

WSTU 199:10 Feminist Frameworks: Women's Studies Senior Seminar

CRN 83623

Fall Semester, 2004

Professor Diane Bell

Objectives:

The Senior Seminar (Capstone) in Women's Studies provides a multi-disciplinary and multi-media forum in which students (i) compare and contrast the writings of a number of contemporary scholars and writers (6-8 authors) whose work provides critical frameworks for feminist scholarship and research; (ii) view a number of videos (4-6) which complement and contextualize the readings; and (iii) pursue individual or collaborative research projects which will be presented and critiqued in class before final submission as written papers.

Requirements:

- A required course for Women's Studies majors.
- Open to WSTU Minors
- Others by permission (prerequisites WSTU 120, 125 and one 170 course).
- Students should take this course in the Fall Semester of their Senior Year, but may, under special circumstances, seek permission to take it in their Junior Year.

Time: 3.30-6.00PM.

Room: 1957 E St, NW; Room 313

Office: Rome 453

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1.45-3.15PM

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Academic Integrity Statement: Distributed in Class: **Week 1**

Expectations:

This is a course for active learners. Students are expected to participate actively and to come to class having read and thought about the set readings. In the case of a border-line grade, class attendance will be taken into consideration.

Required Readings:

Collins, Patricia Hill

1998 *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis.

Enloe, Cynthia

2000 *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

Faludi, Susan

1991 *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*. Crown: New York.

Hawthorne, Susan and Renate Klein (Eds)

1999 *Cyberfeminism: Connectivity, Critique and Creativity*. Spinifex: Melbourne.

MacKinnon, Catharine

1993 *Only Words*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

Weitz, Rose (Ed.)

1998 *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance and Behavior*. OUP: London.

Readings on Blackboard:

Bright, Susie

1993 *Express Books*. Supplement to the *LA Times*. [D. Bell's archive]

Dworkin, Ronald

1993 "Women and pornography." *The New York Review*, Oct. 21, 1993. pp. 36-42; and the "Letters to the Editor" of March 3, pp. 47-8. [D. Bell's archive]

Romano, Carlin

1993 "Between the motion and the act." *Nation* Nov. 15, pp. 563-570; and "Exchange: Words are all I have." Dec. 27, pp. 786-816. [D. Bell's archive]

Domosh, Mona and Joni Seager

2001 *Putting Women in Place: Feminist geographers make sense of the world*. Guilford Press: New York, pp. 174-194.

Morrison, Toni

1992 *Race-ing Justice, En-gendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality*. Pantheon: New York. Introduction: pp. vii-xxx; An open letter .. pp. 3-39; White feminists .. pp. 251-267; Whose story ..pp. 402-440; The last taboo, pp. 441-465.

Video Series:

- "Grrly-Show" [Gelman] Week 1, Sept 1
- "Fatal Attraction: Director's Cut" (1988), Week 2, September 8
- "Senso's Daughters" [Gelman], Week 3, September 13
- "Rachel's Daughters: Searching for the Causes of Breast Cancer" (1997) [Gelman] Week 5, September 29.
- "Tough Guise" Jackson Katz(1999) [Gelman] Week 7, October 13
- "Frontline: Rush to Judgment" (1992) [D. Bell's collection], October 27

Assignments and Assessment:

1. Feminist Analyses and Methodological Approaches. 30% of your grade.

There will be four short papers (3-4 pages), one for each author pairing and video, in which students will summarize the key ideas and methodological approaches.

Paper 1: Faludi/Enloe/Videos-Zines/Fatal Attraction. **Due Week 4, September 22.**

Paper 2: WeitzKlein/Hawthorne/Video-Rachel's Daughters. **Due Week 6, October 6.**

Paper 3: Mackinnon/Video-Tough Guise. **Due Week 8, October 20.**

Paper 4: Hill-Collins/Morrison/Video-Rush to Judgment. **Due Week 10, November 3.**

2. Participation and Written Critiques: 20% of your grade.

Students are expected to actively participate in class. As part of the development of your projects (see below 3) you will be critiquing the work of your colleagues in class. This will be based on the preparation of a short written summary of the strengths and weaknesses of each project. **Due Week 12, November 17.**

3. Project: Presentation, critique and paper. 50% of your grade.

Throughout the semester we will be working on developing an individual or collaborative project. It may focus on one aspect of the contemporary feminist scholars we have read, the videos, or a topic with which a WSTU faculty member has agreed to assist. The paper should reflect your capacity to research and analyze contemporary social issues within the feminist frameworks explored in this and other Women's Studies courses. You will make an in-class presentation of the project and be able to incorporate comments from the class before writing up the project (see above 2). The draft paper is **due Week 11, November 10** and the final paper should be 20-5 pages long, is **due Week 13, December 1.**

Project Guidelines:

(a) Your topic: State the questions/issues you are pursuing.

- Why are you interested in pursuing these matters?
- What makes these feminist questions/issues?

(b) Your approach/methodology: Explain why you chose a particular approach.

- What, if anything, makes your approach/methodology feminist in content, style and analysis?
- How will you go about exploring your topic? Library and archival research? The web? Interviews? Surveys? Why?
- On which of the feminist scholars will you be drawing? Why?

(c) Data and Analysis: Summarize what you have learned about your topic:

- Was it what you expected?
- If not, speculate why not?
- What difficulties, if any, did you experience in terms of access and/or analysis?

- Draw on the ideas of the scholars we have read this semester in your analysis. This will involve citing their work and showing how and why it frames your analysis.

If you have newsclippings, interviews, and so on, include the texts as appendices. Include “consent forms” if required. Visit www.gwu.edu/~research (see Week 1)

(d) Conclusion: Return to the initial question(s) and indicate where you might take your research from here.

- What other questions have been opened up by your research?
- How do you think that the feminist theorists we have studied this semester have impacted on your understanding of social contemporary issues?

(e) Bibliography

All works cited, including URLs, should appear in your bibliography, by author, in alphabetical order.

Course Outline:

Week 1: Wednesday September 1. *Introduction: Whose movement?*

- Introduction: course outline and rationale, assessment procedures, distribution of materials, assignment of tasks, academic integrity, Human Subjects Protocol, go to <http://www.gwumc.edu/research/human.htm>
- Feminisms? Radical, socialist, liberal, womanist, eco-feminism, “third world” feminism, “post-feminism”, global feminisms.
- Video Series: “Grrly Show” (2000) ’Zines and Class project

Week 2: Wednesday September 8. *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*

- Doing research: Constructing a profile; reviewing a text; contextualizing arguments; contemporary issues; Indexes; journals; newspapers; beginning our files.
- Read: Susan Faludi: Part 1 Myths and Flashbacks, pp. ix-xxiii; 1-226.
- Discussion: Knowing our past; critiquing the media; Faludi's methodology.
- Video Series: “Fatal Attraction: Director’s Cut” Excerpt.

Week 3: Wednesday September 15. *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives.*

- Different perspectives on war and peace; the political and the mundane; the personal and the political.

- Read: Cynthia Enloe pp. 1-48, 235-300.
- Discussion: Feminism and international relations, economics, political science; Enloe's contribution to feminism.
- Video Series: “Senso’s Daughters” [Gelman] or substitute on Afghanistan

Week 4: Wednesday September 22. *Cyberfeminism: Connectivity, Critique and Creativity.*

- Changing knowledge boundaries: In whose image? In whose interests? The promise and pitfalls of cyberspace.
- Read: Klein and Hawthorne pp. 1-16; Klein pp. 185-212; Hawthorne 119-133, 213-249, 384-405.
- Discuss: Cyborgs, Goddesses and patriarchy; A hypertext of lesbian culture; virtual and organic bodies.
- **Short Paper No. 1 Due, September 22**

Week 5: Wednesday September 29. *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance and Behavior*

- Embodied knowledge; the social construction of women’s bodies; bodies, behaviour and politics.
- Read: Rose Weitz, Chapters 1-4, 8, 11.
- Video Series: “Rachel’s Daughters”

Week 6: Wednesday October 6. : *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance and Behavior*

- Read: Rose Weitz, Chapters 15-20.
- Read: Domosh and Seager pp. 174-194. Blackboard.
- Embodied knowledge; the social construction of women’s bodies; bodies, behavior and politics, continued.
- **Short Paper No. 2 Due, October 6.**

Week 7: Wednesday October 13. *Only Words*

- On “equal rights’ and “civil rights”. What happens when feminists disagree?

- Read: Catharine MacKinnon. The whole book.
 - Ronald Dworkin (1993) and “exchange” (1994) Blackboard
 - Carlin Romano (1993) and “exchange” (1993) Blackboard
 - Susie Bright (1993) Blackboard
- Discussion: Free speech for whom? Locating MacKinnon in American feminism; the Backlash against Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin.
- Video Series: “Tough Guise”

Week 8: Wednesday October 20. *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice.*

- Read: Patricia Hill-Collins Chapters 1-2, 9 on feminist advocacy, constituting a new knowledge field and “feminist enlightenment”.
- Research Planning
- **Short Paper No. 3 Due October 20**

Week 9: Wednesday October 27. *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice.*

- Continue discussion of Hill-Collins
- Read Toni Morrison – on Blackboard Read: Introduction: pp. vii-xxx; An open letter .. pp. 3-39; White feminists .. pp. 251-267; Whose story ..pp. 402-440; The last taboo, pp. 441-465.
- Discussion: Race and gender: Who speaks? In what voice? The authenticity and authority of Toni Morrison.
- Video: Rush to Judgment

Week 10: Wednesday November 3. Research Planning

- Read: Student chosen selections from Faludi, Morrison, Collins, Enloe, Mackinnon, Klein and Hawthorne, Weitz, Domosh and Seager, and analyses of Short Papers 1-4.
- Discuss the draft for student research projects; questions, sources, methodologies, citations.
- **Short Paper No. 4 Due November 3.**

Week 11: Wednesday November 10. Draft Projects

- Review of draft plans and begin student critiques.

- **Drafts of Projects Due November 10.**

Week 12: Wednesday November 17

- Individual Presentations of projects and student critiques.

THANKSGIVING: No Classes

- WORK ON PROJECTS

Week 13: Wednesday December 1

- Course Review

- **Final Project Due December 1**

Week 14: Wednesday December 8 Making the Zine

Code of Academic Integrity <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html#definition>

Preamble

We, the Students, Faculty, Librarians and Administration of The George Washington University, believing academic honesty to be central to the mission of the University, commit ourselves to its high standards and to the promotion of academic integrity. Commitment to academic honesty upholds the mutual respect and moral integrity that our community values and nurtures. To this end, we have established The George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity.

Article II : Basic Considerations

Section 1: Definition of Academic Dishonesty

(a) Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

(b) Common examples of academically dishonest behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Cheating - intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying from another student's examination; submitting work for an in-class examination that has been prepared in advance; representing material prepared by another as one's own work; submitting the same work in more than one course without prior permission of both instructors; violating rules governing administration of examinations; violating any rules relating to academic conduct of a course or program.

2) Fabrication - intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any data, information, or citation in an academic exercise.

3) Plagiarism - intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.

4) Falsification and forgery of University academic documents - knowingly making a false statement, concealing material information, or forging a University official's signature on any University academic document or record. Such academic documents or records may include the application for admission, transcripts, add-drop forms, requests for advanced standing, requests to register for graduate-level courses, etc. (Falsification or forgery of non-academic University documents, such as financial aid forms, shall be considered a violation of the non-academic student disciplinary code.)

5) Facilitating academic dishonesty - intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.