#HotGirlSemesterSyllabus

Katrina Marie Overby  
*Rochester Institute of Technology*, kmogpt@rit.edu

Gheni Platenburg  
*Auburn University*, gnp0006@auburn.edu

Niya Pickett Miller  
*Samford University*, nmiller@samford.edu

---

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/feministpedagogy](https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/feministpedagogy)

Part of the African American Studies Commons, Digital Humanities Commons, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons, Other Film and Media Studies Commons, and the Rhetoric Commons

---

**Recommended Citation**

Overby, Katrina Marie; Platenburg, Gheni; and Miller, Niya Pickett (2024) "#HotGirlSemesterSyllabus," *Feminist Pedagogy*: Vol. 4: Iss. 3, Article 2.  
Available at: [https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/feministpedagogy/vol4/iss3/2](https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/feministpedagogy/vol4/iss3/2)

---

This Original Teaching Activity is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at DigitalCommons@CalPoly. It has been accepted for inclusion in Feminist Pedagogy by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@CalPoly. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@calpoly.edu.
Introduction

We are a collective of Black female scholars in the fields of media studies, journalism, Black studies, and visual rhetoric whose work shares a common thread of Black women’s liberation. Reflecting on lessons learned from poet and activist Maya Angelou, author and publisher Ama Yawson (2014) powerfully declared, “If you have the privilege of being born a Black woman, it is my belief that it is a part of your divine mission to liberate yourself from all external and internalized oppression and thereby liberate the world.” In part, this project is a response to that call to action.

Black female rappers, such as Megan Thee Stallion, born Megan Pete, use song lyrics, music videos, and social media to rupture the master narrative of Black women being angry; uneducated, filthy, undesirable, uncouth, and hypersexual. Megan and others use their platforms to reject the labels of oppressors and reclaim and reframe Black women as unapologetic leaders, cultural tastemakers, and pleasure activists who are also worthy of love and adoration. The works located in this syllabus confront distortions about Black women.

The use of the hashtag #HotGirlSummer, and other related hashtags on social media, grew out of the success of Megan’s first full-length award-winning project, “Fever” (May, 2019). The hashtag #HotGirlSummer, which has been used over 100,000 times on Instagram, and related memes spurred the release of her single “Hot Girl Summer,” which won “the Best Power Anthem” at the Music Television Awards (2019). In an interview with The Root, Megan described “Hot Girl Summer,” as “women and men being unapologetically them, just having a good ass time, hyping up their friends, doing you” (Townsend, 2019).

We encourage you to build upon the guiding questions, readings, and suggested multimedia resources listed and utilize this syllabus as a launching pad to facilitate meaningful discourse and critique around the intersections of Black feminism, sexuality, identity politics, misogynoir, respectability politics, and communication and media. We encourage public discourse, in and outside of academia, regarding this syllabus and encourage you to join ongoing and new social media discussions on this topic by using the following social media hashtags: #HotGirlSyllabus #HotGirlSemester #HotBlackFeministCollective #HotGirlPedagogy

Guiding Questions: How does Megan Thee Stallion and her body of work provide visibility to the lived experiences often erased in discussions about Black girls and women globally? How does Black women’s influence on popular culture challenge and disrupt ideas and concepts about race, gender, and sexuality norms? Why and how do Black women use social media to rescript and/or reclaim narrative and find community?

Suggested Courses and Course Themes: Journalism; Communication Studies; Hip Hop Studies; African-American Studies; Women and Gender Studies
WEEK 1: Are You A #HotGirl?: Defining Ourselves

Controlling images of Black Women in Imagery and Popular Culture:


A Subject of (Dis)Respectability Politics:


Suggested Multimedia Pairings:

- Megan Thee Stallion. [@theestallion]. (n.d.). *Tweets & replies [TINA SNOW]*. Twitter. [https://twitter.com/theestallion?s=11&t=9eel-cGIfR8mMyuho558vw](https://twitter.com/theestallion?s=11&t=9eel-cGIfR8mMyuho558vw)

WEEK 2: Theoretical Frameworks: Explaining/Predicting Feminism and Social Media Use

Black media and culture framework:


**Hip-Hop Feminism:**


Jennings, K. (2020). City girls, hot girls and the re-imagining of black women in hip hop and digital spaces. *Global Hip Hop Studies, 1*(1), 47-70. [https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00004_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00004_1)


**Uses and Gratifications:**


WEEK 3: Black Women’s Mediated Geographies: Hashtags, Social Media and New Media

**Black Twitter and Racialized Performativity in the Digital Sphere:**

**Black Women and Social Media Werk:**

*Suggested Multimedia Pairings:*
- Snipes, J.T. (Host). (2021, Month Date). Black twitter is undefeated featuring Dr. Katrina M. Overby (Season 2 Episode 9) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Blacktivism in the academy*. https://blacktivismintheacademy.libsyn.com/black-twitter-is-undefeated

WEEK 4: Body By Thee Stallion: The Performance of Thick Black Bodies

**Fatness and Resistance:**

**Trust A Big Butt and A Smile:**

**Twerk Something:**

**Suggested Multimedia Pairings:**
• Smith, E. (Host). (2021, Month Date). Big picture with Dr. Abegunde (Episode 6) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Plus size radio*. [https://soundcloud.com/plussizemagicradio/episode-6-big-picture-with-dr-abegunde](https://soundcloud.com/plussizemagicradio/episode-6-big-picture-with-dr-abegunde)
• Cardi B. (2020). *Cardi B - WAP feat. Megan Thee Stallion* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsm4poTWjMs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsm4poTWjMs)
• 2BLVCKSHEEP. (2019). *Megan Thee Stallion to start hottie camp workouts & talks anime on Instagram* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdelry7zY1E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdelry7zY1E)
• DanceOn. (2019). *Megan Thee Stallion ride or die Deja Carter dance class* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgOMQxUY3cE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgOMQxUY3cE)
• Nicki Minaj (2014). *Nicki Minaj - Anaconda* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDZX4ooRsWs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDZX4ooRsWs)

**WEEK 5: H-Town’s Southern Hot Girl**

**On Black Women’s Place, Space and Culture:**
• Johnson, A. (2021). Dirty south feminism: The girlies got somethin’ to say too! Southern hip-hop women, fighting respectability, talking mess, and twerking up the dirty south. *Religions*, 12(11), 1030. [https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12111030](https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12111030)

**Suggested Multimedia Pairings:**
• Megan Thee Stallion. (2019). *Megan Thee Stallion - Cash Shit ft. Da Baby* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Xe7OAFljOA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Xe7OAFljOA)
• All Def Music. (2019). *The rise of the chopped & screwed sound the report* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VF9W93PE4Q4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VF9W93PE4Q4)
• Megan Thee Stallion. (2019). *Megan Thee Stallion - Big Ole Freak* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BYf6gpVvRA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BYf6gpVvRA)
• Trillex TV. (2018). *Megan Thee Stallion - Cocky AF* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhPYZt-FpOs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhPYZt-FpOs)
• HOT 97. (2018). *Real men are feminists* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alRwi7Nh8_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alRwi7Nh8_M)
• Beyoncé (2014). *Flawless ft. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IyuUWOnS9BY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IyuUWOnS9BY)
• JustBrittanyVEVO. (2013). *Just Brittany - Booty Roll* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnLqoTjkOpo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnLqoTjkOpo)
• BiGLOUsTV. (2012). *Hot Boys I Need A Hot Girl* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdZO99ARasI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdZO99ARasI)

**WEEK 6: #HotGirlSemester: College Girl, She Ain’t No Drop Out**

**Black women navigating the academy and centering their sexuality:**
• Jenkins, M. (2018). This will be my undoing: Living at the intersection of black, female, and feminist in (White) America. Harper Perennial.

Suggested Multimedia Pairings:

WEEK 7: The Politics of Feeling Good, Black Girlhood Paradise

Self-Love Is the Best Love:

Suggested Multimedia Pairings:
WEEK 8: Protecting Black Women: I’m not Your Superwoman

On Misogynoir, Respectability, and Safety:


Suggested Multimedia Pairings:

- Lee, Christina and Bradley, Regina N. (Hosts). (2021). It’s OK to root for all the girls (And Everybody Black) [Audio podcast episode]. In *The bottom of the map*. https://open.spotify.com/episode/12wxNiQ4gTyhVx4fuLLqU4?si=kjWYQpSITPmLwR7WY7oE0A