

Fall 2005 -- Introduction to Women's Studies (WSTU 120 MV)
Monday/Wednesday 2:30 – 3:45 ACAD 303 Mount Vernon Campus

Instructor Information: Susanne Beechey e-mail: sbeechey@gwu.edu Mail box: Women's Studies 837 22 nd St. NW	Office Hours: Wednesday 12-2pm & by appointment Media and Public Affairs Building, Room 610 Office phone: 994-7998 (messages unreliable)
---	---

Note: This syllabus is a guide to the course for the students. The instructor may at her discretion change content and requirements during the semester. All changes to the syllabus will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.

Description

The primary objective of this course is to develop a critical lens through which to understand the social forces that shape us as gendered individuals and the construct world in which we live. While we will often begin our discussion in women's lives, it will soon be clear that this is not a singular perspective. We will analyze key social institutions and systems of power and oppression, with emphasis placed on diverse perspectives related to gender, class, race, sexuality, ability and nationality. In addition to introducing you to the growing body of women's studies scholarship, this course will emphasize developing key reading, writing and critical thinking skills.

Required Texts

Vivien Labaton & Dawn Lundy Martin, *Fire This Time: Young Activists & New Feminism* (TFTT)
Barbara Findlen, *Listen Up: Voices from the Next Feminist Generation* (LU)
Additional required texts will be posted on Blackboard (BB)

Blackboard

Blackboard (<http://blackboard.gwu.edu>) will be actively used in this class. See handout for instructions. All adjustments to the syllabus and useful supplemental materials will be posted here. Discussion boards will be created as a space for you to continue our class discussions. Optional supplemental texts and materials will also be posted to Blackboard under the "outline" section. Please check before each class.

Grading

Paper 1	10%	Attendance	10%
Paper 2	10%	Participation	10%
Paper 3	15%	Weekly Journal	20%
Group Project	10%	Final/Summary of Themes	15%

Individual Conferences

I value individual consultations about all aspects of the class. I am happy to answer questions via email, and will endeavor to reply within 24 hours. If you are having problems with the reading, assignments, class participation, or any other facet of the course, please come see me. I am on campus during much of the week, so if my office hours are not convenient, please contact me to arrange a meeting at another time.

Mid-Semester Check-In

There is no formal midterm for this course, but we will take a moment to check in with each other at mid-semester. I will provide you with feedback about your class participation and journal as well as all assignments to date. You will have a chance to give me anonymous feedback about what is or is not working for you in the class and to offer constructive suggestions.

Journals

Keeping a reading response journal encourages personal, active learning: most people learn more, think more clearly, and retain more when they write about new material. Journals help you focus your thoughts on the texts/topics of the day and thus improve class discussion.

As a primary component of this course you will submit a 2 page journal entry each week by _____ via the journal tab in Blackboard. **No late submissions**, however you are welcome to submit your entry earlier in the week as you complete the readings. You have one “free pass” to skip a journal entry for the week without harming your grade. Any other missed entry will each result in a one-step reduction in your journal grade (i.e. a B+ reduced to a B). Periodically, though not every week, I will comment on your journal entries. Significant improvement in your weekly journals will be reflected in your final grade.

The journal is a place to think on paper and experiment with your writing as you make connections between our class texts and your academic, activist, and intellectual interests. This should **not** be a mere summary of the material, but rather your reflections, opinions, questions and observations. In the journals you do not need to worry about formal citation of texts (naming the text and/or author will suffice) nor technical aspects of writing (but please do write in a coherently organized manner using complete sentences).

There is no set formula for journal entries. Your entries should show what you have read, but more importantly record your reactions to the readings. The best journals make connections – among the readings, between the readings and class, between course materials and current events or personal experiences. There are no correct answers or stands to take in the journal, except that you must be attentive to and accurate about what you have read.

Please save a copy of all your journal entries. At the end of the semester, I will ask you to re-read your entire journal and write a summary reflection piece. Details to follow.

Papers

Class papers will be assigned by separate handouts listing specific requirements and due dates. Students are encouraged to consult with the instructor about assignments. All papers should be typed, double-spaced, one inch margins in a font like this one (12 point times new roman). Pay attention to the page limits! Part of learning to write well is learning meet page limitations. If you find you have written a longer piece, re-read and edit it. The minimum page length indicates the required number of full pages of text. All papers must be submitted both in hard copy and electronically via Blackboard to be considered completed. The grade of any assignment you turn in after the deadline will be reduced one letter grade per day.

Papers will be graded for substantive content, style and command of all the technical aspects of writing, including grammar, punctuation, and organization. Remember, spell checking your paper is only the beginning of a proper editing process. Properly cite all sources, including all images and text from the Internet, books, articles or other sources using a standard academic citation style such as MLA or APA. You may wish to consult the Writing Center (Rome 550, 994-3765) for assistance.

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the Code of Academic Integrity (<http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>). Plagiarism, inappropriate citations, using others’ work as your own (including purchasing or downloading essays), fabrications, falsification, and other forms of academic dishonesty are banned in all course at The George Washington University. Do not attempt to use the internet as an easy source from which to plagiarize. I take this very seriously, as should you.

Disability Services

I am happy to make necessary accommodations to meet your learning needs, as recommended by the Office of Disability Support Services (Marvin Center 436, 994-8250). Class sessions may be taped only in cases of documented necessity. In such cases the class will be notified.

Attendance and Participation

Everyone's presence and active participation is essential for maintaining a successful educational community. Student participation will be tracked daily. Quality of participation is important. Those who find it easy to speak in class should keep in mind we must give everybody equal opportunity to participate in discussions. Those who are less comfortable speaking in large groups should talk to the instructor as soon as possible to develop strategies for full class participation.

In this class we will strive to connect our course readings and discussions to the world beyond our classroom walls. One way we will do this is with our first five-minute check in. We will reserve this time to make announcements about upcoming events and draw connections between the themes of the course and the world beyond Mount Vernon. As part of your participation grade you should share at least one though I hope you will share more. Examples include a newspaper article, an event you attended, or a service available to our student community. Keep it brief and succinct and make clear the connection to our course.

You are the best judge of when you are unable to attend class. From time to time we all face illnesses or have obligations outside of the classroom which may preclude attendance. I appreciate the courtesy of letting me know in advance when you will be missing a class, though I do not need to know why. After any absence, you are responsible for making up missed work, requesting handouts and borrowing notes from other students. You may miss up to 2 classes without impacting your grade. I believe this to be a generous policy. Use these days wisely as any additional absences will reduce your grade severely: 3=B, 4=C, 5=D, 6=F. If you foresee a conflict meeting these expectations, make an appointment to talk with me right away. No accommodations can be made after the fact. In accordance with policy adopted by the faculty senate, religiously observant students should notify me during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. These absences will not count toward the above attendance policy.

Ground Rules

The classroom is a space where we must each "claim our education" and endeavor to learn with and from each other. Everyone brings a unique set of experiences and knowledge to the conversation. One of the premises of Women's Studies is that "the personal is political" - living and learning are inseparable. The ideas and issues we discuss will often have direct bearing on our day to day lives and personal philosophies. It is appropriate to share these connections, but discussion should remain connected to our course readings. In this class you are under no pressure to share personal experiences, and should share only those you are comfortable discussing in a public forum such as this classroom. There is no reward nor penalty for having a particular set of beliefs. It is however important that we be clear about what we believe and why, and that we seek to understand alternative perspectives. We are here to take risks, speak up, ask questions and try out new ideas, but discussion must always remain respectful.

Blackboard@GW Student Guide

Blackboard@GW is optimized for Netscape 6.2 or better,
and Internet Explorer 5.0 or better on both a Mac and PC.

Logging Into Blackboard@GW (<http://blackboard.gwu.edu>)

Your Blackboard@GW account is created following the activation of your Colonial Mail account (normally within two days) **and** you are officially registered for a GW course. Your **username** is your Email address **without** "@gwu.edu", and your **password** is the same as your Colonial Mail password.

If you are **unable** to log in, make sure that:

- 1) You have a Colonial Mail account - to activate your Colonial Mail account go to https://amc.gwu.edu/cgi/acctmgmt/create_idap?verify=pin
- 2) You are officially registered for classes in this semester
- 3) You are using your *NetID* and *password* to log into Blackboard@GW
- 4) You do not have a *hold* of any sort due to unpaid tuition, fines, etc.

Accessing your Courses in Blackboard@GW

When you log into Blackboard@GW you see a link into your course after your instructor makes the course **available** to registered students. The course will be available until one month after the last day of classes for a given semester. However, your instructor may, at any time, make the course **unavailable** and thus restrict student access.

If you cannot see the courses for which you are registered in your Blackboard@GW course listing, here are several possible reasons:

- 1) None of your instructors are using the Blackboard@GW this semester
- 2) None of your instructors have made **available** the courses that they are teaching using the Blackboard@GW.
- 3) You are not officially registered for any courses. Verify your enrollment status through **GWeb**.

Navigating in your Blackboard@GW Course

Similar to other websites, navigating through Blackboard is done by clicking on links and buttons within the site. Use the links listed in the left-hand frame of the pages (**Course Menu**) to navigate to any section of the course. The **Course Menu** may be different from one course to another as instructors are able to customize the content.

The Course Map is an alternative navigational tool in Blackboard. Clicking on Course Map allows you see how the course is structured and to also navigate to any part of the course by clicking on the links within the Course Map.

When navigating through your Blackboard@GW course you notice a trail of navigational links at the top of the course frame. Use this trail of links to navigate back to where you came from.

Student Resources

Technical Questions and Help	ISS Helpdesk at 202-994-5530 option 2 ithelp@gwu.edu
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)	http://helpdesk.gwu.edu/helpdesk/faqs/bb.html
Animated Quick Guides	http://cidd.gwu.edu/viewlets/students.html

Course Outline

Wed. 8/31 Introductions and Expectations

In class: Adrienne Rich, "Claiming an Education"

Mon. 9/5 No Class – Labor Day

Wed. 9/7 Perspectives on Feminism and Women's Studies

BB Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, "A Day Without Feminism"

BB Ellen DuBois, "Feminism Old Wave and New Wave"

BB bell hooks, "Feminist Politics"

TFTT Rebecca Walker, "Foreword: Are We Using This Power To Resist"

TFTT Vivien Labaton and Dawn Lundy Martin, "Introduction: Making What Will Become"

LU Barbara Findlen, "Introduction"

LU JeeYeun Lee, "Beyond Bean Counting"

LU Daisy Hernández, "Bringing Feminism a la Casa"

LU Veronica Chambers, "Betrayal Feminism"

LU Taigi Smith, "This Place Called Home"

Mon. 9/12 Gender, Sex and Social Construction

BB Judith Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender"

LU Curtis Sittenfeld, "Your Life As a Girl"

LU Jennifer Reid Maxcy Myhre, "One Bad Hair Day Too Many"

BB Martha Southgate, "My Girlish Boy"

BB "Transgender 101"

BB Ester Morris, "The Missing Vagina Monologue"

Wed. 9/14 Systems of Privilege and Inequality

BB Michael Kimmel "Toward a Pedagogy of the Oppressor"

BB Allan G. Johnson, "Patriarchy, the System: An It, Not a He, a Them, or an Us"

BB Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege"

BB Marilyn Frye, "Oppression"

Mon. 9/19

BB Patricia Hill Collins, "Toward a New Vision"

LU Sonja D. Curry-Johnson, "Weaving an Identity Tapestry"

BB Susan Wendell, "The Social Construction of Disability"

LU Cheryl Green, "One Resilient Baby"

Wed. 9/21 Identities and Social Locations

LU Robin M. Neidorf, "Two Jews, Three Opinions"

LU Ellen Neuborne, "Imagine My Surprise"

LU Bhargavi C. Mandava, "Ghosts and Goddesses"

BB Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Defining Genealogies: Feminist Reflections on Being South Asian in North America"

BB Leslie Feinberg, "We Are All Works in Progress"

Mon. 9/26 **Language, Silence and Ideology**

BB Suzan Shown Harjo, "What Do You Want to Be Called?"

BB Laurel Richardson, "Gender Stereotyping in the English Language"

BB Sherryl Kleinman, "Why I'm Not A Lady (And No Woman Is)"

BB Audre Lorde, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action"

Wed. 9/28 **Gendered Public Space**

Guest Speaker Jody Herman and Toilet Training Video

Mon. 10/3 **Sexuality**

BB Naomi Wolf, "Radical Heterosexuality"

BB Michael Messner, "Becoming 100 Percent Straight"

BB Anne Koedt, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm"

LU Rebecca Walker, "Lusting for Freedom"

LU Anastasia Higginbotham, "Chicks Goin' At It"

Wed. 10/5

BB Heterosexual Questionnaire

BB June Jordan, "A New Politics of Sexuality"

BB Surina Khan, "The All-American Queer Pakistani Girl"

LU Sonia Shah, "Tight Jeans and Chania Chorris"

LU Laurel Gilbert, "You're Not the Type"

Mon. 10/10 **Bodies**

BB Susan Bordo, "Unbearable Weight, Preface"

LU Abra Fortune Chernik, "The Body Politic"

LU Alisa L. Valdés, "Ruminations of a Feminist Fitness Instructor"

Wed. 10/12

LU Nomy Lamm, "It's a Big Fat Revolution"

BB Sirena J. Riley, "The Black Beauty Myth"

BB Rebecca Walker, "Foreword to Adios Barbie"

BB Lisa Jervis, "My Jewish Nose"

Mon. 10/17 **Health and Reproductive Rights**

BB Angela Davis, "Reproductive Rights"

BB Marsha Saxton, "Reproductive Rights: A Disability Rights Issue"

LU Allison Crews, "And So I Choose"

LU Inga Muscio, "Abortion, Vacuum Cleaners and the Power Within"

Wed. 10/19

LU Lisa Tiger, "Woman Who Clears the Way"

BB Ester Morris, "Beyond the Monologue"

BB Annette Dula, "The Life and Death of Miss Mildred"

Mon. 10/24 **Resisting Violence Against Women**

BB Angela Davis, "The Color of Violence Against Women"

BB Gloria Steinem, "Supremacy Crimes"

LU Whitney Walker, "Why I Fight Back"

LU Emilie Morgan, "Don't Call Me a Survivor"

Wed. 10/26

BB A. Ayres Boswell and Joan Z. Spade, "Fraternities and Collegiate Rape Culture: Why Are Some Fraternities More Dangerous Places for Women?"

LU Jennifer DiMarco, "Word Warrior"

Mon. 10/31 **Gender, the Family and the Law**

BB Nancy Naples "Queer Parenting in the New Millennium"

BB Jennifer Allyn and David Allyn, "Identity Politics"

BB Michael Kimmel, "The 'Constructed Problems' of Contemporary Family Life"

LU Amy Richards, "The Immaculate Conception"

Wed. 11/2

BB Susan B. Anthony, "Constitutional Argument"

BB M. Margaret Conway, David W. Ahern, and Gertrude A. Steuernagel, "Women and Family Law: Marriage and Divorce"

BB Lisa Dugan, "Holy Matrimony"

TFTT Anna Kirkland "When Transgendered People Sue and Win"

Mon. 11/7 **Women, Crime, Criminalization**

TFTT Robin Templeton, "She Who Believes in Freedom"

BB Dorothy Roberts, "Punishing Drug Addicts Who Have Babies"

BB Angela Davis, "Masked Racism"

Wed. 11/9 **Welfare**

BB Gwendolyn Mink, "Violating Women: Rights Abuses in the Welfare Police State"

LU María Christina Rangel, "Knowledge is Power"

Mon. 11/14 **Women's Work Inside and Outside the Home**

TFTT Shireen Lee, "The New Girls Network"

BB Jeannine Ouellette Howitz, "Reflections of a Feminist Mom"

BB Drucilla Barker and Susan Feiner, "Love's Labors – Care's Costs"

BB Drucilla Barker and Susan Feiner, "Women, Work and National Policies"

Wed. 11/16

BB Barbara Ehrenreich, "Maid to Order: The Politics of Other Women's Work"

BB Hattie Gossett, "the cleaning woman/labor relations #4"

TFTT Ai-Jen Poo and Eric Tang, "Domestic Workers Organize in the Global City"

Mon. 11/21 Global Perspectives

TFTT Kathryn Temple, "Exporting Violence"

TFTT Elisha Maria Mianda "A Baptism By Fire: Vieques, Puerto Rico"

TFTT Syd Lindsley, "Bearing the Blame"

BB Charlotte Bunch, "Whose Security?"

BB bell hooks, "Global Feminism"

Wed. 11/23 Class Choice

Mon. 11/28 Women Confronting and Creating Culture

BB Virginia Woolf, "Thinking about Shakespeare's Sister"

BB Audre Lorde, "Poetry is Not a Luxury"

Wed. 11/30

TFTT Ayana Byrd, "Claiming Jezebel"

TFTT Joshua Breitbart and Ana Nogueira, "An Independent Media Center of One's Own"

TFTT Jennifer Bleyer, "Cut and Paste Revolution"

TFTT Holly Bass, "Can You Rock It Like This?"

LU Ariel Gore, "Isolated-Connected"

Mon. 12/5 Activism, Change and Feminist Futures

Revisit readings from first day

BB Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, "A Day with Feminism"

TFTT Afterword

LU Sarah McCarry, "Selling Out"

Wed. 12/7 Wrap up and Evaluations

Mon. 12/12 Reading Day

Mon. 12/19 Take Home Final Due