

**Carleton University:  
The Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies**

**WGST 3812 B: Gender and Social Media  
Fall 2017**

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Course time and location: Monday 8.35am – 11.25am, SA 517

Instructor: Nael Bhanji

Office: Dunton Tower, 1402A

Office hours: Mondays 11.45am – 1pm, or by appointment

Email: [nael.bhanji@carleton.ca](mailto:nael.bhanji@carleton.ca)

Course Tumblr account: <https://wgst3812b.tumblr.com/>

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on the social construction of sex and gender in major social media platforms and networking sites, such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Reddit, and Tumblr. Grounding our understanding of social media through a feminist, queer, anti-racist lens, this course explores the connections between content on virtual platforms and social relations of race, class, gender, and ability while considering how social, political and historical forces influence both media practices and viewership. Some of the issues explored are how these platforms offer new opportunities for sexual education, sexual and erotic/romantic expression, the negotiation and exploration of sexual and gender identities, and feminist/queer media criticism, social activism, and community. We will also explore the more troubling aspects of social media, particularly its connection with global capitalism and neoliberal ideology.

**Course Evaluation:**

In-class Participation (20%): ongoing.

Online discussion (30%): 3 online reflections to be shared on Course Tumblr account. Due the night BEFORE your chosen week's readings until December 3rd 2017.

Reflection Paper (15%): 4-5 pages, due October 16<sup>th</sup> 2017

Abstract (5%): due November 13<sup>th</sup> 2017

Final Assignment (30%): 7-8 pages, due December 4<sup>th</sup> 2017

**\*\*You must submit hard copies of your reflection paper, abstract, and your final assignment in person before the end of class on the due date. Late papers will be penalized according to my late policy outlined below. All papers should be written in 12-point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. You are welcome to use MLA, Chicago, or APA as long as your citational style remains consistent throughout your paper.**

### **Participation (20%)**

One of the most important indicators of a thoughtful life is the capacity to ask interesting and important questions. The kinds of questions I am interested in are those that open the mind to considering confusions, uncertainties, conflicts, and possibilities. To this end, avoid questions that rush to apply, are overly general, or ask us to choose sides without yet exploring meaning.

Your participation mark is based on your understanding and analysis of the assigned readings for each week (not on anecdotal comments). You will be evaluated on your preparation and level of engagement with the material. For high marks, your contribution must demonstrate analytical thought and engagement with the readings and lectures. Participation marks will recognize and value a variety of learning styles. Remember, it is the quality— not the quantity— of your contributions that will enrich our discussions.

### **Online Entries (3 X 10% = 30%): Due online throughout the semester via Tumblr. Last day to submit is Sunday, December 3rd 2017.**

You are responsible for providing THREE short responses of two to three paragraphs each on our Tumblr account this semester. Your responses should take the form of a thoughtful engagement with the assigned readings for the week and you may incorporate your own observations/experiences of social media.

*IMPORTANT: Make sure you sign off each Tumblr post using your full name.*

### **Reflection Paper (15%): Due October 16<sup>th</sup>**

For this assignment, you will write a 4-5 page reflection based on the episode entitled “Nosedive” on the Netflix series, *Black Mirror*. Your reflection should incorporate theoretical terms and/or critiques from at least two course texts. More instructions will be provided to you in class on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Abstract for final essay (5%): Due November 13<sup>th</sup>**

Developing your own original research paper is your major assignment this semester. The abstract should take the form of a short paragraph and a few tentative sources. This is your opportunity to ask for feedback or help with developing your ideas. More information about your final essay will be provided before reading week.

### **Final Essay (30%): due December 4<sup>th</sup>**

This final assignment is designed to be a space for you to develop your own research interests by drawing upon course materials and themes and connecting them to existing scholarship. Papers should be 7-8 pages double-spaced and include a critical analysis of at least 3 readings discussed in the course and at least 1 external academic source.

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### **Readings:**

Ultimately, this is your course. To maximize your ability to follow and synthesize the information you learn through lectures and discussions, you must be prepared to read all required texts. All readings will be available on cuLearn, via Ares.

You should come to class prepared to discuss the course readings and conduct yourself in a respectful and open manner. There may be issues discussed in this class that challenge your personal views and I hope that you use this class to explore your ideas and opinions.

**Late Assignments:**

All assignments MUST be submitted by the deadlines noted on this syllabus. If you think you will not be able to submit your assignment in time (because of illness or bereavement) you must contact me as soon as you are aware of this.

All assignments without documentation will be docked 10% per day that they are late (including weekends) until they are handed in or are worth 0%.

**Essay Format:** All assignments must be typed and double-spaced with standard margins (1.25-inch side margins; 1-inch top and bottom margins). Don't forget to include your name and proper citation. You may only use referencing and bibliographic format from MLA, APA, or Chicago Style.

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 56-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			

WDN = Withdrawn from the course, ABS = Student absent from final exam, DEF = Deferred (See above), FND = (Failed, no Deferred) = Student could not pass the course even with 100% on final exam.

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**Lecture Schedule**

**September 11 | Introduction and Key Terms**

Zeisler, Andi. "Pop and Circumstance: Why Pop Culture Matters." *Women in Culture: An Intersectional Anthology for Gender and Women's Studies* (2016): 186.

In-Class Video: *Social Media and the End of Gender* (Johanna Blakley, 2010)

**September 18 | Theoretical Perspectives I: Sex, Gender, Sexuality**

Seidman, Steven. "Theoretical Perspectives." In *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Eds. Steven Seidman, Nancy L. Fischer, and Chet Meeks. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011: 3-12

Rubin, Gayle. Selection from "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." In *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. Eds. Ablove, Henry et. al., eds. New York, NY: Routledge: 9-16.

#NBD campaign (Dr. Lee Airton, 2016): <https://www.nbdcampaign.ca/what/>  
In-Class Film: *BLACK MIRROR: Nosedive*, Season 3, Episode 1 (dir. Joe Wright, 2016).

Recommended reading:

Somerville, Siobhan. 1994 "Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 5(2): 243-266.

**September 25 | Theoretical Perspectives II: Hegemony and Mass Culture**

Shepherd, Tamara. "Gendering the Commodity Audience in Social Media." *The Routledge Companion to Media & Gender*, Eds. Cynthia Carter, Linda Steiner, and Lisa McLaughlin. New York, NY: 2013: 157-168.

Hall, Stuart. "Encoding/Decoding." In *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. Eds. Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner. Malden, MA, 2006: 166-176.

DeLaure, Marilyn and Moritz Fink. "Introduction." In *Culture Jamming: Activism and the Art of Cultural Resistance*. Eds. Marilyn DeLaure, Moritz Fink, and Mark Dery. NYU Press, 2017: 1-39.

Recommended reading:

Fuchs, Christian. "The Power and Political Economy of Social Media." *Social media: A critical introduction, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Sage, 2017: 121-150.

**October 2 | Ideologies, Archetypes, and Stereotypes on Social Media**

Duffy, Brooke E. "Gendering the Labor of Social Media Production" *Feminist Media Studies* 15.4 (2015): 710-714.

Shohat, Ella & Robert Stam (excerpts), "Introduction" and "From Eurocentrism to Polycentrism." In *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. Eds. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. New York, NY: Routledge, 1994: 1-6 and 13-25.

Hill Collins, Patricia. "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images." *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and The Politics of Empowerment*. Routledge, 2000: 76-94.

**October 9 | STATUTORY HOLIDAY. UNIVERSITY CLOSED.**

**October 16 | Representing the Self**

**\*\*\*\*Reflection Paper Due\*\*\*\***

hooks bell. "The Oppositional Gaze." In *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2015: 115-133.

Chatman, Dayna. "Black Twitter and the Politics of Viewing Scandal." In *Fandom: Identities and communities in a mediated world*. Eds. Gray, Jonathan, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington, eds. NYU Press, 2017: 299-315.

McCarthy, Amy. 2013. "#FEMINISTSELFIE Reinforces Why Selfies are Empowering" <http://www.bustle.com/articles/9421-feministselfie-reinforces-why-selfies-are-empowering>

Edwards, Katie. 2017. "How Beyoncé Pregnancy Pics Challenge Racist, Religious and Sexual Stereotypes": <https://theconversation.com/how-beyonce-pregnancy-pics-challenge-racist-religious-and-sexual-stereotypes-72429>

### **October 23 – October 27 | Reading week!!!**

#### **October 30 | Sexual(ity) and Gender-Based Violence**

Turton-Turner, Pamela. "Villainous Avatars: The Visual Semiotics Of Misogyny And Free Speech In Cyberspace." *Forum on Public Policy: A Journal of the Oxford Round Table*. Forum on Public Policy, 2013.

Vitis, Laura, and Fairleigh Gilmour. "Dick Pics On Blast: A Woman's Resistance To Online Sexual Harassment Using Humour, Art and Instagram." *Crime, Media, Culture* (2016): 1741659016652445.

Hess, Amanda. "Inside AnonIB, Where Hacking is a Sport and Women's Bodies are the Prize": [http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx\\_factor/2014/09/03/anonib\\_nude\\_photo\\_site\\_where\\_hackers\\_and\\_users\\_treat\\_women\\_as\\_property.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2014/09/03/anonib_nude_photo_site_where_hackers_and_users_treat_women_as_property.html)

In-class film: *TOUGH GUISE 2: Violence, Manhood & American Culture* (dir. Jeremy Earp, 2013).

#### **November 6 | Privacy, Predation, and Moral Panic**

Goode, Erich and Ben-Yehuda, Nachman. "The Moral Panic: An Introduction." In *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*, Eds. Erich Goode and Ben-Yehuda Nachman. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 34-50.

Karaian, Lara. "Policing 'Sexting': Responsibilization, Respectability and Sexual Subjectivity in Child Protection/Crime Prevention Responses to Teenagers' Digital Sexual Expression." *Theoretical Criminology* 18.3 (2014): 282-299.

Chemaly, Soraya. "Slut-Shaming and the Sex Police: Social Media, Sex, and Free Speech." In *Gender, Sex, and Politics: In the Streets and Between the Sheets in the 21st Century*. Ed. Shira Tarrant. New York, NY: Routledge, 2015: 125-141.

#### **November 13 | Hetero-Masculinities in the Cybersphere**

\*\*\*\*Abstract Due\*\*\*\*

Pascoe, C. J. "Guys are just homophobic." *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies* (2016): 143.

Ging, Debbie. "Alphas, Betas, and Incels: Theorizing the Masculinities of the Manosphere." *Men and Masculinities* (2017): 1097184X17706401.

In-class film: *Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony* (dir. Laurent Malaquais, 2012).

### **November 20 | CTRL + ALT(right) + DEL: The intersectionality of race, nationalism, and gender**

Ferber, Abby L. "The construction of Black masculinity: White supremacy now and then." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 31.1 (2007): 11-24.

Jackson, Sarah J. "(Re) Imagining Intersectional Democracy from Black Feminism to Hashtag Activism." *Women's Studies in Communication* 39.4 (2016): 375-379.

TeenVogue: <http://www.teenvogue.com/story/what-the-alt-right-is>

Vice.com: [https://www.vice.com/en\\_ca/article/mbbv7n/you-cant-live-in-canada-and-express-shock-about-white-hate-in-charlottesville](https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/mbbv7n/you-cant-live-in-canada-and-express-shock-about-white-hate-in-charlottesville)

In-class film: <https://news.vice.com/story/vice-news-tonight-full-episode-charlottesville-race-and-terror>

#### Recommended reading:

"Why It's So Hard to Talk to White People About Racism":

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/good-men-project/why-its-so-hard-to-talk-to-white-people-about-racism\\_b\\_7183710.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/good-men-project/why-its-so-hard-to-talk-to-white-people-about-racism_b_7183710.html)

### **November 27 | Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Activisms**

Morgensen, Scott Lauria. "The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism: Right Here, Right Now." *Settler Colonial Studies* 1.1 (2011): 52-76.

Barker, Adam J. "'A direct act of resurgence, a direct act of sovereignty': Reflections on idle no more, Indigenous activism, and Canadian settler colonialism." *Globalizations* 12.1 (2015): 43-65.

Media Link: "What does Canada 150 Mean for Indigenous Communities?"  
<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-march-16-2017-1.4026463/what-does-canada-150-mean-for-indigenous-communities-1.4027484>

#### Recommended reading:

Bird, Michael Yellow. "Cowboys and Indians: Toys of Genocide, Icons of Colonialism." *Wicazo Sa Review* 19.2 (2004): 33-48.

### **December 4 | Queerer Trans/formations of the Online world**

\*\*\*\*Last Tumblr post should have been submitted the night before\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*Research Paper Due\*\*\*\*

Butler, Judith. "Critically Queer." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1.1 (1993): 17-32.

Raun, Tobias, "VideoBlogging as a Vehicle of Transformation." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 8.3 (2015): 365-378.

Christian, Aymar Jean. "Camp 2.0: A Queer Performance of the Personal." *Communication, Culture & Critique* 3.3 (2010): 352-376.

Recommended reading:

Trans Allies Tip Sheet: <http://web.mit.edu/trans/tipsfortransallies.pdf>

Russo, Julie Levin. 2013. "Textual Orientation: Queer Female Fandom Online." In *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender*, edited by Cynthia Carter, Linda Steiner, and Lisa McLaughlin, 450–60. Routledge: New York.

Faris, Michael J., and M.L. Sugie. "Fucking with fucking online: Advocating for indiscriminate promiscuity." In *Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots: Flaming Challenges to Masculinity, Objectification, and the Desire to Conform*. Ed. Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore. AK Press, 2012: 45-52.

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### Other Matters

**EMAIL:** Please note that it is official Carleton policy that ALL email correspondence between teachers and students must take place between Carleton email accounts. This means that I will not respond to emails sent from hotmail, gmail, yahoo, or other accounts. You should expect a response to your emails within 24 hours. However, I will *not* respond to emails the night before your reflection paper, abstract, or final essay is due.

**PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is defined as the passing off of anyone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism occurs when a student either a) directly copies more than one or two sentences of another's written work without acknowledgement; or b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgement; or c) borrows, without acknowledgement, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thoughts, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of their work.

#### *What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?*

A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including: expulsion; suspension from all studies at Carleton; suspension from full-time studies; and/or a reprimand; a refusal of permission to continue or to register in a specific degree program; academic probation; award of an FNS, Fail, or an ABS.

#### *What are the Procedures?*

All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and/or departmental chairs.

The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism.

The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

It is in students' best interests to keep all of their research notes intact after handing in papers. Prior approval of the instructor must be obtained if you intend to submit work that has previously or concurrently been submitted, in whole or in part, for credit in this or any other course. Consult the Writing Tutorial Service (215PA) and the Student Academic Success Centre (SASC, 302 Tory) for more information on available services.

Please note that it is not permitted to submit identical (or near identical) assignments for two or more courses.

### **IN OTHER WORDS:**

Understand what it means: plagiarism results when someone uses the ideas or writings of another and presents these ideas or writings as his or her own. Examples include:

1. Buying a paper from a research service or term paper mill.
2. Turning in a paper from a "free term paper" website.
3. Turning in a paper someone else has written for you.
4. Copying materials from a source without proper citation.
5. Using proper citation but leaving out quotation marks.
6. Paraphrasing materials from a source without appropriate citation.
7. Turning in a paper you wrote for another course.

When citing sources, it is best to present ideas using your own original words. If you fully understand a source, you will be able to completely describe its themes and ideas in your own words and from your own perspective. However, if you copy a passage that someone else wrote and only change a few words around, you have committed plagiarism.

When quoting directly from sources, it is best to use direct quotes only if the phrasing is apt and powerfully stated; be sure to include proper citation. If the quote is not revelatory or eloquent but simply provides some useful information, then it is best to explain the information completely in your own words while providing proper citation.

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### **REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:**

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**For Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a co-ordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary *letters of accommodation*.

If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your letter of accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

There are several services for students on campus to take advantage of:

- 1) For health and counseling issues you can visit **Health and Counseling Services**; 2600 CTT Centre; 613-520-6674; [www.carleton.ca/health](http://www.carleton.ca/health)
- 2) **Student Academic Success Centre (SASC)**; 302 Tory; 613-520-7850; [www.carleton.ca/sasc](http://www.carleton.ca/sasc) assists students with academic planning, understanding academic rules and regulations, finding a tutor, choosing or changing a major, polishing study skills, and referrals to other services.
- 3) **Academic Writing Centre and Writing Tutorial Service** (4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Library, 613-520-6632; [www.carleton.ca/wts](http://www.carleton.ca/wts) can help you learn to write better papers. Tutors are graduate students from a range of departments who have been trained to assist you at any stage in the writing process. To make an appointment, call 613-520-6632, or drop by their office between the hours of 9:00am and 4:30pm, Monday-Friday.
- 4) **The Learning Commons** (4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Library, 613-520-2600, ext. 1125; See also Main Floor desk) is a one-stop study-shop that combines research, IT

and learning support services under one roof to enhance the student experience.