

## Women's Studies Course Descriptions – Spring 2007

### **Anthropology 120: *Culture & Intimacy in South Asia*** (Pinto)

Block: J+

This course is an introduction to the anthropology of South Asia by way of inquiry into the structures of personhood and intimacy in South Asian 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, offering valuable material for rethinking identity, gender, and personhood, we will consider both the content and politics of these thematic foci. We will look at ethnographic studies both for what they can tell us about cultures and structures of power in this region 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, how what it means to be a person plays into everyday interactions across groups, genders, and generations, we will pay particular attention to the ways identity and difference are shaped and negotiated. Topics include marriage, dowry, kinship, inheritance, reproduction, sexuality, death, and the politics and symbolics of caste. 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.

### **Classics 184: *Women in Greek Mythology*** (Halpern)

Block: F+

In this class, we will study legendary and mythical female figures. We will identify the characterizations and roles for these figures, and assess how their representation enhances female stature, as it informs and supports cultural identity at various historical times. We will also explore how ancient authors and artists represent the female experience generally: matriarchy, misogyny, martyrdom, marriage, gender-specific cults, athletics, and election in various vocations. Prerequisite: CLS 0031 helpful but not required.

### **Community Health 104: *Women & Health*** (instructor)

Block: H+

This multi-disciplinary course introduces a broad range of concepts and issues related to contemporary women, health, and health care in the United States. We begin with an examination of critical concepts including sex, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, class, and racism through analytical and narrative readings. Conventional indicators of women's health, past and present research on women's health, and the women's health movement help us begin to understand our knowledge about women's health status. Violence and mental health, including depression, eating concerns, and substance abuse receive extended attention. Poverty and the social safety net, private health insurance and health care reform precede our attention to women's traditional healing roles as midwives, home health workers, and family caregivers, as well as the growing role of *promotoras*.

### **\*Comparative Religion 104: *Feminist Theologies*** (Hutaff)

Block: H+

"Feminism," says theologian Judith Plaskow, "is a process of coming to affirm ourselves as women/persons - & seeing that affirmation mirrored in religious & social institutions." This course will survey the impact which the growth of feminist/womanist consciousness during the last three decades has had on the religious commitments of women, as well as on traditional religious institutions, beliefs, & practices. We will explore new approaches & methods which recent feminist scholarship has brought to the study of ancient religious texts & other historical sources, & will assess how the inclusion of women's perspectives is challenging, enlarging, & enriching the craft of theology itself. Also to be considered: the rise of new women's rituals & alternative spiritualities, & the relationship of religious feminism to other struggles for human dignity & liberation.

### **Drama 46: *International Women Film Directors*** (Kouguell)

Block: T 11:50-2:20

Although female directors constitute a minority in the film industry, their contribution is significant. This course will examine the work of Jane Campion, Joan Chen, Agnieszka Holland, Tahmineh Milani, Mira Nair, Patricia Rozema, Agnes Varda, Margarethe von Trotta and Lina Wertmuller, among others. Discussion and analysis will consider genre, female oppression, gender identification, women's roles in everyday life, and female empowerment, as well as the ways in which the groundbreaking work of these women defies predictable Hollywood formulas and stereotypes. No prerequisite.

**\*Education 165: *Educating Women and Girls*** (Weiler)

Block: J+

This course will explore issues of education for women and girls both globally and locally. Questions addressed in the course will include: How does the social/cultural location of women and girls shape their educational experiences? How do women and girls negotiate societal expectations and discursive constructions of “woman” as they engage with academic knowledge? What are the contradictions entailed in the identity of the knowing woman?

**English 54: *Conrad, Forster, Woolf*** (Rosenthal)

Block G+

In this class we will read three authors - Conrad, Woolf, and Forster - whose work has come to represent some of the exemplary moments of literary modernism. Because each author has a distinct and internally complex style, we will try to build our questions from the texts themselves, working towards a consideration of how style works, what it is, and how we understand its distinguishing marks. At the same time, we will follow crucial threads that run throughout the works: contested constructions of masculinity and femininity; the framing of power, authority and the possibilities for social change; the place of art, the artist and the artist-hero within modernity; representations of belonging and alienation, home and exile, metropolitan and colonial space.

**English 107: *Chaucer*** (Fyler)

Block: E+

This course explores the works of one of the three or four greatest poets in English. We'll read Chaucer in Middle English, but he is in almost every respect easier to understand than Shakespeare, who lived two centuries later. We will spend roughly half of the semester on the *Canterbury Tales*, the other half on Chaucer's most extraordinary poem, *Troilus and Criseyde*. Chaucer is primarily a narrative rather than a lyric poet: though the analogy is an imperfect one, the *Canterbury Tales* are like a collection of short stories, and *Troilus* like a novel in verse. We will talk about Chaucer's literary sources and contexts, the interpretation of his poetry, and his treatment of a number of issues, especially gender issues, that are of perennial interest.

**English 192: *Sex in 19<sup>th</sup> Century U.S. Literature*** (Jackson)

Block: 11+

Was there sex in nineteenth-century American literature? Certainly no one would think that Uncle Tom's Cabin or Evangeline are very sexy reading experiences. And certainly much nineteenth-century American literature seems to go out of its way to avoid the subject altogether. As Harriet Jacobs writes when she must recount her sexual history, "it pains me to tell you of it." But did nineteenth-century American writers really avoid telling their readers what they knew about sex? Or did they tell more than we know? In this class, we will read a wide range of nineteenth-century literature with a view toward what stories, novels, autobiographies, lyric and narrative poems, popular broadsides, histories, songs, and political essays tell us about definitions and representations of sex in the U.S. in the nineteenth century. Discussions of women's rights, emerging definitions of homosexuality, race relations, and notions of childhood will intersect (or arise from) with our focus on representations of sex. Readings will include selections from Brown, Brockden Brown, Cooper, Harper, Fern, Emerson, Longfellow, Child, Longfellow, Beecher, Stowe, Sedgwick, Fuller, Horton, Jacobs, Warner, Melville, Hawthorne, Poe, Marvel (Mitchell), Jackson (H.H.), Whitman, James, Dickinson, Dunbar, Higginson, and Hopkins.

**FAH/GER/CR 29/129: *Gender in Medieval Art & Lit.*** (Caviness/Nelson)

Block: 11+

Representations of medieval sex/gender arrangements in art and literature ca. 1000-1300 CE. Constructions of gender through religious and scientific teaching and images; its impact on roles as authors/makers and patrons played by men and especially women such as Hrotsvit, Hildegard, Jeanne d'Evreux. Secular and religious works, such as the Bayeux Embroidery and the *Nibelungenlied*, the *Hortus Deliciarum*, and the writings of the “mystics,” in light of medieval and present-day gender theories. May be taken at the 100 level with consent of the instructor.

**French 121: *Adv. Fr I: French & Francophone Women's Voices*** (Schub)

Block: F+

In-depth study of contemporary language with emphasis on idiomatic usage and different styles of expression through analysis of written and spoken French. Readings include both critical and fictional prose and concentrate on women's voices in French and Francophone society, culture, and literature. Grammar review; frequent written assignments and papers; explications de textes; oral proficiency through exposés and group projects; mid-term and final exams. Active class participation is essential. Not for native speakers or for those who have studied in French-speaking countries. Prerequisites: French 21 and 22, or consent.

**French 192 C Seminar: George Sand's *Léila*** (Smith)

Block: N+

*Léila* is arguably George Sand's finest and most complex novel. It exists in two radically different versions, the first published in 1833, the second in 1839. Initially, the novel caused a scandal, became something of a cause célèbre, and even provoked a duel between two literary critics. In the years to follow, *Léila* would be a constant reference in French literary and cultural discourse.

In this seminar, we will begin with a careful reading and close textual analysis of *Léila*. We will then go on to examine a selection of literary and philosophical works that "inspired" Sand during the composition of both redactions and study the cultural context in which both versions were composed. We will also consider several fictional texts that *Léila* had an impact on. Finally, we will study the novel's critical reception, making use of *Revue des deux mondes* and the *Revue de Paris* which the library owns. Students will use these and other library resources as a kind of archive for their research and will present their findings to the class in group presentations and exposés. One short paper (5-6 pages); one long paper (10-12 pages). Active class participation is essential. Prerequisite: French 31 and 32, or consent.

**History 1.01: *Girlhood in the 1950s*** (Drachman)

Block: 7

This course will examine girlhood and coming of age in the decades of the 1950s and 1960s. Specifically, it will cover the era that begins in the post-World War II years with the emergence of the feminine mystique and ends in the 1960s with the rise of the second wave of feminism. The class will analyze the tension between image and reality, gender difference and equality, conformity and individuality. It will explore differences based on race, class, and ethnicity as well as similarities based on gender. It will focus on the paradox for girls of growing up in an era of optimism and opportunity, when little was expected of girls.

**History 1 03 *Men, Women & Patriarchy in the Middle East*** (Manz)

Block: 6

An examination of women and family in the history of the Middle East during the Islamic period. A central concern is how an extended patriarchal family structure affects both men and women. Marriage, gender and family in society, law and religion, in the medieval and modern periods. Readings include parts of the Qur'an and the *hadith* (traditions about the Prophet) in relation to the family of the Prophet Muhammad and legislation on seclusion, marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Other primary source readings include essays and personal memoirs.

**History 39.04: *Women & Gender in Early Modern Europe*** (Zanger)

Block: G+

What happens when a long missing husband returns to a village, moves in with his wife, and turns out to be an imposter? Why did men wear wigs at the court of Louis XIV? When did sodomy become a crime? Why were the laws against homosexuality enacted differently against men and women, or people of different social classes? How did gender expectations and roles shape the lives of men, women, and children across the classes (nobility, the emerging bourgeois, and workers and peasants)? And how did sexuality and gender affect political culture? These are some of the questions we will explore in an interdisciplinary approach, reading theatre, novels, and images, along with philosophical, theological, and juridical pamphlets, treatises, and records to study early modern projections about and practices concerning sexuality. Topics to be studied include: sexuality and religion, medical ideas about sexuality, marriage conventions, dueling, manners and civility, sodomy laws, cross-dressing, sexuality in the convent, libertinage, and political bodies.

**Italian 121: *Italian Women's Images & Voices*** (Baffoni-Licata) Block: K+  
In-depth analysis of written and spoken Italian. Readings will explore women's images and voices in Italian culture and society. Review of grammatical difficulties through translation exercises. Intensive exercises aimed at building vocabulary. Three short papers, two exams and a final project. Prerequisites: Italian 21 and 22, or consent. Conducted in Italian.

**Jewish Studies/CR 78: *Jewish Women*** (Ascher) Block: L+  
Images, experiences, & accomplishments of Jewish women in life, literature, & tradition from Biblical times to the present. Focus on individual women from various times & cultures; discussion of basic issues, present conditions, & prospects.

**Political Science 104: *Race, Sex, Class & Law*** (Glater) Block H+  
Consideration of U.S. court decisions and related materials that address (or fail to address) issues of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Topics include employment, welfare, marriage, privacy, families, reproduction, immigration, and expression.

**Political Science 128: *Gender, Work & Politics in East Asia*** (Remick) Block: F+  
This course examines the connections between gender and economic development in East Asia during the post-WWII period. Paying attention to differences among East Asian countries, it looks at how men and women have participated differently in the post-war "miracle." It examines the kinds of work that women have done, considering different experiences that women of different classes have had during the development process. To what extent is the gender division of labor mandated or facilitated by the state, under what condition, and for what reasons? What role do culture and politics play in creating the gender division of labor? How has women's participation in economic development altered gender relations? Has the miracle liberated women, as some predict it should?

**Sociology 20: *Family & Intimate Relations*** (Aymer) Block: L+  
This course examines various arrangements defined as family in the U.S. and cross culturally. Diverse family arrangements and the socioeconomic conditions that support them will be studied and compared with ideal type, nuclear family forms that still dominate images of family life in the U.S. Concepts and accompanying relations of cohabitation, motherhood, fatherhood, marriage, and the pros and cons of various family forms for specific groups such as poor and immigrant families and gay partners will be studied. The class will examine family distress caused by divorce, death, and family violence.

**Sociology 111: *Social Change and Community Organizing*** (Ostrander) Block: H+  
Grassroots community organizing creates social change. Organizing brings people together to improve the conditions of their own lives, gain collective power, and build social justice locally and globally. Organizing provides opportunities for people to be active agents in society and community. Women, especially women of color, are often community leaders. Through readings, videos, and guest speakers, we will explore different theories of community and community organizing, examine strategies and approaches used in specific organizing campaigns, and discuss current debates about civic engagement, active citizenship, social justice, and democracy. Students will explore local community organizations and local organizing, and gain hands on experience in a community organizing project.

**Spanish 92A: *Women in Latin American Cinema*** (Gerassi-Navarro) Block: D+  
This course is a critical study of the representation of women in Latin American cinema. Beginning with Mexico's *edad de oro* (1930-1940) to the present, we will explore the positioning of a gendered spectator, the role of melodrama, as well as issues of race and class in the construction of a national identity through film. Special attention will be paid to women directors such as María Nova, María Luisa Bemberg, Sara Gómez, and María Elena Velasco. **This course is in English and open to students who have no background in Spanish.**

**Spanish 192B: *Contemporary Spanish Women Writers*** (de Laire Mulgrew) Block: D+  
This course will explore the changing role of women as represented by female authors between the period of the Second Republic (1930-36), and the late 1990s. Through the novels, we will look at the shift in power held by women as seen in the changing roles of the protagonists, and in their relations to their characters. We will also analyze the significance of the genres of autobiography and fiction in the representation of these roles.

**\*Women's Studies 72: *Introduction to Women's Studies*** (tba) Block: K+  
This interdisciplinary course will draw on historical & contemp. materials (literature, film & articles) to examine the field of women's studies. Readings will include selections from authors such as Chandra Mohanty, Jacqui Alexander, Judith Butler, Dianna Fuss, bell hooks, Cherrie Moraga, Jhumpa Lahiri and Dorothy Allison. Particular attention is given to the constructs of woman & gender as they pertain to race, class, ethnicity & sexuality in a global perspective. Additionally, in an attempt to trace the idea of woman, we will examine themes such as girlhood, femininity, labor and transnationalism.

**Women's Studies 92: *Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence: Crisis Intervention & Advocacy*** (Brown) Block: 8+  
We will examine issues surrounding rape & domestic violence in the U.S. from a multi-disciplinary & cross-cultural perspective. We will address myths & facts: societal attitudes, including victim-blaming patterns; post-traumatic syndrome, & the impact of rape & domestic violence on the survivor, their loved ones, & the community at large. We will discuss crisis intervention theory & examine the stages of trauma that victims of violence experience, as well as their experience of MA medical & legal systems. The course material will cover campus & community resources for survivors & where to look for help when faced with past, present &/or future sexual violence. Students may elect to receive the MA State Certification for Rape Crisis Counseling through the completion of this course with perfect attendance.

**Women's Studies 99: *Women's Studies Internship*** (Director) Block: Arr

**\*Women's Studies 193: *Senior Project*** (Roy) Block: Arr  
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.

## GRADUATE & CONSORTIUM COURSES

FAH 230: The Triumph of Marriage (Baskins) Block: 4  
Tuscan domestic pictures on *cassoni* (wedding chests) or *spalliere* (wainscoting) draw upon a wide range of sources: ancient, medieval and contemporary. The triumphant imagery they show -- featuring Cleopatra, Solomon and Sheba, or Bacchus and Ariadne, for example -- ultimately reflects on the triumphant celebration of a marriage, the event for which the pictures were made and which they continued to commemorate while on display in the home. This course will draw on women's history, the history of the family, and gender studies.

This seminar is being offered in conjunction with an exhibition co-curated by the instructor and Alan Chong, for the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Fall 2008. Prerequisite: FAH 2 or previous coursework in Italian Renaissance art. Reading knowledge of Italian helpful.

### **Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies**

#### **GENDER, RACE, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE AMERICAN WEST, 1880 – 1945**

Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:30 PM

Feb. 1 – May 10, 2007

This course explores the historical experiences and cultural productions of women in the North American West during the time it was being explored, settled, and imagined. Challenging the myths of western expansion as an exclusively male endeavor, and the formation of western myth as enterprise as exclusively male domains, the course pays particular attention to the roles of women in promoting, resisting, transforming, and constructing the trans-Mississippi West as reality and imaginary.

The North American West of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provides a fascinating case study of the shifting meanings of gender, race, citizenship, and power in border societies. As the site of migration, settlement, and displacement, it spawned contests over land, labor disputes, inter-ethnic conflicts and peaceful relations, and many kinds of cultural productions.

#### **FACULTY**

**Karen V. Hansen** is Professor of Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies at Brandeis University. She teaches courses on feminist theory, historical methods, and families.

**Marilyn S. Johnson** is Professor of History at Boston College where she teaches modern U.S. social history and the history of the American West.

**Lois Rudnick** is Professor of English and American Studies, and director of the American Studies Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston, where she teaches courses on immigration and Multi-Ethnic History and Literature, and on Modern American Literature and Culture.

## **GENDER, POLITICS, AND NATIONALISM**

Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:30

Feb. 1 – May 10, 2007

This course will investigate the myriad ways that religion, race, and color affect women's lives within national and transnational contexts. Specifically, this course explores the contested relationship between women and nationalist, religious, and racial/color politics in the context of South Asia and the Caribbean. It will investigate ways in which gender, religious, and racial identities intersect with ethnic and national ones in the emergence of social movements. Further, the course will examine the multiple ways religiosity, nationality, feminism, and political perspective are constructed, experienced, and practiced, and highlight the complex ways in which they inform one another. It seeks to examine ways in which nationalist politics has created opportunities for women's activism while simultaneously undermining their autonomy, and to complicate and explore how nation-states define and use women and how these citizens/agents negotiate these definitions and uses.

Specific topics addressed include: the relationship of gender to nationalism and formation of nation-states, and nationalist movements, women's participation in national movements and anti-colonial struggles, effects of globalization, development, and transnational institutions; and the interrelation of race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, and religion in national identity constructions.

### **FACULTY**

**Elora H. Chowdhury** is an Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Her fields of interest include critical development studies, Third World/transnational feminisms, gender and social movements in South Asia, and feminist ethnography.

**Rhonda Frederick** is an associate professor of English at Boston College. She teaches Caribbean and African American literatures. Her research interests include Caribbean and Post-colonial Studies, Cultural Studies, and narratives of migration.

## **GENDER, ARMED CONFLICT, AND PEACEMAKING**

Wednesdays, 6-9 PM

Jan. 31 – May 9, 2007

Peace Keeping operations involving both military and civilian personnel have been deployed in a number of countries such as Bosnia, Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan. These interventions have come about following intense levels of violence, breakdown in law and order, systems of governance and social systems as well as violations of human rights. This course is designed to review the phenomena of conflict, forced migration and militarization from a gender perspective to highlight the policy and operational implications that arise from this analysis.

The gendered nature of conflict and intervention will be explored from a multi-disciplinary framework involving anthropology, sociology, policy analysis, philosophy and the arts. Presenters will utilize literature, poetry, film, witness testimonies from the field, ethnographic

narratives and other resources to explore the complex ways in which women and men experience, manage and respond to violence and situations of protracted crisis.

#### **FACULTY**

**Carol Cohn** is the Director of the Boston Consortium on Gender, Security, and Human Rights. Her research and writing has focused on gender and international security, ranging from work on discourse of civilian defense intellectuals, gender integration issues in the US military, and, most extensively, weapons of mass destruction.

**Gordana Rabrenovic** is Associate Professor of Sociology and Education and Associate Director of the Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict at Northeastern University. Her substantive specialties include community studies, urban education and inter group conflict and violence.

**Lisa Rivera** is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Her areas of specialization are moral and political theory, feminist philosophy and ethics in international affairs.