

INTRODUCTION - REPRESENTING WOMEN

- Last week: Some gender theories
- Definitions of Performance/Performativity
- Learning Outcome 2: Assess critically the ways in which gender are constituted and/or challenged in and through particular forms of culture
- Introducing some feminist ideas
- Representations in popular culture
- Katniss

IDEOLOGIES

- Ideologies about femininity focused on relationships/romance
- McRobbie and Jackie Magazine
- Changes in representation
- Girls encouraged to seek success and pleasure
- New femininity is premised on a new sexuality (magazines)
- Others cultural texts are critical of new femininity e.g. *Ladette to Lady*



FEMINIST VIEWPOINTS

- Intense critique of women
 - Represents patriarchal control
- Symbolically punished for non conformity
- Romance still valued in new femininity
- Milestones of womanhood
 - Finding a man, getting married, having children
- Time and ageing
- Women's self identities relational – defined by others (men and children)



COMPLEXITY OF REPRESENTATIONS

- Representation of women in contemporary media is complex
- Historical changes/continuities
- Differences across media
- May encourage certain ways of thinking about/acting in relation to women
- Women do have new roles/identities but traditional norms and images continue



POPULAR CULTURE THEMES



- **Negra(2009)**
 - popular culture delegitimizes career women
 - lives as unfulfilled, unhappy
- Women's devotion to careers
 - stands in the way of femininity (e.g. *The Proposal*)
- **Women are essentialised – portrayed as possessing same inherent nature**
 - Caring, loving, emotional, considerate
 - Work associated with greed, superficiality, ruthlessness e.g. (*The Devil Wears Prada*) (2.13)

THE DOMESTIC IN POPULAR CULTURE

- Renewed focus on domestic
 - E.g. *Super Nanny*, *Strictest parents* (e.g. Motherland), cooking programmes (e.g. Bake Off), cleaning programmes (e.g. Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners)
 - Women feature in many of these
 - Class element
 - Different kinds of domestic femininity
 - Expert/failure
 - Motherhood idealised



SEXUAL MORALITY AND VIOLENCE

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- Respectability tied to being sexually innocent, modest, shy
- Presents a dichotomy
 - Women as vamps or virgins (*Black Swan*, *Love Island*)
- Respectable femininity includes asexuality and chastity
- Language used to describe women has no male equivalent
 - E.g. tart, slut, slag, hooker, whore, prostitute
- Men allowed to be sexually promiscuous and have high moral/social standing



KATNISS – HUNGER GAMES

- Not stereotypically feminine
- Few words, often sullen and hostile, rebellious
- Inspired by Greek mythology (Theseus and Spartacus)
- Not feminine but definitely female



PRIM V KATNISS

- Primrose Everdeen – speech is stereotypically feminine,
- Described as fragile, able to cook and flower arrange



PANEM

- Fewer differences between the role for women and men
- Our world – coal miners=male, Participants in hunger games = male & female
- Finnick Odair – body sold to others by Snow



PEETA

- Everyone age 14 above = soldier
- Peeta – close to androgynous blend of masculine and feminine traits
- Confident – self-reliant, open, trusting, warm, avoids violence and aggression except in self-defence, cried openly.



KATNISS AND PEETA

- Katniss sees merit in using romance with Peeta to make herself more likeable
- Femininity adopted as a performance
- Butler – gender is always a kind of performance
- Katniss and Peeta use gender to foster power for themselves
- Gender as performance, but also political and personal



OTHER POPULAR CULTURE

- Orange the is New Black
- Incredibles 2
- Big Little Lies
- Jessica Jones
- Supergirl
- The Kardashians
- Love Island

SUMMARY

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- Learning Outcome 2: Assess the ways in which gender are constituted and/or challenged in and through particular forms of culture
- Assignment: You could analyse a film or films in relation to femininity/gender on offer?
- You could analyse a television programme (e.g. Netflix etc.) in relation to the femininity on offer?
- Or you could look at advertising/objectification and whether these stereotypes remain.

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