**WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION IN FILM**

**Capsule Statement:**

This course discusses how mainstream entertainment cinema traditionally distorts the representation of women, objectifying their bodies, minimizing their agency, and avoiding the most important questions about how cinema can do justice to female subjectivity. Throughout the course draws from feminist film theory, clinical psychology, as well as, women's, gender, and cultural studies, to better understand how filmic representations of the woman's body first emerge from contemporary psychosocial contexts and then in turn shape the body ideals and internalizations, as well as, the behavioral practices of the film spectators. The course familiarizes students with the basic principles of film analysis in conversation with foundational feminist film theory texts.

#### Objectives:

After the completion of this course, students will be able to;

* Discuss visual strategies of film analysis and film making by focusing on cinematography
* Identify gender specific topics covered in films
* Enhance critical thinking about gendered aspects of our own life and how they are represented in mainstream and independently produced movies.
* Look at mainstream movie productions differently after studying aspects of international films and American made movies with international themes.
* Respond to movies in a more reflective and critical way after completing this course.

#### Contents:

1. **Introduction: Feminist Film Theory and the Politics of Vision**
2. **The Women's Film and Makeover Narratives**
3. **Portrayals**
   1. Gender Stereotypes
   2. Fabricated identities
   3. Maternal Melodrama
      1. Reflections on “Stepmom” (Chris Columbus, 1998)

#### Male gaze

* 1. Stereotypes of femininity in mainstream Hollywood films
  2. Mechanism of Stardom
  3. Case Study: Marilyn Monroe as a star phenomenon
  4. The pragmatics and “commodity” of female sexuality: the song “Diamonds are a girl’s best friends.”

#### Women at war with each other

* 1. Conflicts between women at work and in the private sphere. Reflections on “The Devil Wears Prada” (David Frankel, 2006)
  2. How movie directors represent interpersonal crisis

#### Women and violence

* 1. Domestic Violence
  2. Violence as a trope for mass entertainment. Reflections on “Sleeping With The Enemy” (Joseph Reuben, 1991)
  3. Women in horror films

#### Fatherhood/ Motherhood

* 1. Different concepts of parenting
  2. Intergenerational conflict
  3. Young women and their self esteem

#### Influence of Indian Cinema

* 1. Impact on Pakistani cinema
  2. Viewership of Indian cinema in Pakistan
  3. Archetypes and Stereotypes

#### Evolution of Pakistani Cinema

* 1. Overview
  2. Study of selected female names of Pakistani Cinema 9.2.1. 1947- 1960

9.2.2. 1961-1990

9.2.3. 1991 to-date

#### Recommended Readings:

Andrew, Dudley. (1985). Adaptation. *Concepts in Film Theory.* New York: Oxford UP, 1985 Bordwell and Thompson. (2017). *Film Art: An Introduction*. 11th ed. New York: McGraw Hill. Cixous, Helene. The Laugh of the Medusa. *New French Feminisms.* Ed. Elaine Marks and

Isabelle de Courtivron. New York: Schocken, 1981. 245-64.

Cook, Pam. Approaching the Work of Dorothy Arzner. Rpt. *Feminism and Film Theory*. Ed.

Constance Penley. New York: Routledge, 1988. 46-56

Erens, Patricia. (1990). *Issues in Feminist Film Criticism.* Indiana University Press.

Kaplan, E. Ann. (1983). *The Avant-garde Theory Film.* Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera. New York: Methuen.

Norden, Martin. *Women in the Early Film Industry*. Wide Angle 6.3 (1984): 58-66