

Women's Studies Course Descriptions – Fall 2007

DRA 43 *Gay & Lesbian Theatre & Film*

Block: F+

Senelick

Stage and media treatment of homosexuality throughout history, beginning with the classical Greek and Elizabethan stage, dealing with the Chinese and Japanese traditional drama, and proceeding to present time. Subjects include stage transvestitism, stereotypes of the effete dandy and predatory lesbian, underground vs. commercial film representations, the concept of camps, AIDS drama, and contemporary queer theory and performance. Film screenings.

ED 191 14 *Masculinities in Urban Schooling*

Block: J+

Vaught

This seminar will address issues of masculinity in schooling through narrative, ethnographic, and sociological analyses. We will frame this investigation through the intersecting lenses of race, class, and sexuality. Specifically, we will explore these intersections in the context of urban schooling, engaging schools as socio-cultural institutions that reflect, mediate, and reinforce larger structures and processes of masculinity. Students will engage both theoretical and empirical bodies of literature and develop a complex understanding of the issues facing scholars, students, and school communities broadly conceived.

ENG 45 *Non-Western Women Writers*

Block: D+

Roy

This course is designed to introduce you to the diversity of women's writing from countries often referred to as "third world." Through an eclectic selection of texts, the course will explore some of the key concerns of women in places such as South Asia, the West Indies, Africa and Latin America. We shall be concerned also with issues of literary technique, genre and representation. We shall focus on the connection between literary texts and the social and political contexts within which the writing was produced. Authors will include Ama Ata Aidoo, Marta Traba, Joan Riley, Anita Desai, Merle Hodge among others.

ENG 46 *Girls' Books*

Block: 2+

Flynn

Girls' Books construct our ideas about femininity, sometimes deliberately, sometimes quite incidentally. This course will examine the various cultural values that girls' books produce. Without being too subjective, we will probably unpack some of the values that have become part of your own cultural baggage. We will read some of the classical nineteenth century texts- *Little Women*, *The Secret Garden*, *Girls of Limberlost* - then some of your own classics – *Blubber*, *Flowers in the Attic*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Harriet the Spy*. Finally, we will look at contemporary girls' books that explore issues of multi-cultural and sexual diversity -

texts like *Weetzie Bat*, *Deliver Us from Evie*, *Toning the Sweep* and *Finding my Voice*. We will also read cultural critics Gilligan and Pipher. We will read quite a lot of books. If you sign up for this course, I would like you to email me a short list of the girls' books that you find most important to you. I can't promise to include them all, but I am interested in adding texts that strongly interest you. We will also be doing a great deal of writing, both analytical and creative. My email address is carol.flynn@tufts.edu. The book list is subject to change. I will email students registered for the course the final list as soon as possible.

ENG 81 *Postmodernism & Film*

Block: I+

Edelman

Everyone talks about postmodernism, but few really understand what it means. This course aims to introduce students to some major tenets of postmodern thought by studying a wide array of films in relation to important essays written by postmodern critics and philosophers. While providing students with an introduction to some of the most significant figures in postmodern theory (including Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler, Slavoj Žižek, Jean-François Lyotard, Frederic Jameson, Donna Haraway, and Jean Baudrillard), this course will approach those readings in the context of that the various films that will occupy the center of our discussions each week. In the process, we will consider whether film as a medium has something distinctive to tell us about the movement between modern and postmodern thought and how these two modes of conceptualizing the human intersect with and diverge from one another precisely around questions of identity. In the process, we will consider how postmodern theory transforms our ideas about history, narrative, and visual perception. This is not a course for students unwilling to grapple with complex ideas and make their way through some difficult texts. Similarly, students unwilling to view film as anything but a transparent medium of popular entertainment might prefer a different course.

Although we will attend to a number of films that raise issues central to postmodernism, that doesn't mean that the films we will study are all postmodern films. In fact, the tension between the postmodern ideas the films put into play and the resistance to those ideas by the films themselves will be central to our discussions. The following are likely to be among the cinematic texts considered in class: the Wachowski's *The Matrix*, Scott's *Blade Runner*, Lasseter's *Toy Story*, Polanski's *Chinatown*, Zemeckis' *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, Cameron's *The Terminator*, Beineix's *Diva*, Gilliam's *12 Monkeys*, Amenabar's *Abre los Ojos*, Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, Luhrman's *Moulin Rouge*, and Almodovar's *Bad Education*.

No prior experience in the study of film or theory is required, but students enrolling in this class should come prepared to think seriously about both. There will be a weekly film screening outside of class time in the Tisch Media Lab.

ENG 123 *Frankenstein's Sisters: Austen & Shelley*

Block: I+

Hofkosh

Between 1811 and 1818 Jane Austen published six books known as domestic fiction or novels of courtship, each of which focuses on a young woman falling in love in the proper, limited, provincial world of the English gentry. Starting with *Frankenstein*, in 1818, Mary Shelley wrote novels about misshapen monsters, forbidden passions, betrayal, exile, murder, and suicide. With some attention to recent critical approaches to the early 19th Century novel, and especially to women's writing during that period, we will explore the issues and interests that these two apparently very different authors share, from the fictional

nightmares of Austen's *Northanger Abbey* to Shelley's representation of the end of the human world in *The Last Man*.

ENG 135 *Virginia Woolf*

Block: 10+

Rosenthal

Widely recognized as an icon of British modernism, Virginia Woolf is also associated with 20th-century feminism, pacifism and queer theory. Recently popularized by the film adaptation of Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*, her name, thanks in large part to the lyrical title of Edward Albee's famous play, has long provided a convenient short-hand for threats and problems ranging from elitism and anti-intellectualism to mental illness, suicide, and intractable gender ambiguity. In this course we will examine some of the reasons Woolf, both because and in spite of the complexity of her work, has served so well as a metonym and exemplary voice for such a wide range of debates and cultural discourses. Readings will be selected from Woolf's novels, short stories, and essays.

ENG 155 *American Women Writers*

Block: G+

Sharpe

The texts in this course will emphasize the heterogeneity of American literature. We will read a variety of texts that trace and retrace the contours and concerns of race, nation, belonging, and representation from the end of the nineteenth-century to the present. In addition to reading novels we may also see a number of films and view other visual arts as we think through "American women writing" and the practice and politics of representation. This is a seminar. Class will be run on a discussion basis and active student participation is required.

Texts may include but are not limited to: Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*; Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*; Valerie Martin, *Property*; Gayl Jones, *Corregidora*; Michelle Cliff, *No Telephone to Heaven*; Bharati Mukerjee, *Jasmine*; Sandra Cisneros, *Woman Hollering Creek*.

FAH 92/192 *The Latina/o Body in Visual Culture*

Block: H+

Zavala

This course is an analysis of representations of the Latin American and Latino body (politic) in art and popular media with emphasis on such representations in the U.S. In the midst of polemical debates about immigration and national security, the Latina/o body has persisted as a fetish in the U.S. imagination, in films, advertisements, and in commodifications of artists such as Frida Kahlo, Shakira, J. Lo, Juanes, and Daddy Yankee. We will undertake a critical examination of the embodiment of the Latina/o body as different, considering how difference (racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation), though seeming natural is a construct directly linked to power relations and inequalities. We will examine how the Latin American/Latino body is rendered as different and is co-opted for Anglo consumption. Alternately, we will also consider self-expression and radical articulations of difference as a form of political dissent. We will trace this history, beginning, for example, with the fetishizing of Hernán Cortés interpreter and concubine Malintzín, or that of European traveler artists in regard to the indigenous "cannibal," but we will place major emphasis on the construction and co-optation of the Latino body in the twentieth-century, situating this phenomena in cultural and political context over time.

FR 191 B *George Sand & Her Sisters: The 19th Century Woman Writer*

Block: L+

Naginski

While Germaine de Staël and George Sand have in recent years been “rediscovered,” many women writers of the first half of the 19th century remain in relative obscurity. This course attempts to retrieve their lost voices and to study them alongside their more famous sisters. Often braving prejudice and ridicule, these writers were reviled by critics of the day as pedantic “femmes-auteurs.” But they would not be silenced. Adopting the novel genre, but also producing memoirs, plays, political and historical treatises, George Sand and her sisters played a major role in feminizing the literary arena. Some theoretical materials will be read (Cixous, Kristeva, B. Didier). One short paper (5-6 pp); one long paper (10-12 pp); one exposé or take-home final exam. Active class participation is essential. Conducted in French.

GER 70/170 *Grimms' Fairy Tale: Ideology and Politics*

Block: H+

Nelson

The Grimm brothers as nineteenth-century collectors and authors. Folk tale and literary fairy tale; relation to the development of German nationalism and capitalism; role in attitude formation towards gender and social class; assimilation and adaptation in twentieth-century social, political, and economic life under the Weimar Republic, National Socialism, and post World War II Germany. Significant focus on women’s issues. May be taken at the 100 level with consent, extra assignments and conferences.

MUS 126 *Women & Music*

Block: 1

Bernstein

Popular music and art music around the world from the perspective of women. The roles of women as creators, performers, sponsors, and consumers. The representation of women in music and how it reflects the culture of the past and present.

PHIL 48 *Feminist Philosophy

Block: E+

Leighton

Investigation of the implications of a feminist point of view for philosophical inquiry and for various philosophical issues. Practical ethical problems such as abortion, sexual harassment, and pornography, and theoretical issues such as the nature of equality and gender difference will be discussed. Core course in the Women's Studies Program.

PS 129 *African Politics*

Block: E+

Robinson

What accounts for the prevailing patterns of ethnic, gender, and race relations in present-day Africa? To what extent have they been prefigured by earlier histories? How have various political forces sought to overturn discriminatory legal and racial orders, to end the various forms of gender bias, to reverse exclusion from citizenship rights, or to end authoritarian rule? How do we make sense of current African debates about dual citizenship and alternative forms of modernity?

This is a Comparative Politics course that is cross-listed with Women's Studies. It examines issues of political identity, gender relationships and citizenship in contemporary Africa –

through analytical frameworks that focus on processes of democratization and notions of political entitlement. You will learn how to identify distinctive patterns of ethnic, race and gender relations; how to historicize a concept in order to analyze change over time; how social categories become a basis for constructing political identities; and how to apply these constructs in a variety of approaches to the analysis of democracy and the dynamics of political inclusion and exclusion. Case studies that vary the context are used to provide comparative perspective, to test hypotheses, and to ground the phenomena we try to understand in concrete situations. Particular emphasis is paid to the relationship between politics and culture.

SOC 30 *Sex & Gender in Society

Block: L+

Langstraat

Differences and inequalities between women's and men's social positions and personal experiences in the contemporary United States. Intersections of gender, race, and class. Gender relations in the labor force, families, the state, and in sexual and emotional life. Violence and sexual harassment. Men's and women's efforts toward personal and social change in gender relations.

SOC 187 *Immigrant Children & Children of Immigrants*

Block: 6

Aymer

Millions of children have accompanied parents and relatives into exile and settlement in host countries throughout the world. Researchers are just beginning to examine the issues of parenting, childhood, transnationalism, and identity that immigrant children face. The course will focus on refugee and immigrant communities in the United States and East Africa to highlight the unique parenting patterns that are evident cross culturally, and issues of childhood and adolescence that affect children who arrive as part of immigrant families or rejoin immigrant parents through family reunification policies. Attitudes of citizens in receiving countries, institutional processes that help or hinder assimilation, and policies that encourage or discourage settlement of immigrant children in host countries will be studied. Prerequisite: Jr. standing, SOC 1, or consent.

WS 99: *Women's Studies Internship*

Block: Arr

Please contact the Director of Women's Studies.

WS 190: *Doing Feminist Research

Block: 5

Roy

Practices and methods of feminist, interdisciplinary research in a cross-cultural framework. How feminist inquiry rethinks disciplinary assumptions and categories; what counts as knowledge; relation among subjects and objects of study; international issues in feminist analysis. To be taken in preparation for the sr. project. With approval of the instructor, open to non-majors and non-minors (including grad. students) engaged in extensive research on women and/or gender in other programs or departments.

***WS 191 Intro to Queer Studies**

Block: 12+

Yarbrough

This course will introduce students to queer studies through an examination of key theoretical texts and exemplary practices. We will be interested in a diverse set of attempts to upset, oppose, or subvert ideas and practices of normality and to displace the opposition between “homosexuality” and “heterosexuality” as the main axis on which human sexuality is mapped. First we will examine several sources of what became queer theory, including writing by Michel Foucault and Gayle Rubin. We will then examine work by some of queer theory's foundational writers, including Eve Sedgwick and Judith Butler. Next we will see how queer theory is put into practice as it intersects with other fields such as literature, critical race theory, ethnic studies, anthropology, history, and economics. Finally, we will consider recent ideas about “gay globalization” in relation to postcolonialism and international human rights.

Course requirements include participation in class discussion, weekly Blackboard reading responses, one group presentation, a midterm examination on key theoretical concepts, and a final paper or project.

WS 193: *Senior Project

Block: Arr

Roy

Independent project. A substantial interdisciplinary research paper or other creative project, such as film, presentation or performance (with written component) developed from elective cluster topic area on women or gender.

Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies (GCWS)

Founded in 1993, GCWS is a pioneering effort by faculty at eight degree-granting institutions in the Boston area (Boston College, Brandeis University, Harvard University, MIT, Northeastern University, Simmons College, Tufts University, and UMass Boston.) GCWS pursues its mission through an ongoing series of team-taught graduate seminars, interdisciplinary faculty development workshops, and other opportunities for scholarly and administrative collaboration. GCWS programs help to build intellectual community and offer a model for institutional change. GCWS courses are offered to students matriculated in graduate programs at member schools. There is no fee for GCWS courses. Students are granted credit for participation by their home institutions.

Visit the GCWS website at: www.mit.edu/gcws.

Courses Fall 2007

CRWS 291

Interrogating Marriage

Tuesdays, 6 – 9 PM / 9.4.07 – 12.11.07

Meets at MIT Campus, building and room TBA

Is Marriage a patriarchal institution? Much feminist scholarship has characterized it that way, but now in the context of the recent Massachusetts Supreme Court decision legalizing gay marriage, the meaning of marriage itself demands serious re-examination. This course will discuss history, literature, film, and legal evolution, making use of cross-cultural, sociological, anthropological and many other theoretical approaches to the marriage question from 1630 to the present. As it turns out, sex, marriage, and the family have never been stable institutions; to the contrary, they have continued to function as flash points for the very social and cultural questions that are central to gender studies scholarship.

Faculty

Renée Bergland is Professor of English and Gender/Cultural Studies at Simmons College. She teaches courses in American literature and culture, gender studies, and literary and cultural theory. Her first book, *The National Uncanny: Indian Ghosts and American Subjects*, focuses on the Native American figures that haunt US cultural narratives. More recently, she wrote *Computer of Venus: Maria Mitchell and the Sexing of Science*, forthcoming from Beacon Press in 2007. Other current projects are an essay collection on the recently discovered Nineteenth-Century

American novel *The Hermaphrodite*, and a monograph on the global Emily Dickinson.

Leonard Buckle is Associate Professor of Law, Policy and Society and served from 1985 to 2003 as Co-Director of the LPS program. He teaches negotiation and research methods and supervises dissertations in humanistic and social scientific approaches to the study of law and law-like institutions. He has done research in tobacco control, community-based dispute resolution and informal uses of the legal system. Before joining the Northeastern University faculty, he taught and conducted research at MIT's department of urban studies and planning, Tufts' department of political science and the Kennedy School of Government.

Suzann Thomas-Buckle is Associate Professor of Law, Policy and Society and served from 1985 to 2003 as Co-Director of the LPS program. She teaches interdisciplinary research methods and dispute resolution and supervises dissertations in the field of informal justice and the ad hoc construction of social control. Her academic interests include indigenous legal systems, conflict resolution and the construction of law through formal legislation and litigation and through informal processes in organizations and communities. Before joining the Northeastern University faculty, she taught and conducted research at MIT's department of urban studies and planning, Tufts' department of political science and the Kennedy School of Government. "I hope to do more work on writing of the west, to explore concepts of the west in future papers, etc."

CRWS 291

Representing Gender:

Global Perspectives on Art, Media and Popular Culture

Thursdays, 6 – 9 PM / 9.6.07 – 12.13.07

Meets at MIT Campus, building and room TBA

This course explores and interrogates the ways in which social and cultural conventions construct sexuality, gender, race, class, ethnicity and nationality across a broad range of representations in art, popular culture and the communications media. Utilizing a global feminist perspective and drawing on examples from the US, China, India, Mexico, Japan, and South Africa, we will focus on thematic intersections and patterns of representation.

We examine the ways in which cultural, ideological, and generic conventions converge in a wide range of contemporary representational practices and how feminist theoretical and analytical approaches have attempted to account for a diverse range of influences and impulses.

Faculty

Pamela Allara is Associate Professor Emerita at Brandeis University. An art historian, she teaches courses the history of women's art, contemporary art, film,

photography and visual culture. The author of a monograph on the American painter Alice Neel, (*Pictures of People: Alice Neel's American Portrait Gallery*, [1998/2000]), her recent research has been on activist art in South Africa. In 2003, she organized the exhibition, "Co-existence: Contemporary Cultural Production in South Africa" for the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis and the South African National Gallery in Cape Town. During the 2005-6 academic year, she organized two exhibitions: "Geobodies: A Question of Boundaries" for the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis University, and "Cross-Current In Recent Video Installation: Water as Metaphor for Identity" for the Tufts University Art Gallery.

Lisa Cuklanz is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication at Boston College. She is author of *Rape on Trial: How the Mass Media Construct Legal Reform and Social Change* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996) and *Rape on Prime Time: Television, Masculinity, and Sexual Violence* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). Her research interests focus on mass media representations of gendered violence. Her work has been published in journals including *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *Women's Studies in Communication*, *Communication Quarterly*, and *Journal of Gender Studies*.

CRWS 291

Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies

Fall & Spring, Day and Time TBA

Meets at MIT Campus, building and room TBA

Meets every other week

A writing workshop for dissertation writers at all levels, beginning with preparation of the proposal. Class will include rotating discussion in each meeting of pre-circulated material by one or two students. In addition to a constructive critique of your writing, we will focus on: theoretical and methodological concepts in Women's and Gender Studies cross disciplines; research, argumentation, and writing; practical matters such as: the Dissertation Committee, looking toward eventual publication, and writing with an eye to a professional position. Enrollment is limited to ten students.

Faculty

Erica Harth is Professor Emerita (as of 2006) of Humanities and Women's Studies at Brandeis University. Her original scholarly field is early modern French literature and culture. Among her several published books in this field is *Cartesian Women: Versions and Subversions of Rational Discourse in the Old Regime* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); and she is the author of numerous articles and essays. Her most recent book is an edited collection of original essays, which she commissioned, on the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II, *Last Witnesses: Reflections on the Wartime Internment of Japanese Americans* (New York: St. Martins/Palgrave, 2001 and 2003).