This class will take place entirely online, but synchronously in real time. Students must be virtually present in order to participate meaningfully in discussions.

Women & the Media is a collaborative seminar designed to examine the complex relationship (or different, contradictory relationships) between those humans we call “women” and those forms of discourse we call “media.” We will consider women both as subjects and objects, as artists and models, as creators of “media” in its many forms and as media’s creations. What does our culture’s “media” tell us about its ideas of gender? What, if anything, does our gender tell us about our readings of “media”? Student participation in this seminar is key: students are expected to attend all sessions, to complete all the reading (there's lots of reading!), to participate actively in discussion, and to lead one of the class sessions themselves. Leading a class means opening the day’s conversation with a presentation, critiquing and elaborating on the assigned reading, bringing in additional relevant material, and suggesting questions or issues that seem particularly interesting or troublesome. The purpose of the course is to develop our critical and self-critical faculties as journalists, media critics, consumers of media, and women or men—to think clearly, challenge our pet assumptions, and have fun.

Along with attendance and informed class participation, students are required to conduct a mini-research project and present their findings to the class. I want you to pick a “women and media” topic that really interests you and then report the hell out of it. If you’re interested in the portrayal of teen sex on TV, for instance, you would first put together an extensive bibliography of what has already been written on the subject. You would figure out what the key questions in the field were: have these portrayals changed over the last few decades? Do these representations reflect—or lead—changes in the wider society? You might interview some of the leading researchers in the area and tell us what they say. You’ll certainly want to read the most important books/articles on your subject. A paper is not required; instead, students will present their findings to the class during our last three sessions.

Required Reading
Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media*
Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*
Helen Benedict, *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes*

Additional readings will be posted on NYU Classes.

**Syllabus**

9/3  
Introduction to the course.

9/10  
Women consuming culture. Read: *Where the Girls Are* (entire, except the Epilogue). Listen to music and watch TV!

9/17  

9/24  

Thinking about rape. Read: Virgin or Vamp (entire), and Katha Pollitt, “Naming and Blaming: Media Goes Wilding in Palm Beach”; Soraya Chemaly, “Facts About Rape”; Julianne Ross, “If We Gave Men the Same Rape Advice We Give Women, Here’s How Absurd It Would Sound”; Emily Yoffe, “College Women: Stop Getting Drunk”; Charles Clymer, “Emily Yoffe Joins ‘Don’t Drink and Vagina’ Campaign”; “Just Bad Sex? A Collection of Links”; and Jia Tolentino, “Is There a Smarter Way to Think About Sexual Assault on Campus?” (all in Rape/Sex Crimes folder).


BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE.

10/22
Case study: pop culture. Read: Tania Modleski, Loving with a Vengeance and “Three Men and Baby M” (all in Pop Culture folder).

10/29

11/5

11/12

11/19
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

11/26
NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

12/3
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

12/10
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Learning Objectives

In this course, students will:

- Demonstrate critical thinking, independence, and creativity appropriate to the role of journalism in a democratic society
- Interview subjects, conduct research, and evaluate information
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diverse perspectives
Use technological tools and apply quantitative concepts as appropriate

A Word About Grading

This class is a seminar, which means that student engagement is key. Your grade will be based on participation in our discussions, your reading presentation, and of course your final research project. This grading rubric is not applied rigidly and there is room for flexibility, but in general, your final grade will be calculated roughly as follows: discussion and participation, 25%; reading presentation, 25%; and final research project/presentation, 50%.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities that necessitate accommodations should contact and register with New York University’s Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at 212-998-4980 or mosecsd@nyu.edu. Information about the Moses Center can be found at www.nyu.edu/csd. The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

Diversity & Inclusion

The Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. The Institute embraces a notion of intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions.