Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies 2215
Reading Women Writers:
*Literature is Not a Luxury*
University Hall 43
MWF 11:30-12:25
Spring 2014

Instructor: Deema Kaedbey
Email: kaedbey.1@osu.edu or deema.kb@gmail.com (Email is the best way to contact me)
Office and Office Hours: University Hall 37
Fridays 12:30 -2:30 or by appointment
Mailbox: Women’s Studies Department. University Hall, 2nd Floor

**Important:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your needs. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; OSU Office for disability Services Web Site: http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/ This office coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Course Description:** This course examines a selection of women’s writings, mainly by women of color in the U.S, both fiction and non-fiction. We will study how the literature is influenced by social and political movements, and how their writings in turn help shape these movements. Some of the major focuses of this class will be social justice, and social justice movements across boundaries of time, space, and political consciousness. We will be critically examining issues such as violence, immigration, media images and stereotypes, belonging, loss, oppression and resistance. Writing and rewriting history from women of color perspectives will also be a major theme. And throughout, we will always be paying special attention to the way gender, race, class and sexuality play out in the texts.
Course Objectives:

- To study major developments in literature and theories, mainly by and about women of color;
- To reflect critically on, and expand, our understanding of social/political movements, through feminist anti-racist analysis;
- To study a wide range of important texts and analyze each writer’s contribution to social and political movements;
- To develop critical verbal, reading, and writing skills to analyze literature as well as the world around us.

Course Readings: The books are available at SBX

Octavia Butler, *Kindred.*
Susan Abulahawa, *Mornings in Jenin*
Cherrie Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings: Portrait of a Queer Motherhood.*
Linda Hogan, *The Woman Who Watches Over the World: A Native Memoir*

Additional required readings, marked with (CAR) on your syllabus, are available on Carmen. **It is very important that you print these articles out and bring them to class with you. Failure to bring the reading materials with you may negatively affect your participation grade, especially if this happens repeatedly.**

**Tips for preparing for class:** Read. Highlight passages you think are interesting to you, that provoke you, or that you think are relevant to a topic we’ve discussed or that we should discuss in a feminist/women’s studies class. Write down notes on the margins about the feelings and thoughts some passages evoke in you, and why do they evoke these emotions/thoughts. **Bring a question to class that you may like us to discuss.**

**My Policy Regarding Attendance and Use of Technology:**
Because our class is heavily dependent on discussions, it is important that we keep distractions to a minimum.

Thus, I ask that all phones be turned off during class. If you choose to use your phone in class, **10 points will be deducted from your participation grade.** In case of an emergency, let me know (at the beginning of class) that you will be checking your
phone. I also discourage you from using your laptop in class. But again, if you need to use it for practical purposes, let me know beforehand.

**My responsibilities towards class will be to:**

- Attend all class meetings. In the unlikely event of an emergency cancellation, I will make every effort to contact you via e-mail as soon as I possibly can.
- Be available during my designated office hours and by appointment to discuss course material, assignments, questions, concerns, etc. If I need to cancel my office hours, or hold them during a different time, I will notify you in advance.
- Respond to student e-mails within 48 hours.
- Treat students with respect and work to foster an environment in which students feel safe to share their views and experiences in class discussions.

**Course Requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation: 20%</th>
<th>A writing assignment: 20%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ten Carmen posts: 10%</td>
<td>Group presentation: 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: 30% (including 5% for scheduling an appointment with me about it during consultation hours)</td>
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**Participation (20%)**: Throughout the semester, some of the issues or perspectives we will be tackling may be considered “uncomfortable” or “divisive”. You are always encouraged to debate, ask questions and disagree with me or with your classmates. However, personal attacks are NOT allowed. Disrespecting each other is NOT allowed. I hope we will be able to create an environment where everyone can feel safe to participate and to enrich our discussions. And always, we should all respect people in all their diverse beliefs and backgrounds, from their ethnicity to their class, their faith, sexual orientation and bodily abilities.

**Note**: I do not grade your attendance, but for you to participate well, you would need to not only be in class physically, but mentally as well.

Note too that if you miss a class, you do not need to email me the reason why you were absent. You also do not need to ask me what you missed that day. I will email important announcements to everyone and post them on our Carmen front page. **Whatever else you are afraid you missed, contact your classmates to find out. See page 11 for contact information.**
A Writing Assignment (20%): Due March 26, in class: This is short paper, 3-4 pages, 12 point font, double spaced.

Failure to hand in your assignment on time will result in a seven point deduction each day you are late. I will not accept assignments that are more than three days late. If you are having trouble writing your paper, or if circumstances beyond your control arise, consult with me before the due date of the assignment.

You have two options for this paper:

Option One: Interview a feminist/activist about their work on campus or outside it. I encourage you to seek activists in organizations that are focused on women and people of color’s concerns. The activist’s work can be around issues such as racial justice, gender equality, LGBT issues, immigration, environmentalism, politics etc. Write a reflection paper in which you analyze the themes and ideas that came up during the interview. To receive full credit, your paper should include:

Overview of who your interviewee is and the work that she/he does, why was it important for you to interview them, what did you seek to learn from them (1 page)

Choose one or two ideas that caught your attention during the interview, and analyze them critically, with more depth (this will be the most important part of your paper). You are welcome to use a personal voice, but I also expect self-reflection and critical thinking (1-2 pages). Look at how gender, race, class, sexuality etc. play into the work that the activist does.

Attach a copy of your questions

Option Two:
Have you read anything in the news lately that you find relevant to our reading material? Take one recent news story and analyze it critically through a feminist lens (i.e. that looks at gender, class, race, sexuality etc.). Choose one writer/text that we have read in class and one news story—possibly even different articles on that story, and analyze how they are similar and/or different. What angle does the news take that may be different to the literature written by women of color, do you notice any stereotyping in the news story? What is the reason that the news is taking such an angle? If it is a neutral angle, what does neutrality mean in such a situation? (i.e. is there any such thing as apolitical new stories?).

One possible approach would be to use one of our texts (ex. texts by Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, or bell hooks) to analyze and critique a news story that has come out in the past few months.

Your paper should have a thesis statement. And use the class reading material efficiently, i.e. cite it, explain it, and explain its relevancy to what you are discussing. You can compare and contrast between what the news story is saying, and what the class reading is arguing.
**Ten Carmen Posts (10%):** If you want to get credit for your posts, make sure you post them by 10 a.m. on the day when our class meets.

Your post should be about 200 words commenting on the readings due that day, before we discuss them in class. You can raise questions about something you didn’t quite understand, or examine an idea or a passage that interested or provoked you. You can write about your emotional reaction to a certain idea/passage in the readings, but I will also expect you to reflect critically on these emotions. I also encourage you to respond to each other as well to post your own topic. When you do respond to your classmates, make sure you are not simply repeating their ideas. **Critical thinking are key to getting full credit.**

Advice about your Carmen posts; **Do not summarize what the reading is about.** Pick a specific issue or theme and reflect on it. **Avoid overuse of words like “interesting” without explaining at a more critical level, what interests you about something you’ve read.** And when you make a statement like “I did not know that...” consider reflecting more on why certain historical events or certain political perspectives aren’t taught in school, for example, or aren’t mainstreamed.

**Group Presentation (20%):** (a power point presentation works best), about 15-20 minutes long. I expect only reliable sources (the better the sources, the better your grades). Cite your research sources and include a bibliography at the end of the presentation. I discourage you from using Wikipedia and encourage you to incorporate relevant videos, images and music. But these materials should account for no more than 30% of your presentation.

**Include 1-2 questions for your classmates, at the beginning, middle, or end of your presentation, something that would engage the rest of the class with your topic.**

At least one slide has to show the relevancy of the presentation to a text that we are reading that day. If you are also able to make good connections between what you are presenting and other presentations and texts, this will also reflect positively on your grade.

I give one grade to all the members of a group, unless someone doesn’t do any work at all and fails to show up at the day of the presentations. If you do fail to come to class on the day you are presenting, I will try but cannot guarantee that I will be able to assign you to present with a different group another day. However, you will have lost 10/100 points.
Final Project (30%), due April 23rd in the Carmen dropbox (5% for consultation)

Option 1: Research Paper, 7 pages

Option 2: Blog, at least 7 posts, 300+ words each

More details about your final to be announced in due time

The Writing Center: I encourage you all to go to the Writing Center to get some good interactive feedback about your papers. The OSU Writing Center (located in 485 Mendenhall Lab, 125 South Oval Mall) offers free individual tutoring with writing consultants who can help with writers working at any level. They are a valuable and recommended resource. Phone: 688-5865. Website: http://cstw.osu.edu

Statement on Academic Misconduct:
It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The Ohio State University's Code of Conduct (Section #3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Instructors are required to report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the Committee on Academic Misconduct in accordance with University Rule #335-5-487. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct.

Statement on Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is "the representation of another's work or their ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word or word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas." Plagiarism is one of the most serious offenses that can be committed in an academic community; as such, it is the obligation of this department and its instructors to report all cases of suspected plagiarism to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. After the report is filed, a hearing takes place and if the student is found guilty, the possible punishment ranges from failing the class to suspension or expulsion from the university. Although the existence of the Internet makes it relatively easy to plagiarize, it also makes it even easier for instructors to find evidence of plagiarism. It is obvious to most teachers when a student turns in work that is not her or his own; plagiarism search engines make documenting the offense very simple. Just remember - if you can find it on the internet, so can I!

• Always cite your sources (your instructor can help with this)
• Always ask questions before you turn in an assignment if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism
• Always see your instructor if you are having difficulty with an assignment.
To preserve the integrity of OSU as an institution of higher learning, to maintain your own integrity, and to avoid jeopardizing your future, DO NOT PLAGIARIZE
DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE

Week One:
Jan 6 Introduction
Jan 8 Denise Henning, “Yes My Daughters We Are Cherokee Women” (CAR)
Jan 10 bell hooks, “Class and Race: The New Black Elite” and “Being Rich” (CAR)

Week Two
Jan 13 Octavia Butler, Kindred, read till page 51
Jan 15 Kindred, read till page 107
Jan 17 No class

Week Three:
Jan 20 MLK Day, No CLASS
Jan 22 Kindred, read till page 239
Presentation: Black Power and Civil Rights Movement

Jan 24 Kindred, read till page 264
Presentation: Black Feminist/Womanist Movement

Week Four:
Jan 27 Angela Davis, “The Legacy of Slavery: Standards for a New Womanhood” (CAR) and Patricia Hill Collins, selection from Black Feminist Thought (CAR)
Jan 29 Andrea Smith, “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy” (CAR)
Jan 31 Documentary, Visions of Abolition

Week Five:
Feb 3 Workshop
Feb 5 Jan 30 Merle Woo, Nellie Wong, selection from This Bridge Called My Back (CAR)
Presentation: Asian American Feminisms

Feb 7 Reading TBA

Week Six:
Feb 10 Alisa Solomon, “Trans/Migrant: Christina Madrazo’s All American Story” (CAR)
Presentation: LGBTQ people of color in the U.S

Feb 12 Alison Kafer, “Debating Feminist Futures: Slippery Slopes, Cultural Anxiety and the Case of the Deaf Lesbians.” (CAR)
Presentation: Feminism and Disability Studies

Feb 14 Documentary Day

Week Seven:
Feb 17 Selection from Borderlands/La Frontera (CAR)
Presentation: Mexican Immigration in the 20th Century

Feb 19 Borderlands/La Frontera continued
Presentation: The Chicano Movement and Chicana Feminism
Feb 21  Joy Zarembka, “America’s Dirty Work: Migrant Maids and Modern Day Slavery” (CAR)

Week Eight:
Feb 24  Cherrie Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*
Feb 26  *Waiting in the Wings*
Presentation: Chicana Art and Murals

Feb 28  *Waiting in the Wings*

Week Nine:
March 3  Guest Speakers TBA, readings TBA
March 5  Readings TBA
March 7  Documentary Day

Week Ten:
SPRING BREAK

Week Eleven:
March 17  selections from Nadine Naber’s *Arab America*
Presentation: Arab American Feminisms
March 19  *Mornings in Jenin*, read till page 52
March 21  *Mornings in Jenin*, read till page 106

Week Twelve:
March 24  *Mornings in Jenin*, read till page 146
March 26  Documentary Day
*PAPER DUE IN CLASS TODAY*
March 28  Guest Lecture, readings TBA

Week Thirteen
March 31  *Mornings in Jenin*, read till page 182
Ella Shohat, “Coming to America: Reflections on Hair and Memory Loss”
April 2  Reading TBA
April 4  Linda Hogan, *The Woman Who Watches Over the World*, read till page 50

Week Fourteen:
April 7  *The Woman Who Watches Over the World*, read till page 112
Presentation: American Indian Movement (AIM)

April 9  *The Woman Who Watches Over the World*, read till page 142
Presentation: Indigenous Feminisms

April 11  *The Woman Who Watches Over the World*, read till page 180
Presentation: Environmentalism as an Indigenous Issue

Week Fifteen:
April 14  Selection from *Peacemaking Circles and Urban Youth*
April 16  Documentary TBA
April 18  Consultation Day
Week Sixteen
April 21 No Class, Consultation Hours

Final Project due APRIL 23rd, by 11 am.
Contact Sheet

When you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. Ask a classmate about it before you contact me. This is why it is useful to get each other’s contact info.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Number (optional)</th>
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