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)
Renewed focus on domestic

- E.g. Super Nanny, *Strictest parents* (e.g. *Strictest parents*), 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

• Respectability tied to being sexually innocent, modest, shy

• Presents a dichotomy
  • Women as vamps or virgins (Black Swan, Love Island) (3.19 mins)

• 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
• Feminniity 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
• Big Little Lies
• Jessica Jones
• Supergirl (2.40 mins)
• The Kardashians
• Love Island
• The Killing (1.54 mins)
• Gentleman Jack (2.13 mins)
• Fleabag (1.42 mins)
• Twitter and #tag campaigns
SUMMARY

• 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.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


