

Women's Studies Course Descriptions – Spring 2005

Anthropology 185D: *Gender & Sexuality in East Asia* (Crane)

Block: 5

This course will explore what it means to be women & men in Chinese, Korean, & Japanese cultures. By examining archetypes such as the Geisha & the Samurai in Japan, alternative gender & sexuality roles such as the Woman Warrior & “Cut-Sleeved” man of China, & various contemporary gender roles such as that of female shamans in Korea, we will investigate how gender roles are constructed & renegotiated in the various cultures of East Asia.

Community Health 104: *Women & Health* (Galarneau)

Block: D+

This multi-disciplinary course introduces a broad range of concepts & issues related to women, health, & healthcare in the US in the late 20thC. We begin with an examination of the varied perspectives on women's bodies found in 19th- & 20thC medicine, media, & as described by contemporary women. Conventional indicators of women's health status, research on women's health, & the women's health movement help us understand the meanings of “health.” Violence against women, HIV/AIDS, & mental health receive special attention as particular health concerns for women. We attend to women as healers (“informal” care-givers, midwives, & physicians) & address the strengths & limits of a medical specialty in women's health. A focus on US social & health policy as it affects women; in particular welfare reform, access to health care services, & private health insurance.

Chinese 112 : *Women, Gender, & Modernity in 20th C China* (Zhong)

Block: J+

Discussion from a gendered perspective of issues confronting China and Chinese writers in the twentieth century. Focus on the May Fourth period (1920s-30s), 1930s-40s, and the post-Mao period (late 1970s to present). How does modern Chinese history “overdetermine” literary representations of men and women? How do men and women writers respond to sociocultural changes? Anxieties of male writers and the recent debate over “real” men and “real” women. No prerequisites. In English.

Comparative Religion 192PH *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 94K: *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.

English 80: *Hitchcock: Cinema, Gender, Ideology* (Edelman)

Block: K+ M,W

This course explores the relation between Hitchcock’s achievement of cinematic “mastery” & his constant, almost obsessive attention to questions of gender, sexuality, and cultural authority—questions that always underpin the narrative suspense of his films. We examine in detail how the act of seeing gets framed in Hitchcock’s films by being associated with practices of political & erotic surveillance & we attend to his consequent inflection of “looking,” & therefore of cinematic spectatorship, in the direction of sexual perversions such as voyeurism, fetishism, sadism, & masochism. We will read a number of theoretical accounts of Hitchcock’s cinema, including a number of recent interventions from the perspectives of psychoanalysis, feminism, & queer theory.

English 110: *Chaucer* (Fyler)

Block: D+

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 132: *Women & Fiction* (Bamber)

Block: E+ M,W

Do (or should) women's narratives emphasize the suffering of women in patriarchy? If you say "yes," you're wrong, and if you say "no," you're also wrong. In this course we will look at the different ways in which women writers simultaneously include & evade what might be called Matter of Women. The authors we will consider are for the most part committed to both narrative and anti-narrative, representation and language. This is a course for readers who are as interested in matters of language and form as in matters of gender and identity.

English 192A: *Environmental Justice & U.S. Literature* (Ammons)

Block: D+

How does contemporary U.S. literature contribute to the environmental justice movement? What do writers have to say about environmental racism, ecofeminism, homophobia & the social construction of nature, U.S. environmental imperialism, & urban ecological concerns? What analyses & insights can we gain? What is the role of art in the struggle for social change? Our study will be multicultural, foregrounding authors from diverse racial locations—Asian Amer., African Amer., Native Amer., white Amer., & Latino/a; & an anti-racist analytical framework will be central. The goal of this course is empowerment for social change. How can each of us participate as a change agent in the struggle for environmental justice, locally & globally? How can our understanding of literature contribute?

English 192B: *Writing Lives* (Flynn)

Block: 7

18th century writers were famous for observing each other. Samuel Johnson wrote the *Lives of the Poets*, describing Richard Savage, for instance, "the bastard poet" who scandalized London with his wild and aggressive claims. James Boswell observed Johnson, and observed himself observing Johnson in his journals and biography. Hester Thrale wrote her anecdotes observing a "different" Johnson. In fact Boswell and Thrale fought over their claims to "know" Johnson and claim him as their own "literary" creation. Fanny Burney observed every body, suffering shyness in public, but exerting comic, sometimes bitchy wit in her novels and diaries. Ignatius Sancho, an African Man of Letters, created a more perfect, witty, composed Sancho in his letters that sound a lot like Laurence Sterne's.

English 192G: *Feminism, Literature, Theory (Rosenthal)

Block: 12

What is feminism and why is it still interesting? What to make of the recent, tendentious label, "post-feminist," and what does it say about gender relations and feminist discourse in our own time? This course will explore feminist theory as it engages categories of representation, power, difference. Paying particular attention to the questions feminism has posed to literary texts, we will investigate feminism's relationship to psychoanalytic, marxist, literary, postcolonial, queer and critical race theory. No background in feminist thought is required.

English 192H: *Virginia Woolf* (Rosenthal)

Block: 8

Widely recognized as an icon of British modernism, Virginia Woolf is also associated with 20th-century feminism, pacifism and queer theory. Recently popularized by the film adaptation of Michael Cunningham's The Hours, her name, thanks in large part to the lyrical title of Edward Albee's famous play, has long provided a convenient short-hand for threats and problems ranging from elitism and anti-intellectualism to mental illness, suicide, and intractable gender ambiguity. In this course we will examine some of the reasons Woolf, both because and in spite of the complexity of her work, has served so well as a metonym and exemplary voice for such a wide range of debates and cultural discourses. Readings will be selected from Woolf's novels, short stories, and essays.

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

Block: 12

Representations of medieval sex/gender arrangements in art & literature ca. 1000 – 1300 CE. Construction of gender through religious & scientific teaching & images; its impact on roles as authors authors/makers & patrons played by men & especially women such as Hrotsvit, Hildegard, Jeanne d'Evreux. Secular & religious works, such as the Bayeux Embroidery & the *Nibelungenlied*, the *Hortus Deliciarum* & the writings of the "mystics," in light of medieval & present-day gender theories.

FAH/CR 191 *Seminar: Buddhism & Women in Asian Art* (Kaminishi)

Block: 7

We will examine the representations of women portrayed in Buddhist art & literature. A brief historical overview of early Buddhism in India, & Mahayana Buddhism in China & Japan, to orient students with social, cultural, & theological issues, followed by the in-depth gender study of Buddhist sculpture, painting, & literature. The topics of discussion include the presence of voluptuous images of female bodies at Buddhist monuments, ancient Indian practice of meditations on decomposing corpses of women, the depictions of androgynous divinities in Buddhist & Hindu stories, Amitabha Buddha's "Land of Bliss" as male-only land, & the sexuality of prostitute nuns in early modern Japan.

French 92: *20th Century French Women Writers* (Schub)

Block: D+

Voices of women writers are always being articulated against a long tradition of male writers. If women writers share what Adrienne Rich has called "a common female culture," do they also share a common vision, preoccupations and a common language? Is there an *écriture féminine*? This course will examine these questions in the works of six contemporary French women writers of fiction and non-fiction. One oral presentation, one 4-5 page paper, 8-10 page final paper. No prerequisites.

French 192D/ww: *Eros & Destiny: George Sand & Balzac in Dialogue* (Naginski) Block: J+

"Through our writings, we are preparing a future revolution in the realm of private life." Thus declared George Sand to Honoré de Balzac in one of the great literary dialogues of the 19th century. With each new novel--and they

were published hard and fast, both writers being singularly prolific--the critics unflinchingly compared them, making of Balzac the epitome of "Realism" and Sand the epitome of "Idealism". Both novelists, however, explored fictional realms which transcended such facile oppositions. Rather than see in the two writers representatives of two opposing schools of fiction, this course will examine the question of eros in connection with gender. In our readings we will encounter dreamy young girls on the brink of womanhood, ambitious young men, abandoned women, and so-called "virile" heroines intent upon upsetting the social equilibrium. Did erotic love and its failure or triumph tend to determine the destiny of the characters in the fictional worlds of Balzac and Sand? What differences can we discover in the ways in which these models were worked out? We will read short stories and novels in pairs, as a way to gauge the differing literary strategies deployed by the two greatest novelists of Romantic France. Prerequisites: French 31 and 32, or consent.

History 3AZ: *Culture & Sexuality in Early Modern Europe: 1500-1800*

(Zanger) Block K+ M,W

What happens when a long missing husband returns to a village, moves in with his wife, & 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 & women, or people of different social classes? How did gender expectations & roles shape the lives of men, women, & children across the classes? And how did sexuality & gender affect political culture? These are some of the questions we will explore in an interdisciplinary approach, reading theatre, novels, & images, along with philosophical, theological, & juridical pamphlets, treatises, & records to study early modern projections about & practices concerning sexuality. Topics to be studied include: sexuality & the inquisition, the return of the errant husband, dueling, manners & civility, sodomy laws, cross-dressing, sexuality in the convent, libertinage, & political bodies.

History 93: *Women in 20th C America* (Drachman)

Block: E+ M,W

Women in 20th C America, focusing on changes & continuity in their public & private lives. Topics include suffrage, changing patterns of women's work, emergence of the modern woman, changing attitudes toward sexuality & marriage, the birth control movement, women during WWII, rise of the "feminine mystique," women in the civil rights & student protest

movements, the women's liberation movement. Attention to tension between gender identity & diversity among women.

Italian 121: *Italian Women's Images & Voices* (Baffoni-Licata)

Block: G+

Through an in-depth analysis of written & spoken Italian, the course will focus on the study of the contemporary language with emphasis on idiomatic usage & different styles of expression. Readings, both in critical & fictional prose, will explore women's images & voices in Italian culture, society & literature. Conducted in Italian.

Jewish Studies 78: *Jewish Women* (Ascher)

Block: J+

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.

Music 26: *Women in Music* (Bernstein)

Block: D+,TR

Popular music and art music around the world from the perspective of women. The roles of women as creators, performers, sponsors, and consumers. The representation of women in music and how it reflects the culture of the past and present.

Political Science 104: *Race, Sex, Class, & Law* (Glater)

Block H+

Consideration of U.S. court decisions & related materials that address (or fail to address) issues of race, class, gender, & sexual orientation. Topics include employment, welfare, marriage, privacy, families, reproduction, & expression.

Political Science 128: *Gender, Labor & the State in Asia* (Remick)

Block: J+

This course examines the ways that men & women have participated in economic development during East Asia's "Economic Miracle," & asks why

their experiences have been so different. It highlights women's often hidden contributions to the "miracle" through different kinds of labor, including factory work, sex work, & domestic work, & investigates states' role in reinforcing gender roles in the development process.

Sociology 20: *Family & Intimate Relations* (tbd)

Block: F+

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

Sociology 149A: *Urban Community Organizing/Organizations*

(Ostrander) Block: J+

Sociological & practical understandings of community-based organizations, community organizing, & urban community. Focus on relationship to building grassroots democracy, active citizenship, civic participation, & community-based social capital & civil society. Students will be actively engaged in community projects in local areas & organizations.

Women's Studies 72: *Introduction to Women's Studies (Coleman)

Block: K+ M,W

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* (Philip 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

ENG 292A *Austen & Shelley* (Hofkosh)

Block: 6

Between 1811 and 1818 Jane Austen published six books known as domestic fiction or novels of courtship, each of which focuses on a young woman in love in the proper, provincial world of the English gentry. Starting with *Frankenstein*, in 1818, Mary Shelley wrote books about misshapen monsters and murder, forbidden passions, exile and suicide, and the end of the world. With substantial attention to recent critical approaches to Austen and Shelley, as well as supplementary material such as letters, journals, and other contemporary contexts, we will examine what looking at these

two authors together may help illuminate about each, as about the possibilities envisioned or contained in early 19th Century narrative.

CRWS 292A: *Feminist Inquiry: Strategies of Effective Scholarship*

(Bergland/Buckle/Thomas-Buckle)

Time and place: tbd

This course investigates theories and practices of feminist inquiry across a range of disciplines. Doing feminist research involves rethinking disciplinary assumptions and methodologies, developing new understandings of what counts as knowledge, seeking alternative ways of understanding the origins of problems/issues, and redefining the relationship between subjects and objects of study. Discussions in this course will focus on how to identify and listen to the silences within traditional analyses and how to correct the partial and distorted accounts that such silencing has allowed.

As feminist scholarship has developed over the last thirty-some years, it has become increasingly clear that the practice of feminist inquiry is inherently interdisciplinary. We aim to promote the development of feminist theory and methods by providing a forum for sharing and assessing strategies used by feminist scholars in an array of fields from history and philosophy to political science and evolutionary biology.

CRWS 292B: *Women Activists* (Allara/Cazenave/Weiler)

Wednesdays, 5-8 pm; February 3 – May 5, 2005

This course explores art, writing, film, and education as sites of women's activism. Women throughout the world are engaged in collective and individual resistance to oppression. This resistance takes place at the grassroots level and through national and international organizations and movements. Women artists, filmmakers, educators, and intellectuals are active in a variety of ways in supporting and furthering these struggles. This course will examine the contribution of women artists, intellectuals and educators both globally and locally. Classes will make use of speakers from local activist groups, panels, and films. Students in the course will prepare a brief response paper to the readings for each class and will undertake two projects: 1. an investigation of a specific women's activist group, either local or global, and 2. a final research paper on a topic of their choice.