SPECIAL TOPIC FALL 2017

FEMINIST FILMMAKING
This course was originally developed and taught as an undergraduate course at UC Santa Cruz in fall 2017. This revised edition of the syllabus booklet is designed as a self-guided, DIY syllabus that anyone can use. It is not intended to teach basic filmmaking skills, and, while it includes some historical context, it is also not intended as a comprehensive history or overview of feminist filmmaking. Rather, it is designed as a series of modules that focus on specific topics, tools, methods, approaches, and project prompts that can inform, enhance, inspire, or structure a feminist film practice.

Films in the syllabus are not intended as a definitive viewing list or canon, but as a selection of useful models with an emphasis on feminist work that is cheap, short, DIY, experimental, formally innovative, homemade, and relevant right now. Next year my list might look completely different. Some of the films in the syllabus may be difficult to find or may be art or experimental film world work that is not in general distribution. I have included a film source list at the end of the syllabus that indicates, when possible, how to view the films included in the syllabus. I have also suggested occasional further viewing or substitutions for hard-to-find films.

Readings for the course can be found online at https://tinyurl.com/yax-gww63

Manifestos created by UCSC students enrolled in the class are included, with their permission, for inspiration and encouragement. Add your own manifesto to the end!

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I. Lusztig / April 2018
WELCOME TO FEMINIST FILMMAKING. THIS BOOKLET IS YOUR SYLLABUS. IT IS DESIGNED TO ALSO BE A TOOLKIT, A HANDBOOK, AND HOPEFULLY INSPIRATION FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION AND THOUGHT. LOOK UP ARTISTS, WRITERS, AND THINKERS THAT YOU ARE CURIOUS ABOUT AND CONSIDER LEARNING MORE ABOUT ANY IMAGES THAT STRIKE YOU. THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR YOU TO TAKE NOTES. MAKE THIS BOOK YOUR OWN.
WOMEN IN THE YEAR 2000
CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN, 1977

By the year 2000 no young woman artist will meet the determined resistance and constant undermining that I endured as a student. Her Studio and History courses will usually be taught by women. She will never feel like a provisional guest at the banquet of life; or a monster defying her “God-given” role; or a belligerent whose devotion to creativity could only exist at the expense of a man, or men and their needs. Nor will she go into the “art world”, graving or disgracing a pervading stud club of artists, historians, teachers, museum directors, magazine editors, gallery dealers – all male, or committed to masculine preserves. All that is marvelously, already falling around our feet.

She will study History courses enriched by the inclusion, discovery, and reevaluation of works by women artist; works (and lives) until recently buried away, willfully destroyed, ignored, or reattributed (to make artists with whom they were associated). Our future student will be in touch with a continuous feminine creative history – often produced against impossible odds – from her present, to the Renaissance, and beyond. In the year 2000, books and courses will be called “Man and His Image,” “Man and His Symbols,” “Art History of Man” only to probe the source of dis-ease and man-ia which compelled patriarchal man to attribute to himself and his masculine forebears every invention and artifact by which civilization was formed for over four millennia!

Our woman will have courses and books on “The Invention of Art by Woman,” “Woman – The Source of Creation,” “The Gynocratic Origins of Art,” “Woman and Her Material.” Her studies of ancient Greece and Egypt will reconcile manipulations in translation, interpretation, and actual content of language and symbolic imagery with the protracted and agonizing struggle between the integral, cosmic principles of Gynocracy and the aggressive man-centered cultures gathered as the foundations of Judeo-Christian religion in the Western world.

Fifteen years ago I told my History professor I thought the base breasted women bull jumpers, carved in ivory, painted in frescos about 1600 B.C. in Crete, could have been made by women depicting women. And I considered that the preponderant neolithic fertility figurines might have been crafted by women for themselves – to accompany them through pregnancy and birth-giving. And I wondered if the frescos of the Mysteries, Pompeii – almost exclusively concerned with feminine gestures and actions – could have been painted by women. He was shocked and annoyed, saying that there was absolutely no authority to support such ideas. Since then I have given myself the authority to support and pursue these insights. By the year 2000 feminist archeologists, etymologists, egyptologists, biologists, sociologists, will have established beyond question my contention that women determined the forms of the sacred and the functional – the divine properties of material, its religious and practical formations; that she evolved pottery, sculpture, fresco, architecture, astronomy and the laws of agriculture – all of which belonged implicitly to the female realms of transformation and production.

The shadowy notions of a harmonious core of civilization under the aegis of the Great Mother Goddess, where the divine unity of female biological and imaginative creation was normal and pervasive, where the female was the source of all living and created images will once again move to clarify our own conscious desires. The sacred rituals of forming materials to embody life energies will return to the female source.

One further change will be the assembling of pioneer historians – themselves discredited or forgotten by traditional masculinist authority. In the year 2000 they will be on the required reading lists! What a joy to welcome: Helen Diner, J.J. Bachofen, Michelet, Rilke, Gould-Davis, Jane Ellen Harrison, Robert Graves, Jacquetta Hawkes, Ruth Benedict, Robert Briffault, Erich Neumann, H.D., Marie de LeCourt, Ruth Herschberger, Bryher, H.R.Hays, Mina Mosherosch Schmidt, Clara E.C.Waters, Elizabeth F. Ellet!

The negative aspect is simply that the young woman coming to these vital studies will never really believe that we in our desperate ground work were so crippled and isolated that a belief and dedication to a feminine history of art was designed by those who might have taught it, and considered heretical and false by those who should have taught it. That our deepest energies were nurtured in secret, with precedents we kept secret – our lost women. Now found and to be found again.

"If we long to transform the culture so that the conventional mass media are not the only force teaching people what to like and how to see, then we have to embrace the avant garde... Here is where we’ll find radical possibility. We can deconstruct the images in mainstream white supremacist capitalist patriarchal cinema for days and it will not lead to cultural revolution."

- bell hooks (Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies, 2008)

What does it mean to make feminist moving image work in 2018?

In this workshop we will collectively explore possible definitions, methods, approaches, production models, interventions, histories and potential futures of feminist filmmaking. Experimentation, formal innovation, DIY activism, and collaboration will be encouraged. Throughout the quarter, you will be expected to read, watch moving image work, ask questions, write, engage in critical conversation, and make creative moving image work that responds to the ideas of the course.

This class starts from a few basic principles: that process and product are equally important; that feminism and filmmaking are both critical spaces of intervention for changing culture; that reading and viewing are central to the production of new kinds of moving image work; and that radical new moving image languages and forms are essential to the creation of feminist media-making strategies.

Ultimately, this class is an invitation to consider new conditions of possibility for making the culture you want to live in.
ANNE LIESE

BE FRUGAL!

Embrace older formats and preexisting materials, and any accessible technology or resources that may not be the best or most expensive.

Beautiful work does not mean the most high end production; value content over production value!

CREATE NEW CHANNELS OF ACCESS!

Let’s think up different modes of producing and distributing work to make access to feminist media production more expansive!

Utilize social media and the internet as new grounds to archive feminist media histories and distribute new works to larger communities.

Use social media, online community and the accessibility of technology to uplift historically marginalized people and make intersectional feminist media a priority!

PRACTICE COMMUNITY FILMMAKING!

Ask your friends for help, share resources, share knowledge, share technology and skills! Work together and eliminate toxic aspects of competition!

Understand that it is 2017 and probably the most feasible way to build community most likely involves social media. Take to Instagram to find folks to help create a feminist platform for media making and fostering community!

NO MORE MISREPRESENTATION!

Let people tell their own stories and create their own media that is reflective of the complexities of their own identities.

Prioritize femme, POC and queer voices both behind the scenes and on the screen!
1) “PROJECT OF THE WEEK” PROMPTS
Each of these projects is connected to a course module, and has a project prompt that invites you to make a creative response to the week’s screenings, readings, and discussions (for more details and “Project of the Week” prompts, see the week by week section of this syllabus). These short projects are to be thought of as sketches, experiments, or explorations that are made relatively quickly, in 1-2 weeks.

2) OPEN PROJECT
For your last project, you should take a little longer and make whatever you want (so long as you can explain why it is a feminist project). Don’t think of this as a high pressure final project per se, but do think of this as a chance to take a creative dive into whatever you’ve been thinking about throughout the quarter. If you’d like to use one of the Project of the Week prompts that you didn’t get a chance to try, you’re welcome to do that. Or you can do something else. You can work collaboratively or alone.

3) WEEKLY WRITTEN REFLECTION
You will also be asked to post a short 2-3 paragraph personal written response to class on a weekly basis. This is not formal academic writing; the form can be personal and informal – think of this as a space for reflection / conversation about the ideas explored in the class; you are expected to articulate a thoughtful response to each week’s class, including class screenings, readings, and discussions.

4) FEMINIST FILMMAKER INTERVIEW PROJECT / FEMEXFILM ARCHIVE
https://sites.google.com/ucsc.edu/femexfilmarchive/home
Students in my UCSC class were also asked to conduct an interview with a feminist experimental filmmaker of their choice. The goal of this project was to make a collective class website, co-created with students working with Julie Wyman at UC Davis, that could become a come a resource for others researching feminist experimental filmmaking and that could also be the beginning of a larger project that future students continue to expand. We hoped to encourage students to think about things like finding their own creative role models, learning from listening, not being afraid to talk to artists whose work they admire, learning how to communicate with strangers courteously, professionally, and persistently (a great life skill!), and learning from inter-generational feminist conversation. You can read a little bit more about this project over here. This project is additive and ongoing, and will eventually be open to other classes, groups, and individuals who wish to contribute an interview with a feminist filmmaker.

***More information about participating as a contributor will be on the FEMEXFILM website in summer 2018***

5) MANIFESTO!
This is a short piece of writing (1-2) pages that should accompany your last creative project. It should take the form of a written manifesto (we’ll be reading a number of these over the quarter and this is a form that has resonated with feminists in many historical moments). What is your vision for feminist experimental film practice? What might you propose as a set of guiding principles, rules, slogans, concepts, or challenges? What do you think is needed for feminist media praxis right now? How about in the future?
Feminist organizing and cultural production throughout history has emphasized the importance of collaboration. Collaboration enables the formation of generative supportive networks, which in turn foster conditions for meaningful action, change, and new formal and material possibilities for making creative work. On the other hand, school is a system that often undervalues collaboration. When you are evaluated on your individual accomplishments and praised for your individual creative or intellectual vision it can become challenging to create robust alternate structures for working together with others.

This course strives to value collaboration fully as a critical component of feminist media making work. This means that you are encouraged to collaborate as often and as much as you want: you may choose to work collaboratively with one or more of your classmates on any of the video projects in this course (which means that two or more people might show one jointly made project on a given week rather than each making a separate project). You are strongly encouraged (though not required) to consider making at least one of the short projects collaboratively with a classmate at some point during the quarter.

Many of the films in this class deal with difficult, uncomfortable, and sometimes graphic subjects and imagery including images and themes of sexuality, violence against women, racial and colonial violence, and illness—all issues important to feminist media makers. While I believe that each film on this syllabus is feminist in its politics, intention, and form, that does not mean that each film will be a comfortable viewing experience for each viewer (and, in fact, discomfort can be a powerful political tool). My hope is that students in my classroom are able to treat these works critically, to consider what is being expressed by the maker, and to examine the potential social impact and historical context of works shown in class. You are strongly encouraged to watch everything shown in class: when something makes you feel uncomfortable, provoked, or uneasy, try to examine that feeling critically and to articulate and analyze your discomfort in class discussion. As a teacher, I believe that surprise and discomfort generate essential and productive cinema-viewing and learning spaces: I strive to make my classroom a comfortable space for examining discomfort rather than a space where uncomfortable images are excised or erased. Accordingly, it is not my teaching practice to exhaustively itemize difficult images or themes or to provide a detailed trigger warning before each class screening.

That said, I recognize that some kinds of personal histories might make certain images or subjects uncomfortable in ways that are traumatic rather than productive, and I am happy to make occasional viewing accommodations on a case by case basis. If you are concerned about specific kinds of images that are challenging for you, please take responsibility for researching the topic and content of films on the syllabus ahead of time and communicate clearly with me about any potential issues at least one week in advance of the screening date. For further reading on trigger warnings, look at Jessica Valenti’s “Feminists Talk Trigger Warnings: A Round Up” and Roxane Gay’s essay “The Illusion of Safety / The Safety of Illusion” (both essays are in the reading folder).
FEMEX FILM MANIFESTO

I believe that this class, Feminist Experimental Film Production should be held once a quarter at UCSC and other production courses should include the foundational rhetoric taught in this course. I believe it is the duty of the new filmmaking generation to create Feminist Media, not only within the context of a Feminist class, but in other classes too, perhaps even more so. In order to foster this, film needs to be taught differently in film school, from theory and history, to aspects of production, in a non Western-male way. Because, if we keep learning from ‘the greats’ in filmmaking, we are just doomed to make the same content as them, which is often from a narrow context: the white, heterosexual, cis-gendered male, aka ‘the universal perspective’. And the trajectory of future cinema is up to the students in these classes.

Feminism must be incorporated into both story (fictional) and process (real-life). Film narratives and documentaries need more female, non-heterosexual, non-cisgendered, and non-white characters and stories; and these stories cannot be solely written and made by cis-het white men, but people from those demographics on which the stories are based on. If a filmmaker is a member of a more privileged demographic, it is their duty to fight the status quo in the film industry, and sometimes that means passing the tools of filmmaking/acting to a person from a more marginalised group. This means not always letting a white man write and direct Django Unchained, which is about black revenge, or a man direct Blue is the Warmest Colour, a film about lesbian women. Because black men and lesbian women are rarely given the funding and support to make films about themselves. It is about a white man turning down a role if that character is canonically Asian, as Ed Skrein did for the Hellboy reboot. Because white people are not always ‘the best one for the role’. We cannot let the knowledge of film technology remain solely in the hands of White Hollywood, because those with the tools of filmmaking, have the power to rewrite history and affect how people of the world view themselves and others. People from all backgrounds should be encouraged and supported to go into the film industry, and not have to fight ten times as hard against moderately talented white men. Diverse representation is key—on and off screen!
Do women have to be naked to get into the Met Museum?

Less than 4% of the works in the Modern Art sections are women, but 76% of the workers are female.
**KEYWORDS:** feminisms, intersectional feminism, constellation, map, definitions, nodes, waves, feminist strategies and approaches, manifestos.

**WATCH:**
- *Free, White, and 21* (Howardena Pindell, 1980, 12 min)
- *Soft Fiction* (Chick Strand, 1979, 54 min)

**READ:**
- “Women in the Year 2000” (Carolee Schneemann, 1977) - read in class
- “Feminist Politics: Where We Stand” from *Feminism is for Everybody* (bell hooks, 2000)
- Introduction from *Women of Vision: Histories in Feminist Film and Video*, pg 1-32 (Alexandra Juhasz, 2001)
- “The Principles of Feminist Filmmaking” from *Cámara Retórica: A Feminist Filmmaking Methodology for Rhetoric and Composition* (Alexandra Hidalgo, 2017) - this is a 28 minute video book that can be viewed online at [http://ccdigitalpress.org/camara/chaptertwo.html](http://ccdigitalpress.org/camara/chaptertwo.html)
Cauleen Smith, ‘Human 3.0 Reading List,’ 2017

Human_3.0 Reading List

1. Black Interior by Elizabeth Alexander
2. The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin
3. Gender Trouble by Judith Butler
4. Woman, Race & Class by Angela Davis
5. The World and Africa by W.E.B. Du Bois
6. Black Skins, White Masks by Frantz Fanon
7. Where And Where I Enter by Paula Giddings
8. Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature by Donna J. Haraway
9. The Undercommons: Fantasia Black Hole and Black Study by S. Harney and A. Moten
10. Sylvia Wynter On Being Human As Praxis edited by Katherine McKittrick
11. Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde
12. Martha Washington Goes To War Vol. 15 by B. Miller and D. Gibbons

This list is an offering for study. Each entry acts as an index for nodes of knowledge that enable the expansion of consciousness, consciousness and insights humans will need in order to approach a sustainable ontology. Explore and augment as needed.
TO DO LIST:

- WRITTEN REFLECTION: Post a link to something that you like and that you think counts as feminist media of any kind. It can be writing, an image, or a video. Write a few sentences about how you made your selection and why you think it’s feminist. Use the reading by hooks, Juhasz and Hidalgo to guide your definition of feminist media.
Feminist Manifesto:
Can we all just make work that makes people think?
The future of feminism needs more feminist works
To empower and gain more feminist workers,
And how do we expand impact?
More work.
More work that thoughtfully considers
and makes those who receive it
thoughtfully consider.
But that doesn’t mean you must be tame.
Wake them up.
A nice tap on the shoulder,
A kind “Good Morning,”
An irritating repetitive noise they can’t
find the source of,
Or a good shake,
Even a bucket of ice water
It doesn’t matter, wake them up!

Work can be outrageous and wild, but it doesn’t have to be
Sometimes we need to shout, “Fuck the Patriarchy!”
And sometimes we need to show how
we’ve been silenced.
Sometimes we need something that just
is who we are and know that is enough.
But feminism in work can shine through
even when its not spoon-fed.

It won’t always be “right”
But who’s saying it is or its not?
Why do we have to be right all the time?
And if it’s wrong, what better way to
learn.

If you’re saying it’s wrong, why is it?
Tear privilege down, but we shouldn’t
tear each other down.
Call out harmful actions,
Limited ways of thinking,

But also be prepared to hear your own ways questioned.
Listen to others
Look for motives,
But don’t count on
Or allow,
Only motives to say the right thing.
Don’t dismiss how others feel.
Know that just because you could stand up to yourself
And say, “This isn’t a good direction,”
“I think you missed the mark,”
“I’m insulted by this,”
Doesn’t mean that everyone else can or will.
Police yourself.

Be just as prepared to say, “Fuck off” as
you are to say “No Thank You”
And at least try to choose the right one.

There’s so much to address, and then we think
Do I have to address something?

Don’t be afraid
Afraid to make something that people won’t like
More importantly, don’t be afraid to
make something that you won’t like
Fear paralyzes, and we need movement

Just create!
“’That’s easy to say”
Well yes it is, but do you disagree?

It’s too much to take on everything at once, but that’s why we need to keep making.
Every feminist – make something!
And everyone should be a feminist.
Womanhouse (January 30 – February 28, 1972) organized by Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, co-founders of the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) Feminist Art Program.
PART 1  Histories

KEYWORDS: 70s feminism, second wave feminism, consciousness raising

WATCH:
The Woman’s Film (Judy Smith, Louise Alaimo, and Ellin Sorrin, 1971, 40 min)
Womanhouse (Johanna Demetrakas, 1974, 47 min)

PART 2  Returns

KEYWORDS: third wave feminism, fourth wave feminism, contemporary feminism, second wave critiques, returning, revising, remaking, reconsidering

WATCH:
Hysterical Reenactments: WITCH (Amy Ruhl, 2015, 14 min)
Shulie (Elisabeth Subrin, 1997, 36 min)

READ:
• “By For and About: The ‘Real’ Problem in the Feminist Film Movement” (Shilyh Warren, 2008)
• Trying to Make the Personal Political: Feminism and Consciousness-Raising (a reprint of Consciousness Raising Guidelines, 1975 by the Women’s Action Alliance, Lori Sharpe, Jane Ginsburg and Gail Gordon, with new forward and afterword by Mariame Kaba, and Jacqui Shine, 2017)
• “Trashing Shulie: Remnants from Some Abandoned Feminist History” (Elisabeth Subrin, 2006)
REVISION / RECLAMATION

Use a historical archive, artifact, piece of media, document, text, or object from feminist history as a point of departure to make a moving image project. You might use something we have read or watched in class, but you can also choose something else. How can you transform your object through reuse, re-appropriation, or re-performing? Is your transformation a critique, a celebration, a call to action or a call to remember something forgotten? What might it mean to embody, engage with, or recreate something that originates in a previous feminist moment? How can you use objects, texts, and creative work from the past to think about feminism right now?

Faith Ringgold and Michele Wallace at an Art Workers Coalition protest at the Whitney Museum in 1971. Photograph by Jan van Raay.
TO DO LIST:

- Module 2 reading
- **WRITTEN REFLECTION**: Frame your thoughts on this week's screenings and readings by thinking about Alexandra Juhasz's reflection on "the perpetual 're' for all things feminist." Juhasz notes (in the reading from week 1): "I find a recurring cycle of feminist knowledge and action: feminists exist and are forgotten, make their work and see it disappear, are remembered and get lost, are rediscovered, erased, and rerepresented yet again." What does it feel like in this moment to watch / discover / rediscover feminist work from 40 years ago? What feels dated and what feels urgent? What feels nourishing or useful and what feels problematic? Think across both days of screenings this week as well as the week 2 reading (all of which does the work of thinking about the 70s in a later / present day moment). How might we use earlier feminist histories to move forward in our own making and thinking right now?
YOU DON’T KNOW ANYTHING FOR SURE

You never know anything for 100% certainty and that’s okay. Is this the best career for me? Is filmmaking what I was destined to do? Am I a good filmmaker? The answer is who knows? Just keep trying.

There are so many reasons, we as non men filmmakers ask ourselves this question. We are doubted at every turn and by the time we look for positive introspection from our minds, we’re littered with thoughts that male filmmakers are routinely not. We have to find the fine line. What is uncertainty and what is gendered negativity? We must destroy the doubting thoughts that come from being a non man. We must look at our certainty under a critical eye and feel the one that is productive.

We have to make and make and fuck up constantly and keep repairing and keep destroying.

WE HAVE TO BE OK WITH NOT KNOWING

We also have to be okay with making constant mistakes. You are not perfect. You are capable of recreating fucked up images on camera and have to look at what you’ve done and ask yourself, “have I gone too far?” There is no easy answer. There is no yes or no. There is a long and productive conversation to have with yourself. You will have moments where you will be problematic because no one is born having all the social justice knowledge in the world and you are not a saint that knows everything. Stop pretending you do. Listen to your peers and be open to fucking up and always hold yourself accountable. Don’t over apologize, then you’re just trying to ease your guilt. Apologize, then change. For yourself and your filmmaking.

You don’t know everything, but there are moments to pretend you do. Not during critique, not during casual conversation with peers, and not during classes but on set where we have a leading role in the crew, just pretend you know what you’re doing. You will eventually find that you might actually feel more and more comfort on set with a surge of confidence that comes directly from sheer will which makes it easier when you surround yourself with people you trust. You can look at them in the eye and they will have your back. You must not rely on them every time but if you are able to have a support system you trust, you should use it. These people are looking out for you just like you’re looking out for them.

LYNN

STUDENT MANIFESTO #4 / UC SANTA CRUZ, FALL 2017
NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY PRESENTS

GENDER INEQUALITY IN FILM

HOW WOMEN ARE PORTRAYED ON SCREEN IN THE TOP 500 FILMS
2007-2012

30.8% of speaking characters are women
28.8% of women wear sexually revealing clothes as opposed to 7.0% of men
26.2% of women actors get partially naked while 9.4% of men do
10.7% of movies featured a balanced cast where half of the characters are female

Average ratio of male actors to female actors is 2.25:1
Percentage of teenage females depicted with some nudity has increased 32.5% from 2007 to 2012
Roughly a third of female speaking characters are shown in sexually revealing attire or are partially naked

10.6% increase in female characters on screen observed when a woman is directing
8.7% increase when a female screenwriter is attached
Women purchase half of the movie tickets sold in the US

INDUSTRY INEQUALITY

There is a 5:1 ratio of men working on films to women
Females direct more DOCUMENTARIES than NARRATIVE FILMS

PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN EMPLOYED BEHIND THE SCENES ON TOP 250 FILMS BY ROLE

DIRECTORS
WRITERS
EXEC. PRODUCERS
PRODUCERS
EDITORS
CINEMATOGRAPHERS


PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN AND MEN EMPLOYED BEHIND THE SCENES ON TOP 250 FILMS OF 2012

38% employed
0-1 women
23% employed
2 women
28% employed
3-5 women
10% employed
6-9 women
MODULE #3

KEYWORDS:
industry sexism, interventions, dismantling mainstream representations, mainstream media, Hollywood, TV, video games, gender roles, porn, disruptions, reversals, re-appropriations, interventions

WATCH:
Semiotics of the Kitchen (Martha Rosler, 1975, 6 min)
Schmeergunz (Gunvor Nelson and Dorothy Wiley, 1965, 13 min)
The Body Besieged (Kelly Sears, 2009, 5 min)
Millionaire Worthy TV - Shred for that Millionaire (performance for video 2013, 15 min) and Playing A Girl (Performance for Video, 2013, 21 min) - both by Angela Washko
"Work of Art! Reality TV Special" episode from Falling in Love...with Chris and Greg (Greg Youmans and Chris Vargas, 2012, 14 min)
Removed (Naomi Uman, 1999, 7 min)
What Happened to Her (Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, 2016, 15 min)

READ / WATCH ON YOUR OWN:
• “The Rule” in Dykes to Watch Out For (Alison Bechdel, 1985)
• Interview with Kristy Guevara-Flanagan
• “The Careless Language of Sexual Violence” (Roxanne Gay in The Rumpus 2011)
• episodes of Feminist Frequency (www.youtube.com/user/feministfrequency) with Anita Sarkeesian, “Tropes vs. Women” (2011, links in reading drive folder).
• articles on gender inequality in mainstream film industries (reading folder)
INTerventions

Inspired by this week's viewing and reading, this project invites you to intervene in or disrupt a sexist or patriarchal film, TV show, video game, or other media object. You might use text, commentary, cinematography or editing to create a transformation in your selected media object. As a point of departure, here are some ideas to consider:

- Re-edit a scene from film or TV that you consider sexist to transform, improve, or subvert it in some way. Can you take a film that doesn't pass the Bechdel test and turn it into one that does? [For example: what would it feel like to take all the women in a mainstream porn film and let them talk to each other?]

- Alternately, your re-edit can make the sexism of your chosen media more visible in a way that transforms how we see it.

- Or, you can add or remove something from a sexist film or TV show to make us think about it in a new way.

- Restage a sexist film or TV scene with genders or gender roles reversed. Or, instead, you might alter the film's racial representations. What role does casting play in how we look at gender and its presentation, race, and sexuality?

This is not an exhaustive list but rather a few ideas to get you thinking. Feel free to expand on these ideas!
TO DO LIST:

- Module 3 Reading

**WRITTEN REFLECTION:** Use this space to reflect on any of this week's screenings and/or readings. Which pieces resonated with you? Which didn't? How can feminist interventions help us look at everyday media in new ways? Talk about whatever struck you this week.

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SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
MAY 22 2010

I bet this is the first time a woman wearing a gorilla mask has ever given a commencement address. If this makes it into Ripley’s Believe it or Not, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago should get an award for taking the leap. It’s delicious that an anonymous, masked artist is speaking to you today, when the art world still clings to the outmoded idea that art has to be about the individual — one great genius after another, creating entirely original work, passing the mantle on to the next genius, forming a master narrative that tells the history of our culture. And, ok, these geniuses are mostly pale and mostly male. So, what are the rest of us, including the 67% of Art Institute students who happen to be female, to do?

In 1985, we got the idea to put up two posters on the streets of NY about the state of women artists in the New York Art world. It wasn’t a pretty picture. But we had a philosophy about how to construct political art — to twist an issue around and present it in a way that hadn’t been seen before. Who knew that our work would cause all hell to break loose? Who knew it would cause a major crisis around and present it in a way that hadn’t been seen before. Who knew that our culture. And, ok, these geniuses are mostly pale and mostly male. So, what are the rest of us, including the 67% of Art Institute students who happen to be female, to do?

Who knew that those two posters would lead to hundreds of others, plus actions, billboards, sticker and books — not just about about art, but about women and people of color in the worlds of film, politics and pop culture. Who knew that 25 years later we — the agitating outsiders — would wind up inside the museums we criticize: the Art Institute, The Museum of Modern Art in NY, the Pompidou in Paris... and be speaking to all of you today. The Guerrilla Girls have been so lucky to do this work and we’re so grateful that thousands of people all over the world, aged 8 to 80, write us each year telling us that we inspired them to be activists, too.

We were just a bunch of girls who couldn’t put up and shut up. We saw something that needed to be done. And we figured out a way to do it. We didn’t have a plan but we had attitude and a strategy. We know that each of you in the Class of 2010 want to do great creative work and have strategies and attitude, too. We know you want to be the best artists, designers, writers, administrators, architects, and educators you can be. But we also know that you want to do good in the world at the same time. We all have to. We can’t not.

So today, as you go out to transform the worlds of art, design, fashion, architecture, art history, writing, critical theory, etc, plus fields that haven’t been invented yet, I want to share some things we learned along the way.

Presenting:

The Guerrilla Girls’ Guide to Behaving Badly (Which You Have to Do Most of the Time in the World as We Know It)

Be a loser. The world of art and design doesn’t have to be an Olympics where a few win and everyone else is forgotten. Even though the art market and celebrity culture is set up to support the idea of hyper-competition and to make everyone but the stars feel like failures, there’s also a world out there of artistic cooperation and collaboration that’s not about raging egos. That’s the one we joined, and the one you can join, too. Get beyond the outdated assumption that only a handful of you will “make it.” Don’t all waste your time running after the same few carrots.

Be impatient. Don’t wait for a stamp of approval from the system. Don’t wait around to be asked to dance. Claim your place. Put on your own shows, create your own companies, develop your own projects. To steal a phrase from the Dali Lama, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” In other words, Be the artworld you want to take part in.

Be crazy. Political art that just points to something and says “this is bad” is like preaching to the choir. Try to change people’s minds about issues. Do it in an outrageous, unforgettable way. A lot of people in the art and film world didn’t believe things were as bad as we said they were and we brought them around....with facts, humor and a little fake fur. Here’s a trick we learned: If you can get someone who disagrees with you to laugh at an issue, you have a better chance of changing their minds.

Be anonymous. You’d be surprised what comes out of your mouth when you’re wearing a gorilla mask. We started wearing them to protect our careers, but soon realized it was one of the secrets of our success. Anonymous free speech is protected by the First Amendment. So join that long line of anonymous masked avengers, like Robin Hood, Batman, and of course, Wonder Woman.

Be an outsider. Maybe having a secret identity isn’t for you. But even if you end up working inside the system, act like an outsider. Look for the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair, then expose it. We’ve empowered lots of people inside museums, universities and film studios to jam their culture and dis their institutions.

Lead a double life. Be a split personality. Be two, three, four, five artists in one body, like me. I’m an artist / activist / writer / graphic designer. Be a hybrid. Hybrids are so green.

Just do one thing. If it works, do another. If it doesn’t, try it another way. Over
time, we promise you it will all add up to something effective and great. Don't be paralyzed because you can't do it all right away. Just keep on chipping away.

**Don't make only FINE art.** Make some cheap art that can be owned by everyone, like books and movies can.

**Sell out.** If people start paying attention to you, don't waste time wondering if you've lost your edge. Take your critique right inside the galleries and institutions to a larger audience. When our work appears at venerable venues like the Venice Biennale, the Tate Modern, or The National Gallery in DC, we get hundreds of letters from people saying they were blown away by our analysis of art and culture.

**Give collectors, curators, and museum directors tough love:** (Bear with me, this is a long rant.) It's a pity that public art museums have to compete with billionaire art investors to own significant artworks. And then depend on those investors to donate the works! It's outrageous that art by women and artists of color sold at auction bring 10-20% of the price of art by white males. It's unethical that wealthy art collectors who put lots of money in the art market can then become museum trustees, overseeing museums that in turn validate their investments. What a lousy way to write and preserve our history! If things continue like they're going, a hundred years from now, many museums will be showing only the white male version of art history, with a few tokens thrown in. You need to keep that from happening. Make sure that museums cast a wider net and collect the real story of our culture.

How can you deliver tough love to the art world? Demand ethical standards inside museums. No more insider trading. No more conflicts of interest! No more cookie cutter collections of Art That Costs The Most (Eli Broad, do you hear us?) While you're at it, give some tough love to design and architecture, where women and people of color face a crushing glass ceiling. And finally, educators out there, don't teach a history constructed by corrupt institutions. Write your own!

**Complain, complain, complain.** But be creative about it. Sure we've done 45 feet high banners and billboards all over the world. But here's some simpler things we've done: Put anti-film industry stickers in movie theatre bathrooms, insert fliers with facts about art world discrimination into books in museum stores, send anonymous postcards to museum directors. Want more ideas? How about attaching political hangtags to items in clothing stores, putting up street art or billboards across from your office, slapping stickers on fashion magazine covers. You can probably think up a million better ideas than we can.

**Use the F word.** Be a feminist. For decades the majority of art school graduates have been women. Your class is no exception. But after school, when you find a too-small number of women and people of color in your field, especially at the top, then you know there's got to be discrimination, conscious or unconscious, going on. Don't just put up with it, say something. We think its ridiculous that so many people who believe in the tenets of feminism have been brainwashed by negative stereotypes in the media and society and refuse to call themselves feminists. And guys, that means you, too. Time to man up, whether you're female, male, trans, etc. and speak up for women. Women's rights, civil rights, and gay, lesbian and trans rights are the great human rights movements of our time. There's still a long way to go.

**And last, but not least, be a great ape.**

In 1917, Franz Kafka wrote a short story titled A Report to An Academy, in which an ape spoke about what it was like to be taken into captivity by a bunch of educated, intellectual types. The published story ends with the ape tamed and broken by the stultified academics. But in an earlier draft, Kafka tells a different story. The ape ends his report by instructing other apes NOT to allow themselves to be tamed. He says instead: "break the bars of your cages, bite a hole through them, squeeze through an opening… and ask yourself where do YOU want to go?"

Make that YOUR ending, not the tamed and broken one.

**Oh...And don't forget to have some serious fun along the way!!!!**
1. **Say what you feel needs to be heard**

Dealing with obsessed thought? Interrogate those thoughts. Unfold your conscious through your visuals. Have a conversation with your thoughts. Talking to yourself is normal.

2. **Processing Black pain matters**

Black pain and internal conflict needs to be seen in new ways outside of the typical narrative of black pain. We need to tell stories that WE can empathize with beyond class and geopolitical struggle. Most import, we need to make less work that will be hyper consumed by white audiences and nonblack audiences (see #3)...

3. **Strive to work with ppl you can trust**

Create a cast and crew that represents you and a shared interest to produce something that would mutually benefit from your services as a filmmaker and vice versa. Combining talents with you people you share vibes and constructive challenges with is powerful.

4. **Don’t sweat if white people don’t like your work**

I hate that I’m even bringing this up, but its not about them it – it never was. WE must remember that in order to subvert the narrative and cycle of hyper consumption we must derail our ties to oppressive modes of perception regarding our work. WE have no time to question if Rebecca and Dylan can process or fathom our struggles or interrogations of such. If they’re that uncomfortable and displeased, that’s their problem.

5. **Manifest Feasibility**

Producing a film is expensive, but don’t let the big shots with money intimidate you from your craft. Get creative and use your limitations to your advantage. Don’t worry if you can’t make a major-motion picture right now, your imagery will move folx regardless of budget.
MODULE #4

Keywords: DIY filmmaking, collaboration, activism / activist video, amateur film, lo-fi, super 8, pixelvision, cable access, handmade film, femmage, low budget / no budget production practices, video chain letters, diary films

Watch:
The Herstory of the Female Filmmaker (Kelly Gallagher, 2011, 15 min)
Madam Winger Makes a Film: a Survival Guide for the 21st Century (Helen Hill, 2001, 10 min)
A Breakdown (and) After the Mental Hospital (Anne Charlotte Robertson, 1991, 26 min)
Jollies (Sadie Benning, 1990, 12 min.)
Joanie 4 Jackie: Intro from Joanie 4 Jackie 4-Ever (Miranda July, 1998) and A Wild Horse Rider, on Joanie 4 Jackie’s U-Matic Chain Letter (Dulcie Clarkson, 1997, 9 min.)
Pope Don’t Preach, I’m Terminating my Pregnancy (1987, 5 min) and Scarlet Harlot’s Interstate Solicitation Tour (1991, 10 min - both by Scarlet Harlot aka Carol Leigh)
Hermione (Nina Yuen, 2014, 10 min)

Read / View on your own:
• Guerilla Girls Art Institute of Chicago Commencement Address, 2010
• "Waste Not Want Not: An Inquiry into what Women Saved and Assembled—FEMMAGE." from Heresies (Miriam Schapiro and Melissa Meyer, 1977)
• "No Woman Is an Object: Realizing the Feminist Collaborative Video" (Alexandra Juhasz, 2013)
• Interview with Carol Leigh from Women of Vision (Alexandra Juhasz)
• "Miranda July Shares Her Vintage Feminist Film Archive" in The New York Times, January 2017 (and browse through Joanie 4 Jackie website)
• Recipes for Disaster: a Handcrafted Film Cookbooklet (ed. Helen Hill, 2001: Optional / further reading, not required!)
ANTI-HIERARCHICAL FILMMAKING (METHODS, MATERIALS, AND MEANS OF PRODUCTION)

Inspired by this module's screenings, this project asks you to foreground how you make work. Rather than giving you a topic or subject, this week's feminist filmmaking project can be about whatever you want but the medium, tools, process, and materials used should be a central and visible aspect of your piece. Using Alexandra Juhasz's proposal that feminist video practice should be “antihierarchical, process-oriented, less costly, populist, and user-friendly” try to think about using cheap, accessible, DIY tools for your project as well as about how your work can reflect feminist process. What can you make without using any school equipment (or using as little as possible)? Your project should be fast, cheap, inventive, homemade, improvisatory, ingenious, and brave. How can simple tools and strategies make your work conceptually stronger (rather than being seen as a limitation or disadvantage?). You might use your body / performance, make posters, leaflets, or props, use things you find in your kitchen or bathroom cabinet to make something new, or think about using collaborative methods.

A few ideas (feel free to expand on this list!):

- make a collaborative project with someone else that foregrounds the process of collaboration. How can you make the act of working together a visible part of your work? What gets negotiated and how when you work together?
- Intervene in a sexist or patriarchal cultural space using your body—the most accessible art-making tool at your disposal—to create your intervention.
- make a project inspired by Miriam Schapiro’s and Melissa Meyer’s idea of “Femmage.” Can you turn waste or scraps into something new and unexpected?
- make a video chain letter with someone else in the class (you’ll need to leave extra time for this idea so that you can pass it back and forth a few times).

‘Riot Grrrl Manifesto,” Kathleen Hanna in BIKINI KILL ZINE 2, 1991

Project of the Week

What is a Riot Grrrl?

Because it will never meet the hierarchical
DOY standards of talent, or cool, or smart.
They are created to keep us out, and if we ever meet them they will change, or we will become tokens.
BECAUSE I need laughter and I need girl love,
we need to build lines of communication so we can be more open and accessible to each other.
BECAUSE we are being divided by our labels and philosophies, and we need to accept and support each other as girls; acknowledging different approaches to life, and accepting all of them as valid.
BECAUSE in every form of media I see us/myself slapped, decapitated, laughed at, objectified, raped, trivialized, pushed, ignored, stereotyped, kicked, scorned, molested, silenced, invalidated, knifed, shot, choked, and killed
BECAUSE I see the connectedness of all forms of oppression and I believe we need to fight them with this awareness.
BECAUSE a safe space needs to be created for girls where we can open our eyes and reach out to each other without being threatened by this sexist society and our day to day bullshit.
BECAUSE we need to acknowledge that our blood is being spilled that right now a girl is being raped or battered and it might be me or you or your mom or the girl you sat next to on the bus last Tuesday, and she might be dead by the time you finish reading this. I am not making this up.
BECAUSE I can’t smile when my girlfriends are dying inside. We are dying inside and we never even touch each other, we are supposed to hate each other.
BECAUSE I am still fucked up, I am still dealing with internalized racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, etc., and I don’t want to do it alone. BECAUSE we need to talk to each other. Communication/inclusion is key. We will never know if we don’t break the code of silence.
BECAUSE we girls want to create mediums that speak to us. We are tired of boy band after boy band, boy zine after boy zine, boy punk after boy punk after boy.
BECAUSE I am tired of these things happening to me; I’m not a fuck toy. I’m not a punching bag, I’m not a joke.
BECAUSE every time we pick up a pen, or an instrument, or get anything done, we are creating the revolution. We ARE the revolution.

No we are not paranoid.
No we are not manhurers.
No we are not worrying too much.
No we are not taking it too seriously.
Hello Helen —
So glad that you are doing this. Here are a few tiny hints.

1. Nail polish on the emulsion works to block the action of the bleach. I find that blue polish is the easiest color to see when you are working. Do not stay limited to the brush that comes with the polish. Nail polish can be removed after bleaching. Be careful to rinse the acetone (nail polish remover) off immediately. In a warm climate, the acetone will begin to eat the film base (acetate).

2. Black India ink works great to block out part of the image. Speedball is the densest brand of ink and works great in the superfine sappingograph pen. Use on emulsion side.

3. Do a lot of whatever technique you are using. Allows the eye to focus.
The Big Miss Moviola Project

TO: Big Miss Moviola
P.O. Box 14284 S.E.
Portland, Or.
97214
TO DO LIST:

- Module 4  Reading
- **WRITTEN REFLECTION:** Things like funding, access to production tools and media-making education, and gatekeeping at the level of film festivals, broadcast, and distribution play a large role in perpetuating sexist, racist, and exclusionary mainstream media cultures. This week you've watched and read about a lot of makers and projects that claim the margins or periphery of mainstream culture as a space of potential, imagination, visibility, and culture-building power. From handmade animation activists and educators, to cable access sex work advocacy, to intimate diary practices, to Miranda July's video chainletter empire, this week's makers embrace low-fi, cheap, DIY, intimate, small-scale, and collective practices in order to make new spaces for creative production that can function outside of mainstream funding, screening, distribution, and broadcast systems. What do you think about the strategies, works, and readings from this week? What are the potentials of DIY counter-production and what are the limitations? Which works and strategies felt strong or exciting to you? How can you imagine applying these ideas to your own future media making work?
There have always been great blackwomen artists
Chila Kumari Burman (1986)

We face many problems when trying to establish the very existence of Blackwomen’s art, and a strong social and political base from which to develop our study of it. Firstly, we have to struggle to establish our existence, let alone our credibility as autonomous beings, in the art world. Secondly, we can only retain that credibility and survive as artists if we become fully conscious of ourselves, lest we are demoralised or weakened by the social, economic, and political constraints which the white-male art establishment imposes and will continue to impose on us.

This paper, then, is saying Blackwomen artists are here, we exist and we exist positively, despite the racial, sexual and class oppressions which we suffer, but first, however, we must point out the way in which these oppressions have operated in a wider context – not just in the art worlds, but also in the struggles for black and female liberation.

It is true to say that although Blackwomen have been the staunchest allies of black men and white women in the struggle against the oppression we all face at the hands of the capitalist and patriarchal system, we have hardly ever received either the support we need or recognition of our pivotal role in this struggle. Blackwomen now realise that because of the specific ways in which we are oppressed by white-male dominated society, we must present a new challenge to imperialism, racism and sexism from inside and outside the established black liberation movement. It is this realisation which has a lot to do with many second generation British Blackwomen reclaiming art, firstly as a legitimate area of activity for Blackwomen as a distinct group of people, secondly as a way of developing awareness (denied us by the racist, sexist, class society) of ourselves as complete human beings, and thirdly as a contribution to the black struggle in general.

Having said this, Blackwomen’s ability to do any or all of these three things is restricted by the same pressures of racism, sexism and class exclusivity which we experience in society in general. The bourgeois art establishment only acknowledges white men as truly creative and innovative artists, whilst recognising art by white women only as a homogenous expression of femininity and art by black people (or, more accurately, within the terms of reference used, black men as a static expression of the ritual experience of the daily lives of their communities, be they in the Third World or the imperialist hinterland. In this system of knowledge, Blackwomen artists, quite simply, do not exist.

Nevertheless, if we look at the way in which these assumptions have been challenged, particularly by white women, we can see nothing that acknowledges that Blackwomen exist. Art history is an academic subject, studied in patriarchal art institutions, and white middle-class women have used their advantageous class position to gain access to these institutions by applying pressure to them in a way which actually furthers the exclusion of black artists in general. White women’s failure to inform themselves of the obstacles faced by black artists and in particular Blackwomen artists has lead to the production of an extremely Eurocentric theory and practice of ‘women’s art’. It seems that white feminists, as much as white women in general, either do not attempt or find it difficult to conceive of Blackwomen’s experience. Some of those who do not attempt to may claim that they cannot speak for Blackwomen, but this is merely a convenient way of sidestepping their own racism. The fact remains that in a patriarchal and sexist society, all black people suffer from racism, and it is quite possible for white women to turn racism, which stems from patriarchy, to their advantage. Black men are unable to do this and, theoretically, are unable to turn sexism to their advantages, although they can do this for short-term gains which in the long term will never benefit black people as a whole. This has happened to a certain extent in the art world, where black men have failed to recognise Blackwomen artists or have put pressure on us to produce certain kinds of work linked to a male-dominated notion of struggle. However, because of their race and class position, black men have been unable to use the resources of information in art institutions in the same way white middle-class women have.

The struggles of Blackwomen artists

The first stage of most Blackwomen artists’ encounter with the art establishment is their entry into art college. There are hardly any Blackwomen attending art college in Britain, and those who do, according to a survey of Blackwomen artists I carried out, seem to have experienced a mixture of hostility...
and indifference from their college. Because their white tutors work within an imperial art tradition, using the aesthetic conventions of the dominant ideology, they are unwilling to come to terms with Blackwomen students and their work. This resistance manifests itself in many ways – some Blackwomen art students have found themselves asking why they as individuals found it easy to get into art college, only to realise that they are there purely as tokens, and in general it appears that Blackwomen’s very presence in white-male art institutions is frequently called into question. Apart from denying us the support and encouragement that white art students receive, art colleges make us feel as though we don’t belong inside their walls by the way in which our work is looked at. Those of us who have done more overtly political work have made white tutors very uncomfortable and, as a result, hostile, whilst students who have done less obviously challenging work have been questioned for not producing the kind of work which tutors expect black people to produce. Class differences amongst Blackwomen are significant here, for working-class Blackwomen have generally been quicker to reject the ideology of the art establishment and have therefore found it difficult to accept any kind of token status or to produce work of a more acceptable nature. Those who have not taken such an oppositional stance have still suffered from having their work analysed within a very narrow framework because their tutors have expected them to produce ‘ethnic’ work which reflects their ‘cultural origin’ using, for example, ‘bright carnival colours’, and white tutors and students alike have expressed confusion when such work has not been forthcoming. Another tendency of white tutors, irrespective of the work they are presented with, is to discuss art from the third world with Blackwomen in a patronising and racist manner.

Of course, the assumption that Blackwomen will produce work with ‘ethnic’ or ‘primitive’ associations is one that white tutors make about black men as well, but it is important to point out that male and female white tutors are more inclined to see black men as having a more prominent role in this misconceived tradition. One Blackwoman student at Bradford art college commented: ‘Funny how they always refer to you as some sort of bridge or crossing point between two things. Black meets woman. That’s handy. As if you don’t have an experience which is your own, but borrow from the brothers and sisters in struggle.’

It seems, then, that when art colleges and universities give places to Blackwomen, which in itself is a rare event, all the forces of the dominant aesthetic ideology are brought to bear on us. Blackwomen artists are ignored, isolated, described as ‘difficult’, slotted into this or that stereotype and generally discouraged in every conceivable way from expressing ourselves in the way we want to. This system of oppression and exclusion extends well beyond our time as art students. There are no full-time lecturing posts at art colleges and universities filled by Blackwomen in the entire country - instead we are offered ‘freelance’ work as visiting lecturers, which will never be enough to initiate a critique of contemporary art practice which is so desperately needed in every single art department in the country. In addition, Blackwomen artists are denied the opportunity to develop their work as individuals to develop their work in the same way that white artists can through grants from sources such as the Arts Council, the Greater London Council, regional arts associations and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Even through some of these sources such as the GLC and the Greater London Arts Association have recently begun to realise how much they have neglected Black visual arts, on the only occasion that a Blackwoman had received funding from the GLC as an individual, this has still been on unsatisfactory terms which differ significantly from the terms on which the only black man in this position has been funded. The man in question has been funded without any preconditions except that he produces a certain amount of work, whilst, the woman was funded by the Arts and Recreation Department of the GLC for a year on the condition that she was attached to a community arts centre as a ‘community artist’, and the stipulation was made that work she produced should not reflect her desires as an individual but the interests of the ‘black community’ of the experience of an individual Blackwoman and had funded her on the basis of an historical notion of ‘community’ or ‘ethnic minority’ art, but when it came to applying for the Arts Council, it appeared that the role she has been pushed into was not individual enough. The rejection of her application to this body read:

‘We do not think that your proposed project fits the terms of reference for this training scheme which is specifically aimed at developing the individual’s skills, and is not to assist with research projects.’
If even the GLC funded a Blackwoman artist only as a 'community artist', this illustrates our position in a kind of funding no-woman’s-land, because the Arts Council, racist and sexist as it is already, will continue to see our work as unfundable research projects and, as was the case with the application mentioned, refer us to bodies such as the Association of the Commonwealth Universities, further relegating us to the marginality of the 'ghetto artist', completely outside the mainstream British art world.

**Blackwomen artists fight back**

The resilience of Blackwomen in the face of oppression has manifested itself in the art world through our ability to produce and exhibit work despite all the social, economic and political constraints described above. The first all-Blackwomen’s show at the Africa Centre in 1983 was not just a beginning; Blackwomen artists have been actively involved in exhibitions with white artists and Black men artists for several years, but this all-Blackwomen’s show and the ones that have taken place since then – Blackwoman Time Now, 1985 International Women’s Day Show, Mirror Reflecting Darkly, etc.- represent a significant new direction which has much to do with the development of what Barbara Smith describes as ‘our own intellectual traditions’.

It is obvious that the majority of Black artists see their work in opposition to the establishment view of art as something that is ‘above’ politics, and Blackwomen artists see their work as integral to the struggles of Blackwomen and black people in general, but although Blackwomen’s own culture plays a large part in determining the culture and form of our work, we often concentrate on different issues to black men, who, as one Blackwoman artist points out, often believe that ‘artists who are making through their works a collective, aggressive challenge to cultural domination are “real” black artists and making Black Art. But some male artists fail to go through to assert their identity and survive’.

Alice Walker illustrates the difference between these two ideas of Black Art in ‘In Search for Our Mothers’ Gardens’ and goes on to put forward an alternative way for the black artist to operate:

“I am impressed by people who claim they can see everything and event in strict terms of black and white but their work is not, in my long contemplated and earnestly considered opinion, either black or white, but a dull, uniform gray. It is boring because it is easy and requires only that the reader be a lazy reader and a prejudiced one. Each story or poem has a formula usually two-thirds ‘hate whitey’s guts’ and one third ‘I am black, beautiful and almost always right’. Art is not flattery, and the work of every artist must be more difficult than that.

‘My major advice to young black artists would be that they shut themselves up somewhere away from all the debates about who they are and what colour they are and just turn out paintings and poems and stories and novels. Of course the kind of artist we are required to be cannot do this (our people are waiting)’.

Alice Walker’s advice is important here, for she is not suggesting that we cut ourselves off from the outside world, because we cannot forget the mark our oppression as black women have made on us, or the fact that ‘our people are waiting’. The point is that what we need as artists is the opportunity to create the situation she describes so that we are allowed to develop an understanding of ourselves and of the struggle we have to wage within British society for recognition and respect. If we are able to do this by having adequate resources put at our disposal, we hope to share our experiences with, awaken the consciousness of and impart our strength to the whole society.

“When you go to bed at night, do you think about being white? Sometimes when my head touches the pillow just right, and the black behind my eyelids begins to get fuzzy, I feel my fingers raise to my face and pinch the tip of my nose. Count. 30 seconds, 1 minute, 3 minutes, 5 minutes. 5 whole minutes, and I will have the perfect, most beautiful nose. Instant nose job for 6 year old me. Laying in the dark with my eyes closed, nose pinched, and tears running. And then I fall asleep.”

This is the introduction to the first piece of spoken word poetry I had ever written - a monologue that allowed me for the first time to voice my feelings about my own identity as an Asian immigrant in America. Something that I felt compelled to write and later extrapolate into one of my first personal, experimental films. When girls like me are growing up, our lives exist on the peripheral. Growing up in the middle of Orange County, Southern California, I remember being somewhat acknowledged by peers, even strangers but never really seen. I say seen in the sense that eyes that were met with mine held respect and understanding. I’ve never felt understood, and it some respects this lack of understanding imbued my own confused and misguided self-awareness as a young girl.

The subject of race on screen is a topic full of controversy met with constant adversity. The question of who is seen and who is privileged to look has been a cultural pandemic, which relegates people of color to be spectacles of performance; however, the feminist creative practice provides a space that allows these people to reclaim their roles and spaces on screen. I’ve realized that the line tread between reclamation and relegation is thin. I know these these two worlds well. Many of you do. They are constructed by social stigmas and beliefs existing solely to pit lightness and darkness against one another and thus creating anxieties around racial difference. In America, we see these anxieties manifest themselves specifically in the binary of race - whiteness vs. blackness. As someone who falls outside and in and between these identities I rarely find faces and voices like mine anywhere in the media. My experiences as a feminist and filmmaker throughout the years have left me with many answers and questions regarding art and identity. Some of which I have condensed into a list of reminders for filmmakers like myself. I say reminders instead of rules because I choose to reject rigid guidelines that may be reductive and non inclusive to the wonderfully complex and intricate spectrum of filmmakers and feminists out there.
1. Disrupt false binaries such as gay/straight, male/female, black/white, masculine/feminine so that equality is not measured by whether you treat a woman the same way you treat a man but whether you regard everyone as a unique yet fully human individual.

2. The personal is political. Your work is greater than yourself in many ways. The number one reason being that the politicizing happens because you are unique and everything around you creates experiences that affect the world and people around you. These reverberations make up culture and society, reflecting and questioning social structures and stigmas.

3. Embrace all your identities but avoid reductive narratives. For intersectional filmmakers who exist on many identity axes, it may seem harrowing to begin making a film from a personal place. There so much material to draw from but you fear accessing all of it will only create a superficial retelling of your own and others experiences. Find a good balance. Sometimes one identity or experience can fill up a whole film.

4. Film everything. Don’t be afraid of your ideas and concepts. Make films for yourself and your friends. Be vulnerable and open to all possibilities and concepts. It is in the experimentation of filmmaking that leads to the most honest work.

5. Collaborate with other feminist filmmakers. Working together not only provides consciousness raising around feminist issues, but it also invites marginalized groups of filmmakers to make work that they understand and want to champion along with you.

6. Invest in the future of feminist filmmaking whilst acknowledging the work of our predecessors. Often times there is a historical unbelonging for many feminist works. Things get made, seen, praised, and forgotten. This cyclical intergenerational amnesia contributes to the lack of permanence of feminist triumph on the mainstream screen. Acknowledge the past and its foundation while experimenting with new concepts.

Living in a visual culture dominated by images and constantly facilitated by the act of watching, marginalized peoples often find themselves missing from the screen. Although they still retain some filmic representations in visual and pop culture, their narratives and experiences are often trivialized, deeming them replaceable and insignificant. This erasure creates deep rooted misrepresentations about you and me, classifying our lives, voices, and stories as “less than” and creating dangerous, one-dimensional stereotypes simply because white directors tell more “compelling” stories about white subjects.

Much of what I have written here should be interpreted as advice you should not feel obligated to take. From one feminist to another, I urge this generation and future generations of filmmakers to never set ideas and beliefs in stone. All things and concepts are working in the sense that we are in a state of transformation – never always in one place but instead always moving towards a goal that is constantly growing and evolving. Our duty is not to adhere to any set of rules but to use our own creative practice to adapt and grow with these changes. Feminism itself is still a working concept with a working definition, and I think it would be wise for all of us to apply these working concepts to filmmaking as well.
KEYWORDS: (in)visibility, non-normative bodies, transgressive bodies, non-white bodies, fat bodies / fat studies, aging bodies, critical disability studies, sick woman theory, transgendered bodies

WATCH:

In My Country Men Have Breasts (Mania Akbari, 2012, 5 min)
Home Avenue (Jennifer Montgomery, 1989, 16 min)
The Body Beautiful (Ngozi Onwurah, 1990, 23 min)
Get Well Soon (Carolyn Lazard, 2015, 13 min)
Dear Lou Sullivan (Rhys Ernst, 2014, 7 min)
Well Dressed (Elliot Montague, 2006, 10 min)
Man (Maja Borg, 2016, 13 min)
Buoyant (Julie Wyman, 2004, 28 min)

READ:

• “There Have Always Been Great Blackwomen Artists” (Chila Kumari Burman, 1986)
• “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action” (Audre Lorde, 1977)
• “How to be a Person in the Age of Autoimmunity” (Carolyn Lazard, 2013)
• “Sick Woman Theory” (Johanna Hedva, 2016)
• “Fat Liberation Manifesto” (Judy Freespirit and Aldebaran, 1973)
• “Divinity: A Dossier A Performance Piece A Little-Understood Emotion” (Michael Moon and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, 1990)
Make a project that uses a body (yours or someone else’s) as its central image and point of departure. Is the body one that is usually visible or invisible? What might it mean to ask your viewer to look at a kind of body we don’t usually see? Or what might mean to ask your viewer to look in a new way at a kind of body we have seen many times? Does this body take up space or disappear? What kinds of stories are mapped onto our physical bodies?
Ana Mendieta, Untitled (Glass on Body Imprints), 1972, Photograph. © The Estate of Ana Mendieta

TO DO LIST:

- Module 5 Reading
- **WRITTEN REFLECTION**: Our bodies are the most visible part of us—depending on our physical presentation, age, size, shape, color, ability, and much more, our physical bodies are scrutinized, judged, measured, gendered / misgendered, seen, admired, objectified, avoided, or ignored. Think across this week’s readings and screenings about the politics of bodies that are hypervisible, that are usually invisible, or that are made newly visible onscreen (or in text). What are questions, thoughts, and responses that come up for you as you think across all of the work presented this week? What kinds of work do these projects do to think about the body as a productive site for feminist media work?
For Those of us Who Aim to Practice Feminist Media Making: An Incomplete Statement of Guidelines for the Making of Radical Art

(Discuss with Others and Add Your Thoughts)

1. To identify as a feminist is meaningless. We either practice feminism or we do not. Or rather, we either strive to practice feminism or we do not strive to practice feminism. Feminism is a methodology by which we engage with the world, whether it be in the creation of art or the studying of culture. Making media does not make one’s practice of feminism more valuable than that of someone who does not make media.

2. Growth is the most valuable result of creation. Product is merely incidental to the practice of creating feminist media. After creation, a maker should accept that their work is no longer theirs to amend or judge. A maker’s identity should not be determined by the media that they make or have made. Growth is the most valuable result of creation. If a maker has proven not to desire growth they should be encouraged to do so.

3. When creating art, one should not base their own worth on the level of exposure their work receives. Public reception does not reflect on the quality of the media nor does it reflect the usefulness of said media. The sheer number of viewers does not reflect on the quality or potency of the work. Whether the work deeply moves one viewer or one hundred viewers is irrelevant to the conversation surrounding the work’s significance.

4. All makers creating media with the intent of teaching, spreading, generating, questioning, exploring, and engaging with feminist methodologies should open themselves to new perspectives and critical discussion. Critical discussion is including but not limited to criticism, reassessment, theoretical analysis, or general questioning.

5. Feminist theory serves as the framework by which we are able to classify and understand forms of violence, therefore it is our duty to engage with feminist theory/methodology in ways which both criticize and embrace what theory we can currently access. It is our duty as feminist media makers to make these methodologies apparent and accessible through our various modes of creation. Whether it be in our body of work or the documentation that accompanies our main projects.

6. Self-care comes before the making of media. Without ample sleep, food, and play an artist cannot create highest quality of work that they are capable of. Although leisure is a privilege not available to every maker, those that have the ability to rest should do so before attempting to create. Experiencing life and attempting to enjoy the aspects that are more joyous than painful is far more important than creating media. An artist that cannot be transfixed or moved by the moments of unique significance (i.e. beauty, pain, love, or happiness) that result from life cannot reach their full capacity as a maker. Mental health/illness may inhibit the realization of these assertions. That means that these assertions should be understood as complicated and flexible. Care for yourself then care for those around you. Build a community that can provide the support which our society denies us.

7. When a maker is privileged enough to have the tools necessary to create media, they should share and make their tools openly available to all that may not have the same resources. This also helps strengthen communities and foster collaboration between multiple makers. This allows for the widest breadth of perspective and first hand experience to be channeled into the media made. Of course, a maker need not over extend themself to make their tools available to others. Instead they should note the importance of spreading resources and allot space/time for sharing equipment with others.
8. A maker that does not acknowledge or observe the wretched or violent aspects of life cannot make art that is relevant to the lives of those who are affected by said violence. A maker that only moves in one direction is doomed to corner themself into a pit of redundancy and reiterations of irrelevant statements or themes. To observe and study evil is to engage in that which society chooses to ignore. It is our duty to regard the abject of society as important and as meaningful as the normative.

9. When making feminist media, we must acknowledge that the tools we are utilizing are that of the masters. We must believe that in some senses it is in fact possible to tear down the master’s house with his own tools. It is our job to repurpose and reframe the mediums of media that enact violence on oppressed peoples.

10. When critically discussing art which is problematic, discussion of “good art” or “bad art” should be avoided. This is to avoid justifying acts of oppression on the grounds that a piece of art is generally accepted as “good” or significant. This is not to say that art cannot be irredeemably problematic, rather that it is necessary to explore and discuss problematic art in order to better understand forms of violence that manifest in various forms of media. If a “good” piece of art has aspect that are problematic we must study those aspects the same as we would an irredeemably problematic piece of art.

11. Aesthetics are inherently tied to ethics and vice versa. Therefore we must consider art as a space in which radical development of aesthetics is encouraged. Throughout the process of creating said radical aesthetics, one must be able to discern between aesthetic flattening and aesthetic generation. Even in cases of genuinely generative art production we must study the form by which our art manifests with the same scrutiny that we would any other work.

12. We should not disingenuously perform political acts physically or via social media. Reductionist performance of “radical” politics for social capital IS violence. Be wary of those who only speak in absolutes.

13. Embrace complexity. Life is grey. Binaries are cop outs. Violence is unforgivable therefore we must study. Identifying violence for the purpose of ignoring it is not productive. Therefore we should make art that engages with these complexities.

14. Authority that is self subverting is the only valid authority. Teach and be taught. Don’t police others. Engage and communicate with others. There is a cop in everyone, kindly exterminate them.
MANIFESTO FOR MAINTENANCE ART 1969!
Proposal for an exhibition CARE

MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES

I. IDEAS:

A. The Death Instinct and the Life Instinct:

The Death Instinct: separation; individuality; Avant-Garde par excellence; to follow one’s own path to death — do your own thing; dynamic change.

The Life Instinct: unification; the eternal return; the perpetuation and MAINTENANCE of the species; survival systems and operations; equilibrium.

B. Two basic systems: Development and Maintenance. The sourball of every revolution: after the revolution, who’s going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?

Development: pure individual creation; the new; change; progress; advance; flight or fleeing.

Maintenance: keep the dust off the pure individual creation; preserve the new; sustain the change; protect progress; defend and prolong the advance; renew the excitement; repeat the flight;

- show your work — show it again
- keep the contemporary art museum groovy
- keep the home fires burning

Development systems are partial feedback systems with major room for change.

Maintenance systems are direct feedback systems with little room for alteration.

C. Maintenance is a drag: it takes all the fucking time (lit.) The mind boggles and chafes at the boredom. The culture confers lousy status on maintenance jobs = minimum wages, housewives = no pay.

- clean your desk, wash the dishes, clean the floor, wash your clothes, wash your toes, change the baby’s diaper, finish the report, correct the typos, mend the fence, keep the customer happy, throw out the stinking garbage, watch out don’t put things in your nose, what shall I wear, I have no sox, pay your bills, don’t litter, save string, wash your hair, change the sheets, go to the store, I’m out of perfume, say it again — he doesn’t understand, seal it again — it leaks, go to work, this art is dusty, clear the table, call him again, flush the toilet, stay young.

D. Art:
Everything I say is Art is Art. Everything I do is Art is Art. “We have no Art, we try to do everything well.” (Balinese saying).

Avant-garde art, which claims utter development, is infected by strains of maintenance ideas, maintenance activities, and maintenance materials. Conceptual & Process art, especially, claim pure development and change, yet employ almost purely maintenance processes.

E. The exhibition of Maintenance Art, CARE, would zero in on pure maintenance, exhibit it as contemporary art, and yield, by utter opposition, clarity of issues.

II. THE MAINTENANCE ART EXHIBITION: CARE

Three parts: Personal, General, and Earth Maintenance.

A. Part One: Personal

I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife.

I am a mother. (Random order).

I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, etc. Also, (up to now separately) I “do” Art.

Now, I will simply do these maintenance everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art. I will live in the museum and I customarily do at home with my husband and my baby, for the duration of the exhibition. (Right? or if you don’t want me around at night I would come in every day) and do all these things as public Art activities: I will sweep and wax the floors, dust everything, wash the walls (i.e. “floor paintings, dust works, soap-sculpture, wall-paintings”) cook, invite people to eat, make agglomerations and dispositions of all functional refuse.

The exhibition area might look “empty” of art, but it will be maintained in full public view.

MY WORKING WILL BE THE WORK

B. Part Two: General

Everyone does a hell of a lot of noodling maintenance work. The general part of the exhibition would consist of interviews of two kinds.

1. Previous individual interviews, typed and exhibited.

Interviewees come from, say, 50 different classes and kinds of occupations that run a gamut from maintenance “man”, maid, sanitation “man”, mail “man”, union “man”, construction worker, librarian, grocerystore “man”, nurse, doctor, teacher, museum director, baseball player, sales “man”, child, criminal, bank president, mayor, moviestar, artist, etc., about:

- what is the relationship between maintenance and freedom;
- what is the relationship between maintenance and life’s dreams.

2. Interview Room — for spectators at the Exhibition:

A room of desks and chairs where professional (?) interviewers will interview the spectators at the exhibition along same questions as typed interviews. The responses should be personal.

These interviews are taped and replayed throughout the exhibition area.

C. Part Three: Earth Maintenance

Everyday, containers of the following kinds of refuse will be delivered to the Museum:

- the contents of one sanitation truck;
- a container of polluted air;
- a container of polluted Hudson River;
- a container of ravaged land.

Once at the exhibition, each container will be serviced: purified, de-polluted, rehabilitated, recycled, and conserved by various technical (and / or pseudo-technical) procedures either by myself or scientists.

These servicing procedures are repeated throughout the duration of the exhibition.


KEYWORDS:
cleaning, housework, maintenance work, care labor, domestic labor, waged labor, invisible labor, affective labor, home work, maternity, childcare

WATCH:
TV Maintenance (Disorientalism - Katherine Behar and Marianne M. Kim, 2007, 4 x 1 min)
Sharing Space (Courtney Kessel, 2012, 2 min)
Mujer (Sofia Canales, 2012, 10 min)
The Table (Farheen Haq, 2015, 5 min)
In Common (Adele Horne, 2014, 19 min)
Mothertime (Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, 2017, 60 min)

READ / VIEW ON YOUR OWN:
• Manifesto for Maintenance Work” (Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969)
• “Wages Against Housework” (Silvia Federici, 1975)
• excerpt from Cleaning: People Talk About Housework (Adele Horne and Karin Johansson, 2012)
• “Mother of Demolition” from Mothernism (Lise Haller Baggesen, 2014)
• “Caring Everywhere” (Viviana Zelizer, 2010)
• Artist Residency in Motherhood Manifesto (Lenka Clayton, 2012)
‘Pillars of home’ are ninety-eight – 30 minutes long – balancing sculptures by Csilla Klenyánszki

The floor-to-ceiling constructions rely on their own inner stability while being framed only by the floor and the ceiling. The in situ installations are being made during my son’s naps, when our home becomes a studio for no more than a half an hour.

http://pillarsofhome.com/
Artist’s Statement

In common with all new parents, the birth of my first child in April 2011 changed many things in my life. One of these changes has been the way I and others think about my career as an artist. I find now that many aspects of the professional art world are closed to artists with families. Most prestigious artist residencies for example specifically exclude families from attending. Despite a legacy of public artist/parents it still seems to be a commonly held belief that being an engaged mother and serious artist are mutually exclusive endeavors. I don’t believe or want to perpetrate this. I like to imagine the two roles meet as competing directions but to view them, force them gently if necessary, to inform one another.

I will undergo this self-imposed artist residency in order to fully experience and explore the fragmented focus, nap-length studio time, limited movement and resources and general upheaval that parenthood brings and allow it to shape the direction of my work, rather than try to work “despite it”.

This website will document my attempts.
Let’s see.

L.C. September 2012

An Artist Residency in Motherhood Artist Statement
Lenka Clayton 2012
http://www.artistresidencyinmotherhood.com/
MAINTENANCE

Make a project inspired by Mierle Ukeles’ concept of maintenance work. Your project can celebrate the mundane, the every day, and the routine. Or your project might be a critique of everyday labor conditions. What kind of maintenance work do you perform in your every day life? For whom or what do you perform care labor? Who cares for you? What requires upkeep? How do you maintain yourself, your body, your living space, or your family? What does intimate labor look like? What are the overlooked actions that you spend the most cumulative time doing? How can you make art out of the boring, repetitive, domestic, or quotidian things that make up your every day life?
TO DO LIST:

- Module 6 Reading
- **WRITTEN REFLECTION**: In last week’s “Sick Woman Theory” reading, Johanna Hedva frames some of this week’s ideas and questions by stating that “the most anti-capitalist protest is to care for another and to care for yourself. To take on the historically feminized and therefore invisible practice of nursing, nurturing, caring.” Use this idea as a point of departure to reflect across this week’s readings and screenings about intimate labor, care labor, and maintenance work. Which films and writings did you respond strongly to and why? How can you imagine using maintenance and care as generative spaces for making creative work?

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Notes
Time in a Place Without

After a quarter dedicated to the practice of feminist film making I think I have begun to form a definition of what feminist film is and a rule for other filmmakers that like me wondered if there was anything they could really offer to a field that has been on the cutting edge of the avant-garde and social discourse since its inception. To answer that first question: yes, there is plenty of feminist work to be made and ideas to be explored that need new angles and arguments associated with them. There are far more facets of feminism than you might think that apply directly to your identity (and all identities).

The rule I would beseech any filmmaker who is new to the field is to take time. Time with yourself and time with others. Take time in understanding the work that is being presented to you and recognize that it is the product of someone’s vigilant toil. Take time when you hear new ideas, especially the ones that aren’t in your direct toolbox for understanding the communities and world around you. Analyze where your initial desire to disagree with a position comes from. Know that you will not understand or identify with everything and everyone, and know that it will take some time, others have been at this longer than you have.

I emphasize this fact because during this class I learned what a non male dominated learning space was this quarter and I spent a lot of time listening to voices and perspective that I realized were frequently silenced in other classes. In taking time with myself, my film practice, and ideas expressed in this class I found myself learning far more than I had expected to from a rushed 11 week quarter system class. I learned to take time in a place without it and it made me a better student, friend, person, and feminist. In short, a better human.
KEYWORDS: sexuality, erotic bodies, transgressive bodies, pornography, sex work, intimacy, sex and power, desire, sexual freedom, body image

WATCH:
The Politics of Intimacy (Julie Gustafson, 1974, 52 min) - SHORT EXCERPT
Vanilla Sex (Cheryl Dunye, 1992, 3 min)
Labial Quintet (Courtney Stephens, 2015, 11 min)
Beyond Guilt #1 (Ruti Sela and Maayan Amir, 2003, 9 min)
Venus (Mette Carla Albrechtson and Lea Glob, 2016, 83 min)

READ:
• "A Feminist Sexual Politic: An Ethics of Mutual Freedom" from Feminism is for Everybody (bell hooks, 2000)
• "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" (Audre Lorde, 1978)
• "Mother of Redemption" from Mothernism (Lise Haller Baggesen, 2014)

Copenhagen’s Kussomat “vagina photo booth”
http://www.kussomat.dk/
TO DO LIST:

- Module 7  Reading
- **WRITTEN REFLECTION:** This week's screenings collectively invite you to think about bodies, sexuality, power, vulnerability, porn, intimacy, and trust—among other things. Write about anything that struck, moved, provoked, troubled, or interested you about this week's screenings and readings.
  
  
  

Introduction: A manifesto is a statement of reflection, knowledge, and intent. I wanted to make sure I created a manifesto that I could read years from now and continue to feel strongly connected to. As I have never written a manifesto before, I looked up “how to write a manifesto”. I thought it was a fitting moment when one of the first pages to come up was from a website called “The Art of Manliness”. This page is littered exclusively with images of white men. Is this because it is a “manly” thing to voice your opinion and tell people what you want? I am a latinx, non-binary, feminist with a lot of opinions and while historically, voices like mine have not been given the opportunity to present opinions and intent for the future, I am here today writing about how I am gonna change that. I have opinions and stories and a deep, grand knowledge that I have acquired through my personal experience. My friends have a deep, grand knowledge too and so we make films. We are learning and while our styles/stories/experiences vary, we all have the same goal: Infiltrate mainstream media, create progressive feminist art, make space for other marginalized voices to speak up in the future.

Beliefs
I believe that the best art is found in places of uncertainty and vulnerability whether it is personal or not.
I believe that I can achieve good, personal, vulnerable art, but I can get more uncomfortable and and less safe in my filmmaking.
I believe that in my most recent project, I struggled to find the spaces of vulnerability because it is very likely I still wanted to draw the line between safe and difficult. I stayed in the line many times leaning towards what was easier. because you have never done it before.

I believe good art should never be easy and we should always experiment with something that we are doing whether it is content or form. There must always be a point where you are unsure about what you are about to produce because you have never done it before.
I believe that we need to be bold in our expression meaning that we take our truths, our fears, and our love into our art. We should never feel comfortable throughout the process. We will tell our stories and help other marginalized voices tell their stories.

Goals
We will not take no for an answer. When we are denied spaces and resources for our art we will make our own spaces by holding our own screenings, will we reach out to each other for support, we will contact our inspirations through email and phone calls.
We will continue researching and filling our heads with knowledge about modern feminism by reading and exposing ourselves to the stories of those who are oppressed.
We will acknowledge our privileges and use what we have to give a platform to those who are in need. This is being a good ally and being a good ally is being a good feminist.
We will continue to critique modern media and modern feminist work in the hopes of being able to improve ourselves and our own work.
We must never settle when improving ourselves as people. Healthy self critique in essential in continuing progression personally, politically, socially, and artistically.

Never settle, make your own space, help others who are less privileged and give them a space for their voice too. Spread your knowledge and always help your fellow feminist filmmaker succeed.

SARAH
KEYWORDS: indigenous film, indigeneity, anti-colonial film, critical disability, feminist science fiction, utopian and dystopian futures, Afro-futurism, space, cli-fi

WATCH:
(The Past)
Anishinabemowin Nagishkodaading (6 min, 2011) and From Sea to See (8 min, 2013) - both by Eve-Lauryn LaFountain
Ha Terra! (Ana Vaz, 2016, 13 min)
Me Broni Ba (My White Baby) (Akosua Adoma Owusu, 2008, 22 min)
(The Future)
Afronauts (Frances Bodomo, 2014, 14 min)
A Space Exodus (Larissa Sansour, 2009, 6 min)
We The Others (Maja Borg, 2014, 11 min)
Pumzi (Wanuri Kahiu, 2009, 21 min)

READ:
• “Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism” (Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1995)
• “The Ultimate Revolution” conclusion from The Dialectic of Sex (Shulamith Firestone, 1970)
• “The Book of Martha” (Octavia Butler, 2005)
• “The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction” (Ursula K. LeGuin, 1986)
“Dwelling: in this space we breathe” by Khadija Saye
http://www.sayephotography.co.uk/

Octavia Butler cover art:
“The Parable of the Sower” and “Mind of my Mind”
TO DO LIST:

- Module 8 Reading

- **WRITTEN REFLECTION**: For your final written reflection, you can talk, as usual, about anything that strikes you across the screenings and readings this week. What thoughts does this group of works bring up around time travel, imagination, world-making, or speculative thinking about the past and future? This is also your last week of this kind of writing, so if you have any bigger thoughts about the larger arc of the course screenings or readings you’re welcome to reflect on that too. In planning this course I thought a lot about how to make a conversation about the possibilities of feminist thinking and making that reverberates across many weeks of screenings, starting in the recent past with the 1970s and ending in the future. So if you’d like to formulate a bigger response to the whole progression of works, please do!

- This is the final weekly module. After this week there are no more readings or written responses due. You will spend the last two weeks of the quarter completing your Open Projects, Interviews, and Manifestos.
YOUR MANIFESTO!
GENERAL SOURCES FOR FEMINIST MEDIA

Feminist work is often made in cultural margins, so it is not always easy to track down. Public libraries and university libraries are great resources for difficult-to-see work. Here are some other general pointers:

There are many educational distributors for short, experimental, radical, and non-mainstream feminist work. In North America, some distributors that carry strong collections of feminist / radical work include Women Make Movies (the only explicitly feminist distributor in the US–they have an amazing catalogue of historic and contemporary feminist work), Video Data Bank in Chicago, Electronic Arts Intermix in New York, and V-Tape in Canada (all distributors with a focus on experimental work), New Day Films (founded in 1971 by feminist filmmakers with a strong historic and contemporary feminist catalogue), and Third World Newsreel (with a strong radical / political film collection). Some work made on celluloid film is only distributed on film—the main 16mm distributors in the US are Canyon Cinema and Filmmakers’ Co-op—both also have strong collections of feminist work.

Most of these distributors work primarily with institutions, schools, and libraries, so their listed purchase prices are very high (like $300 for a single DVD). But some of these distributors have unofficial ways to sell films more cheaply to individuals, or have ways to watch work in person in their offices. So, if there is something you really want to see, can’t afford, and can’t find in a local library, it is always worth contacting the distributor to ask if there are any ways to watch the work for personal / research viewing. Also, a lot of feminist filmmakers and artists are really generous about sharing their work! Some filmmakers make their work available on vimeo or other streaming platforms, so it’s always worth looking up filmmakers to see if they have a website and / or vimeo page where some full length work is viewable. And sometimes filmmakers are even open to sharing private password-protected links if you send a really polite and enthusiastic email explaining that you are just one person who can’t buy a $300 DVD who really wants to watch their work.

Finally, check out ubuweb (free), Fandor (subscription-based), and Kanopy (possibly available through your public or university library) for lots and lots of interesting / feminist work online!

FILM SOURCE LIST / WEEK BY WEEK

all links current as of April 2018, but the Internet changes quickly. Consider buying legally distributed copies whenever possible. Purchasing work helps artists!

WEEK 1
Free, White, and 21 is on ubuweb.
Soft Fiction is best watched on 16mm film but someone put it on YouTube so you can watch there too as an inferior plan B, at least for now.

WEEK 2
The Woman’s Film is distributed by Third World Newsreel, but it’s also—for now—on YouTube.
Womanhouse is distributed by Women Make Movies
Hysterical Reenactments: WITCH is excerpted on the artist’s website.
Shulie is distributed by Video Data Bank.

WEEK 3
Semiotics of the Kitchen is on ubuweb or distributed by Video Data Bank. Schmeergunz is available through French distributor Re:Voir
The Body Besieged is on Kelly Sears’ vimeo page
Millionaire Worthy TV- Shred for that Millionaire and Playing A Girl are both on Angela Washko’s website
“Work of Art! Reality TV Special” episode from Falling in Love...with Chris and Greg is on the Falling in Love... vimeo page.
Removed can be found via Peripheral Produce or on YouTube.
What Happened to Her is distributed by Women Make Movies

WEEK 4
The Herstory of the Female Filmmaker is on Kelly Gallagher’s vimeo page.
Madam Winger Makes a Film: a Survival Guide for the 21st Century is on the Helen Hill vimeo page
A Breakdown (and) After the Mental Hospital - Anne Charlotte Robertson’s work is truly worth hunting down but also truly hard to see. It is NOT in general distribution at all. The work has been digitized and is in the Harvard Film Archive, but it usually only circulates to film festivals and cultural institutions. But, someone put this not-legal copy online so you can watch it.
Jollies is distributed by Video Data Bank
Joanie 4 Jackie: Intro from Joanie 4 Jackie 4-Ever and A Wild Horse Rider, on Joanie 4 Jackie’s U-Matic Chain Letter
Pope Don’t Preach, I’m Terminating my Pregnancy and Scarlot Harlot’s Interstate Solicitation Tour are both on Scarlot Harlot aka Carol Leigh’s (amazing!) vimeo page.
Hermione is on Nina Yuen’s vimeo page.

WEEK 5
In My Country Men Have Breasts is on YouTube
Home Avenue is on Jennifer Montgomery’s vimeo page
The Body Beautiful is distributed by Women Make Movies and is also here.
Get Well Soon is on Carolyn Lazard’s vimeo page
Dear Lou Sullivan is on Rhys Ernst’s vimeo page
Well Dressed can be previewed here and is available from Video Data Bank
Man doesn’t seem to have a distributor, but there’s contact info online
Buoyant is distributed by Women Make Movies

WEEK 6
TV Maintenance can be seen on the Disorientalism website
Sharing Space is on Courtney Kessel’s website
Mujer is on Sofia Canales’s vimeo page
The Table is on Farheen Haq’s vimeo page
In Common is on Adele Horne’s vimeo page
Mothertime is self-distributed by Kristy Guevara-Flanagan

WEEK 7
The Politics of Intimacy is distributed by Video Data Bank
Vanilla Sex is part of the Early Works of Cheryl Dunye compilation, available here and here.
Labial Quintet is self-distributed by Courtney Stephens
Beyond Guilt #1 might be available through the artists
Venus doesn’t seem to be in North American distribution yet... but it’s a newer film, so it might turn up soon!

(and an amazing additional film that I wanted to include and didn’t have room for is Chantal Akerman’s Je Tu Il Elle, which is easy to find on home video and streaming on Kanopy)

WEEK 8
Anishinabemowin Nagishkodaading and From Sea to See are both on Eve-Lauryn LaFountain’s vimeo page
Ha Terra! is distributed by Light Cone
Me Broni Ba (My White Baby) is distributed by Cinema Guild
Afronauts is self-distributed via afronautsfilm@gmail.com
A Space Exodus is online here
We The Others doesn’t have distribution info online but may be available through the artist
Pumzi is on YouTube
(And the feminist Sci-Fi classic that I didn’t have time to screen is Lizzie Borden’s widely available Born in Flames!)
Diagram from Shulamith Firestone's "The Dialect of Sex," 1970