

COURSE OUTLINE

WMST-270

Women and Film

3 Semester Hours

Fine Arts and Humanities Core Course

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Description

An interdisciplinary study of women in film, this course will review a wide variety of movies written and/or directed by women, featuring women, and dealing with women's issues. This course draws on the arts, media, and popular culture in examining the impact of gender expectations on shaping societal roles. Prerequisite: Eligible to enroll in ENGL-121. (3 hours weekly) NOTE: Also listed as FILM-270.

Statement on General Education and Liberal Learning

A liberal education prepares students to lead ethical, productive, and creative lives and to understand how the pursuit of lifelong learning and critical thinking fosters good citizenship. General education courses form the core of a liberal education within the higher education curriculum and provide a coherent intellectual experience for all students by introducing the fundamental concepts and methods of inquiry in the areas of mathematics, the physical and natural sciences, the social sciences, the arts and the humanities, and composition. This course is part of the general education core experience at Howard Community College.

Overall Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explore the power of gender constructs, as they appear in the options/limitations female film characters face.
2. Analyze whether a film portrays female characters as agents in their own lives – able to act on their own behalf and craft their own destiny – or whether female characters are portrayed as passive recipients of dramatic action.
3. Evaluate whether a film presents woman-as-subject or woman-as-object. The former is a unique, multifaceted person with virtues and vices. The latter is a stereotype – someone's conclusion about what women are or should be.
4. Analyze the range and diversity of roles available to women of color in film.
5. Analyze the range and diversity of roles portraying lesbian, bisexual, transgender women in film.
6. Compare and contrast depictions of women in Western [U.S., Canadian, European] and non-Western [Asian, Latin American, African, Pacific Island, Indigenous] films.
7. Explore the roles available to female characters during a range of historical time periods in U.S. History.
8. Analyze the power of the female director to broaden and deepen the portrayal of female characters in film.
9. Explore several female film directors in the role of auteur.
10. Analyze the power of female film characters to expand or contract imaginative possibilities for young female film viewers.

Major Topics

- I. Social construction of gender in film.
- II. Patriarchy and sexism in film.
- III. Marriage contexts; how marriage is portrayed as an institution in film.
- IV. Political and economic contexts with women as central characters in film.
- V. Women of color in film.
- VI. Feminism in film.
- VII. Violence against women in film.
- VIII. Creation stories involving women in film.
- IX. Worldviews specific to women portrayed in film.
- X. Feminine clichés depicted in film.
- XI. Women artists and image makers: female directors.
- XII. Women as agents of their own destiny portrayed in film.

Course Requirements

Grading/Exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member.

Other Course Information

This course is a Fine Arts and Humanities Core Course, and an Arts and Sciences, Fine Arts and Humanities Elective.