Course Description
An examination of films made by women, film criticism written by women, and the portrayal of women in films. These topics are considered within the context of film history and with an emphasis on their relations to ideas in contemporary feminist theory.

This course focuses on English and French language filmmaking and writing. While women’s filmmaking and writing is diverse, our course will pay particular attention to issues that have been of special interest to women. It will therefore not provide you with a complete history of women’s contributions to film (that would require much more than a semester). This course will also present key concepts in critical and feminist theory.

Course Objectives
Students will develop a rich understanding of the diverse interactions women have had with film, and will be able to analyse and discuss contemporary women’s film production and feminist film writing in light of historical developments.

Classroom Environment
Questions or concerns relative to class material and classroom environment should be first discussed with the instructor, who will make every effort to address them. Some of the audiovisual material presented contains explicit nudity or depictions of sexual acts; there is material that deals with issues of sexual violence, sexism, homosexuality, and racial stereotypes related to gender. All material has been selected to engage with the course’s focus and should therefore be considered from an analytical rather than a moral perspective. It is your responsibility to see me if you require more specific forewarnings about the content of individual films or readings.

You may use your computer to take notes, but all computers must be turned off during screenings. All cellular phones should be turned off in class.

Student Responsibilities
Attendance to all classes is mandatory. Written notification is expected if you cannot come to class due to illness or serious impediment. As the course depends on everyone’s contribution,
students who miss more than two classes will be penalized (2% per missed class deducted from final grade unless medical document is provided). Everyone is expected to arrive on time: be discrete if you are late or leave early.

Readings
The required readings are found in a course pack available at the Concordia Bookstore. Some required readings and all supplementary material are also available on reserve at the Webster Library circulation desk.

Video Media Resources (VMR) and Other Audiovisual Resources
The VMR library is located in the Hall Building (1455 de Maisonneuve West), room H-341. Easiest access: Use the McKay Street entrance, go through blue doors on the left (H-285) and go up one flight of stairs to the third floor. The VMR library provides on-line search to films and videos at the following address: http://fcms.concordia.ca/av.avv01.asp. All movies must be viewed on site.

Other audiovisual resources:
The Concordia library: http://library.concordia.ca
The Cinémathèque québécoise: http://www.cinematheque.qc.ca
The CinéRobothèque: http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/cinerobotheque

Evaluation and Assignments

1) Quizzes 15% (October 14, November 4 and December 2)
2) Reaction Papers 15% (September 30, October 5 and November 11)
3) Mid-Term Take-Home 30% (Due October 21)
4) Term Paper 40% (Due November 25)

All assignments may be submitted in French.

1) Quizzes (15%):
Three (3) quizzes will be administered throughout the term. They will consist of multiple choices questions related to the assigned readings and lectures. Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade.

2) Reaction Papers (15%):
You will be asked to write 3 reaction papers after class screenings (1-2 pages, or 250-500 words). Each is worth 5% (3 X 5% = 15%). Each paper is to be submitted on the Monday following the screening:
Reaction Paper 1: Screening: Sept. 30 = Due: Monday Oct. 3;
Reaction Paper 2: Screening: Nov. 4 = Due: Monday Nov. 7;

3) Mid-Term Take-Home (30% Due October 21):
Mid-Term questions will be distributed in class on October 14. You will be given one week to answer two of the four questions, and write two to three pages (between 500 and 750 words) for each. Mid-term will cover readings, screenings, lectures and class discussions. You will be graded on your understanding of the question, on the clarity of your answer (structure,
content, and coherence), and on the quality of your writing (spelling, grammar, syntax). Your mid-term will be evaluated according to the grid provided below (p. 10).

4) **Term Paper** (40% Due Nov. 25):
Term paper will consist in a film analysis using at least three of the class readings. Students must situate the film within a particular historical and social paradigm and integrate this context into their analysis. You will be graded on the connections you make between the readings, class material and your film analysis, as well as your demonstrated comprehension of the ideas conveyed in class and through readings. **A list of films from which you may choose from will be provided, along with supplementary guidelines, in the second week of class.**

Those aiming for a higher grade (“A” range) will also need to **assess critically the readings AND**
a) use relevant extra readings (in additional to those suggested in the syllabus)
OR
b) draw a comparison with another movie (screened in class or not).

Your paper should be written in an essay form, and should be 10-12 pages (approximately 2500 to 3000 words, excluding title page, bibliography, endnotes and illustrations). You must briefly explain the concepts you are using (with proper referencing) and demonstrate how they apply (or not) to the film. Your term paper will be evaluated according to the grid provided below (p. 10).

A good strategy would be to select your film early on, and work on your paper throughout the semester, as we discuss the various texts. This will allow you to view your chosen film several times during the course of the semester and work on the final paper while your ideas are still fresh.

**General Guidelines for Written Assignments**
Organization, grammar, spelling, syntax, formatting, punctuation, writing style and the use of illustrations will count towards your final grade. Computer difficulties will not be accepted as an excuse for a late submission; you may want to print you paper the night before to avoid last minute problems.

I recommend using a standard writing guide such as the *MLA Style Manual* and Timothy J. Corrigan’s *A Short Guide to Writing about Film* (PN 1995 C66). You can also check out the Concordia Library citation and style guides: [http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/citations.html](http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/citations.html)

All written assignments must be handed in to the instructor in class on the day that they are due. Electronic copies may be exceptionally accepted, and may be sent (preferably in a .pdf format) through Moodle. All assignments are to be written in Times New Roman, 12 pt, and double-spaced. Images are to be added at the end of the document and do not factor in the page count.
Late submissions will be penalized (2% per day, including week end days) and you should also expect a delay in my correction. If you are late, make sure you drop your paper at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, FB 319 (1250 rue Guy) during their office hours and have your paper date-stamped by the secretary. Otherwise, I will consider that the paper was handed in on the day that I receive it.

The Student Learning Services offers workshops and individual help to improve your writing, research and learning strategies. Don’t hesitate to use this service: you are already paying for it through your tuition fees! http://learning.concordia.ca/

Plagiarism:
The most common offense under the Academic Code of Conduct is plagiarism which the Code defines as “the presentation of the work of another person as one’s own or without proper acknowledgement”. This could be material copied word for word from books, journals, internet sites, professor’s course notes, etc. It could be material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It could be the work of a fellow student, for example, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased through one of the many available sources. Plagiarism does not refer to words alone - it can also refer to copying images, graphs, tables, and ideas. Finally, if you translate the work of another person into French or English and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism.

In Simple Words: **Do not copy, paraphrase or translate anything from anywhere without saying where you obtained it**!” (Source: The Academic Integrity Website: http://provost.concordia.ca/academicintegrity/plagiarism/)

If you still aren’t sure on how to quote or reference some material, I will be more than happy to help. You cannot submit the same paper for more than one course.

**CALENDAR**
*This calendar gives you a week by week description of what will be discussed in class, as well as required reading (to be done prior to class) and screenings. You will want to consult the calendar a few days before each class. The readings are not easy! You may need to go over them more than once in order to be fully prepared for class discussion. I have also added optional (possible but not compulsory) readings. Course calendar may be subject to change.*

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**Week 1 Sept. 9**
Course Intro
READ:


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**Week 2 Sept. 16**
Early Cinema, the “Social Problem Film” and the Avant-Garde
READ:

   *La souriante Madame Beudet*. Dir. Germaine Dulac. France. 1923. 40 min.

Optional reading:

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Week 3 Sept. 23
Pre-Code Hollywood (1929-1934)
READ:

   *Baby Face*. Dir. Alfred Green. USA. 1933. 76 min.

Optional reading:

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Week 4 Sept. 30 *Reaction Paper 1*
Women Filmmaker and Classical Hollywood Cinema (Ida Lupino and Dorothy Arzner)
READ:

   *Christopher Strong*. Dir. Dorothy Arzner. USA. 1933. Clip.
   *Dance, Girl, Dance*. Dir. Dorothy Arzner. USA. 1940. 90 min.

Optional reading:
Week 5 Oct. 7 *Reaction Paper 2*
Early Feminist Film Theory and Activism
READ:


Optional reading:

*****
Week 6 Oct. 14 *Mid-Term questions distributed today* *Quiz 1*
The Gaze
READ:

SCREENING: Vertigo. Dir. Alfred Hitchcock. USA. 1958. 120 min.

Optional reading:

*****
Week 7 Oct. 21 *Mid-Term due today*
Female Film Spectatorship and the "Woman’s Film"
READ:


SCREENING: *Queen Christina*. Dir. Rouben Mamoulian. USA. 1933. Clip.

*Stella Dallas*. Dir. King Vidor. USA. 1937. 106 min.

Optional reading:


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Week 8 Oct. 28

The Femme Fatale in Noir and Neo-Noir

READ:


Optional reading:


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Week 9 Nov. 4 *QUIZ 2*

The Female Body & Horror

READ:


Optional reading:


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Week 10 Nov. 11 *Reaction Paper 3*

Experimental & Counter Cinema

READ:


SCREENING:

Two films by Maya Deren:
*MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON* (USA. 1943. 14 min);
*AT LAND* (USA. 1944. 15 min).

Three films by Barbara Hammer:
*Dyketactics* (USA. 1974. 4 min);
*MULTIPLE ORGASM* (USA. 1976. 6 min);
*WOMEN I LOVE* (USA. 1979. clip).

Two films by Sadie Benning:
*A PLACE CALLED LOVELY* (USA. 1991. 14 min);
*GIRL POWER* (USA. 1993, 15 min).
Optional reading:
• Filling in the Blank Screen” in Maggie Humm. *Film Fatales*.

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**Week 11 Nov. 18**

**Sex and Gender in Contemporary Women Filmmaker’s Practices I**

READ:


Optional reading:

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**Week 12 Nov. 25 *Term Paper Due Today***

**Sex and Gender in Contemporary Women Filmmaker’s Practices II**

READ:


Optional reading:

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Week 13 Dec 2 *Quiz*

Semester Review


Optional reading:

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MARKING GRID

Your grade is necessarily a composite assessment of a number of factors, represented on the chart below. Each of the factors can be conceived of as a general range of performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic not understood</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>Topic well-understood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does not answer the question(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Clearly answers the question(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not satisfy the parameters of the assignment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Satisfies all parameters of the assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not define/understand key terms and concepts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Defines/understands key terms and concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not use relevant sources efficiently</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Uses relevant sources efficiently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No critical understanding of the literature</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Solid critical understanding of the literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points are unclear and inconsistent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Points are clear and consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfounded assertions and description</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Uses evidence-based reasons and argument(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay is rambling and without structure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Essay is logically structured and consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerous grammatical and/or spelling errors*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Few or no grammatical and/or spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly implemented/inconsistent writing style</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Consistent and well-implemented writing style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable referencing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Acceptable referencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Grade (before late penalty if applicable)</td>
<td>/100</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* I do take into account students whose native language is neither English nor French. It is your responsibility to let me know if that is the case.