

WaGS 001
Witzig
Section 2
x4422
Fall, 2011
MW 2-3

Denise
Dante 311
Off.Hrs.

INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S STUDIES GENDER, SEX, RACE AND CLASS

This course is designed as a forum on gender. Its structure will be rhetorical in nature, that is, we will frame our readings, writings, and class discussions as a series of questions and debates: What is a "woman"? (and what is a "man"?) How do we define and evaluate "women's experience"? How does our culture represent, even mythologize, women, femininity, and masculinity, and how is this evident in movies, TV, advertising? How do issues of race, class, sexuality and other identities shape or change our ideas about "women"? What is the historical definition of feminism and does it have any bearing on our lives today? How do we interpret or go beyond cultural expectations of women and men and their roles in society? Are women-centered politics and law necessary, even desirable? Most likely, this course will raise more questions than it answers. Our aim as a class will be to consider and discuss as many diverse points of view about gender and its intersections as possible, whether we find ourselves in agreement or not.

Texts:

FEMINIST THEORY: A READER, 3rd ed. Wendy Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski
FULL FRONTAL FEMINISM: A YOUNG WOMAN'S GUIDE TO WHY FEMINISM MATTERS,
Jessica Valenti
FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY, bell hooks
MS MAGAZINE and NEW MEDIA
COURSE READER

Readings for this course have been chosen to cover a range of perspectives on issues pertaining to women and gender. You'll find they vary in accessibility; more theoretical readings will likely take longer to read and analyze than narrative and descriptive selections. Try to plan your schedule to look over all assigned readings at the beginning of each week to understand the larger contexts and issues explored. This course will focus especially on intersections between theories about and realities of women's lives. Give yourself enough time to consider and reflect upon these diverse points of view by reading well ahead of class. You should always bring the required readings to class and be prepared to cite specific passages in discussion.

Assignments:

3 Essays	45 pts.
Midterm	20 pts.
Discussion, inc. forum and issues group, web reviews	20 pts.
Service Learning Project	15 pts.

The **3 essays** will allow you to discuss ideas from the readings and class discussion from a variety of critical and creative perspectives on gender and identity. All essays must be typed, double-space, according to MLA standards. The **Midterm** will be based on theories and ideas addressed in the readings

and in our class discussions. Your journals will serve as important study guides for this exam.

All written work must be submitted to receive a passing grade in this course. Late essays will be penalized one-third grade per day, unless a new deadline has been given. All written work also must comply with standards for original work set by the College's Academic Honesty Policy. Review this document carefully.

Be sure to use office hours to discuss any questions you may have about writing assignments. Please note: all work must be submitted in hard copy, unless otherwise specified. Work submitted by email will not be accepted without express approval beforehand. All written work will be handed back to you within two weeks.

Class discussion :

Our class discussions will rely on the exchange of ideas, opinions, and responses to readings, lectures, and films. To a large extent, you will be responsible for the specific direction of discussion, and for bringing in outside issues and popular views about gender. During the first half of the semester, the class will be divided into forums of 3-4 students each, which will lead class discussion on the assigned readings. These forums will meet outside of class time to prepare, and should be ready to expand on readings and the issues raised in class through written questions or group debate, dramatic presentation, video, magazine or newspaper examples, etc. During the second half of the semester, you will choose an issues group focused on current topics related to gender. Guidelines for forums and issues groups will be forthcoming. In addition to discussion, there will be regular in-class reviews of websites and new media related to gender issues.

- **Attendance:**

Since you must be present in class to discuss and debate course issues and ideas, attendance is mandatory and will be graded as part of your class participation. Only three unexcused absences will be accepted before your grade is affected. If you find you must miss class 1. let me know ahead of time so we can work out your assignments, or contact a classmate to find out what you missed and what you need to make up. It is your responsibility to find out details of discussion and assignments given during classes not attended.

- **Social media:**

Cell phones and laptops should be turned off and put away before class begins. We only have an hour in each class period and that time flies. Check your messages *before* or *after* class.

Service Learning Project:

As part of investigating ideas and theories about gender in the "real world," you will participate in a service learning project with designated Community Partners. Your commitment in this project will include

- 20 hrs. of service (@ 2 hrs. per week over 10 weeks; more if you choose)
- a journal of your experiences and reflections about your service, making connections to the ideas you're encountering in readings and discussion. Journal entries should be typed on regular paper, single-spaced, dated, and kept in a project folder. These folders will be collected every two weeks for evaluation and will be considered in project grading
- inclusion in your final essay of the issues and ideas you've discovered in your service. More details on this focus will be forthcoming when that essay is assigned

Grades:

Grading in this class reflects the College's standards as specified under Academic Requirements in the Catalog. To merit a C (Satisfactory) or above as a final grade in this course, you must hand in all written assignments and they must meet or exceed the expectations of the assignment, you must come to class on time and prepared, and you must participate fully in class discussion and presentations. Your Service Learning Project will be graded on your commitment – your regular and consistent on-site participation – and your critical connections to course material you make in your journal and in discussion. Please use office hours! See me with questions, concerns, clarifications and conflicts *before* they affect your grade.

Films, Videos, Speakers:

Films and videos will be shown during class time as additional, visual texts of the theories and representations discussed in the readings and in class. They may be used for paper topics, and questions on them will appear on the midterm. In addition, the Women's Studies Program cosponsors a number of social justice speakers and events on campus, with the Women's Resource Center and the Social Justice Speakers Series. You should plan to attend at least 2 of these events this semester. In some cases of scheduling conflict, outside events may be substituted with permission.

Final Points:

Reasonable and appropriate accommodations, that take into account the context of the course and its essential elements, for individuals with qualifying disabilities, are extended through the office of Student Disability Services. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Student Disability Services Coordinator at (925) 631-4164 to set up a confidential appointment to discuss accommodation guidelines and available services. Additional information regarding the services available may be found at the following address on the Saint Mary's website: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/academics/academic-advising-and-achievement/student-disability-services.html>

Course Goals and Objectives:

Students will learn to

- Develop critical strategies to recognize and interpret intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class in local and global contexts
- Recognize and evaluate diverse ideas, debates and theories about feminism, women and men in culture
- Develop thoughtful and well-reasoned arguments in reading, writing about and discussing gender

Students are advised to consult the Academic Honor Code and adhere to College expectations for submitting original work in all assignments.

Class Schedule

Part 1: Identity Politics: What is a Woman?

Week One - Women, Gender, Feminism

Mon. 8/29 Introduction: Claiming an Education

Wed. 8/31 *What is a Woman?* New Identities: Walker, "Womanist" (R11)

Fri. 9/2 *The F-Word*: Baumgardner & Richards, *Manifesta*, "A Day without Feminism" (x)

Cottledge, from *Click*, "You Are What You Wear" (x)

Thompson, from *Ms*, "Taking *Slut* for a Walk" (x)

Week Two - Sex vs. Gender: Binaries

Mon. 9/5 Labor Day Holiday

Wed. 9/7 Johnson, from *Gender Knot*, "Where Are We?" (x)
Valenti, "He's a Stud, She's A Slut" *select one* (x)

Fri. 9/9 De Beauvoir, Intro to *Second Sex* (R 147-152)

Week Three - Sex vs. Gender: Systems

Mon. 9/12 Chodorow, "Sexual Sociology" (R 264)

Wed. 9/14 Fausto-Sterling, "Should There Only Be 2 Sexes?" (R516)

Fri. 9/16 Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex" (R 230-235)

Week Four - Sex vs. Gender: Difference

Mon. 9/19 Lorde, "Age, Race, Sex, Class" (R 281)

Wed. 9/21 Canaan, from *This Bridge We Call Home*, "Brownness" (x)
Lopez, from *Colonize This!* "In Praise of Difficult Chicas" (x)

Fri. 9/23 Halberstam, "An Introduction to Female Masculinity" (R 502)

Week Five - Sex, Gender, Race, Nation: Borderlands

Mon. 9/26 Abu Ghraib Enloe, from *Globalization and Militarism*, "Wielding Masculinity Inside and Guantanamo" (x)

Wed. 9/28 Anzaldúa, "La Consciencia de la Mestiza" (R 362)

Fri. 9/30 Fregoso, from *Color of Violence*, "Femicide on the Border" (x)
Kristof & WuDunn, from *Half the Sky*, "Shame of Honor" (x)
Paper 1 Due

Part 2: Real Lives: Perspectives on the Women's Movement

Week Six- Historical Texts : 1st Wave

Mon. 10/3 1792-1920, Introduction (R58)

Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments" (R 67)
Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" (R75)

Wed. 10/5 Douglass, "Why I Became a Woman's Rights Man" (R 88)
Terrell, from *The Progress of Colored Women* (R104)

Fri. 10/7 Sanger, "Awakening and Revolt" (x)
Yalom, from *A History of the Wife*, "Margaret Sanger" (x)

Week Seven- Historical Contexts: 2nd Wave

Mon. 10/10 1963-1975, Introduction (R 160)
Friedan, from *Feminine Mystique* (R 162, sel)
Solanas, "SCUM Manifesto" (R178)

Wed. 10/12 Weathers, "An Argument for Black Women's Liberation" (R183)
Radicalesbians, "Woman Identified Woman" (R 197)

Fri. 10/14 Midterm break (Read read read)

Week Eight - On Women's "Liberation": Debating Difference

Mon. 10/17 Nietogomez, "Chicana Feminism" (R245)
Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement" (R 254)
Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality" (R 290)

Wed. 10/19 Kimmel, from *Men Speak Out*, "Abandoning the Barricades" (x)
Fessler, "The Girls Who Went Away" (x)

Fri. 10/21 Davis, "Outcast Mothers and Surrogates" (R447)

Week Nine- Revisiting Connections and Differences.

Mon. 10/24 Midterm review

Wed. 10/26 Manifestas

Thu. 10/27 Lecture: Robert Jensen, 7:30 p.m.

Fri. 10/28 Manifestas
Paper 2 Due

Week Ten - You've Come a Long Way, Baby

Mon. 10/31 Midterm review 2

Wed. 11/2 Midterm

Fri. 11/4 Midterm, pt. 2

Class Schedule 2, Part II : Contemporary Issues in Women's Studies

Part 4: Feminist Futures: New Discussions on The Personal and the Political

Week Eleven - Full Frontal Feminism

Mon 11/7 Re-orientations: What's next?

Wed 11/9 *FFF*, 1-129; www.feministing.com

Fri 11/11 *FFF*, 131-248

Week Twelve - Feminist Issues, Feminist Debates

Mon 11/14 Full frontal arguments: What's at stake?

How do we extend Valenti's arguments to issues we care about? Bring in an article (ie., from the internet or other news source) that reflects 1. a major idea in the reading; 2. a chapter topic or 3. an area not addressed

Wed. 11/16 What's at stake? And more
Issues workshop

Fri 11/18 Library Day Research Workshop – Topics Paper 3 Due

Week Thirteen – New Directions, New Debates; Turkey

Mon. 11/21 *MS Magazine*: Global to Local; Issues workshop

Hip-Hop and Social Justice: Tricia Rose, 4:30, Hagerty Lounge

Challenging the Religion of Thinness: Michelle Lelwica , 7:30, Hagerty

Lounge

Wed-Fri 11/23-27 Thanksgiving

Week Fourteen - Political Culture: The Personal Gets Serious

Mon. 11/28 Third Wave Activism: Issues workshop

Bibliography Paper 3 Due

Wed. 11/30 Activism and Social Justice
Issues workshop

Fri 12/2 Debating the Third Wave: Zines, Websites, New Forums
Draft Paper 3 due

Week Fifteen - Claiming Your Education

Mon. 12/5 hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*

Draft discussion and revision

Wed. 12/7 hooks, cont.
Final draft questions

Fri. 12/9 Feminist Futures
Paper 3 Due