

**WGST 140-20: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies
Summer 2018**

Time and Location: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 1pm – 3pm, ICC 209B

Instructor: Katherine A. Costello

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Office Hours and Location: TBA, ICC 456

Course Description

What is a woman? What is gender? What is feminism? Why do these concepts matter to our lives and to our intellectual pursuits? These are the questions that will guide our exploration of the interdisciplinary field of women's and gender studies. We will study the construction of identity and difference across the distinct but intersecting categories of sex, gender, sexuality, race, class, nation, and ability; and investigate the ways in which power operates across a number of issues, including heteronormativity, cisgenderism, violence, labor, reproduction, body image, and cultural representation. Because women's and gender studies aims to transform knowledge and bring about social change, we will continuously ask ourselves how the ideas we learn about in our readings and class discussions can be translated into intellectual practice and social activism. We will study some of the ways in which feminism has impacted society, from the 19th century to the present, and use field experiences on and/or off campus to help bridge our classroom learning with our everyday lives.

Our readings will reflect the interdisciplinary nature of women's and gender studies and include scholarly articles, speeches, manifestos, and short stories. We will read works by such feminist activists and thinkers as Gloria Anzaldúa, Simone de Beauvoir, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Gloria Steinem, Julia Serano, and Andi Zeisler. Given the important role that visual culture plays in contemporary culture, we will also look at art and advertisement, and think about film and television.

Learning Objectives for this Course

After taking this class, students will have an understanding of:

1. the social construction of sex, gender, and sexual identities
2. the intersection of gender with race, class, nation, ability, and sexuality
3. the global politics of feminism
4. how women are represented across a variety of media and how this affects them
5. the history of feminism in the US, especially from the second wave to the present
6. the ways in which gender impacts a variety of social institutions, including healthcare, labor, marriage, family, and motherhood.
7. feminist activism

After taking this class, students will be able to:

1. Deploy gender as a lens of analysis
2. Use feminist theories to analyze both women's and men's lives, including their own
3. Think critically about social and cultural norms
4. Closely analyze a text
5. Write and speak about gender in a clear, nuanced, informed, and intellectually engaged manner

Required Texts

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*, ISBN 978-1-101-91176-1
Andi Zeisler, *We Were Feminists Once*, ISBN 978-1610397735

All other readings are available through Canvas: <https://georgetown.instructure.com>

Course Requirements and Grading

Preparation and Class Participation	15	points
Discussion Leadership and Reflection	25	points
Midterm Exam (take-home)	30	points
Final Essay/Project (take-home)	30	points
Total	100	points

Grading Scale:	96-100: A	77-79: C+
	90-95: A-	70-76: C
	87-89: B+	67-69: D+
	83-86: B	60-66: D
	80-82: B-	<60: F

Description of Course Requirements and Assignments

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are central to your success in this course. You are allowed 2 absences. If you miss **more than 2 classes**, your **final grade will drop 2 points per day absent**. In accordance with Georgetown's academic standards, if you will be unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time due to the observance of a major religious holiday, you must notify me at the beginning of semester. You will be excused and given a chance to make up any missed work. If you are absent for several days due to illness, you should inform me and contact your Dean's Office.

Late arrivals are disruptive to the class flow. **Consistent tardiness** (arriving after the start of class more than three times over the course of the semester) will result in **2 points taken off your final grade**.

Preparation and Class Participation

This course is a discussion-based seminar. I will serve as a mediator and bring in background and additional material/information as relevant, but we will all share the responsibility for the quality and outcome of discussions. You are expected to come prepared to every class, having carefully read/viewed the assigned materials, and ready to think critically about them and engage in an intellectually rigorous conversation with one another. Each class, *you must bring a copy of the reading assigned for that day.*

Discussion Leadership

Directions will be distributed separately.

Midterm Exam

Directions will be distributed separately.

Final Essay/Project

Directions will be distributed separately.

Guidelines for All Assignments

Writing Center

I encourage you to make use of Georgetown's writing center for all your written work. They can assist you at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming, to crafting an argument, to polishing your sentences: <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu>

Late Policy

Submitting work on time is crucial to your success in this class. You will lose 2 points for every late day of the midterm or final exam. I will give you a 5 min window around the due time, such that if an assignment due at 5pm is submitted between 5 and 5:05 pm, it will not be considered late. Submitting it at 5:06 pm will, however, be considered late and you will be deducted 2 points. If for some reason you think you might be unable to complete an assignment on time, you must contact me *at least 48 hours* prior to the deadline to discuss this and make alternate arrangements.

Returning Your Work

I will return the majority of your graded work in person or through Canvas. On occasion, I might email you your graded assignment. If you have any concerns about this, please let me know.

Course Policies

Basic Needs

If you are having difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, and/or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, and believe this may impact your academic work, I urge you to contact your Dean's Office. I also encourage you to come talk to me, so that we can figure out a proper course of action. My primary concern is for your well-being and my primary goal is to help you succeed in this class.

Physical and Mental Health

If your physical health is interfering with your academic work, you should make an appointment with Student Health Services (<https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/medical-care>) and I urge you to notify your Dean's Office. I also encourage you come to talk to me, so that we can figure out a proper course of action. My primary concern is for your well-being and my primary goal is to help you succeed in this class.

If you think your mental health may be interfering with your academic work, Counseling and Mental Health Services are here to support you: <https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/mental-health>. I also encourage you to come talk to me, so that we can figure out a proper course of action. Again, my primary concern is for your well-being and my primary goal is to help you succeed in this class.

Students with Disabilities

If you need accommodation due to a disability or think you might need one, you should contact Disability Support Services, which are part of the Academic Resource Center: <https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability>. If you receive an accommodation, please stop by my office hours or make an appointment to see me.

Academic Support

Academic support is available to all students. You can find more information here: <https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/academic>

Honor System and Academic Integrity

Students are expected to abide Georgetown's Honor System:

In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life I commit myself to respect and to uphold the Georgetown University honor system:

- *To be honest in every academic endeavor, and*
- *To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community as we live and work together.*

Plagiarism is a violation of the Honor System. Plagiarism includes:

- The use of another's ideas without citation
- Material copied word for word, cited but lacking quotation marks
- Material placed within quotation marks but lacking a citation (according to the professor's preferred citation style)
- Paraphrased material that too closely resembles the structure of the original source, without citation or attribution
- Paraphrased material from several sources pieced together in a way that resembles original thought, without citation or attribution
- Material attributed to a non-existent or incorrect source
- Fabricated material attributed to a real source
- Citation mistakes, such as wrong author, page number, or date
- Specific help from someone in writing the paper, without acknowledgment
- Imitation of structure or style, without citation or attribution

You are responsible for understanding plagiarism. You can find more information here:

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/https%3A/honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/faculty/plagiarism-checklist>

Email

I will use email to communicate with you out of class. You are required to check your Georgetown email on a daily basis.

Electronic Devices

You may bring an electronic device to class in order to access the materials on-line. I want to be perfectly clear though that your computer/tablet/etc should not be used for any purpose other than taking notes and accessing the reading. If I notice you doing anything else on your device, you will get a warning. If I notice you texting/on social media/etc a second time, you will lose the privilege of bringing an electronic device and will earn a 0 for your Preparation and Participation grade. *No cell phones allowed under any circumstance; please turn you phone off and leave it in your bag (no cell phones on desks).*

Schedule

The schedule is a working document. It may be modified throughout the semester in order to respond to class needs. You will be notified of any changes to the schedule.

UNIT 1 KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS IN WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES

- July 9 **Introduction**
Getting to know one another
Overview of course: syllabus, objectives, and expectations
- July 10 **What is Feminism?**
bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*: Introduction and 1-24
Carol Hanisch, “The Personal Is Political”
- July 11 **What is Feminism?**
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*

Recommended:
Beyoncé, “***Flawless” (music video)
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “Beyoncé’s feminism isn’t my feminism”
- July 12 **What is a Woman?**
Sojourner Truth “Ain’t I A Woman”
Simone de Beauvoir, Introduction to *The Second Sex*
Julia Serano, “Debunking ‘Trans Women Are Not Women’ Arguments”
- July 16 **Sex and Gender**
Maria Lugones, “Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System,”
 Read the entirety of the article but focus the following sections:
 -“The coloniality of power” (190) to “tightly related to colonialism” (192)
 -From the section “Intersexuality” (194) to the end of the article
Lois Gould, “X: A Fabulous Child’s Story”
Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes, Revisited”
Judith Lorber “Believing Is Seeing: Biology As Ideology”
- July 17 **Sexuality**
Radicalesbians, “The Woman Identified Woman”
Stevi Jackson, “Heterosexuality as a Problem for Feminist Theory”
- July 18 **Intersectionality**
Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement”
Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of
 Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women’s Studies”
Kimberlé Crenshaw, “The Urgency of Intersectionality” (TED Talk)

Recommended:

Minnie Bruce Pratt, "Identity: Skin Blood Heart"

July 19

Feminism in a Global Frame

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes"

Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?"

UNIT 2

THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL: PRIVATE ISSUES, PUBLIC FUTURES

July 23

Women's Liberation

In-class screening of *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*

Midterm Exam Due

July 24

Health and Reproductive Justice

Finish watching *She's Beautiful When She's Angry* in class

Preface to the 1973 edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*

Roberta Brandes Bratz, "Never Again-Death, Politics and Abortion"

Barbara Krueger, "Your Body is a Battleground"

Carol Sanger, "Talking About Abortion"

July 25

Motherhood, Marriage, and Family

Jeffner Allen, "Motherhood: The Annihilation of Women"

Excerpt from *Feminist Mothering*

Audrey Bilger, "Feminism Helped Pave the Way for Marriage Equality"*

Linda Nicholson, "The Myth of the Traditional Family"

July 26

Labor

"The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap"

Johnnie Tillmon, "Welfare Is A Women's Issue"

Pat Mainardi, "The Politics of Housework"

Christine Delphy, *Close to Home*, excerpt

July 30

Violence

Carole Sheffield, "Sexual Terrorism and the Social Control of Women"

"What is Rape Culture?"

Roxanne Gay, "Blurred Lines, Indeed"

July 31

The Politics of Pleasure

Ellen Willis, "Feminism, Moralism, and Pornography"

Joan Nestle, "My Mother Likes to Fuck"

Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic As Power"

"Hookup Culture: The Unspoken Rules Of Sex On College Campuses" (listen)

UNIT 3

REPRESENTING WOMEN AND GENDER

- August 1 **Women and/in the Media**
 In-class screening of *Miss Representation*
 Caroline Heldman, “Sexual Objectification,” Parts 1-4
 Guerilla Girls, “Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met”
- August 2 **Subject/Object**
 In-class screening of *Miss Representation*
 Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”
 Gloria Steinem, “Sex, Lies, and Advertising”
- August 6 **Body Image(s)**
 Susan Bordo, “Hunger as Ideology”
 Sandra Lee Bartky, “The Feminine Body”
- August 7 **Commodity Feminism**
 Andi Zeisler, *We Were Feminists Once : From Riot Grrrl to Covergirl®, The
 Buying and Selling of A Political Movement* : Introduction and Part 1
- August 8 **Commodity Feminism**
 Andi Zeisler, *We Were Feminists Once : From Riot Grrrl to Covergirl®, The
 Buying and Selling of A Political Movement* : Part 2 and Epilogue
- August 9 **Feminist Futures**
 Katie Mettler, “Hillary Clinton just said it, but ‘the future is female’ began
 as a 1970s lesbian separatist slogan”
 Hannah Ellis-Peterson, “Anohni on Future Feminism: ‘Trump is just a distraction
 from the core issues’”
 Anohni, Kembra Pfahler, Johanna Constantine, Bianca Casady, and Sierra
 Casady, “Future Feminism Manifesto”