

Issues in Feminism  
WST 3311-001  
Fall 2008  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-1:45  
EDU 347

Instructor: Cyrana Wyker  
Office: FAO 19  
Phone: 813-974-3496  
Email: [Cwyker@mail.usf.edu](mailto:Cwyker@mail.usf.edu)  
Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 10am-12:15 or by appointment

In Issues in Feminism we will examine and engage with issues of contemporary feminism. We will explore the construction of gender in America as it interacts with other constructions, such as race, class, and sexuality. The topics we will examine and engage with include varying perspectives and understandings of gender, sexism, race/racism, heterosexism, sexuality, beauty ideals, class/classism, reproduction, families, and sex work. We will also explore experiences of belonging to a privileged or stigmatized sex, race, sexuality, class, etc. We will develop a dialogue that will investigate the ways in which gender is constructed and maintained by cultural institutions such as media, law, medicine, family, etc. We will individually and collectively place ourselves within feminist dialogues by acknowledging the many interstices of our identity politics.

Class time will be devoted to the assigned readings and the issues that they raise. We will ask questions such as:

- \*How do we learn gender?
- \*What is the impact of sex and gender stereotypes on women's work, sexuality, health, families, etc.?
- \*In what ways can individuals encourage social changes in order to eradicate gender discrimination, racism, classism, heterosexism, etc.?
- \*In what ways are women similar to, and in what ways are they different from, one another?

**Course Description, Goals, and Objectives:** One of the goals of this course is to challenge the assumption that Feminism is a monolithic ideology that provides a single feminist position on an issue. There are many consequences to the notion that only one 'feminism' exists and that feminists share the same goals and ideals. This notion hides the differences that exist within the women's movement which pull the movement apart, frames feminism in narrow terms, and makes feminism appear to speak for a small, elite group of women. It also reduces women and their multiple experiences to a stereotype of 'feminist'.

By the end of the semester students will be able to define, discuss, and provide information regarding key concepts and issues of concern within contemporary U.S. feminism, such as intersections of gender, race, and class, the role of media and other institutions on women's lives, sex and gender discrimination, women's work, violence against women, women's health, etc.

By participating in this course students should be able to demonstrate a working knowledge in the following areas:

- \*Concepts in feminism (sex, gender, social construction, essentialism, etc.)
- \* Diversity and contemporary political concerns of feminist thought
- \* An enhanced sense of personal agency by using your voice as an effective tool of communication
- \*Situating yourself and your multiple identities as a means of understanding the ways in which intersections of identities of race, class, sex, and sexuality affect the diversity of human experience.

**Required Text and Materials:**

*Listen Up: Voices from the Next Feminist Generation*

\*available at the USF bookstore located in the Marshall Center and often times carried at Borders, Barnes and Noble, or Amazon.com

The other readings will be available through the USF library's electronic reserves/Blackboard.

*Please Note:* The use of e-reserves is required for this course. If you do not access this resource and keep up with the assigned readings, you will not successfully complete this course. I encourage you to use the free computer services that are available through Student Government Computer Services (Marshall Center room 038). They offer free internet and free printing of 30 pages per day!

**\*\*In order to be prepared for class and to actively engage with the material the assigned readings must be read prior to coming to class. You are required to bring a copy of the assigned articles to class on the day they are due.\*\***

**Classroom Behavior:** Attending class provides a context for you to examine and engage with the course material and the issues that arise. It is a space for you to explore your own ideas and values. Preparation and participation is vital to the classroom experience. Respect is essential. In order to be respectful to yourself and other classmates, you must show up to class on time and stay for the full duration of the class period. You should come prepared and ready to discuss the assigned readings. Because we will sometimes discuss controversial, sensitive, personally and politically charged issues, respect for all opinions is mandatory. We will strive to create an atmosphere in which people can talk respectfully and freely. This class will be a cell phone free environment!!

*Please Note:* One of the requirements for this course is that you are an active participant. This in no way means giving 'correct' answers or responses but that you actively engage with the readings. Thoughtful participation means a sincere attempt to come to terms with the material. Such an attempt may include questioning the material, pointing out connections or contradictions between readings, responding to other students' comments, etc. We are all teachers and students creating a collaborative experience in constructing knowledge in the classroom. I encourage you to express your opinions freely and honestly. Honest discussion will help you try out and develop your ideas. As in any good discussion, critical listening is vital. Critical listening means taking the texts and other students' ideas seriously and making an honest effort to understand their basis even when those ideas are not agreeable to you. Disagreement will enrich the class and stimulate thinking, but it requires us to develop ways to talk to each other that allow us to disagree without attacking anyone personally. Respect in the classroom applies to yourself also. Take your ideas seriously, allow your ideas to develop over time, and give yourself credit for the situated knowledge you possess when engaging with the material and the issues that arise.

**Absences:** This course is organized as a reading and discussion course. Students will be learning primarily through the assigned readings, in-class videos, each other's voices and insights. Thus, your experience in this course will be a reflection of your participation and engagement. If you are not present, you cannot participate in our class discussions. Attendance will be taken every class. Students who miss more than three classes, regardless of validation or reason will have their final grade lowered one full letter grade. I will take careful notice of students who make a habit of arriving late or leaving early. In addition, if you miss an in-class assignment due to your absence or tardiness, this will affect your participation grade. **There will be no opportunities to make-up in class assignments.**

**Special Considerations:** Any student with a disability is encouraged to meet with me immediately to discuss accommodations. Each student must bring a current Memorandum of Accommodations from the

Office of Student Disability Services located at SVC1133 (974-4309) as a prerequisite for receiving accommodations.

**Religious Observances:** Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent due to a religious observance must provide the instructor with advance notice of their absence in writing. If a religious observance interferes with handing in an assignment or an exam, you must turn in your work before the due date. There will be no exceptions.

**Academic Honesty:** All students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty. There will be no tolerance for academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) By engaging in academic dishonesty, you will receive a “0” for the assignment. However, further action may include a “FF” for the course.

*Please Note:* Signing another students name on the attendance sheet is considered academic dishonesty.

**Safe Assignment:** You will be required to submit midterm and final written examinations to Safe Assignment. Safe Assignment is a program that checks for plagiarism. Instructions on how to submit to safe assignment will be posted on Blackboard and will remain posted throughout the semester. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with this process.

**Blackboard:** It is your responsibility to become familiar with blackboard and to check it often. Information, assignments, grades, and course updates will be posted. In order to use Blackboard, you need a netID and password. You can log on to Blackboard and create a log-in by going to <https://my.usf.edu>.

Grading Matrix for WST 3311:

Attendance and Participation	10%
In-class writing assignments	10%
Response Papers	40%
Midterm	20%
Final	20%

**Attendance (10%):**

To earn optimal points for attendance and participation, please come to class having read all of the assigned readings and be ready to engage with the texts and each other. A criterion for active participation includes:

- \*Raising interesting and relevant questions for discussion
- \*Offering informed responses to others’ questions
- \*Evidence of your having read the text with care
- \*Being respectful

**In-class writing assignments (10%):**

There will be 5 in-class informal writing assignments throughout the semester to jump start discussion, gauge your reaction to film or media, or to ensure we are all reading the required texts. There will be no opportunities to make-up in-class writing assignments.

**Response Papers (40%):**

Ten response papers will be collected throughout the semester. Each response paper must be a minimum of 2 (maximum of 3) typed, double spaced, pages with standard one inch margins, Times New Roman 12 pt font. No extra spacing between paragraphs. Handwritten response papers will not be accepted. Response papers are to actively engage with the assigned readings. They are an opportunity to express

thoughtful exploration of the material and should consist of your reactions to the prior week's readings. Response papers should demonstrate that you are thinking about the topics presented. Comment on the material; USE YOUR VOICE! You do not have to agree with the material presented but you should use this opportunity to situate your values, beliefs, and assumptions as related to issue(s) in feminism. Explore, examine, speak up!

*Please Note:* Your response papers are a large part of your overall grade. Response papers are due on Tuesdays at the beginning of class. **If you submit your journals late, you will lose a minimum of 10pts per day. Response papers more than two business days (by 5pm) late will not be accepted.** Journals may not be sent electronically.

**Midterm Exam (20%):**

Your midterm will be a take-home exam. It will consist of 2 or 3 essay questions. You will respond to only one. Your midterm exam, guidelines to follow, and my expectations for successful responses will be made available to you in class and on Blackboard on 9/25. Your midterm is due in class on 10/7. Late midterm examinations will be accepted when an uncontrollable circumstance prevents you from turning your midterm in on time. Written documentation may be requested. If you submit your midterm late you will lose a minimum of 10pts per day. **Midterms that are more than 5 business days (by 5pm) late will not be accepted.** Midterms may not be sent electronically.

**Final Exam (20%):**

Your final will be a take-home exam. It will consist of 2 or 3 essay questions. You will respond to only one. Your final exam, guidelines to follow, my expectations for successful responses, and the date and time it is due will be made available to you in class and on Blackboard on 11/25. The Final will be due on 12/11 before 3 pm. **No late or electronically submitted finals will be accepted.**

**Final Grades for WST 3311 will be determined as follows:**

<b>A</b>	<b>94-100%</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>74-76%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-93%</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>70-73%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>87-89%</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>67-69%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>84-86%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>64-66%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>80-83%</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>60-63%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>77-79%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>59% and below</b>

**Incomplete Grade Policy:** An "I" grade can only be awarded when any one portion of your work is incomplete and only when you are otherwise earning a passing grade in the course. Please see the Undergraduate Catalog for more information. "I" grades will be granted only in extreme emergency situations.

**Extra Credit:** There will be no opportunities for extra credit in this course.

**Course Schedule**

*Please Note:* All assigned readings are to be completed before coming to class. In addition, all response papers are due at the beginning of the class. Reading assignments and other assignments are subject to change. Any modifications will be announced in class and on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to keep informed.

## Week 1 – Introductions

8/26

Introductions  
Defining Feminism(s)

8/28

“Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression,” bell hooks  
“Consciousness Raising,” Catherine MacKinnon

## Week 2 – Introducing the Terms: Sex, Gender, Race, Class and the “-isms”

9/2

“Oppression,” Marilyn Frye  
“Sexism,” Marilyn Frye  
“Night to His Day: The Social Construction of Gender” Judith Lorber  
“Investigating Sex...” Jennifer Harding

9/4

“A Question of Class,” Dorothy Allison  
“White Privilege and Male Privilege,” Peggy McIntosh  
“Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, Gender as Categories of Analysis,” Patricia Hill-Collins

## Week 3 – Feminist Perspectives and Theories

9/9

Response Paper 1 Due  
“Theories and Theorizing...,” Kirk and Okazawa-Rey  
“Patriarchy, the System” Allan Johnson  
“Imagine My Surprise” Ellen Neuborne  
“One Bad Hair Day Too Many,” Jennifer Reid Maxcy Myhre

9/11

“Who’s on Top” Kate Bornstein  
“Theorizing difference from Multiracial Feminism” Maxine Zinn and Bonnie Dill  
“Bloodlove,” Christina Doza  
“Weaving an Identity Tapestry,” Sonja D. Curry Johnson

## Week 4 – Bodies, Sexualities, Power, and Desire

9/16

Response Paper 2 Due  
“Sexual Desire and Gender,” Schwartz and Rutter  
“The Invention of Heterosexuality,” Jonathan Katz  
“Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism,” Suzanne Pharr

9/18

“Radical Heterosexuality” Naomi Wolf  
“The Lesbian Perspective,” Julie Penelope  
“Chicks Goin’ at it,” Anastasia Higgenbotham  
“Lusting for Freedom,” Rebecca Walker

Week 5 – Social Construction of Race and Racism

9/23

Response Paper 3 Due

“Jews in the U.S.: The Rising Cost of Whiteness,” Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz

“The Masters Tools will Never Dismantle the Masters House,” Audre Lorde

“Something about the Subject Makes it Hard to Name,” Gloria Yamato

9/25

“The Strength of My Rebellion,” Gloria Anzaldua

“Womanism and Black Feminism,” Patricia Hill-Collins

“Betrayal Feminism,” Veronica Chambers

“Beyond Bean Counting,” JeeYeun Lee

Guidelines for Midterm Distributed

Week 6 – Sex Work

9/30

Response Paper 4 Due

In class Showing: Live Nude Girls Unite!

10/2

No Class- Work on Midterm!

Week 7 – Intersections with Work, Class, and Privilege

10/7

**\*\*Midterm Due\*\***

“Work, Wages, and Welfare,” Kirk and Okazawa-Rey

“Knowledge is Power,” Maria Cristina Rangel

10/9

“Sexual Harassment: The Nature of the Beast,” Anita Hill

“Maid to Order: The Politics of Other Women’s Work,” Barbara Ehrenreich

“Prostitution, Humanism, and a Woman’s Choice,” Kimberly Klinger

Week 8 – Women, Work, and the Global Economy

10/14

Response Paper 5 Due

“Living in a Global Economy” Kirk and Okazawa-Rey

10/16

“Maquiladoras: The View from Inside,” Maria Patricia Fernandez-Kelly

“Globalization and its Discontents,” Evelyn Hu-Dehart

Week 9 – Violence Against Women

10/21

Response Paper 6 Due

“Violence Against Women,” Kirk and Okazawa-Rey  
“Don’t Call Me a Survivor,” Emilie Morgan  
“Word Warrior,” Jennifer DiMarco

10/23

Guest Speaker  
“Rape: The Power of Consciousness,” Susan Griffin  
“Witnessing the Death of Love,” bell hooks

#### Week 10 – Women and the Law

10/28

Response Paper 7 Due  
In class showing: Iron Jawed Angels

10/30

Finish Iron-Jawed Angels  
“Equal Rights Amendment...,” Riane Eisler and Allie Hixson  
“Law and Equality...,” Susan Gluck Mezey

#### Week 11 – Reproduction and Contemporary Motherhood

11/4

Response Paper 8 Due  
“Assault on the Female Headed Household,” Ruth Sidel  
“Abortion is a Motherhood Issue,” Judith Arcana  
“Letters to a Young Feminist on Sex and Reproductive Freedom” Phyllis Chesler

11/6

“You’re Not My Type,” Laurel Gilbert  
“Taking it to the Streets,” Melissa Silverstein  
“And So I Chose,” Allison Crew

#### Week 12 – Beauty Culture

11/11

No Class – Veteran’s Day

11/13

“The Body Politic,” Abra Fortune Chernik  
“It’s a Big Fat Revolution,” Nomy Lamm  
“No Way Outa No Way,” Becky Thompson

#### Week 13 – Culture, Controlling Narratives and Images

11/18

Response Paper 9 Due  
“Situated Knowledges...,” Donna Harraway  
\*\*Challenging Article, allow yourself extra reading time!\*\*

11/20

“Experience,” Joan Scott

“Age, Race, Class, & Sex: Women redefining difference,” Audre Lorde

Week 14 – Activism and Social Change

11/25

“Creating Change: Theory, Vision, and Action,” Kirk and Okazawa-Rey

Final Exam Distributed

11/27

No class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15 – Looking Forward

12/2

Response Paper 10 Due

“Coalition Politics” Bernice Reagon

“Selling Out” Sarah McCarry

12/4

“A Day Without Feminism,” Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards

“A Day With Feminism,” Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards

Week 16 – Exam Week

12/9 & 12/11

No Class

**\*\*Final Exam Due 12/11 before 3pm\*\***