

GH 101: The Beauty Myth

Professor: Barbara Ashwood

Class Meeting: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Section 27: 2:00-3:15 Simpkins 214

Email: b-ashwood@wiu.edu

Phone: 309-298-2431

Office: Simpkins Hall 09

Office Hours: T/TH 10:30-11:00 and 12:20-1:50, W by appointment

Course Description:

Flip through Vogue or Cosmopolitan or Glamour. Peruse Maxim or Men's Health or GQ. Watch TV for an hour. How many images of beauty do you see?

Many of us recognize that the portrayal of beauty in the media is often unrealistic and unobtainable, yet these standards continue to permeate our culture. This course encourages you to consider why.

To help answer that question, we will study Naomi Wolf's book *The Beauty Myth* that explores conceptions of beauty and their effects on people, particularly women, in Western society. We will analyze the beauty myth that Wolf writes about and also read and discuss some contemporary responses to her argument. Can a person use cosmetics and care about fashion without being a victim to the beauty myth? Are there any problems with Wolf's reasoning and methodology? How are men affected by this myth? These are just a few of the questions that we will pursue throughout the course.

Required Texts:

Ways of Seeing, John Berger

The Beauty Myth, Naomi Wolf

Survival of the Prettiest, Nancy Etcoff

Fresh Lipstick: Redressing Fashion and Feminism, Linda M. Scott

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution:

Analytical Essay: (900-1500 words) --25%

Research Essay (1500-2100 words) –30%

Group Discussion Leader -- 20%

Reading Quizzes/ Informal Writing: --15%

Participation/ Group Work Activities --10%

In this section of GH 101, there will be frequent quizzes and in-class free writes. For your informal writing assignments, you may be as creative as you like by experimenting with different narrative styles and forms.

Participation indicates more than just speaking out in class discussion; it also reflects your dedication to the class. Good participation means coming to class on time having read the material assigned for the day, being prepared to contribute your views on the assigned reading, collaborating appropriately, and showing respect to your classmates and to me. Writing Center appointments (with verification from the Writing Center) are considered participation. Active listening and questioning are important components of participation. Should there be anything hindering your ability to participate, please speak with me and we will work together to resolve the situation.

Group work is a significant component of this class. If you dislike working with others, it would be in your best interest to switch to another section of GH 101.

If you are absent on a day when we have a quiz, informal writing assignment, or group activity, you will not be allowed to make up those points.

Grade Scale:

100-95: A (4.0)

94-90: A- (3.7)

89-87: B+ (3.3)

86-82: B (3.0)

81-79: B- (2.7)

78-76: C+ (2.3)

75-73: C (2.0)

72-68: C- (1.7)

67-65: D+ (1.3)

64-60: D (1.0)

59-57: D- (.7)

56-0: F (0)

Course Policies:

Attendance is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. You may be absent up to four times for any reason. Absences for university-sanctioned events **will** count towards your absence limit, so please plan accordingly. Each absence after four will result in the lowering of your final grade by a full letter grade. Seven absences will result in failure for the course.

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will result in an unexcused absence.

Academic Dishonesty is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course. Please refer to Western Illinois University's Academic Integrity Policy for more information (<http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>).

In addition to handing in a paper copy of their assignment, each student is required to email an electronic copy of their essay to beauty.myth.essays@gmail.com on the day the essay is due. Essays should be sent as an attachment AND copied and pasted into the body of an email. **Any student who fails to email their essay to me will fail the assignment.**

Student Work must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due. **Late work will not be accepted, and you will receive a zero for the assignment.** All writing assignments must be typed and double spaced with one-inch margins and a reasonable font (like Times New Roman 12 point). You must also include a word-count for your writing assignment on the first page.

You are expected to be respectful to your classmates and me. If you are disruptive and/or rude, you will be asked to leave class and will receive an absence for the day.

Cell Phones are to be turned off and ignored for the entire class period. If I catch you texting during class, you will be marked absent for that day.

Resources:

Me. Take advantage of my office hours. I am here to help!

The Writing Center. The University Writing Center offers students at any academic level collaborative, one-on-one consultation on writing projects from any discipline at any point in the writing process. For more information, visit the University Writing Center website (<http://www.wiu.edu/uwc>).

Disability Support Services. "In accordance with university values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in

barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 309-298-2512, disability@wiu.edu or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.”

Title IX Coordinator. “University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know has been a victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online at http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at <http://www.wiu.edu/vpas.policies/titleIX.php>.”

Leslie F. Malpass Library:

<http://www.wiu.edu/library>

Information regarding student rights and responsibilities:

<http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php>

And lastly, all assignments, texts, and due dates are subject to change.

GH 101 CALENDAR

All assigned readings for the day should be completed by the beginning of class

Assignments, texts, and due dates are subject to change.

(8-23) Day 1: Introductions

- Introduction to course, texts, and syllabus

(8-25) Day 2: Rhetorical Analysis

- Rhetorical Situation, Rhetorical Appeals
- Open registration ends on 8/26

(8-30) Day 3: *Ways of Seeing*

- *Ways of Seeing*: 1 (7-34)

(9-1) Day 4: *Ways of Seeing*

- *Ways of Seeing*: 2 & 3 (36-64)
- Last day of restricted schedule change: 9/2

(9-6) Day 5: *Ways of Seeing*

- *Ways of Seeing*: 4 & 5 (66-112)

(9-8) Day 6: *Ways of Seeing*

- *Ways of Seeing*: 6 & 7 (114-155)

(9-13) Day 7: Thesis Statements

- In-class Exercise: The Evolving Thesis

(9-15) Day 8: Integrating Quotations / Introductions and Conclusions

- In-class Exercise: Integrating Quotations

(9-20) Day 9: Peer Review

- Bring two copies of your polished and well-written essay to class

(9-22) Day 10: Paper 1 Due

- In-class Exercise: Process Writing

(9-27) Day 11: Screening of Jean Kilbourne's *Killing Us Softly*

- Please bring a paper copy of your essay to class in addition to emailing it to beauty.myth.essays@gmail.com
- *The Beauty Myth*: "Introduction" through "The Beauty Myth" (1-19)

(9-29) Day 12: *The Beauty Myth*

- *The Beauty Myth*: "Work" through "Culture" (20-85)

(10-4) Day 13: *The Beauty Myth*

- *The Beauty Myth*: "Religion" (86-130)

(10-6) Day 14: *The Beauty Myth*

- *The Beauty Myth*: "Sex" (131-178)

(10-11) Day 15: *The Beauty Myth*

- *The Beauty Myth*: "Hunger" (179-217)

(10-13) Day 16: *The Beauty Myth*

- *The Beauty Myth*: "Violence" through "Beyond" (218-291)

(10-18) Day 17: Screening of *Tough Guise (Part 1)*

(10-20) Day 18: Screening of *Tough Guise (Part 2)*

(10-25) Day 19: Reading Day: No Class

- *Survival of the Prettiest*: "Introduction" (1-27)

(10-27) Day 20: Reading Day: No Class

- *Survival of the Prettiest*: "Beauty Bait"
- Last day to drop course and/or withdraw from the university: 10/30

(11-1) Day 21: *Survival of the Prettiest*

- *Survival of the Prettiest*: "Pretty Pleases"

(11-3) Day 22: *Survival of the Prettiest*

- *Survival of the Prettiest*: “Cover Me” (89-130)

(11-8) Day 23: *Survival of the Prettiest*

- *Survival of the Prettiest*: “Feature Presentation” through “Size Matters” (131-204)

(11-10) Day 24: *Survival of the Prettiest*

- *Survival of the Prettiest*: “Fashion Runway” through “Conclusion” (205-231)
- Last day to drop course: 10/30

(11-15) Day 25: *Fresh Lipstick*

- *Fresh Lipstick*: “Introduction” through “Dress Reform and Domination” (1-51)
- Optional Reading: *Fresh Lipstick*: “Making the Myth” through “Reading the Popular Image” (53-125)

(11-17) Day 26: *Fresh Lipstick*

- *Fresh Lipstick*: “The Power of Fashion” (127-163)

(11-22) Day 27: Thanksgiving Break

(11-24) Day 28: Thanksgiving Break

(11-29) Day 29: *Fresh Lipstick*

- *Fresh Lipstick*: “Sex, Soap, and Cinderella” through “Rethinking Necessities” (165-222)

(12-1) Day 30: *Fresh Lipstick*

- *Fresh Lipstick*: “Freudian Feminism and Commercial Conspiracy” through “Something Different” (224-280)
- Marge Piercy, “Barbie Doll” (<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/barbie-doll>)

(12-6) Day 31: *Fresh Lipstick*

- *Fresh Lipstick*: “Style and Substance in the Second Wave” through “Fresh Lipstick” (281-331)

(12-8) Day 32: Preparation for Research Essay

***Your final essay is due during the final exam period**