

Issues in Women's Studies
11644–HUMN 310–40
10857–WMST–310–40
Fall Quarter 2011
Wednesdays, 6–9:40pm
SSCF S. Campus Facility 225, Riverpoint Campus

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My heart is moved by all I cannot save.
So much has been destroyed,
I have to cast my lot with those who, age to age,
Perversely, and with no extraordinary means,
Reconstitute the world.
~ Adrienne Rich

Course Description:

This interdisciplinary course will examine the ways that social roles, expectations, status, experiences, and gender socialization shape our world and the experiences of people within that world. In this course, students will learn about and discuss the ways that women are viewed and defined within society and the ways that sex and gender roles in the Western world shape experiences and opportunities.

Every part of this course is heavily concerned with connecting the notions *women* and *gender* to race, class, and sexuality, creating what is known as an intersectional analysis. As a class, we will imagine this intersectional framework as existing both within and beyond U.S. borders in an effort to consider what it means to think about and analyze women and gender internationally and transnationally. In the final part of the course, we will consider how activist movements have conceived of and consummated changes in the ways institutions are shaped around and through these categories.

This course is structured around questions of *praxeological impact* - What kinds of knowledge are produced and acted upon in a feminist and feminist-influenced world?

Please note that this is an introductory course. Therefore, students are not required to have any prior experience or familiarity with conversations about women and gender, just a thirst for knowledge around what such conversations entail.

Course Objectives:

Each student will optimally leave this course with:

- An idea of how women and gender can be conceived as descriptive, analytical, and political categories
- The ability to study women and gender within an intersectional framework, that is, the ability to link the study of women and gender to race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality
- The capacity to begin thinking about ourselves in ways that forge connections between our personal experiences and the larger social institutions and cultural practices in which they occur
- The capability to analyze how commodity culture affects and produces gender identity
- An understanding of how women's and gender studies as an interdisciplinary field studies women and gender
- A better understanding of knowledge production and action practices in women's and gender studies
- Adequate writing and critical thinking skills to study women and gender productively in any intellectual or political venue

Course Requirements:

Attendance is crucial in all classes, but is particularly important in a once-weekly class. Students will be expected to come to class on-time and stay for the duration of the course. Lateness and unexcused absences will count negatively toward your participation grade. **A student who misses more than 2 classes will not be able to pass this class.**

Turning assignments in late is unacceptable unless I am contacted at least one day before the assignment is due AND permission is granted.

Sustained, astute, and critically engaged class participation is crucial for a successful and productive classroom atmosphere, and such participation depends largely upon completing the reading assignments completely. Class discussion will stay closely aligned with the reading assignments for each week. Therefore, students must come to class having done all the reading assigned. At times, topics discussed in class may be highly personal and politically-charged.

Students are thus required to respect the opinions of their classmates and talk only in their turn. Interruption and hostile remarks will not be tolerated. **All cell phones must be put on silent through the duration of the class period.** Additionally, use of personal computers in a manner that is distracting the participation of any student will result in individuals having their access to laptops during class limited.

Students are required to submit all assignments via email to kbenson@ewu.edu. I will respond to all submissions to confirm that they have been received. If you do NOT hear a confirmation, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the professor receives the assignment. Please note that submissions from students' @eagles.ewu.edu address will nearly always reach me. Additionally, **PLEASE FOLLOW THE FOLLOWING NORMS for communication with me:** http://scienceblogs.com/sciencewoman/2009/01/how_to_write_clear_emails_to_y.php

Academic integrity:

EWU expects the highest standards of academic integrity of its students. Academic honesty is the foundation of a fair and supportive learning environment for all students. Please review the "Student Academic Integrity Policy" on the EWU website for more information.

Students with special needs:

Eastern Washington University strives to make academic accommodations for students with identified special needs. Students with disabilities need to register with the EWU Disability Support Services office if they require special accommodations.

Grading

Weekly Paragraphs & Questions (30% total)	20 pts each, 180 pts total
Oral Herstory Notes (3.33% - see note):	20 pts
(must be submitted on-time for the paper to be accepted)	
Oral Herstory Paper (25%)	150 pts
Class Participation (16.67%)	100 pts
(includes class participation, being a respectful listener, attendance, and coming to class on time)	
Midterm Paper (12.5%)	75 points
Final Paper (12.5%)	75 points
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Course Points Total: 600	

4.0 = 588-600	3.4 = 516-527	2.8 = 444-455	2.2 = 372-383
3.9 = 576-587	3.3 = 504-515	2.7 = 432-443	2.1 = 360-371
3.8 = 564-575	3.2 = 492-503	2.6 = 420-431	2.0 = 348-359
3.7 = 552-563	3.1 = 480-491	2.5 = 408-419	1.9 = 336-347
3.6 = 540-551	3.0 = 468-479	2.4 = 396-407	1.8 = 324-335
3.5 = 528-539	2.9 = 456-467	2.3 = 384-395	1.7 = 312-323

Extra Credit:

Students are encouraged to engage critically and respectfully with the course, the content, and the instructor. Students who submit written constructive feedback on the course will receive 10 points of extra credit added to their final grade (the equivalent of .1 on a 4.0 scale). Additional extra credit may be made available during the course of the quarter.

Reading Materials:

Students are required to purchase one books for this class. Each may be purchased at the Eastern Washington University Bookstore – additional information about purchasing the book is available via email. **Please note that this is the 5th edition. Although the 4th edition is cheaper, it does not have all of the readings. If a student chooses to purchase the 4th edition, please ensure that you can access the readings not available in the 4th edition either online or by borrowing/photocopying/scanning those articles.**

Susan Shaw and Janet Lee, eds. 2011. *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Fifth Edition. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Course Structure:

Date	Topic	Due	In-Class Speaker/Media
9/21	Introduction to the Course What is Women's Studies?	(In-Class Reading) Guy-Sheftall & Thornton Dill "Forty Years of Women's Studies," pp. 25-27; Baumgardner & Richards, "A Day Without Feminism," pp. 30-33.	<i>The danger of a single story</i> "Commencement Day"
9/28	Sex/Gender as Central Categories of Analysis	Shaw & Lee, "Learning Gender," pp. 105-119; Fasto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes, Revisited," pp. 121-126; Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender," pp. 126-128; Blackwood, "Trans Identities and Contingent Masculinities," pp. 135-140; Wexler, "Shame-O-Phobia," pp.141-144; Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, Buchanan, "Through the Lens of Race," pp. 145-155; Rosenberg, "(Re)Thinking Gender," pp. 158-162. Due 9/27, 5 pm: Summary #1 and Questions	"William Wants a Doll"
10/5	Hierarchy, Structure, & Oppression	Shaw & Lee, "Ranking Gender," pp. 119-120; Shaw & Lee, "Systems of Privilege and inequality," pp. 42-58; Collins, "Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection," pp. 59-67; Frye, "Oppression," pp. 67-69; Pharr, "Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism," pp. 71-74; McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege," pp. 75-82; Yeskel, "Opening Pandora's Box," pp. 86-90; Wendall, "The Social Construction of Disability," pp. 91-99. Due 10/4, 5 pm: Summary #2 and Questions	
10/12	Gendering Bodies	Shaw & Lee, "Inscribing Gender on the Body," pp. 213-233; Grossman, "Beating Anorexia and Gaining Feminism," pp. 241-243; Gloria Steinem, "If Men Could Menstruate," pp. 238; Rubin et al., "Body Ethics and Aesthetics Among African American and Latina Women," pp. 243-252; Martin, "Love Your Fat Self," pp. 265-270; Davis, "Designer Vaginas," pp. 270-277; Courvant, "Thinking of Privilege," (PDF provided). Due 10/11, 5 pm: Summary #3 and Questions	
10/19	Women & Biopolitics	Shaw & Lee, "Health & Reproductive Rights," pp. 279-309; Sanger, "My Fight for Birth Control," pp. 310-312; Woods, "A Global Health Imperative," pp. 326-332; Parks, "Rethinking Radical Politics in the Context of Assisted Reproductive Technology," pp. 333-339; Sillman et al., "Women of Color and Their Struggle for Reproductive Justice," pp. 340-347. Due 10/18, 5 pm: Summary #4 and Questions	Megan Cuilla, Planned Parenthood (Agency overview, ed, advocacy)

10/26	Sexuality	Shaw & Lee, "Sex, Power, & Intimacy," pp. 164-181; Valenti, "The Cult of Virginity," pp. 181-185; Marinucci, <i>Feminism is Queer</i> (selection, PDF will be provided); Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (PDF provided); hooks, "Romance: Sweet Love," pp. 186-189; Springer, "Queering Black Female Heterosexuality," pp. 207-212. Due 10/25, 5 pm: Summary #5 and Questions Due By Class Time: Midterm Paper	
11/2	Economics and Money	Shaw & Lee, "Women's Work Inside and Outside the Home," pp. 391-414; Burroughs, "Too Poor to Parent," pp. 571-574; Sweetman, "Feminist Economics" (PDF provided). Due 11/1, 5 pm: Summary #6 and Questions	<i>Guest:</i> Elizabeth Wallace, JD; Bina Walker <i>Roseanne, S01E01</i>
11/9	Living and Creating as Activism	Shaw & Lee, "Women Confronting & Creating Culture," pp. 450-472; Lorde, "Poetry is Not a Luxury," pp. 477-479; de Leon, "If Women Ran Hip Hop," pp. 483-484; Gillman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (find on Project Gutenberg); Piepmeier, "Bad Girl, Good Girl: Zines Doing Feminism," pp. 498-502. Due 11/8, 5 pm: Summary #7 and Questions Due By Class Time: Oral Herstory Notes	<i>Guest:</i> Jolie Mandelbaum, MA/MFA Selection from <i>Girls Rock!</i>
11/16	Power-Based Violence	Shaw & Lee, "Resisting Violence Against Women," pp. 503-524; Smith, "Beyond the Politics of Inclusion," pp. 525-527; Swartz, "The Lost Girls: pp. 528-534; Manah & Bekoh, "Confronting Violence," pp. 537-540; Roy, "Rape and War: Three Essays on a Theme," pp. 543-547. Due 11/15, 5 pm: Summary #8 and Questions Due By Class Time: Oral Herstory Paper	<i>Guest:</i> Laurel Kelly & Green Dot Project
11/23	Thanksgiving Holiday – NO CLASS		
11/30	Activism, Change, and the Future	Shaw & Lee, "Activism, Change, & Feminist Futures," pp. 640-654; Hogeland, "Fear of Feminism," pp. 655-657; Kimmel, "Real Men Join the Movement," pp. 662-665; Bailey & Gumbs, "We are the Ones We've Been Waiting For," pp. 674-675. Due 11/29, 5 pm: Summary #9 and Questions	
12/7	Where do we go from here?	Due In-Class: Final Paper	

Writing Assignments:

Summary Assignments: Due EVERY WEEK at 5 pm on Tuesday (via email)

Due by 5 pm the evening before class (EVERY TUESDAY EVENING), all students will submit 2 paragraphs summarizing what you got out of the readings this week and 4 questions that you have about the reading. These questions and paragraphs will be used to both address concerns that students have about the readings and to structure the small group discussions that occur in class.

Midterm Paper: Due 10/26/2011 (via email, before class):

A midterm paper of 4-6 pages will be assigned. Separate instructions for this paper will be disseminated 2 weeks before the due date.

Final Paper: Due 12/7/2011 (via email, before class):

A final paper of 5-7 pages will be assigned. Separate instructions for this paper will be disseminated 2 weeks before the due date.

Herstory Assignment:

Notes Due: November 9, 2011 (note that notes MUST BE submitted on time for the paper to be accepted)

Paper Due: November 16, 2011

Length: 3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, normal margins

Guidelines to the project and paper:

1. For this project you will interview a woman who is older than you or is from a different generation than you are, using some of the questions and topics provided below as a guide for your interview. You do not have to ask all of these questions (you will probably not use all of them) and you can ask relevant questions that are not mentioned here.

The purpose of the interview is to find out more about the woman you are interviewing and in particular to explore how gender has affected her life experiences and choices and to relate her experiences to yours and to social roles and institutions . This woman may be a family member, a friend, a professor or teacher, an acquaintance, a neighbor, or a community member. You should take notes during this interview.

The interview should be in person or by telephone. You can videotape or record your interview if your interviewee agrees, but this is not required.

You will need to turn in your interview notes, and you will write a paper based on this interview: your oral herstory of the woman you interviewed. **In this paper you will include your critical reflection on what has changed and what has stayed the same in the lived experience of this woman, other women in your life, and yourself, as well as connections to material presented in class and in the textbook.**

Things to think about while interviewing and writing your paper:

A) Background information/intersectionality

- Race
- Social Class
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Able Bodied/Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Cis/transsexual privilege or points of experience
- Religious Affiliation
- Etc.

B) Growth and Development/Gender Socialization

- What messages did she receive about what it meant to be a “good girl” when she was a child?
- What activities did participate in as a child? What toys/games did she most enjoy?
- What chores or household duties was she assigned as a child? Did her siblings have the same responsibilities? If so, how did they differ?
- How did her life change as she grew older?
- What period of her life has she enjoyed most up to this point? The least? Why?

C) Dating, Relationships, Marriage, Children, and Friendships

- Did she date? What was/is the typical date for her?
- Is she married? OR has she ever been married?
- Is she or was she in a relationship/partnership with another woman?
- Did she plan to marry? At what age?
- Did she feel she was EXPECTED to marry (social or family pressure)?

- If married, how have her expectations been met or not met?
- If not married, why does she want to or not want to marry?
 - Did she feel society judged her because of her “singleness”?
- How does she feel about being single/divorced/widowed?
- What was/is the significance of relationships or friendships with women in her life?
- Did she feel pressure to have children?
- If she does not have children, did she feel judged because of that?
- Does she have children?
 - What were/are the roles of mother & father?
 - How close together were the children?
 - Was birth control a consideration?
 - What was most important to her in raising her children?

D) Education

- What is her level of education? What was the level of education of other family members?
 - If she did not go to college, why not?
 - If she did go to college, who made the decision to go and how did she decide to major in _____?
 - What opportunities were there for women to get an education in her youth? Does she feel those opportunities have changed for her as she grew older?

E) Work History

- Remember if she is single this will change her career path vs. that of someone who is married and/or has children
- What type of work does she or did she do?
- If she worked or works outside the home, how does she FEEL about it?
- How did she decide on her career?
 - Did she choose the kind of work she does or did she fall into it by chance or necessity?
- Does she like the work?
- Is this a male or female dominated field? Does she feel that she is treated equally to men at her workplace?
- If she feels comfortable to discuss – has she ever encountered sexual harassment in the workplace?

F) Balancing Work and Family

- Does she or did she have children at home? If so, what type of childcare arrangements did she use?
- How does she or did she handle the combined roles of career woman and mother?
- If she had or has children and worked or works outside the home, how did she feel that experience affected or affects her children?
- Who does the housework in the family?
 - Who cleaned last the kitchen, bathroom, bedrooms, etc.
 - Who does the laundry?
 - Changes linens and makes beds?
 - Takes care of meal preparations/ breakfast, lunch, & dinner?
 - Does grocery shopping? Who decides what to eat/ what groceries to buy?

G) Activities

- Has she been/does she plan to be involved in any women’s groups or social clubs consisting only of women?
- Has she participated in any activities related to women’s rights or women’s equality? How?
- How does she feel about women who are involved in the women’s movement?
- Does she think the overall impact of the women’s movement has been positive or negative? Why?

H) Contributions to Society

- What contributions does she feel she has made to her family, herself, community, and society?
- Describe in detail her accomplishments in creative endeavors.

- Music, gardening, dancing, cooking, crafts, painting or drawing, writing, needlework, quilting, etc.?
- To what degree was her self-expression determined by her opportunities or lack of opportunities?
- To what degree was her self-expression influenced by her race, culture, ethnicity, religion?
- To what degree was her self-expression encouraged and appreciated?
- What contributions does she hope or expect to make?
- What contributions does she feel other women have made to society?
- Who are some people she particularly admires?

I) Problems

- What does she see as her biggest problem? Her biggest joy?
- What does she see as the biggest problems confronting women in society today?

J) Other ideas for questions:

- Body image
- Her health
- Her religious beliefs
- Her political ideals/values
- Her hope for her children, especially daughters or granddaughters

2. After you interview this woman and write up your interview notes, you must create a paper that connects this woman's life to your own and to larger structural societal issues, using gender as a crucial factor in your analysis.

In order to do this you should include the following in your paper:

- **Introduction (17 points)**

- 1-2 paragraphs introducing the woman you interviewed and briefly explaining what you are going to talk about in the paper. You should express why you chose to interview this woman and her connection to you.

- **Body of the paper (91 points)**

- In this section you should summarize and discuss your interview and what you learned. You can break it up into sections from your interview on specific topics if that is easier. **For each topic you talk about, you must bring in your own personal reflection on how this relates to your life and to other women around you, using gender as a lens to discuss your reflections. You must also bring in material from the book and class discussion that allows you to connect her life with larger, structural factors concerning gender, as well as class, race, ethnicity, etc.**
 - For example, if the woman you interviewed is working outside the home and has children, you would talk about her experience with this. If she is struggling with balancing work and family, you might refer to the fact that living in a patriarchal society conditions our ideas about women's roles and may influence their decision to stay at home or work outside the home. Therefore, even though the 2nd wave of the women's movement fought for equality in the workforce, because women are still expected to take care of children, it is still an issue today. Also what role did economic status and social class play in her decision? Did she really have a choice?
- Since the paper length is between 3-5 pages long, you will probably have to pick and choose the topics that offer the most analysis. Make sure you bring in the connection between this woman's life and larger society. Her personal story could be considered analysis at the micro level, but to analyze her life in a thorough way you must connect her life to greater society (macro level). That is where you would reference patriarchy, inequality, the women's movement, racism, class differences, gender socialization, etc.]

- **Reflection, Discussion, & Conclusion (17 points)**

- How do you think your own statuses (race, class, gender, age, etc.) affected your interaction with this woman & your interpretation of her story?
- What was the most significant thing you learned while conducting this interview?
- Effective conclusion, closing insights

- **Grammar, Organization, Proofing, Citations, etc. (25 points)**

- Is the paper well organized? Does it flow well?
- Is the grammar/spelling correct? Are sentences clear and well structured?
- Is the paper well proofed, with no typos or other errors?
- If you used outside material, did you cite properly?
- Is the paper typed, double-spaced, in 12 point font?