

Course title: Gender, Power and Violence

Language of instruction: English

Professor: Anna Petrus Pons

Professor's contact and office hours: anamaria.petrus@upf.edu

Office hours will be confirmed the first week of the course

Course contact hours: 45

Recommended credit: 6 ECTS credits

Course prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course

Language requirements:

Recommended level in the European Framework B2 (or equivalent : Cambridge Certificate if the teaching language is English, DELE or 3 semesters in the case of Spanish).

Course focus and approach:

The course explores the relationships between gender, power, and violence through cinema and audiovisual media from the theoretical perspective of Feminist Film Studies and the practical approach of creation.

Course description:

How is the representation of gender-based violence (GBV) on screen connected to both the public and private spheres? To what extent do audiovisual creators bear responsibility for reinforcing or challenging these connections? Can gender inequality be reimaged by creating an audiovisual space where new gender dynamics exist beyond the frameworks of power and violence?

The #MeToo era has broadened the scope of GBV representation on screen. Today, film and television increasingly offer audiovisual narratives that explore the complexity of GBV from an intersectional perspective, shedding light on the various forms of violence embedded in power structures. At the same time, these narratives aim to center victims' experiences while avoiding stereotypes and re-victimization, amplifying their voices in a way that fosters understanding and awareness.

This course examines GBV representations in film and television, tracing a spectrum from unconscious and homogeneous portrayals shaped by patriarchal perspectives to more conscious and nuanced depictions informed by feminist viewpoints. Additionally, the course provides a creative space for students to critically engage with audiovisual language, exploring its potential to redefine and reimagine gender relationships.

Learning objectives:

At the end of the course, students:

- Will be able to understand how gender-based violence (GBV) has historically been portrayed on screen from a patriarchal perspective.
- Will be able to identify biases in the representations of GBV in film and television.
- Will be able to understand the complexity of GBV portrayals on screen from a feminist and intersectional perspective (gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity, class, etc.).
- Will be able to apply key concepts related to GBV in the audiovisual creation process.

Course workload:

Students should be prepared to read between 50 to 100 pages per week.

Teaching methodology:

The course includes lectures, seminars, screenings, and a creative workshop. Given the nature of the topic, the course will encourage students to develop their critical thinking skills by exploring key theoretical, moral, and practical debates that influence the representation of GBV on screen. Additionally, students will be trained to approach creative processes from a genre and intersectional perspective, focusing on the affirmative potential of non-violence. The success of the course relies on the level and quality of students' participation. Enrolled students are expected to complete the assigned readings before classes. All readings and course materials will be available on the course website (Aula Global).

Assessment criteria:

Class participation: 15%

Reading response: 20%

Mid - Term Essay: 30%

Final Creative Project: 35%

BaPIS absence policy:

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. Missing classes will impact on the student's final grade as follows:

Absences	Penalization
Up to two (2) absences	No penalization
Three (3) absences	1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Four (4) absences	2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Five (5) absences or more	The student receives an INCOMPLETE ("NO PRESENTADO") for the course

The BaPIS attendance policy does not make a distinction between justified and unjustified absences. All absences—whether due to common short-term illnesses or personal reasons—are counted toward the total amount and cannot be excused. Therefore, students are responsible for managing all their absences.

Only in cases of longer absences—such as hospitalization, prolonged illness, traumatic events, or other exceptional situations—will absences be considered for exceptions with appropriate documentation. The Academic Director will review these cases on an individual basis.

Students must inform the Instructor and the International Programs Office promptly via email if serious circumstances arise.

Attendance Policy and Religious Observances:

In line with the UPF Code of Ethics and the principles of equality and non-discrimination, our attendance policy considers the accommodation of students' needs for religious reasons or specific religious festivities.

Students may self-manage their attendance and miss some sessions without penalty, as outlined in each syllabus. However, if a student anticipates that their religious obligations may significantly affect their participation in a course, and the standard policy does not fully accommodate their situation, they must inform the course professor **at the beginning of the term** to discuss suitable alternatives. **It is the student's responsibility to communicate these needs at the start of the term.** The Academic Director is also available to support both students and professors in finding a workable solution that ensures the student can meet the course objectives.

Classroom norms:

- No food or drink is permitted in class.
- Students will have a ten-minute break after one- hour session.

Weekly schedule:

WEEK 1. Introduction. The *male gaze*

Course description. Syllabus, assessment and readings

Gender power relations and patriarchy in classical cinema: the *male gaze*.
Feminist and intersectional perspectives on gender-based violence.

Reading assignment:

- De Lauretis, T. (1987). *Technologies of gender: Essays on theory, film, and fiction*. Indiana University Press

- Johnston, C. (1999). *Women's cinema as counter-cinema*. Feminist film theory: A reader, 39.
- Mulvey, L. (1989). *Visual pleasure and narrative cinema*. In Visual and other pleasures (pp. 14-26). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

WEEK 2. Domestic Violence. The politics of the housewife

The public nature of private violence.

Normalization of private violence on the screen.

Transgressor female characters. Guilt and punishment.

Reading assignment:

- Friedan, B. (2013). *The feminine mystique*. WW Norton & Company
- Hanisch, C. (1970). *The personal is political*. Notes from the second year: Women's liberation, 76, 78.

WEEK 3. Sexism and Misogyny in Film

Subtle violence. Representation and legitimation.

Reviewing film history masterpieces.

Reading assignment:

- Murat, L. (2017). *Blow Up, revu et inacceptable*. Libération, 12.
- Zecchi, B. (2007). *Estrategias de elisión, inscripcióón y desexuación en la representación cinematográfica de la violencia contra la mujer*. Hispanismo y cine.-(La casa de la riqueza. Estudios de cultura de España; 11), 311-335.

WEEK 4. Rape Culture in Film

Representations of sexual violence on the screen.

The lack of the victim point of view.

Stereotypes and re-victimization. The role of the camera.

Reading assignment:

- Brownmiller, S. (1977). *Against our will: men, women, and rape* (reprint 1977). Penguin Books
- Horeck, T. (2013). *Public rape: Representing violation in fiction and film*. Routledge.
- Modleski, T. (2016). *The Women who knew too much: Hitchcock and feminist theory* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Projansky, S. (2001). *Watching rape: Film and television in postfeminist culture*. New York University Press.

WEEK 5. The limits of sexual consent

Sexual violence and the victim point of view.

Representations of sexual consent on the screen.

Reading assignment:

- Benson-Allott, C. (2020). *How I may destroy you reinvents rape television*. Film Quarterly, 74(2), 100-105

- Durham, M. G. (2021). *MeToo: The impact of rape culture in the media*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Vidu, A., & Tomás Martínez, G. (2019). *The affirmative “yes”. Sexual offense based on consent*. *Masc. Soc. Chang*, 8, 91-112.

WEEK 6. Rethinking and reimagining gender relationships

Building up new gender relationships through audiovisual creation.
Remaking: a chance to reimagine power and violence on the screen.

Presentation of Creative Projects.

WEEK 7. Feminist film reactions to GBV

The explosion of anger in feminist film cinema.
Male versions of female anger in mainstream cinema.

Reading assignment:

- Lorde, A. (1997). The uses of anger. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 25(1/2), 278-285.
- McHugh, K. (2021). *Prolegomenon: Anger, aesthetics, and affective witness in contemporary feminist cinema*. *Film Quarterly*, 75(1), 10-22.
- Orgad, S., & Gill, R. (2019). *Safety valves for mediated female rage in the #MeToo era*. *Feminist Media Studies*, 19(4), 596-603.

WEEK 8. New masculinities in film

The opportunity to rethink masculinity away from power and violence.

Reading assignment:

- Blanco-Herrero, D., Rodríguez-Contreras, L., & Gutiérrez-San-Miguel, B. (2021). *New forms of masculinity in Western films: The end of the Marlboro Man?*. *Communication & Society*, 1-14.
- hooks, B. (2004). *La voluntad de cambiar: hombres, masculinidades y amor*.
- Silverman, K. (2017). *Male subjectivity at the margins*. Routledge.
- Zecchi, B. (2007). *Women filming the male body: subversions, inversions and identifications*. *Studies in Hispanic Cinemas*, 3(3), 187-204

WEEK 9. The power of non-violence

Victim and abuser. The utopia of reconciliation.
Visions of resilience on the screen.

Reading assignment:

- Butler, J. (2021). *The force of nonviolence: An ethico-political bind*. Verso.
- Davis, A. Y. (2011). *Women, race, & class*. Vintage.

WEEK 10. Final presentation of projects

Reflection on the creative process and the challenges to reimagine gender relationships, power and violence.

Last revision: March 2025.

Required readings:

- Benson-Allott, C. (2020). How I may destroy you reinvents rape television. *Film Quarterly*, 74(2), 100-105
- Blanco-Herrero, D., Rodríguez-Contreras, L., & Gutiérrez-San-Miguel, B. (2021). *New forms of masculinity in Western films: The end of the Marlboro Man?*. *Communication & Society*, 1-14.
- Brownmiller, S. (1977). *Against our will: men, women, and rape* (reprint 1977). Penguin Books
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- De Lauretis, T. (1987). *Technologies of gender: Essays on theory, film, and fiction*. Indiana University Press
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- Orgad, S., & Gill, R. (2019). *Safety valves for mediated female rage in the #MeToo era*. *Feminist Media Studies*, 19(4), 596-603
- Projansky, S. (2001). *Watching rape: Film and television in postfeminist culture*. New York University Press.
- Vidu, A., & Tomás Martínez, G. (2019). *The affirmative "yes". Sexual offense based on consent*. *Masc. Soc. Chang*, 8, 91-112.
- Zecchi, B. (2007). *Estrategias de elisión, inscripcióón y desexuación en la representación cinematográfica de la violencia contra la mujer*. *Hispanismo y cine*-(La casa de la riqueza. Estudios de cultura de España; 11), 311-335.
- Zecchi, B. (2007). *Women filming the male body: subversions, inversions and identifications*. *Studies in Hispanic Cinemas*, 3(3), 187-204

Recommended bibliography:

- Archard, D. (2019). Sexual consent. Routledge.
- Benson-Allott, C. (2020). How I may destroy you reinvents rape television. Film Quarterly, 74(2), 100-105
- Blanco-Herrero, D., Rodríguez-Contreras, L., & Gutiérrez-San-Miguel, B. (2021). New forms of masculinity in Western films: The end of the Marlboro Man?. Communication & Society, 1-14.
- Bronfen, E. (2017). Over her dead body: death, femininity and the aesthetic. Manchester University Press.
- Brownmiller, S. (1977). Against our will: men, women, and rape (reprint 1977). Penguin Books
- Butler, J. (2004). Undoing gender. Psychology Press
- Butler, J. (2015). Bodies that matter. Taylor & Francis
- Butler, J. (2021). The force of nonviolence: An ethico-political bind. Verso.
- Davis, A. Y. (2011). Women, race, & class. Vintage.
- De Lauretis, T. (1987). Technologies of gender: Essays on theory, film, and fiction. Indiana University Press
- Durham, M. G. (2021). MeToo: The impact of rape culture in the media. John Wiley & Sons.
- Friedan, B. (2013). The feminine mystique. WW Norton & Company
- Hanisch, C. (1970). The personal is political. Notes from the second year: Women's liberation, 76, 78.
- Hustvedt, S. (2016). A woman looking at men looking at women: Essays on art, sex, and the mind. Simon and Schuster.
- hooks, B. (2004). La voluntad de cambiar: hombres, masculinidades y amor.
- Silverman, K. (2017). Male subjectivity at the margins. Routledge.
- Horeck, T. (2013). Public rape: Representing violation in fiction and film. Routledge
- Johnston, C. (1999). Women's cinema as counter-cinema. Feminist film theory: A reader, 39.
- Kaplan, E. A. (2010). Is the gaze male?
- Kaplan, E. A. (1997). Looking for the other: Feminism, film, and the imperial gaze. Psychology Press.
- Kuhn, A. (2013). The power of the image: Essays on representation and sexuality. Routledge.
- Lorde, A. (1997). The uses of anger. Women's Studies Quarterly, 25(1/2), 278-285.
- McHugh, K. (2021). Prolegomenon: Anger, aesthetics, and affective witness in contemporary feminist cinema. Film Quarterly, 75(1), 10-22.
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- Orgad, S., & Gill, R. (2019). Safety valves for mediated female rage in the #MeToo era. Feminist Media Studies, 19(4), 596-603
- Pateman, C. (2016). Sexual contract. The wiley blackwell encyclopedia of gender and sexuality studies, 1-3.
- Popova, M. (2019). Sexual consent. MIT Press.
- Projansky, S. (2001). Watching rape: Film and television in postfeminist culture. New York University Press.

Spallacci, A. (2019). Representing rape trauma in film: Moving beyond the event. In Arts (Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 8). Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute.

Vidu, A., & Tomás Martínez, G. (2019). The affirmative “yes”. Sexual offense based on consent. Masc. Soc. Chang, 8, 91-112.

Zecchi, B. (2007). Estrategias de elisión, inscripción y desexuación en la representación cinematográfica de la violencia contra la mujer. Hispanismo y cine.-(La casa de la riqueza. Estudios de cultura de España; 11), 311-335.

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