

Women's Studies Course Descriptions – Fall 2009

AMER 83-01 / WS 196-02 *On the Road in America*

Block: T/Th 4:30-5:45

Johnson

This multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary course studies the 20th-century United States through two of its most compelling narrative forms: the road tale and the buddy tale. We will consider this most popular form of epic movement across multiple forms and significations, including: citizenship, and disenfranchisement; political entitlement and oppression; "discovery" and self-discovery; emancipation and enslavement; captivity and assimilation; resistance and resignation; self-improvement and the pursuit of the American Dream. Throughout the course we will focus on the similarities and differences between male and female road travel and "buddy" adventures.

ANTH 120 *Culture and Intimacy in South Asia*

Block: D+ TR 10:30-11:45

Pinto

This course is an introduction to the anthropology of South Asia by way of inquiry into the structure of personhood and intimacy in household, religious, and political life. Beginning with the notion that, within a region marked by its rich diversity, anthropological approaches to South Asia have long been obsessed with kinship and caste, we will consider both the content and politics of these foci. We will look at ethnographic studies for what they can tell us about cultures and structures of power in this region, for the material they offer for thinking about identity, gender, and personhood, and for what they reveal about the symbolic place of South Asia in the larger world. In asking what holds people together, how genders are defined, what shapes emotional life, and how legal and political structures delineate relationships within and across groups, genders, and generations, we will pay particular attention to the ways identity and kinship, inheritance, reproduction, sexuality, death, and the politics and symbolics of case. With particular attention to the maintenance of and challenges to social and symbolic hierarchies, this course incorporates ethnographies, novels, and films about and from South Asia.

CHN 112 *Women & Gender in Modern Chinese Literature*

Block: G+ MW 1:30-2:45

Zhong

Discussion from a gendered perspective of issues confronting China and Chinese writers in the twentieth century. Focus on the May Fourth period (1920s-30s), 1930s-40s, and the post-Mao period (late 1970s to present). How does modern Chinese history "overdetermine" literary representations of men and women? How do men and women writers respond to sociocultural changes? Anxieties of male writers and the recent debate over "real" men and "real" women. No prerequisites.

EDU 165 *Educating Women and Girls

Block: K+ MW 4:30-5:45

Weiler

Use of feminist theory to explore how women and girls of different race, class, and ethnic identities have struggled to define and claim a meaningful education for themselves both globally and locally. Analysis of educational theories, curriculum and classroom practices from the perspective of gender.

ENG 45 *Non-Western Women Writers*

Block: G+ MW 1:30-2:45

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: O M 9:00-11:30

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.

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

Block: E+ MW 10:30-11:45

Hoshkosh

Between 1811 and 1818 Jane Austen published six books known as domestic fiction or novels of courtship, each of which focuses on the interior life of a young woman falling in love in the proper, limited, provincial world of the English gentry. Starting with *Frankenstein* in 1818, Mary Shelley wrote books about misshapen monsters, forbidden passions, war, betrayal, suicide, and plague. What do these two apparently so different writers share? With some attention to context and 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 link Austen and Shelley as creators of "subjectivity" or what could be called "the human," from the nightmare fantasies of Austen's *Northanger Abbey* to Shelley's representation of the end of the world in *The Last Man*.

ENG 155 *American Women Writers*

Block: E+ MW 10:30-11:45

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*.

FR 162 *French Romanticism: <Masculin/Feminin>*

Block: N+ TR 6:30-7:15

Naginski

Are the tenets of Romanticism the same for male and female writers? Do they express the “mal du siècle” in the same fashion? Are the characters gendered in the same way? How does the rehabilitation of a marginalized feminine Romanticism alter our understanding of the dominant and androcentric paradigm? After examining how the movement, through various manifestoes (by Stendhal, Hugo, Musset, Sand), set itself apart from Classicism, we will attempt to explore these questions. Chateaubriand’s *René* will be studied as a crucial foundation text. We will then focus our attention on George Sand and Alfred Musset, nicknamed “les enfants du siècle”, as a way to gauge the poetic and ideological differences between Romanticism in its masculine and feminine incarnations. Not only did Sand’s and Musset’s writings enter into a fertile dialogue of opposites, but their love affair produced a celebrated correspondence, poetry, fictions and a dramatic comedy. Course taught in French. Pre-requisite: French 31 and 32 or consent.

ENG 0191-08 *Reading Clarissa*
Flynn

Block: 7 W 1:30-4:00

This is your chance of the lifetime to read the longest and one of the most influential and powerful novels in the English language. The reason that you have possibly never heard of Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa*, (1748) is that it is “too long” to teach. Usually it is taught in abridgement. That is worse than not teaching it at all. Instead I usually teach Richardson’s novel *Pamela*, which is also an important early modern novel, but just not as important or compelling as the too often neglected *Clarissa*. *Clarissa* is around 2000 pages long, although in the paperback version we will be reading this comes to 1500 (tiny print, big pages). It tells the story of a tyrannical family and a relentlessly brilliant lover, and their discordant but mutual efforts to control their object of desire, *Clarissa*. The sublime heroine is imprisoned, swept away, deceived and imprisoned, raped, and dies, triumphant at last in her sublime suffering made divine. The work stretches the exquisite anguish of its heroine’s life and death in a full throttled attempt to move and reform the reader, and to capture your own attention and desire by making you feel the characters’ desire and pain. The work is epistolary, written from four separate points of view’s: *Clarissa* writes to her friend and supporter, Anna Howe; *Lovelace*, the seducer/rapist writes to his friend and increasingly distressed fellow “rake,” *Belford*. Reading the letters, written “to the moment,” full of their mutual anguish and excitement, is like being steamrolled into submission. Instead of submitting, however, we also find ourselves questioning the very meaning of her sacrifice and what it means to the rise of capitalism and the nuclear family, the price of patriarchy, and religiously endorsed family values. Richardson would be seen as a revolutionary were he not also so enmeshed in the values of his conservative culture. We will try to take his puzzle apart.

Samuel Johnson, major critic laying down the law in the eighteenth century, said that if you read *Clarissa* for the plot, you would hang yourself. You read the story for “the Sentiment.” We will explore the theory and cult of sentimentality in this course by reading the novel itself, in eight weeks, one week for each originally printed “volume” of the novel. We will also read Laurence Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey* and William Cleland’s *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, (short) works that in a different way make similarly disturbing connections between patriarchy, sexuality, death and power.

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

Block: I+ MW 3:00-4:15

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.

HIST 14 *Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Crises in Africa*

Penvenne

Block: E+ MW 10:30-11:45

Western press coverage of Africa highlights "democratization," environmental stress, human rights, transitional justice and AIDS. This course seeks historical perspectives on the African continent's contemporary crises. We explore African views through films, novels, scholarly texts, praise poetry, African journalism, biographies, autobiographies and web based ephemera collections.

After a general introduction to the continent's physical and human geography, we briefly recall the experience of intensified contact between African and European powers in the late nineteenth century culminating in conquest throughout much of the continent. Twentieth century competition to exploit African resources, changing political, military and environmental configurations, African intellectual history, social accommodation of new settlement and production patterns particularly for women and youth, comprise key themes. We consistently seek gendered perspectives on historical agency from across the whole continent. Case studies are drawn from Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Algeria and Darfur Sudan.

HST 91 *Africa: Seeking Gendered Perspectives, Africa (Foundation Seminar)*

Penvenne

Block: 7+ W 1:20-4:20

We begin by confirming that all people create, experience and interpret history as agents of change within the parameters of social location. Among the most familiar criteria shaping social location are age, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ethnicity, and race. This course will wrestle with the overall problematic of experiencing and interpreting history, but will pay special attention to women and men in Southern Africa. The course will partner small groups of students to read and report back to class on topics of historiography, theory and methods.

African historiography is now deep and complex. We will survey overall themes, but then focus on works that engage theoretical analyses of Southern Africa from the turn of the 20th century. Course materials include scholarly readings, documentary films, photographs, literature, poetry, interviews and a range of digital primary sources.

We will focus on web-based archives such as Aluka's "Struggles for Freedom in Southern Africa" collection and Michigan State's "African Activist Archive Project." Both contain digital images of ephemera and documents including pamphlets, newsletters, leaflets, buttons, posters, t-shirts, photos, audio and video recordings.

JPN 114 *Gender in Japanese Culture*

Block: F+ TR 12:00-1:15

Napier

The role of femininity and masculinity in Japanese culture, from the writings of Murasaki Shikibu, creator of "The Tale of Genji" to the heroines of contemporary Japanese animation (anime). Our sources will include , literature, film, essays, television series, manga (comics) and anime. The role of women as a repository of tradition, the use of women in contemporary horror films, the rise and fall of the iconic salaryman, the crisis in contemporary masculinity, and issues in queer sexuality. Taught in English.

PHIL 48 *Feminist Philosophy

Block: K+ MW 4:30-5:45

Bauer

The purpose of this course is to ask whether "feminist philosophy" is possible and, if so, what it can do and what it is good for. Any number of prominent feminists believe that in its commitment to what it calls "objectivity," "universality," and "reason," philosophy inveterately and insidiously serves the interests of men and is inherently an enemy of feminism. On the other hand, mainstream philosophers, who see objectivity, universality, and reason as paradigmatically neutral values, often worry that political movements such as feminism, while they may serve lofty purposes, cannot, by definition, count as philosophy.

The guiding concern of this course will be to explore whether in fact feminism has any good reason to take an interest in philosophy -- or traditional philosophy in feminism. We will focus on the following sorts of questions: Does philosophy have anything special to offer feminism? Can philosophy be feminist and remain philosophy? Why can't we, if indeed we can't, explore feminist concerns -- such as the very possibility of an inherent masculinist bias in some of our basic practices and concepts -- within traditional philosophical inquiry? Is there anything philosophically special about oppression based on gender? Is gender a natural subject for philosophy? What *is* gender? What, if anything, does it have to do with people's bodies? What rides, for feminism and for philosophy, on the answers to these sorts of questions?

The syllabus for the course will juxtapose, week by week, contemporary feminist writings with traditional philosophical texts. The feminist writings, by such authors as Simone de Beauvoir, Catharine MacKinnon, Luce Irigaray, Margaret Urban Walker, and Judith Butler, implicitly or explicitly offer themselves as examples of or commentaries on the possibility of feminist philosophy. The traditional philosophical material criticized and appropriated by our feminist writers will include texts by Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Rousseau, Nietzsche, and Freud -- authors who, ironically in this context, understood themselves to be working generally in service of human liberation.

Prerequisites: No previous experience with any of the authors mentioned above, or with philosophy or feminist theory in general, is necessary or will be presupposed.

PS 129 *African Politics*

Block: G+ MW 1:30-2:45

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: D+ TR 10:30-11:45

Ostrander

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 114 *Sociology of Leadership*

Block: G+ MW 1:30-2:45

Centner

In this introduction to the sociological study of *leadership*, we will consider two main themes: (1) what goes into being a leader – what qualities and experiences, as well as how leaders can be categorized, from good to bad, and everything in between; and (2) how leadership can be engaged critically and astutely by putting sociology into action. The course examines these themes across several very different contexts, especially in schools, communities, politics, and business. By the end of the semester, you will be able to understand how various sociological dimensions – especially race and ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, class, citizenship, age, and territory – shape leadership in those settings. It will be important to understand the difference between *assumptions* about leadership (e.g., collaboration), as well as the various ways leaders can be considered good or bad. This course is also about *leaderly* contexts, and avoids fetishizing individual leaders.

SOC 187 *Immigrant Children and Children of Immigrants*

Block: 5 M 1:30-4:00

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.

SPN 191 A *Saints & Sinners: Images of Women in Hispanic Literature*

Marquez-Raffetto

Block: H+ TR 1:30-2:45

This course will examine the dichotomous representation of women in Hispanic Literature as either paragons of virtue or victims, practitioners, and disseminators of vice and desire. The implications of their behavior will be considered as well as the author's representation of gender as not only a biological but also a social and political construct. Readings from XIII-XX century texts will also focus on the traditional Hispanic view of woman as repository of honor, both her own and that of her family and examine how this concept evolves from medieval to contemporary literature according to social, political, and cultural circumstances. Mid term and

final exams; final paper. Conducted in Spanish. Prerequisites: Spanish 31 or 34, and 32 or 35, or consent.

WS 73 *Intro to Queer Studies

Block: T 6-9

Burtner

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 two of queer theory's foundational writers, Eve Sedgwick and Judith Butler. The bulk of the course will be concerned with how queer theory is put into practice in fields such as economics, anthropology, literature, cultural studies, and film. Texts here will include work by Lisa Duggan, Martin Manalansan, John D'Emilio, and Isaac Julien. We will pay particular attention to the way gender and sexuality intersect with race, ethnicity, nationality, and class.

WS 99: *Women's Studies Internship*

Block: Arr

Please contact the Director of Women's Studies.

WS 190: *Doing Feminist Research

Block: M 3:30-6:00pm

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 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.

WS 196-01 *Special Topics: Shaping the 21st Century Women's Movement*

Francine Rogers & Morra Arrons

Block: 6+ T 1:20-4:20

This course examines the state of women's achievement and status on a broad spectrum of issues and asks the question -what gaps remain to be addressed? We will reference women elsewhere in the world but focus primarily on US women.

Since the 1960s, women in all fields have made much progress and the notion of women as victims in society has been widely rejected. However, there is hardly equity at the workplace or in politics. In addition, on cultural concerns like body image, premature sexuality and advertising, many see alarming regression.

The course is structured to briefly review previous women's movements and their central concerns for the purpose of understanding those issues that have been resolved (or still remain) and to discuss how previous movements formed. We will then spend the bulk of our sessions reviewing the contemporary status of women: in the workplace, in politics, as protected by the legal system, in the economy, in healthcare, in advertising, and in the family. In each session we will examine the historical and current challenges particular to each area, but also look at potential solutions.

The course challenges this generation of young women to think about their status in society and what they would like to see changed. If your generation were to design a new and powerful movement for women's equality what would it concern itself with and what would be its goals? This is a chance to update women's concerns through the fresh lens of a new generation.

As part of the class we will design and interpret a broad survey of Tufts students on their views of women's issues and their sense of what more, if anything, needs to happen to improve the status of women.

Teams of students will develop issue-specific survey questions and also make presentations on a how a specific issue (i.e.; reproductive health, influencing advertising, etc) might be interpreted by their generation.

WS 196-02 / AMER 83-01 *On the Road in America*

Block: T/Th 4:30-5:45

Johnson

See AMER 83-01 above for course description

Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies (GCWS)

Founded in 1993, GCWS is a pioneering effort by faculty at nine degree-granting institutions in the Boston area (Boston College, Boston University, 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 2009

Workshop for Dissertation Writers in Women's and Gender Studies

FALL & SPRING, Tuesdays, 1:00 - 4:00 PM

September 9th, 2009 – May 12th, 2010

Meets every other week at MIT, building and room TBA

A writing workshop for dissertation writers. Classes will include presentation and discussion of students' work-in-progress. Discussion will move back and forth between theoretical considerations and practical ones as we address three subjects central to dissertation work: data and the archive, methodology, and explanation or interpretation. Students will be asked to reflect on ways that feminism and gender studies have affected their discipline's views of what data are considered relevant and on the question of what body of materials is best suited to answer the questions raised in each of their dissertations. We will also consider general issues of scholarly method, methodological issues that feminism and gender studies have raised, and methodological issues prominent within the major topics of the participants' different disciplinary fields. The inquiry into explanation and interpretation will ask how dissertation writers convince various audiences that their work is significant. Each student will also give an oral presentation that has been consciously adapted for an interdisciplinary audience. Enrollment is limited to ten students.

FACULTY

Janet Z. Giele is Professor Emerita of Sociology, Social Policy, and Women's Studies at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management of Brandeis University. Her research focuses on the changing life course of women and the emergence of American family policy. She is the author, editor, or co-editor of *Women: Roles and Status in Eight Countries* (1977), *Women and the Future* (1978), *Women in the Middle Years* (1982), *Women and Work: The Continuing Struggle Worldwide* (1992), *Two Paths to Women's Equality* (1995), *Methods of Life Course Research* (1998), *Women's Equality in the Workplace* (2004), *Changing Life Patterns in Western Industrial Societies* (2004), and *The Craft of Life Course Research* (2009).