A TORRENT OF MOVING IMAGES: FREE ONLINE VIDEOS FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES

by Phyllis Holman Weisbard

Instructors teaching in 2009 face classrooms full of "digital natives" who have had the Internet at their fingertips for most of their lives. One of the characteristics of this tribe is greater appreciation for visual stimuli, which on the plus side can translate into more sophisticated ability to decode images. On the other hand, it puts an onus on teachers to provide visuals as well as text in lectures, discussions, and assignments. For many women's studies instructors, **YouTube** has been a godsend (or *goddessend* if you prefer), with its short videos, clips, and mash-ups. YouTube has also come to the rescue when shrinking university library budgets can't afford to purchase documentaries at institutional prices of \$300 and more, and instructors make do with online trailers or excerpts.

But there is a whole world of women/gender-focused, academically relevant, downloadable or streaming images beyond YouTube that are worth exploring. This article will describe some major sites and methods for discovering these resources.

Google Video

Given the endless looping of interconnectivity that is the Internet, many videos are accessible through several sites. The most comprehensive way to find them is through Google, especially **Google Video** (http://video.google.com). Even though Google owns YouTube, anyone looking for free videos should also search Google Video — unless and until Google mergers these two entities. Like YouTube, Google Video hosts material uploaded by individuals, but it also is the part of Google that indexes ready-to-view videos hosted elsewhere, including some indexed by other Internet indexes. According to the Google Video site, it indexes "millions of videos... an ever-growing collection of TV shows, movie clips, music videos, documentaries, personal productions and more from all over the Web."

The largest single source of items indexed by Google Video is YouTube, although not everything in YouTube appears to be indexed (yet?) in Google Video. The advanced search screens on both Google Video and YouTube allow users to limit results by duration (short: under four minutes; medium: four to twenty minutes; and long: over twenty minutes). At present, Google Video may be a better source for longer videos (over twenty minutes), as the chart below illustrates for sample searches:

VIDEOS 4-20 MINUTES LONG

Search Terms	Number of Hits Google Video	Number of Hits in YouTube
women	97,800	588,000
feminist or feminism	4.030	3,630
gender	8,080	20,000

VIDEOS OVER 20 MINUTES LONG

Search Terms	Number of Hits in Google Video	Number of Hits in YouTube
women	4,820	1,110
feminist or feminism	653	81
gender	568	144

^{1. &}quot;What is Google Video?" http://video.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=66485&ctx=sibling, accessed November 5, 2008. It is often difficult through Google Video and the other sites mentioned in this article to find bibliographic information on the sites themselves about the videos. In many cases I have used other sources, including WorldCat, to provide the names of filmmakers, production companies, and production dates.

Limiting the search to longer videos in either YouTube or Google Video brings down the search results to more manageable numbers and cuts out most of the individual rambles and rants and unsuitable uploads about women. Among the indexed videos over twenty minutes long is the venerable *Killing Us Sofitly 3: Advertising's Image of Women* (34 minutes),² used in many introductory women's studies courses. Instructors of courses in women and science at small colleges without bench scientists could bring "guest lecturers" to class by showing *Minority Women in Science*, a look at four women scientists from different countries, now working in the United States, who discuss the impact of gender on their professional advancement,³ or a lecture by molecular biologist Elizabeth Blackburn, hosted on the Google campus as part of a Women@Google series.⁴ *Trading on the Female Body: the Exploitation of Women for Eggs*,⁵ another lecture given at Google (this time by Jennifer Lahl, founding director of both the Center for Bioethics and Culture Network and Hands Off Our Ovaries), should stimulate discussion in courses that cover reproductive technology.

Everyone knows that the Web is saturated with video clips of Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and Michelle Obama — some straightforward, some humorous — that students can dissect in courses on women in politics. But it is also possible to get beyond the well-known players and hear from other women in political life. An excellent way to do so is with a three-part video series of *Practitioner Roundtables* from the conference "Women in Politics: Seeking Office and Making Policy," held at the University of California, Berkeley, June 9–10, 2006 (co-sponsored by the Institute of Governmental Studies, Berkeley and the University of Virginia Center for Politics). The Roundtables, which focused on "Seeking Office," "Administration and Policy," and "Governing," featured Democratic and Republican political consultants, administrators, office seekers, and local, state, and national office holders.

Courses covering international women's issues have a lot to pick from. They might want to start with *To Empower Women: the Fourth U.N. World Conference, Beijing, China, 1995*, in which attendees from Zimbabwe, Germany, Papua New Guinea, Iran, the Philippines, Israel, the Solomon Islands, and the United States are interviewed about the many unmet needs of women. A 1997 production, *Bought and Sold: An Investigative Documentary About the International Trade in Women*, although perhaps dated in focusing on women from the former Soviet Union, nevertheless reveals much from interviews with traffickers as well as with trafficked women and workers who try to help them. There is a series called *Women on the Front Line*, from the UN Population Fund, focusing on violence against women and girls in various countries, including Austria, Colombia, Morocco, Nepal, and Turkey. The connections between women, cotton production, and water shortages in India are discussed in *Water, Gender, and Social Reproduction*, a talk by Priti Ramamurthy (University of Washington) in a Global Issues Colloquium on Water and the World at the University of California, Santa Cruz. *Behind the Labels*¹¹ tells the plight of the thousands of Chinese and Filipina women who pay fees to work fourteen-hour days in sweatshops on the island of Saipan, a U.S. territory, making garments for retailers such as J. Crew, the GAP, and Polo. Norma Kriger, formerly of Human Rights Watch in Zimbabwe and South Africa, draws on her experi-

^{2.} By Jean Kilbourne, Media Education Foundation, 2002? http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1993368502337678412&ei=-WcUSciWN5Gu-AHzs6ClCg&q.

^{3.} By Karin Koch, 2007, 40 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l69EIRoxXX8.

^{4.} August 20, 2008. 62 min. http://youtube.com/?v=irUQEG4BSK4.

^{5.} In "Google Tech Talks" series, July 14, 2008, 47 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZDFLb1rjUo.

^{6.} The full conference program is posted at http://www.centerforpolitics.org/programs/nss/WIPindex.htm. Part 1 (118 min.) is at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=192F8GVRIvw; Part 2 (71 min.) at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEKXyzJStVg; and Part 3 (105 min.) at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1xWC4ke72o. The videos are also on a Berkeley server and are linked from the conference program, which also has links to audio files for sessions of research roundtables at the same event.

^{7.} By Margot Smith and narrated by Bella Abzug, Off Center Video, 2006, 28 min. http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5176335523660693351&ei=oGgUSdPsFIXc-AHwxfX4Dw&q.

^{8.} By Gillian Caldwell. 41 min. http://www.joost.com/040000k/t/Bought-and-Sold-An-Investigative-Documentary-About-the-International-Trade-in-Women.

^{9.} One can also see these UN Population Fund videos and many others as well on the Fund's site: http://video.unfpa.org/.

 $^{10.\} November\ 27,\ 2006,\ 69\ min.\ http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2822354208384950389\&ei=1JUYSeGOHaGI-gGz_L3EDQ\&q.$

^{11.} By Tia Lessin, 2001, 46 min. http://www.joost.com/0400005/t/Behind-the-Labels.

ences in *Gender and Human Rights in Contemporary Africa*,¹² a talk given at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County that explored many aspects including land, migration, wars, and sexual violence. Clark University's Cynthia Enloe decodes the war in Iraq in *Women and Men in the Iraq War: What Can Feminist Curiosity Reveal?*¹³ at Dickinson College. After a heavy dose of examples of the lack of empowerment, students might enjoy seeing *Kenya: Where Women Rule*, ¹⁴ about the Kenyan village of Umoja, home to rape and domestic violence victims, where women make the decisions by consensus, or *Arab Women Speak Out: Strategies for Self-Empowerment*, a documentary from Research Channel (more on Research Channel below) about a project designed to "empower women and increase their involvement in social development throughout the Arab world." The video has profiles of women in Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Tunisia, and Yemen. What compels a woman to become a suicide bomber? Lisa Ling's *Female Suicide Bombers*, ¹⁶ part of her series on *National Geographic Explorer*, delves into the reasons.

Many prominent women writers are invited to speak on campuses, offering students an opportunity to see and hear the words of living, breathing literary icons. But even if your campus isn't one of those fortunate enough to be visited, for example, by bell hooks, you can have your students view her talk *Mind*, *Body, and Soul*, which keynoted a Women of Color conference at the University of Oregon.¹⁷ Isabel Allende and Amy Tan have both spoken at Dominican University.¹⁸ Ursula LeGuin read from her novel *Lavinia* at Powell's City of Books, Portland.¹⁹ Toni Morrison has conversed with Charlie Rose at least three times, all viewable online (December 13, 1993, January 19, 1998, and November 21, 2003).²⁰ In celebration of the publication of the *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, co-editor and University of Wisconsin-Madison scholar Nellie McKay joined Henry Louis Gates and Jamaica Kincaid to discuss the significance of the work with Rose.²¹ This is an especially important video, as much-loved Professor McKay is now deceased, and this may be the only publicly available video in which she appeared. A Rose interview with Jamaica Kincaid (March 1, 1996)²² is also available, as are episodes with other prominent women writers, among the thousands of Charlie Rose segments online.

The Charlie Rose interviews retrievable through Google Video demonstrate another way to think about Google Video: as an index to the other sources of productions. Instead of having to discover and bookmark each source of documentaries, academic talks, etc., Google Video takes care of much of that for you. In addition to the Rose shows (http://www.charlierose.com), Google Video indexes the **Open Video Project** (http://www.open-video.org), which has numerous instructional mid-twentieth-century films on health and hygiene (*Molly Grows Up*, a menstruation film from 1953), grooming (*Body Care and Grooming*, 1948), and women and domestic appliances (*Mother Takes Holiday*, 1952). Hundreds of **TED Talks** (Technology, Entertainment & Design conference presentations, http://www.ted.com) are accessible through Google Videos. Women's studies classes might like to watch the TED presentation by Eve Ensler, in which she performs an excerpt from her *The Vagina Monologues* and discusses how the show took on a life of its own.²³

Another useful site that Google Video indexes is **SnagFilms** (http://www.snagfilms.com), which mounts documentaries and lets visitors "snag" them to put on other websites. (Be aware that SnagFilms versions include

^{12. 2008? 60} min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIxxKJ6_eW8.

^{13.} March 24, 2008, 79 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXUCLahznqs. Also in UChannel: http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3026.

^{14.} Stormland Productions, 2006? 21 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meEz3qV_RRc.

^{15.} Collaborative project of the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research, Population Initiatives for Peace, and the University Center for Communication Programs, Johns Hopkins University. 2002? 64 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnqL-ocObXs.

^{16. 2004, 53} min. http://www.joost.com/0320089/t/Female-Suicide-Bombers#id=0320089.

^{17.} Eleventh Annual Conference, University of Oregon, 2006, 43 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAuHQIMQUIs.

^{18.} Allende, April 2, 2008, 62 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uc1M9eCWMmI; Tan (in conversation with Michael Krasny), May 14, 2008, 68 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBLKL704Ix0.

^{19.} http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=5859596608206926440&ei=DskUSY7NKIKM-QHK9fH0Dw&q.

^{20.} http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghfhLcB0zto and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsqzajdlyNw and http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=4313266071427505573&ei=zbYUSaHDKoGE_AGXvIykCg&q.

^{21.} Charlie Rose, February 27, 1997. http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5404254173286488688&ei=4sQUSfHdOYvs-wG4rrGkCg&q.

 $^{22.\} http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=8895772108641800452\&ei=z8MUScCzGKGI-gHHtcXqAg\&q.$

^{23.} February, 2004, 21 min. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQvMQEB0j_A.

commercials, however.) Among the SnagFilms indexed on Google Video is *Refrigerator Mothers*, an excellent documentary on the era of blaming mothers for children with autism.²⁴ Another SnagFilms-mounted video of note for women's studies classes is *Sisters of '77*,²⁵ through which students can experience the look and feel of the first National Women's Conference from archival footage and interviews with participants.

In all these examples (Charlie Rose, Open Video Project, TED Talks, and SnagFilms), it is of course also possible, and sometimes desirable, to go to the sites and search them directly. The SnagFilms site, for example, provides an easy way to browse for relevant women-focused videos because it has a "Women's Issues" category (http://www.snagfilms.com/films/browse/category/womens_issues/). Currently there are forty-three women's issues films on the site.

Research Channel and UChannel

It's clear that Google Video and YouTube mount or index a huge number of items. However, as massive as Google Video is, it doesn't index everything (or curiously, even all the videos retrievable in "regular" Google searches), and there are other important places to look on the Internet for relevant material. Two important academic efforts are **Research Channel** (http://www.researchchannel.org) and **UChannel** (http://uc.princeton. edu). Research Channel is a consortium of several scholarly societies and universities, including the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Minnesota, and Yale University. The 3,500+ lectures, panels, and documentaries to date may be viewed online or watched as broadcast on Dish Network Channel 9400 or by cable carriers in some locations. Some Research Channel offerings, including Arab Women Speak Out (mentioned above), are indexed in Google Video, while others appear in "regular" Google searches. Searching on the Research Channel site offers more search options than Google, including a keyword search and browsing by contributing institution, title, series title, and broad subjects, such as "social sciences." Currently, 117 items are retrieved by a search for "women" and 25 for "gender." Health-related topics abound, including Women and Heart Disease: The Silent Epidemic; Body for Life for Women;, Say My Name: Black Women & Health; Women's Reproductive Tract Cancers: News from a Humanist Perspective; Alcohol: A Women's Health Issue; The Health and Well-Being of Pacific Islander Women; and many others. Denice Denton, then Dean of the School of Engineering at University of Washington and subsequently Chancellor at University of California, Santa Cruz, before her untimely death, can be seen in Strategies for Enhancing Ethnic and Gender Diversity in Engineering and Computer Science (2004).²⁶

U[niversity] Channel, hosted by Princeton University, currently focuses on public and international affairs. Like Research Channel, UChannel has member institutions, but in light of its aim to "go global," there are members from outside the United States, including the London School of School of Economics and Political Science and the Australian National University, in addition to Rutgers, Tufts, University of California, Berkeley, Johns Hopkins, and others in the U.S. (no videos spotted from outside the U.S. covering women-focused topics as of yet.) Another aim is to stimulate discussions, and comments are solicited for each item. Thus far, despite the academic environment, the few comments seen were more of the "u're right! i liked it!" variety than scholarly discourse. Files are available in various formats, including Mp3 Audio, Mp4 Video, and various platforms of streaming audio or video. There's a "tag cloud" of subject terms prominent at the top of the homepage, although no explanation of whether the terms are supplied by the contributor, UChannel operators, or automatically. "Women" is in the cloud; "gender" and "sexuality" are not, even though there is a *Transnational Gender and Sexuality Symposium* in the collection. The *Symposium* featured perspectives from Denise Brennan (Anthropology,

^{24.} By David E. Simpson, 2002, 60 min. Google Video has a direct link to it at http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6350283653640651956&ei=kQcjSYPKDIn0-wGT7YTUDQ&q, but also gets to the SnagFilms site (http://www.snagfilms.com/films/watch/refrigerator_mothers/) via another video indexing website, Truveo (http://www.truveo.com/).

^{25.} By Ällen Mondell, Cynthia Salzman Mondell, & Brian Hockenbury. Media Projects, Inc., 2005. 54 min. http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/sisters_of_77/.

^{26.} Microsoft Research, 90 min. http://www.researchchannel.org/prog/displayevent.aspx?rID=4710&fID=345.

Georgetown University) and France Winddance Twine (anthropologist and professor of Sociology, University of California, Santa Barbara) on sexuality and gender identity "in relation to shifting cultural and national boundaries." UChannel videos turn up in regular Google searches, but not in Google Video searches.

The Internet Archive

The Internet Archive (http://www.archive.org) is another major resource for freely accessible videos and much more. Self-described as a "non-profit...building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form," it can also be described as in some respects a non-commercial alternative to Google. Videos are in the "Moving Images" section of the Archive. Moving Images contains items that "range from classic full-length films, to daily alternative news broadcasts, to videos of every genre uploaded by Archive users." The section has some nice features: you can see thumbnail stills from each video, and you can search by sub-genre, such as animation/cartoons, arts/music, cultural/academic films, news/public affairs, or several other categories. On the other hand, there is no way to limit searches by duration, and you cannot find out the length until you have clicked on "click to play video." *Shocking and Awful: Standing with the Women of Iraq*²⁹ and *Women Behind Bars*³⁰ are two films in the Internet Archive contributed by the Deep Dish TV network (the latter in conjunction with Free Speech TV) that are sure to find spots on women's studies viewing lists. (And don't forget to search Free Speech TV at http://www.freespeech.org/ for episodes of Amy Goodman's *Democracy Now!* and other television programs covering women's issues and activism.)

Here again, Google Video does not seem to be indexing the Internet Archive directly (a Google Video search of the domain www.archive.org results in no hits), although the individual videos are retrievable through regular Google. There are also many items that seem to have been uploaded both to YouTube and/or Google Video and to the Internet Archive. For example, the two-part video *Our Bodies, Our Choice*, by PMS Media, about the March for Women's Lives held in Washington, DC, in March, 2004, is accessible through the Internet Archive at http://www.archive.org/details/PMSmediaOurBodiesOurChoiceI and http://www.archive.org/details/PMSmediaOurBodiesOurChoiceII, and through Google Video at http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-3527631835883890918&ei=pGcjSb7jFo6I_QGtkeTUDQ&q and http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4441176813443927556&ei=pGcjSb7jFo6I_QGtkeTUDQ&q. Presumably the producers wanted to facilitate both potential viewers' ability to find the video through Google and longterm saving/archiving by the Internet Archive Project.

Other Universities, Channels, and Governmental Sites

Many fine lectures and conferences are mounted on campus, public television, and governmental websites. As with many items found via the Internet Archive and UChannel, you won't find them through Google Video, although they may turn up in regular Google searches. Those that are parts of series are easiest to find, bookmark, and browse occasionally to see what women/gender content has been added. Harvard University's Harvard@Home (http://athome.harvard.edu/archive) for example, has an extensive selection of entire conferences, including Reproductive Health in the 21st Century (http://athome.harvard.edu/dh/rrh.html), Women, Men, and Food: Putting Gender on the Table (http://athome.harvard.edu/food/watch/1), Women and War in the 20th Century (http://athome.harvard.edu/programs/asc/index.html), In the War Zone: How Does Gender Matter? (http://athome.harvard.edu/programs/iwz/), and Gender and Religion (http://www.radcliffe.edu/events/calendar_2008religion.aspx). WGBH Forum Network, http://forum.wgbh.org/wgbh, sponsored by WGBH in association with the Lowell Institute, offers webcasts of public lectures "in partnership with Boston's Leading Cultural and Educational Institutions." Among the programs presented thus far are Art, Women, and Power (http://forum.

^{27.} Dickinson College, February 14, 2008, 3 parts: 84 min., 83 min., 73 min. http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=284

^{28.} http://www.archive.org/details/movies.

^{29.} By Persheng Sadegh-Vaziri and others, 2005. Part 2 of a 12-part series on the war in Iraq. 27 min. http://www.archive.org/details/ddtvshock2.

^{30.} In conjunction with Free Speech TV. n.d. 59 min. http://www.archive.org/details/ddtv_179_bars_and_stripes_week_2_show_1.

wgbh.org/wgbh/forum.php?lecture_id=1014), by Jill Medvedow, director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; *Artists As Activists: Muslim Women Artists* (http://forum.wgbh.org/wgbh/forum.php?lecture_id=1273), by Munir Jiwa, anthropology teacher at The New School University; and *The Media and Women's Health: Sorting Fact from Fiction* (http://forum.wgbh.org/wgbh/forum.php?lecture_id=1856), by Judy Norsigian of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*.

The **U.S. Office of Research on Women's Health** has scores of videocasts³¹ covering aspects of sex/gender differences research, health conditions specific to women, and health policy implications of women's health issues, as do other units of the National Institutes of Health. Instructors would need to preview to determine whether a presentation is nontechnical enough for students. That would also apply to the offerings in the **Innovations in Medical Education Video Library** of the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, including *Health Disparities: Cultural Considerations for African American Women*, by Sheila Ward (http://videos.med.wisc.edu/videoInfo.php?videoid=206); and *Heart Failure in Women: Really Different or Just PC?* by Maryl R. Johnson (http://videos.med.wisc.edu/videoInfo.php?videoid=1315).

Arrange for Filming on Your Campus

All of us can increase the number of academically relevant, freely available online videos by arranging for the filming of talks, conferences, and other events on our campuses. Judy Blume recently gave a gracious, funny, and poignant talk at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, as the eleventh annual Charlotte Zolotow lecture, sponsored by the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) of the School of Education. Her remarks can be viewed through the CCBC website,³² as can most of her predecessors' talks since 1999, because the CCBC folks had the foresight to have them videotaped. Newcomb College Institute of Tulane University has sponsored symposia such as *Educating Women for a World in Crisis*³³ and *Unveiling Secrets: Rape Culture on College Campuses*,³⁴ addressing important topics and available online in their entireties. Purdue University sponsored an interesting conference on *Women in Academe: Institutional Change to Enhance Success*, a good bit of which is streamed.³⁵

Women News Network Video Collection

Thus far I have pointed to some examples of useful video material accessible online in hopes of stimulating readers to do some of their own looking, daunting though the prospect may be when doing general searches for "women" or "gender." There is one site that may prove the most helpful and least time-consuming, because it is already scouring the Internet and "collecting" international women's issues videos. This is the **Women News**Network Video Collection at http://womennewsnetwork.vodpod.com. To date, 487 videos have been collected, tagged, and in many cases commented upon. Students might be especially interested in adding their reactions to an InsightnewsTV production about the horrible acid attacks on Bangladeshi women³⁶ or a San Diego State short asking whether sexism or gender bias played a part in the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign.³⁷

Explore the sites mentioned in this article and share your finds with *Feminist Collections*' readers — we'll be delighted to include links and short descriptions in our future issues.

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^{31.} Listed in reverse chronological order at http://videocast.nih.gov/PastEvents.asp?c=11&s=1.

^{32.} April 22, 2008, 43 min. http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/authors/lecture/czlecture.asp.

^{33.} http://newcomb.tulane.edu/article/watch-video-from-ncis-inaugural-summit-2007.

^{34.} http://newcomb.tulane.edu/article/watch-video-from-ncis-symposium-2007?department_id=newcomb-college-institute-nci-programs-summits-symposia.

^{35.} http://www.science.purdue.edu/success/interact/

^{36.} http://vodpod.com/watch/1111839-acid-attack-on-women-in-bangladesh?pod=womennewsnetwork

^{37.} http://vodpod.com/watch/1033359-has-sexism-and-gender-bias-played-a-role-in-the-presidential-campaign?pod=womennewsnetwork.