

COURSE DESCRIPTION FALL 2019 Gwendolyn Audrey Foster

ENGL 413/ 813 "Women Filmmakers"

Time	Day	Sec	Faculty	Room
0130-0440p	W	001	Foster, G	RVB 123

NOTE: Special fee - \$30.

Fulfills ACE 7 Requirements.

Aim: Women directors have made considerable contributions to the art of filmmaking in all periods of cinema history, especially in the early days of film when there were many, many female directors. The history of women in early cinema has been neglected until fairly recently. We study the history of women film directors from the silent era to the present. One of the most interesting aspects of the class is discovering how film history in being actively rewritten to include the work of women and minority film directors.

This is an exciting class in which we study the history of women as film directors and utilize feminist approaches to their work. The range of directors we study is international and diverse including directors such as Alice Guy Blaché, Dorothy Arzner, Lois Weber, Maya Deren, Ida Lupino, Claire Denis, Lucrecia Martel, Agnes Varda, Ava DuVernay, Dee Rees, Jennifer Kent and many others. The course covers an international spectrum of women filmmakers; therefore we discuss nationality, race, class, sexuality, especially as these issues relate to the revision of film history and film reception. This is an exciting and unique class that covers rare films by neglected and forgotten women in film history, as well as the films of celebrated and contemporary women directors.

Teaching Method: Classes typically include a brief opening lecture, a film screening (with running analytical commentary during the film), and a class discussion after the film. We also discuss the reading materials after we view the film. We do a significant amount of reading and writing about women in film history, analysis of films, biographical material, and interviews with women directors. Developing analytical writing skills as a writer and class participant is central.

Requirements: Three research papers, weekly reading assignments, and class discussion. Students will study many different types of films directed by women, from early silent films to documentaries, and from art-house films to mainstream cinema.

Tentative Reading List: Anthony Slide, The Silent Feminists; and Karen Ward Mahar, Women Filmmakers in Early Hollywood. Additional online weekly readings, including interviews, feminist theory, film analysis, etc.