Instructor: John Musser, PhD

jjm183@pitt.edu (I typically respond to emails within 24 hours)

Zoom Student Hours: Tuesday, 4-5pm

**Course Description:**

We engage with popular culture every single day. When we see memes about the latest *Star Wars* movie, or when we hear the new album that Beyoncé dropped, we are participating in popular culture. Some raise their noses at ‘pop’ culture, declaring it uncouth, déclassé, and culture for the ‘least common denominator.’ This course seeks to challenge that opinion, and raise several important objections to that attitude. That is, upon further inspection, an examination of popular culture reveals our culture’s ideologies about race, sexuality, or even gender. Popular culture is *always* telling us something important about race and sexuality.

Though you can easily ‘binge’ dozens of movies and television shows on your phone or laptop, in this course, I will be asking you to slow down that process, to think of pop cultural texts as not just products of an entertainment industry meant to bring us escape or pleasure, but as discrete aesthetic texts that are created with particular conventions and aesthetic decisions in mind. Approaching pop cultural texts this way can produce a fruitful conversation or critique about the ways that race and sex function in our contemporary, media-saturated world. What encompasses popular culture is massive, so for the sake of this course, we will be primarily focusing on popular music, film, television, sports, and performance cultures in the twentieth and into the twenty-first century.

I will be using a *blended* approach to web-based instruction for this class, meaning that some aspects of the course will be synchronous (everyone meets digitally at a certain time), and other aspects are asynchronous (work on your own pace outside the timeframe of the class). My intention on incorporating a blended approach is twofold: 1) To provide you with some of the benefits that come with a synchronous classroom experience; and 2) To give you the flexibility and freedom to engage with each other digitally on your own time.

You will be assessed through frequent *and* insightful class participation, a midterm exam, 6 response papers, 4 pop quizzes, and a final paper. This will be a fun class, but it will also require hard work! If you think that talking about movies, music, or other media texts ‘takes the fun out of them,’ then this is not the course for you.

**Required Readings:**

All essays, book chapters, or other materials will be uploaded to courseweb.

**Digital Platforms**:

This course will require the use of Zoom, Canvas, YouTube, Google Docs, and some music/film streaming platforms (like Spotify or Netflix).

**Required Viewing/listening**:

You will regularly be asked to watch videos or listen to music which is readily available on most streaming or online platforms.

**n.b.** – I deliberately keep the costs of textbooks in this class at 0, with the understanding that you may occasionally have to pay a few dollars here or there to watch a film or episode that only streams through YouTube or another platform. The overall cost for the course, though, should be minimal.

**A Note on the required viewing/listening**

You must have watched the film/music videos or listened to the songs before Tuesday of each week. Even if you watched or heard the text before, even if it was last year, you still need to do it again. You will notice new and interesting things by consuming it *with intent*. You can find the films on Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, Vudu, YouTube, Google Play, iTunes, in the Library’s collection, or through other means.

**Grading Breakdown:**

Participation – 15%

Contemporary Connections Response Paper – 6 at 5% each = 30%

Pop Quizzes – 4 at 5% each = 20%

Midterm Exam – 15%

Final Exam – 20%

**IMPORTANT SEMESTER INFORMATION**

**Please read this section carefully, as it contains information related to the multiple modes of instruction during the pandemic.**

**Flex@Pitt:**

Pitt’s Flex model for instruction during this academic year is a hybrid model that wants to allow students to have the comfort of remote instruction given the real dangers that a classroom experiences might bring, while also providing the option of a face-to-face classroom experience to those students who want it. If there are moments in the semester where students will be both remote and face-to-face in the classroom, there is streaming technology in our class that *should allow* for our remote students to connect with the instructor, and our face-to-face students to connect with the instructor as well.

* It is unclear at present how well remote students and face-to-face students would be able to connect with each other.
* **Keep in mind, this approach to instruction is largely experimental. I encourage all of you to approach this semester with an air of understanding to any problems or difficulties that may emerge. We will try our best to find the solution that best fits our class.**
* It is ultimately ***your*** decision as to whether you decide to go with remote or face-to-face instruction, and neither decision will affect your grade in a positive nor negative way.

**Operational Postures at Pitt:**

Please regularly refer to [**https://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/operational-postures**](https://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/operational-postures)for information about University risk postures, and the kinds of instruction that are expected/allowed during each.

* At the time of this writing, the University is still in ‘elevated risk,’ which emphasizes remote and web-based instruction. It is not clear when or if the University will move to ‘guarded risk,’ which allows for and emphasizes face-to-face instruction.
* Thus, we will acclimate ourselves to each other in a web-based format and will—as a class—reevaluate our options later in the semester when/if circumstances allow for it.

**Class Structure**:

The Tuesday class meeting will be a synchronous Zoom lecture/discussion, from 1:30pm to 2:45pm. The link for the recurring Zoom session will be posted to Canvas. During this hour or so on Zoom we will go over the readings, introduce key concepts, identity key passages, and go through some activities to prepare us to ask deeper critical questions. After the Zoom lecture/discussion, you will respond to a prompt on Canvas, asking you to either produce discussion board posts, a focused freewrite, or a combination of both. These latter discussion board posts/writing activities will be due by Thursday at 2:45 (so you can use the allotted class time to complete them, or do them at your own leisure).

* During the pandemic, I am most comfortable teaching in a remote capacity, though I have marked some places on the syllabus where a face-to-face classroom experience is available. Here’s what that will mean: on those dates, students who are comfortable with/desire a face-to-face experience may report to the classroom (following strict masking/social distancing/capacity rules), turn on the streaming technology in the classroom, and I will appear on the streaming apparatus to begin class with both the face-to-face and remote students.
	+ Face-to-face instruction will ***only*** happen if the University’s risk posture is at the ‘guarded risk’ level.
	+ Our classroom’s maximum capacity under social distancing regulations is 9 students. So if more than 9 students desire to take part in face-to-face instruction, we will create a rotation of when cohorts of students are allowed.
	+ **It should go without saying, but if you are feeling sick at all, even if you don’t suspect it is Covid-19, please do not participate in a face-to-face learning environment.**

**Zoom Office/Student Hours:**

Traditionally, office hours, or student hours, are set times where students can come and meet with the instructor outside of class to discuss course materials, their progress in the course, or to brainstorm ideas for projects/papers. In more remote or web-based circumstances, I’ll instead create a recurring Zoom meeting on Tuesdays, from 3pm-4pm, where you can meet with me in a similar fashion. The meeting number/password will be made available on Canvas. I am also available by appointment.

**\*\*\*Any substantive changes made to instruction format (e.g. temporary or permanent changes to web-based or face-to-face instruction, or the means through which those happen) will be communicated to you through email, and possibly also through the ‘announcement’ function on Canvas.\*\*\***

**Voting at Pitt:**

In this presidential election season, eligible student voters and those educating themselves about the election process are encouraged to consult the nonpartisan website [Pittvotes.turbovote.org](https://nam05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpittvotes.turbovote.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CJJM183%40pitt.edu%7Caada2a4be92f418bd8d808d83cc9bdea%7C9ef9f489e0a04eeb87cc3a526112fd0d%7C1%7C0%7C637326184452769647&sdata=OIh%2F9OCCSz0WNQ5ew%2FvK%2BHdwCaYHqMLh%2FwtsQhu4nXY%3D&reserved=0).  This site ensures Pitt students and other members of the community always know when elections are happening and have the information they need to vote with confidence.  The site also provides election reminders, voter registration, applications for absentee ballots, and more.  Please consult [Pittvotes.turbovote.org](https://nam05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpittvotes.turbovote.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CJJM183%40pitt.edu%7Caada2a4be92f418bd8d808d83cc9bdea%7C9ef9f489e0a04eeb87cc3a526112fd0d%7C1%7C0%7C637326184452769647&sdata=OIh%2F9OCCSz0WNQ5ew%2FvK%2BHdwCaYHqMLh%2FwtsQhu4nXY%3D&reserved=0) and seek out assistance from your instructors and peers as you work to learn about and exercise your critically important right to vote.

**Major Graded Assignments/Tasks:**

Contemporary Connections Response Paper:

Six times throughout the semester, you will write short, 2-page response papers connecting the readings and texts for the day to another text of your choosing. This is a way for you to suggest the continual relevance and importance of the ideas or concepts discussed in the readings/screenings for the day. That is, **in what other places or cultural venues do you see these concepts at play**? You can use pop culture, local/national/global politics, social media, literature, performance, art, or other contemporary cultural forms/figures to make these connections. Also, be specific, make clear which reading, visual/sonic texts, or concepts you are exploring through a contemporary connection. Dive deeply into these concepts and issues; provide a close-reading of your particular contemporary text, and clearly outline how this text helps us to better understand the relevant theoretical concepts.

* Please upload your response papers to courseweb before class.

Pop Quizzes:

Four times throughout the semester, I will distribute short pop quizzes at the beginning of our Zoom lecture/discussion that will ask some basic questions about the assigned texts, and ask you to think through the concepts in the readings. They should be easy to complete if you are prepared for class and have reflected on the assigned texts.

Participation:

Zoom lectures are most enjoyable and most effective when students are participating and prepared to discuss the course materials. Trust me, you do not want a class involving critical theory to be a one-way Zoom lecture; a discussion-based, conversational approach to critical theory is more effective and more pleasant for all. Your input and enthusiastic engagement with the materials will make the class enjoyable and rewarding for all parties involved. Furthermore, not only is participation part of your grade, but contributing your thoughts and responses aloud to the class is a crucial component of joining an academic community.

* N.b. – one of the benefits of web-based instruction is the way that discussion boards offer a written alternative to participation for more introverted students.
	+ \*\*\*I would still like to hear everyone’s voice on Zoom, though.

Discussion Board/Post-Lecture Activities:

* After each Zoom lecture/meeting, you will have a writing activity that will either be a series of discussion board posts, a focused freewrite, or a combination of the two.
* Discussion Board Posts will typically **be in response to prompting questions posed on Canvas, or they may be a substantial question, comment, or analysis of something that emerged from the readings or the texts for the week** (for instance: a substantial close reading of a passage that helped you understand the author’s argument, or a substantive question about the stakes and implications of the author’s argument).
	+ For each discussion board post you make, you must write **two** substantive replies to other discussion board posts—engaging or responded to another person’s ideas or questions. (so, if I assign **one** post, you respond to **two**, and if I assign **two** posts, respond to **four**)
	+ Freewrites do not require replies from other students.
	+ **Discussion board posts, replies, and/or freewrites will be due by Thursday, 2:45pm (the time that Thursday class would normally end).**
		- I will read all discussion board posts, and will endeavor to respond to most, but you will be graded holistically.
			* I want to see you earnestly engaging with the concepts and texts for the week, and earnestly and respectfully engaging with each other.

Midterm Exam: Your midterm exam will consist of multiple choice questions, short-answer identifications of key quotations from the readings, and short-essays where you will be asked to perform a critical analysis of an image or short video.

Final Exam: Your final exam will be a series of take-home essays. You will receive the questions well in advance.

**Course Policies**

Notes on Remote Instruction:

I think most of us can agree that a web-based classroom is not the same as a face-to-face classroom experience. There’s an ‘energy’ in the space of the classroom which many students and instructors (like myself) find conducive to creating a micro-community of learning with each other. However, a micro-community of learning can be replicated in the web-based classroom, with some careful attention and deliberateness. Remote instruction, on the surface, seems to reward the autodidact—the person who learns well by themselves. And while self-directed learning is valuable, this is not an independent study. The activities and group discussions we will go through will ensure that you’re constantly in communication with each other, and with me. Some students find that in a web-based classroom, they even get *more* feedback from their instructors. This is all to say, yes, this learning experience will be different from a face-to-face classroom, but it is my hope that it will be *productively* different. We will still grow as learners and scholars.

Digital Citizenship:

Since many of your interactions with each other will happen in discussion boards or other web-based formats, it’s crucial to remind you to practice good digital citizenship. Good digital citizenship is almost identical to good classroom citizenship. Make sure you post or provide feedback in a timely manner, especially if others are beholden to the same timeline as you are. You want to consistently be respectful to others in digital spaces, even when you disagree (no insulting or offensive language). You also should practice intellectual generosity, which means that you should provide feedback or respond to questions (even if they aren’t perfectly phrased or formed) with a spirit of understanding and willingness to collectively learn.

* I’m aware that not everyone feels comfortable having their face and living space visible during Zoom lectures/discussions. While I’d personally love to see all of your faces, please use your best judgment and/or use creative solutions. Feel free to design your own Zoom background, or find other ways to let me know you are an active participant in class (frequent use of the chat, thumbs-up, or hand-raised functions in Zoom).
* Lastly, while in Zoom lectures/discussions, it is good manners to leave your microphone on ‘Mute’ until it is your turn to speak, to eliminate audio feedback.

Digital Attendance and Lecture Recordings:

Ideally, I’ll be able to see each of you in our weekly Zoom lecture/discussions. However, I’m aware that in a pandemic, there are a lot of uncontrollable circumstances. So, please do your best to attend every Zoom lecture/discussion, as we’ll be having important conversations about the concepts at play for the week. However, if you need to miss class due to illness or other necessary circumstance, I will have Zoom record our weekly lectures, and they will be made available to you so you can catch up on missed material (these recordings will be deleted at the end of the semester). Please keep me posted as your circumstances change, so I can best help you.

Submission of work:

Your response papers, essays, and other assigned work will be submitted through Canvas.

Late work:

I do not chase students for late assignments. Please submit your work on time. If you find yourself needing more time to submit work, please be in communication with me.

A Note on Man-splaining:

If there are men or more masculine folk in this class, please be mindful of how you are engaging with other students in the class. Thoughtful comments and reflections are always welcome.

A Note on Call-out Culture and Canceling:

A topic of hot debate in Feminist and social justice circles, it is my opinion that call-outs and ‘canceling’ have no place in my class. (To be clear, if someone makes a mistake one time, they will not be ‘canceled.’ However, repeated showings of disrespect through language will not be tolerated.) No one comes into a classroom completely ‘woke.’ Classrooms are spaces where people can learn from honest mistakes. Honest mistakes will be addressed with a spirit of generosity and compassion. For a longer explanation on this issue, read: [I’m a Black Feminist. I Think Call-Out Culture Is Toxic.](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/17/opinion/sunday/cancel-culture-call-out.html)

Reading Theory:

This class will be asking you to read critical theoretical texts, and some of you may who have limited experience reading texts like this. Not to worry, there are some tricks to ‘getting it,’ many of which hinge on developing consistent active reading practices. Active reading practices involve developing the habit of highlighting, circling, writing questions in the margins, or responding to the text *as* you read the text. This will help your comprehension of dense theoretical material.

Email Etiquette: When emailing your instructor (myself or another), it is considered polite to start the email with a greeting, i.e. “Hello. Dr./Prof. XYZ.” If you are unsure how to refer to your instructor, ask. It is also considered polite to close your email with “Thank you,” “Sincerely,” or something to that effect. Remember that you want to convey the right ethos in email, as well as graded work! (for the record, you may address me by my first name in email and in conversation)

Disability resources and services:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, visit <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/>

Academic integrity and plagiarism:

Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the quiz, exam or paper will be imposed. For the full Academic Integrity policy, go to: http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html

Violation of the Academic Integrity Code requires the instructor to submit an Academic Integrity Violation Report to the Dean’s Office.

E-mail policy:

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address.

Non-discrimination policy:

As an educational institution and as an employer, Pitt values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. For more information, visit <http://cfo.pitt.edu/policies/documents/policy07-01-03web.pdf>

* I encourage students to discuss and explore issues and topics surrounding any of the above categories in their academic work.

Gender-Inclusive language guidelines:

Aspiring to create a learning environment in which people of all identities are encouraged to contribute their perspectives to academic discourse, the University of Pittsburgh Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program provides guidelines and resources regarding gender-inclusive/non-sexist language ( [www.gsws.pitt.edu/node/1432](http://www.gsws.pitt.edu/node/1432) ). Following these guidelines fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment, strengthens academic writing, enriches discussion, and reflects best professional practices.

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of any gender (e.g. first-year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes the difference between biological sex and gender expression. Students may share their preferred pronouns and names, and these gender identities and gender expressions should be honored.

These guidelines fulfill the best intentions of the University of Pittsburgh’s Non-Discrimination Policy: <https://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/07/07-01-03.html>.

\*\*\*What to do if you accidentally misgender someone\*\*\* If you make a mistake, quickly correct yourself, you may quickly apologize, and continue with your statement as usual. The swiftness of your correction shows your desire to get it right, and prevents a long-winded apology that might make the mistake more about you than the misgendered person.

Content warning and class climate:

Our course readings and classroom discussions will often focus on mature, difficult, and potentially challenging topics. As with any course in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program, course topics are often political and personal. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers’ understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be mindful of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in a mature and respectful way. If you are struggling with the course materials, here are some tips: read the syllabus so that you are prepared in advance. You can approach your instructor ahead of time if you’d like more information about a topic or reading. If you think a particular reading or topic might be especially challenging or unsettling, you can arrive to class early and take a seat by the door so that you can easily exit the classroom as needed. If you need to leave or miss class, you are still responsible for the work you miss. If you are struggling to keep up with the work because of the course content, you should speak with me and/or seek help from the counseling center.

Sexual misconduct, required reporting, and Title IX:

The University is committed to combatting sexual misconduct. As a result, you should know that University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence, to the University’s Title IX office so that the victim may be provided appropriate resources and support options. **What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware**.

There are two important exceptions to this requirement about which you should be aware:

A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here: <http://www.titleix.pitt.edu/report/confidentiality>

An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University’s Title IX office.

If you are the victim of sexual misconduct, Pitt encourages you to reach out to these resources:

\* Title IX Office: 412-648-7860

\* SHARE @ the University Counseling Center: 412-648-7930 (8:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M. M-F) and 412-648-7856 (AFTER BUSINESS HOURS)

If you have a safety concern, please contact the University of Pittsburgh Police, 412-624-2121. Other reporting information is available here: <http://www.titleix.pitt.edu/report-0>

**Course Calendar** (again, these dates and assignments are subject to change)

***Week 1***

**Thursday, Aug. 20|**

Introductions and conceptual overview

***Week 2***

**Contemporary Connection Response Paper #1 Due**

**Tuesday, Aug. 25 | Feminist and Black Feminist Theories of Media and Spectatorship**

To read for class:

Mulvey – “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”

hooks, “Introduction” and “Eating the Other” in *Black Looks*

**Thursday, Aug. 27 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 3***

**Tuesday, Sept. 1 | Early 20th Century Popular Culture – Blues and The Culture Industry**

To read for class:

Davis, “I Used to be Your Sweet Mama” and “Preaching the Blues”

Listen to:

Ma Rainey, “Prove it on Me Blues,” “Blame it on the Blues,” “Shave Em Dry Blues,” “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom,” “Ma and Pa Poorhouse Blues,” and “Sissy Blues” [you may listen to more songs of Ma Rainey’s, as well]

**Thursday, Sept. 3 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 4***

**Contemporary Connection Response Paper #2 Due**

**Tuesday, Sept. 8 | Using Popular Culture as a Strategy – The Politics and Possibilities of Television**

To watch for class:

[Colin Kaepernick Kneeling Timeline](https://www.sportingnews.com/us/nfl/news/colin-kaepernick-kneeling-protests-timeline/xktu6ka4diva1s5jxaylrcsse)

To read for class:

Muñoz, “Pedro Zamora’s *Real World*”

**Thursday, Sept. 10 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 5***

**Tuesday, Sept. 15| Gendering Race, Erasing Gender in Women’s Sports**

To watch for class:

[Caster Semenya Wins Women's 800m](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anqBSY1qHSk)

[Serena Williams vs. Maria Sharapova 2016](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXg1zF5CLwM)

[Serena Williams vs. Maria Sharapove 2019 HIGHLIGHTS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRuQluHpjCQ)

To read for class:

Pastor, “Unwarranted and Invasive Scrutiny: Caster Semenya…”

Desmond-Harris, “Serena Williams is Constantly the Target…”

**Thursday, Sept. 17 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 6***

**Tuesday, Sept. 22| Interrogating Whiteness**

To watch for class:

*Spring Breakers* (dir. Korine, 2012)

To read for class:

Mattes – “Imagining Excess…”

Chidester – “May the Circle Stay Unbroken…”

**Thursday, Sept. 24 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 7***

**Tuesday, Sept. 29 | Vogueing, Race, Gender, Sex, and Trans Women of Color**

To watch for class:

*Pose*, episode 1 (dir. Murphy 2018)

*Paris is Burning* (dir. Livingston 1991)

To read for class:

Butler, “Gender is Burning”

Freccero, “Identity Politics and Postcoloniality”

**Thursday, Oct. 1 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 8***

**Contemporary Connection Response Paper #3 Due**

**Tuesday, Oct. 6 | Disco and the Queer Dance Floor**

Listen to:

Donna Summer, *Bad Girls* (whole album)

Sylvester, “You Make Me Feel (mighty real)”

To read for class:

Cochrane, “Music Sermon: Disco's Revenge - How Disco Demolition Night Sparked Evolution In Black Music”

Román, “Dance Liberation”

**Thursday, Oct. 8 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 9***

**Tuesday, Oct. 13 | MIDTERM EXAM**

**Thursday, Oct. 15 | No Discussions due**

***Week 10***

**Tuesday, Oct. 20 | Searching for Sex: Racial Politics of Dating Technology**

Conner, “The Gay Gayze…”

Robnett and Feliciano, “Patterns of Racial-Ethnic Exclusion by Internet Daters

**Thursday, Oct. 22 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 11***

**Contemporary Connection Response Paper #4 Due**

**Tuesday, Oct. 27 | “Excessive” Bodies in Pop Culture**

To watch:

Grace Jones, “One Man Show”

Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion, “WAP”

Lil’ Kim, “How Many Licks?”

To read for class:

Royster, excerpt from *Sounding Like A No-No*

Fleetwood, “Excess Flesh: Black Women Performing Hypervisibility”

**Thursday, Oct. 29 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 12***

**Tuesday, Nov. 3 | Body, Body, Body – Extreme Fitness and Femininity**

To Watch:

“Pumping Iron 2: The Women”

To Read for Class:

Schippert, “Can Muscles Be Queer?”

**Thursday, Nov. 5 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 13***

**Contemporary Connection Response Paper #5 Due**

**Tuesday, Nov. 10 | Who Runs the World? A Week of Knowles**

To watch for class:

Beyonce’s *Homecoming*

Solange’s 2017 performance on Jimmy Fallon

Solange, “Cranes in the Sky” music video

Listen to:

Solange, *A Seat at the Table*

To read for class:

Gammage, “Pop Culture without Culture…”

Hobson, “Celebrity Feminism…”

**Thursday, Nov. 12 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

***Week 14***

**Contemporary Connection Response Paper #6 Due**

**Tuesday, Nov. 17 | Contemporary Black Male Sexuality and Representation**

To watch for class:

*Moonlight*, (dir. Jenkins 2016)

Le1f, “Wut”

Lil Nas X, “Old Town Road”

To read for class:

Hall, “What is this ‘Black’…?”

**Thursday, Nov. 19 | Discussion Board Posts Due By 12:20pm**

**Nov. 21 | Reading Day**

**Dec. 1 | FINAL EXAM DUE**