stuart Hall, questioned the simplistic opposition between 'high' literary culture versus 'low' popular culture. Thus Cultural Studies legitimized popular culture as an academic topic. We will also discuss how French Cultural Studies continues to evolve in response to popular culture.

Core readings:

Hall – The work of representation (1997)

Secondary readings: TBA

Week 2 Popular Culture and Issues of Class and National Identity

This week, we elaborate on the main analytical concepts underpinning the course, namely articulation and hegemony. Using these concepts, we discuss the question: What is the 'French' in French popular culture, or the 'German' in German popular culture? Starting with the issue of class, which has been the focus of Cultural Studies since its early days, we analyze representations of class and its links to 'national character' or 'mentality' in popular culture.

Core readings:

Hall – Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular';

Secondary readings:

Fiske – Popular Discrimination;

Lull – Hegemony

Week 3 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. While feminist critics largely spearheaded analyses of representations of gender, we will also study the representations of men and masculinity in the class. Our analyses will be situated within larger social and historical trends in Europe. We will also question whether representations of gender are intertwined with other themes and discuss the limitations of focusing solely on issues of gender.

Core readings:

Mulvey – Visual pleasure and narrative cinema

Secondary readings:

Gauntlett – Ch. 2

Individual response paper due

Week 4 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, we will question the underlying problems of essentialism in mainstream gender discourse and consider how these are used to marginalize sexual minority groups. 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.

Core readings:

Butler – Gender performance: An interview with Judith Butler;

Butler – Imitation and gender insubordination

Week 5 What is 'Race'?

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 ethnic minorities in European popular cultures. In a vein similar to that of previous weeks, we challenge race as an essential category and critically analyze the representations of the different races – or the lack of it – in popular culture.

Beyond representations of black culture, 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 analyzed separately.

Core reading:

Hall – What is the ‘Black’ in Black Popular Culture?

Week 6 Moving forward – Challenges, Summary, and Discussion

In this final week, we will have a guest lecturer who will talk to us about coming-of-age films. Her work will place the main issues we have looked at in the course, namely class, gender, sexuality and race, in 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 as integral to everyday life. Time permitting, we will read a piece by the African-American critic Henry Louis Gates Jr. where he relates his experiences of living in Europe during the late 1980s.

Readings: TBD

Guest Lecture; Final essay due

Course Materials

Bibliography

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).

Course textbook

Hill-Collins, Patricia and Bilge, Sirma 2016. *Intersectionality*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Other core readings

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. Abelow, M. A. Barale, & D. M. Halperin, eds. *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, pp. 307–320.

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.

- Hall, S., 1997. "The work of representation". In S. Hall & Open University, eds. *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices. Culture, media, and identities*. London, Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage in association with the Open University, pp. 13–74.
- Hall, S., 1996. "What is this "black" in black popular culture?" In D. Morley & K.-H. Chen, eds. *Stuart Hall: critical dialogues in cultural studies*. London; New York: Routledge, pp. 468–478.
- 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.

Supplementary readings

- Andersen, Margaret L. & Collins, Patricia Hill. *Race, Class, & Gender: An Anthology*. Cengage Learning. 2012. Print.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.