

# English 216: Notes for Chapter 7

## Feminisms

- **radical:** creates concept of patriarchy (systemic sexism)
  - **patriarchy:** social systems invested with sexism regardless of individual intention
- **Marxist:** women are exploited by men as a consequence of capitalism
- **liberal:** oppression comes from individual, prejudiced men
- **dual-systems theory:** capitalism is sexist; sexism is capitalist, they conspire
- **bell hooks:** 'finding a voice' speech turns one from object to subject

## Feminist textual analysis

- goal is to reveal what was always there but silenced (women)
- **pop-culture:** culture is where we define what it means to be woman

## Women at the Cinema:

- breaking away from text-determinist theories (e.g., Mulvey's gaze)
- **Jackie Stacey:** defines three discourses of British women filmgoers of the 40s/50s
- **escapism:** into the lavish theatre as well as the film, escaping every-day life
- **identification:** use images of film stars as empowerment, enact control of their own lives
- **consumption:** use the film's excess of escapism to construct a new self

## Reading Romance:

- moving towards audience studies rather than textual studies
- **Modleski**: abandon dismissive or mocking tone towards women who read romances
  - **romantic suffering**: romances are a protest against the suffering of women
- **Coward**: admits she is a reader, popularity of romances implies they're addressing a need
  - **regressive fantasy**: adore the male's power, depict female sexuality as passive/guiltless
- **Radway**: studies a specific reading group, analyzes their criteria of "good" and "bad"
  - **triangular satisfaction** (Freudian): father's protection, mother's care, adult sexuality
  - **fear of male violence**: reveal it to have been an illusion and/or benign
  - **fear of female sexuality**: confine it to a heteronormative, monogamous relationship
  - **Ang**: Radway is criticizing from the outside; Ang focuses on pleasure as empowerment

## Ang on Dallas

- **realism**: a mode, like a super-genre (as opposed to a subgenre)
  - **classical realism**: verisimilitude, adherence to expectations; empirical realism
  - **denotative realism**: resemblance to reality
  - **connotative realism**: emotionally identifying with the content; emotional realism
- **tragic structure of feeling**: pleasure via connotative realism
  - **melodramatic imagination**: repertoire that allows access to tragic structure of feeling
- struggles with **mass-culture ideology**: mass-culture critique: dislike b/c something is mass-culture (circular reasoning)

- **irony:** reinterpret as object of mockery, love it b/c it's mass-culture
- **fan:** defend it as meaningful, or surface irony: "I can handle it"
- **appeal to taste:** they like it because they like it
- **pleasure:** derives from seeing fantastic solutions to real problems

## Women's Magazines

- **Winship:** studies as an insider
  - **attraction and rejection:** want to feel feminine but not be defined by sexism
  - **fictions:** all content of women's magazines, including ads, creates various worlds
  - **pleasurable femininity:** myth of successful, individual woman, cut off from context
- **Hermes:** previous critiques showed concern but not respect; postmodern methodology
  - **fallacy of meaningfulness:** only study 'fans,' end up ignoring ordinary readers
    - **repertoires of women's magazines:** easily put down: convenient for women in domestic labour
    - **relaxation:** actual relaxation also signal to others to leave her alone
    - **practical knowledge:** practical how-to tips, make one feel omni-capable
    - **emotional learning:** construct ideal self, ready for all interpersonal crises
  - **moments of empowerment:** effects of repertoires generally don't last very long

## Post-Feminism

- what comes after the second wave?

- **Winship:** feminist ideas aren't oppositional any more, thus more internal discussion
- **McRobbie:** tactical position, act like feminism is no longer necessary after 70s/80s
- **re-traditionalization (Ball):** construct new identities for women through capitalism

## Men's Studies and Masculinities:

- arguably not feminist, arguably couldn't exist without it
- **dominant masculinities (Easthope):** force all other genders to compare themselves to DM
  - **lived masculinities:** how men, including gay/bi men, actually live
  - **regimes of representation (Nixon):** constructions of masculinity in ads, magazines, etc.
- **Canaan & Griffin:** men might crowd women out, women must insist it's feminist work

## Queer Theory

- political methodology (like feminism), resistance to heteronormativity
- **Butler:** "sex" (biology) is not outside culture, a discursive category that's been naturalized
  - uses concept of **performative language:** utterances that make reality
  - **gender performance:** each performance cites the last performance as proof, reifies
  - **drag:** imitative performance reveals that gender is always imitative
    - i.e., "You're born naked, and the rest is drag." — Ru Paul
- **Queerness and Consumerism**
  - **Warner:** assimilation into the mainstream means assimilation into consumerism

- **Creekmur & Doty**: problem is how to be 'out in culture' without consumerism
- **queer reading** (Doty): reveal anything and everything that's not heteronormative