docc 2016

Gender & Sexuality in Media and Popular Culture: Dialogues in Feminism & Technology
WGSS 380/AMST 404/ANTH 302/FILM 324

Seminar: Tuesdays 2:30-4:20pm, LC 212
Lab: Tuesdays 6:30-8pm DH Lab, Sterling Library 3rd Floor

Professor Laura Wexler (laura.wexler@yale.edu) - Office hours: Tuesdays 5-6pm WLH 318
Professor T.L. Cowan (t.l.cowan@yale.edu) - Office hours: Mondays 1-2pm WLH 314
Trip Kirkpatrick, Lab Instructor (trip.kirkpatrick@yale.edu)

course description

This course is a cross-disciplinary seminar taught at Yale as part of a Distributed Open
Collaborative Course (DOCC), a project developed by an international network of institutions
and scholars called FemTechNet. The FemTechNet DOCC focuses on intersections among
feminisms, media arts, science/technology studies, and human-computer interactions.

This course is designed to focus your attention on gender and sexuality as it is increasingly
mediated in digital space. We will discuss key readings in cultural studies, a field that has
pioneered the study of new and old media, and has drawn our attention to the vital analytical field
that centers the culture of ordinary people rather than singularly the culture of elites. We take
popular culture seriously as an important way in which subjectivity, meaning, and identities are
formed and continue to be produced. We will come to a robust understanding of how theories of
media can be understood and reframed in relation to intersectional and transnational analyses of
gender, race and sexuality.

This DOCC will use technology for collaborative creation and peer-to-peer sharing, both within
our classroom/lab, and in the broader network of which our class is just one node. The course that
you will share with students taking similar classes in other colleges and universities. Through
readings, discussions, writing, and making, we will add to a growing and global database of
materials relating feminist technologies to economies, identities, infrastructures, and movements.

Students will have the opportunity to submit their work from the DOCC to be published in
FemTechNet's *signal/noise: collected student works from a feminist docc*, a peer-reviewed online
publication (http://femtechnet.org/publications/signalnoise-collected-student-works-from-a-
feminist-docc/).

course goals

To combine theory with practice; to understand what the medium of the internet and its
technologies can do for the study of popular culture and to ascertain (some of) its limits. To focus
upon self-reflection, multidirectional collaboration and to attend to the values and diverse
expertise distributed throughout our class and among our networks. To the extent possible, the
course aims to embody and enact a different way of being in the academy, through flattened
hierarchies and collaboration within and outside of established institutions. In the laboratory
sessions of this seminar, students will explore digital platforms, and build skills that will allow
them to create digital worlds.

assignments and evaluation

Introductory exercise: **Digital Media Autoethnography – 5%**
- ❖ **Due Sunday, September 11th**
- ❖ For one day, pay conscious and close attention to the way digital media are shaping your life. One day this week, (ie. a 24 hour period) make notes and take pictures or screenshots: What ways of seeing, hearing, moving your body ave become intuitive and natural to you because of the ways you use digital devices? Are your movements through the world at the mercy of Google Maps? Do you see the world through a Pokémon GO, Instagram, Tumblr, Tinder, or Grindr lens? Do you encounter different digital experiences through work, family, or friends?
- ❖ As you go about your day, think about how racialized and gendered structures are embedded in the technology we use every day, and how you are shaped by these structures.
- ❖ Now, bearing in mind everything you've attended to over the past day, write a response to the following question:

- ❖ ***How do race, gender, and/or queerness shape your digital practices?***
- ❖ This is not a thesis-driven paper. Rather, this is an opportunity to think things through as you write, to make an inventory of your own entanglements with digital media and how you interact with these media and with other humans through digital infrastructures and interfaces. (Though we still expect you to proofread and to include citations for any readings you choose to quote!)
- ❖ We are not asking you to write about your own race, gender and sexual identities in particular, though you are more than welcome to refer to them. Instead, try to notice when race and gender, and sexuality inflect what you do
- ❖ Your autoethnography might be written as several different entries: like a field log, journal or annotated inventory. Please conclude with a paragraph that communicates provisional analysis of your notes.
- ❖ Remember to include your first and last name at the top of Page 1.
- ❖ 1000 words max. Email your autoethnography to the three course instructors: Laura Wexler laura.wexler@yale.edu; T.L Cowan t.l.cowan@yale.edu and Trip Kirkpatrick trip.kirkpatrick@yale.edu .
- ❖ We will refer back to this Autoethnography throughout the course.

Behind the Screen: 10 %
- ❖ **Due Week 5**

Students will work in pairs or groups of 3 to go "behind the screen" of a digital social media platform, game, software, etc, and make a presentation to the class about the Terms of Use, privacy settings, and genealogy of popular social media site, community protocols, user profiles, and so on, of Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Pokémon GO, Twitter, Tumblr, Wikipedia or another site that you work with on a regular basis.

Online Risk Management Self-Inventory 5%
- ❖ **Due Week 5**

Using the tools available from the Center for Solutions to Online Violence (CSOV), students will do a self-assessment of their own digital identities and security.

Digital Street Project - 60%
- ❖ **Due Weeks 12 & 13**
- ❖ 10% Proposal; 10% Presentation; 40% Project, both 3-D and digital

This project may be done individually or in teams of two or three. The project will require you to use skills that you learn in our Lab and to mobilize theories that we discuss in class to engage in a project of speculative computing. You will create a world: both a 3-D and a digital representation of a street in a time and place other than now and other than here. Topics will be discussed with and approved by the instructors. Building upon work in the lab as well as in various archives, the project must reflect a clear and critical understanding of theories of popular culture as well as feminist science and technology studies. The project will be done in stages and will be the major project for the course. Each stage of the project will be presented to the seminar along with a discussion of progress and goals achieved or not. The research project grade will be broken down into: 1) Research + Design Proposal, 2) Presentation, 3) Project: 3-D and digital. Throughout the semester we will see your project at different stages, and you will benefit from peer responses and suggestions.

Class Participation 20%
Punctual (and faithful) attendance in both seminar and lab, as well as active participation in our class' activities, are requirements for both your individual and our collective success in this course. Be present! Be engaged! Your participation in discussions, skills-building, collective experimentation (like Wikipedia editing, Situated Knowledges Mapping, talking with students in other DOCCs, or producing + critiquing keyword videos) and in reading and completing homework assignments all count toward this dimension of your grade. Anything beyond one unexcused absence must be explained (or forewarned) in writing and for good reason. We need you here!

> To ensure robust discussion, each class please come prepared to:
> - ❖ explain at least one thing you feel that you understood from the readings, and
> - ❖ pose at least one generative question to the class about something that you didn't understand or want to talk about more.
> Each meeting we will take turns pitching these questions and collaboratively building answers as a class.

course policies
*Academic Integrity: If you have any questions about what might constitute plagiarism, please don't hesitate to ask. A shorthand definition is this: the submission of written work that either is (or contains samples of) work that is not your own and lacks recognizable citations. If, in the course of your writing, you use the words or ideas or images of another writer, proper acknowledgement must be given. Not to do so is to commit plagiarism. If you are not absolutely clear about what constitutes plagiarism and how to cite sources appropriately, now is the time to learn. Even if you are clear, it's good to review. Scholarship is a collaborative process. We want you to learn and share and borrow from others—essential to the process is to acknowledge when you have. One resource for you is Yale's statement on academic honesty: http://yalecollege.yale.edu/new-students/class-2018/academic-information/intro-undergrad-education/academic-honesty .

*Attendance: You must submit a Dean's Excuse to secure an excused absence or authorization to submit late work. If you find you must miss class, contact us as soon as possible. Students missing more than one class and one lab session, or who regularly arrive late or leave early will not pass the class unless alternative arrangements have been made. Incompletes will not be granted, except in extraordinary circumstances. Students are responsible for any material missed due to absence from class. If any course assignments are difficult to fulfill because of conflicts with days of observance, please let us know to make alternative arrangements.

*Classroom Community: In our work together we will take on challenging questions about gender, sex, and sexuality, and we will endeavor to discuss these issues in a candid manner. In this community of thinkers demonstrating your maturity will be paramount, as will an agreement to respect our classroom as a space for free expression, respectful challenge, and productive critique. As we attempt to work and speak across our differences, we ask that you contribute your ideas respectfully and in a mode that seeks to advance our conversations. As you participate, you should think not only about your own contributions, but also about the overall group dynamic: who is speaking more, who less? How might you contribute to an atmosphere that enables everyone to participate meaningfully?

*Technology: Silence your mobile phones before entering our classroom. Laptops and tablets are permitted, but **only** for purposes that advance rather than obstruct our collective goals. Non-course-related email, IM-ing, social networking, etc. are not acceptable uses of technology in our classroom. Prepare to have your final evaluation suffer should these be the uses to which you put your tech devices. P.S. We can tell when you are texting!

resources
*Communication: Please feel free to send us questions via email; we will attempt to respond to all electronic communication sent Monday-Thursday within 24 hours. Do be mindful of appropriate standards for professional communication (modes of address, formal writing conventions, etc.) when you drop a line. You don't have to have an earth-shaking reason to communicate with us—in fact, we welcome feedback on how our class is going or conversations about topics that we haven't had time to address during class.

*Accessibility: Yale College's Resource Office on Disabilities facilitates accommodations for students with documented disabilities. You can find more information on their services here: http://yalecollege.yale.edu/student-services/resource-office-disabilities/student-information Beyond that office's specific interventions, we are committed to principles of universal learning, meaning that we strive to make our seminar experience as inclusive as possible. Please talk to us about your individual learning needs and about how this course can best accommodate them, as early in the semester as you are aware of them.

*Writing Assistance: You have a variety of resources available to you to support you in your writing, including your peers/colleagues, your residential college's Writing Tutor, and the Writing Partners at the Yale College Writing Center (35 Broadway). Use these resources!

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gender, sexuality, media & popular culture - course outline

We will prioritize (and perhaps change) the readings listed here—this syllabus is a working document!
Please check the course website for weekly updates & reading files.
Readings for each session should be read prior to meeting that week.

Week 1
Introduction to the Course
Manifesto: "We Are FemTechNet"

Background Reading:
FAQs on FemTechNet: http://femtechnet.newschool.edu/the-network/femtechnet-faq/

 Losh, Elizabeth, Jacqueline Wernimont, Laura Wexler & Hong-An Wu. "Putting the Human
        Back Into the Digital Humanities: Feminism, Generosity, Mess." *Debates in Digital
        Humanities: The Expanded Field.* Eds. Lauren F. Klein & Matthew K. Gold. U of
        Minnesota P, 2016. http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/61

<u>**Digital Media Autoethnography – Due Sunday, Sept. 4th by 5pm.**</u>

Week 2
Theories of Popular Culture
Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass
Deception"
Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"
Guy Debord, "The Commodity as Spectacle"
Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding"
Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House."

Week 3
Objects and Agents
Langdon Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Politics?"
Inderpal Grewal, "Traveling Barbie: Indian Transnationalities and the Global Consumer"
Michel de Certeau, "Introduction: *The Practice of Everday Life*."
Sara Ahmed. "Happy Objects," in *The Promise of Happiness.* Duke University Press, 2010.
Jennifer Terry. "Loving Objects." *Trans-Humanities* (2010): 33-75.
Selection from "Postposttranssexual: Key Concepts for a 21st Century Transgender Studies",
        Transgender Studies Quarterly. 1:1-2 (2014).

In preparation for the Behind the Screens assignment in Week 5 read:
  ❖ Read through the materials on the Center for Solutions to Online Violence (CSOV) site
      http://femtechnet.org/csov/ ,
  ❖ Pay particular attention to The Power & Respect Wheel, Mikki Kendall's graphic novel
      Paths and the Research Ethics for Using Social Media in the Classroom.

Week 4
Theorizing #race #gender #sexuality #labor + (new) Media
Watch: FemTechNet VIDEO DIALOGUE WITH MARIA FERNANDEZ AND LISA
NAKAMURA
~~Greg Tate. "Nigs R Us, or How Blackfolk Became Fetish Objects" in~~ *~~Everything but the Burden:~~*
~~What~~
    ~~White Folks Take From Black Culture.~~ ~~2003.~~
bell hooks, "Eating the Other" in *Black Looks: Race and Representation.* South End Press
    Boston, 1992.

Erin Maher, "Men are from Reddit, Women are from Tumblr"
Anne Balsamo: "Gendering the Technological Imagination," in *Designing Culture: The Work of the*
    Technological Imagination
T.L. Cowan & Jasmine Rault. "The Labour of Being Studied."

Further readings on Race as Technology
- ❖ Wendy Chun, "Race and/as Technology, or How to Do Things to Race"
- ❖ Tara McPherson, "Why Are the Digital Humanities So White? or Thinking the Histories of Race and Computation"
- ❖ Lisa Nakamura, "Cyber-race," *PMLA: Proceedings of the Modern Language Association,* Special issue on Comparative Racialization, 2008.

Week 5
Behind the Screen Presentations
- ❖ **How is your favorite social media platform structured, and how do these structures shape how they are used?**

Online Risk Management - due
- ❖ **Using the resources available from the CSOV, build your own inventory and assessment**

Week 6
WikiStorming
Watch: FemTechNet VIDEO DIALOGUE -- WIKIPEDIA STORMING WITH ADRIENNE WADEWITZ
Valerie L. Thomas: "Black Women Engineers and Technologists" in *A Hammer in Their Hands*, edited
    by Carroll W. Pursell
Adrianne Wadewitz,"How to Use Wikipedia as a Teaching Tool"
Adrianne Wadewitz, "Wikipedia's gender gap and the complicated reality of systemic gender bias,"
    July 26, 2013.

Digital Street Project Step One: Street choice, issues due before lab.

Week 7
Gaming

Reading 1. Consalvo, M. (2012). Confronting Toxic Gamer Culture: A Challenge for Feminist
    Game Studies Scholars. *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology,* No. 1.
    http://adanewmedia.org/2012/11/issue1-consalvo/
Reading 2. Lisa Nakamura, "Queer Female of Color: The Highest Difficulty Setting There Is?
    Gaming Rhetoric as Gender Capital," *Ada: a Journal of Gender, New Media, and
    Technology*, No. 1. 2012 http://adanewmedia.org/2012/11/issue1-nakamura/
Reading 3. Anita Sarkeesian. "Television Interview about Harassment in Gaming." *Feminist
    Frequency*. November 3, 2012.
        http://www.feministfrequency.com/2012/11/television-interview-about-
    harassment-in-gaming/

Reading 4. Todd VanderWeff. "#GamerGate: Here's Why Everybody in the Video Game World Is Fighting." *Vox*. 14 Sept. 2014. http://www.vox.com/2014/9/6/6111065/gamergate-explained-everybody-fighting

Reading 5. Zoe Quinn. "5 Things I Learned as The Internet's Most Hated Person." *Cracked*. September 16, 2014.

Reading 6. Laurie Penny, "I'm with the Banned." Jul 21 2016. https://medium.com/welcome-to-the-scream-room/im-with-the-banned-8d1b6e0b2932#.1md3ll7pe

Reading 7. Merritt Kopas, "Trans Women & the New Hypertext. *Lambda Literary. 2014.* *http://www.lambdaliterary.org/features/07/08/trans-women-the-new-hypertext/*

Angelique Harris and Jonathan Wynn. "Pokémoning While Black."
http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2016/08/pok%C3%A9moning-while-black.html

Digital Street Project Step Two: Rough design proposal and media due before lab

Week 8
Mapping
Readings TBA
This week students will participate in and contribute to FemTechNet's Situated Knowledges Map

- **Graham Huggan** – **Decolonizing the map** ariel.ucalgary.ca/ariel/index.php/ariel/article/download/2242/2196 **(link automatically downloads PDF)**
- **Donna Haraway** (1988). "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. **http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~ewa/Haraway,%20Situated%20Knowledges.pdf**
- **Patricia Hill Collins** (1990). selection from *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* **http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/252.html** (This is freely accessible, but there are some typos.)
- **Adrienne Rich,** "Note Towards a Politics of Location." In *Blood Bread and Poetry: Selected Prose, 1979-1985*. New York: W.W. Norton. (1986): 210–32. Here is a online version –**http://www.medmedia.it/review/numero2/en/art3.htm**
- **Adrienne Rich,** "Towards a Women-Centered University." *On Lies, Secrets and Silence: Selected Prose, 1966-1978.* New York: Norton, 1979. (Short excerpt here:**http://feministlit.pbworks.com/w/page/8649395/Toward%20A%20Woman%20Centered%20University**)
- **Doreen Massey – "Space, Place, and Gender"**
- Section: **http://www.unc.edu/courses/2006spring/geog/021/001/massey.pdf**
- Whole book: **http://selforganizedseminar.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/massey_space_place_gender.pdf**

Related projects:

- **Photogrammar** (photogrammar.yale.edu/) and see article in *The Atlantic*: **http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/08/seeing-the-great-depression/379238/**
- The Mapping Journey Project, Bourchra Khalili http://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1627
- **FemTechNet Situated Knowledges Map :** https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1_pJZfgABhxso6M3UiCEdvVNzE48
- Toronto Kiss Map: http://torontokissmap.com/

Additional readings:
- David Meek – **Critical Cartography as Transformational Learning** (antipodefoundation.org/2012/10/11/critical-cartography-as-transformational-learning/)
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Week 9
Disability and Differential Politics
DUE: Digital Street Project Step Three: Refined design proposal and media due before lab

Week 9
Disability and Differential Politics
1. Christina Crosby, selection from *A Body Undone: Living on After Great Pain* (pdf)
* Please Plan to Attend Christina Crosby's events @Yale this week 5pm Wed. Nov 2, WLH 309
2. Subini Ancy Annamma, David Connor, & Beth Ferri. (2013). Dis/ability critical race studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the intersections of race and dis/ability. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 16*(1), 1-31. (pdf)
3. Petra Kuppers, "The Wheelchair's Rhetoric: The Performance of Disability" (pdf)

Additional Readings:
4. Amade M'charek. (2010). Fragile differences, relational effects: Stories about the materiality of race and sex. *European Journal of Women's Studies, 17*(4), 307-322. (pdf)
5. Catharina Landström, "Queering Feminist Technology Studies" *Feminist Theory.* 2007. (pdf)

In-class screening:
Laurence Parent – Wheeling NYC Video Blog: It's Not On TheMap https://vimeo.com/109374126
KingCRIP productions - G.I.M.P. Bootcamp https://vimeo.com/58160733

Suggested Viewing: FemTechNet VIDEO DIALOGUE -- **DIFFERENCE: WITH SHU LEA CHANG AND KIM SAWCHUK https://vimeo.com/76909765**

Week 10 – Nov 8
Mediation-Entanglement
Watch: FemTechNet **VIDEO DIALOGUE MACHINES: WITH WENDY CHUN AND KELLY DOBSON**
Wendy Chun, "On Sorcery and Source Codes"
Jodi Dean, "Affective Networks." *Media Tropes* II, no. 2 (2010): 19-44
Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward An Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter." *Signs* (2003): 801-831.
Laura Wexler, "More Pregnant Pictures." *Photography & Culture.* 4.3 (November 2011): 309–320
DOI: 10.2752/175145211X13068409556763

Week 11
Journalism and Ethics in an Age of Social Media – Thinking about an Ethics of Care & Accountability
Class visit with Eunsong Kim and Gabrielle Bellot
Readings TBA

Week 12
Digital Street Project Presentations

Week 13
Digital Street Project Presentations