

GWST 2700: From Margin to Center: Exploring the multiple identities of women of color through contemporary media

Summer 2008: Tuesday evenings (6:00 PM – 9:30 PM)

Instructor: Dr. B. Afeni Cobham
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PREREQUISITES: Students are responsible for completing course prerequisites before registering for a class. Students may be removed from a course for which they have not fulfilled the prerequisite course work.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Consistent images found in contemporary forms of media have relegated women of color to positions of matriarch, servitude mammy, sexual exploit, or angry and bitter. These images have intentionally or unintentionally disempowered feminist discourse and solidarity. This course will explore an artistic renaissance that dispels narrow-minded myths about the experiences women of color contend with in America and throughout the world. Students will critically analyze literature, TV, films, and music that illuminate and give agency to the rich and complex day-to-day journey women of color encounter within their multiple identities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- ♦ Students will be able to identify historical events that continue to impact the marginalization of women of color.
- ♦ By moving women of color from their historically marginal position to the center of our attention, students will be challenged to shift their knowledge and understanding about women in our society to far-reaching gender constituencies.
- ♦ Students will be able to use feminist theories relevant to forms of resistance that [some] women of color call upon to create cultural capital.
- ♦ Students will gain an understanding about the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, ageism, and sizeism, and how these multiple identities [and others] might impact the experiences of women of color.
- ♦ Students will become more knowledgeable about some of the major issues that affect the lives of women of color and their divergent stance on feminist discourse and solidarity.
- ♦ Students will become better skilled in addressing inward-looking generalizations about the needs of women of color based on the individual experiences and perspectives of persons from that group, which may in most cases, represent one's own interest versus a communal interest.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

- (1) **Course Text:** Ryan, B. (2001). Identity Politics in the Women's Movement. New York: New York University Press.
- (2) **Library E-reserves:** Various articles and book chapters
- (3) **Notebook (5x7):** Journal Writing

**** Assigned readings should be completed prior to each class session**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

The Women’s College fully endorses the University of Denver’s Honor Code and the procedures put forth by the Office of Citizenship and Community Standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating, and falsification of data and research—is in violation of the code and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course.

As student members of a community committed to academic integrity and honesty, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the DU Honor Code and its procedures (www.du.edu/honorcode).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Biweekly journal entry (4 x 15 pts. each) | 60 pts |
| 2. Class Participation (reading materials) | 20 pts. |
| 3. Final research project (information cited) | 15 pts. |
| 6. Attendance | <u>5 pts.</u> |
| | Total 100 pts. |

NOTE: LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory and active participation in class discussions will be a factor in the final grade. An absence, for any reason, will result in forfeiting points for an assignment or in-class presentation. These may not be made up in another class session. If an emergency arises, it is your responsibility to contact me at 303/871-4720 or via email at bcobham@du.edu

INCOMPETE POLICY: A grade of incomplete will not be granted under any circumstances.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, June 24th

TOPIC: Theoretical Foundations

- Margin to Center
- Intersectionality
- Unpacking Privilege
- The matter of Whiteness
- Cultural Capital
- Privileged Identity Exploration model

READINGS:

Dyer, R. (2002). The matter of Whiteness. In P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism* (pp. 9-14). New York: Worth Publishers.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299

Hooks, B. (2000). Seeing the light: Visionary feminism. In *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (pp. x-xv). New York: South End Press.

McIntosh, P. (2002). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. In P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism* (pp. 9-14). New York: Worth Publishers.

Watt, S. K. (2007). Difficult dialogues, privilege and social justice: Uses of the Privileged Identity Exploration (PIE) model in student affairs practice. *The College Student Affairs Journal*, 26(2), 114-126.

Yosso, T. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8 (1), 69–91

In-Class Assignment(s):

CASE STUDY: Accapadi, M.M. (2007). When White women cry: How White women's tears oppress women of color. *The College Student Affairs Journal*, 26(2), 208-215.

Multimedia Presentation

TBD

Tuesday, July 1st

TOPIC: Historical Context

- The 'politics' of struggle
- Identity Politics

READINGS:

El Comité De Mujeres Puertorriqueñas. (2003). In the belly of the beast: Puertorriqueñas challenging colonialism. In M. J. Alexander, L. Albrecht, S. Day & M. Segrest (Eds.), Sing, Whisper, Shout, Pray! Feminist Visions for a Just World (pp. 124-136). Canada: EdgeWork Books.

Jacobs, H. A. (1999). Incidents in the life of a slave girl. In J. Parini (Ed.), The Norton Book of American Autobiography (pp. 94-99). New York: Columbia University Press.

Najjar, O.A. (2003). Still "A difficult journey up the mountain"? Palestinian women's national versus gender politics 1919-2002. In M. J. Alexander, L. Albrecht, S. Day & M. Segrest (Eds.), Sing, Whisper, Shout, Pray! Feminist Visions for a Just World (pp. 181-211). Canada: EdgeWork Books.

Ryan, B. (2001). Identity politics: The past, the present, and the future. In B. Ryan (Ed.), Identity Politics in the Women's Movement. New York: New York University Press.

Trask, H.K. (2003). Self-determination for Pacific Island women: The case of Hawai'i. In M. J. Alexander, L. Albrecht, S. Day & M. Segrest (Eds.), Sing, Whisper, Shout, Pray! Feminist Visions for a Just World (pp. 137-150). Canada: EdgeWork Books.

In-Class Assignment(s):

EXERCISE: Diversity Mask

****ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Journal Entry # 1

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TBD

Tuesday, July 8th

TOPIC: From Margin to Center

- Identity
- Agency
- Collective movement?

READINGS:

Bresnahan, E. (2001). The strange case of Jackie East: When identities collide. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Collins, P. H. (2000). The social construction of Black Feminist Thought. In *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2nd ed.). (pp. 1- 43). New York: Routledge.

Pratt, M.B. (2001). Who am I if I'm not my father's daughter? A southerner confronts racism and anti-semitism. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Shah, S. (2001). Presenting the blue goddess: Toward a bicultural Asian-American feminist agenda. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

The Combahee Rive Collective. (2001). A Black feminist statement. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

In-Class Assignment(s):

EXERCISE:

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Tuesday, July 15th

TOPIC: Socialized Stereotypes

- Body Image
- Commodification and Consumption

READINGS:

Frisby, C.M., & Engstrom, E. (October 1, 2006). Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Bride: Portrayals of Women of Color in Bridal Magazines. *Media Report to Women* 34(4), 2-6

Haubegger, C. (2000). "I'm not fat, I'm Latina" In M. Adams, W. J. Blumenfel, & R. Castaneda, H.W. Hackman, M.L. Peters, X. Zuniga (Eds.), *Readings for Diversity in Social Justice: An Anthology on Racism, Anti-semitism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism, and Classism* (pp. 242-243). New York: Routledge.

Hooks, B. (1992). Selling hot pu**sy: Representations of Black female sexuality in the cultural marketplace. In *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (pp. 61-77). Boston, MA: South End Press.

McMillian, S.N., Roberts, E.M., Flowers, C. & Garrett, M.T. (Spring, 2006) Ebony and Ivory: Relationship Between African American Young Women's Skin Color and Ratings of Self and Peers. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*. Volume 45

Riley, Sirena J. (2002). The Black beauty myth. In D. Hernandez & B. Rehman (Eds.), *Colonizethis!: Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism* (pp. 357-369). New York: Seal Press.

Salamm K.I.. (2002). How sexual harassment slaughtered, then saved me. In D. Hernandez & B. Rehman (Eds.), *Colonizethis!: Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism* (pp. 326-342). New York: Seal Press.

Wilson II, C. C., Gutierrez, F., & Chao, L. M. (2003). Sex, servants, and stereotypes: Latinas in the media. In Wilson et al., *Racism, Sexism, and the Media: The Rise of Class Communication in Multicultural America* (3rd ed.). (pp. 197-204). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Wong, N. (2002). When I was growing up. In C. L. Moraga & G. E. Anzaldua (Eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (pp. 5-6). Berkeley: Third Woman Press.

****ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Journal Entry # 2

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Tuesday, July 22nd

TOPIC: Part 2 – Socialized Stereotypes

- Music
- Media, Movie, and More ...
- Reflections on assumptions?

READINGS:

Adams, T.M. & Fuller, D.B. (2006). The words have changed but the ideology remains the same: Misogynistic lyrics in rap music. *Journal of Black Studies* 36, 938

Frye, M. (2001). Lesbian community: Heterodox congregation. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Roberts, R. (Summer, 1994). "Ladies First": Queen Latifah's Afrocentric Feminist Music Video African American Review, Black Women's Culture Issue, 28(2) 245-257

Takaki, R. (2004). The success of Asian Americans has been exaggerated, in part to criticize other minority groups. In J. F. Healey & E. O. O'Brien (Eds.), *Race, Ethnicity, and Gender: Selected Readings* (pp. 277-278). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Wilson II, C. C., Gutierrez, F., & Chao, L. M. (2003). Do the media matter? In Wilson et al., *Racism, Sexism, and the Media: The Rise of Class Communication in Multicultural America* (3rd ed.). (pp. 35-41). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Wilson II, C. C., Gutierrez, F., & Chao, L. M. (2003). Racialism in the movies. In Wilson et al., *Racism, Sexism, and the Media: The Rise of Class Communication in Multicultural America* (3rd ed.). (pp. 74-86). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

White, D. G. (1999). Jezebel and Mammy: The mythology of female slavery. In *Ar'nt I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (2nd ed.). (pp. 26-61). London: W.W. Norton & Company.

In-Class Assignment(s):

EXERCISE:

Multimedia Presentation

TBD

Tuesday, July 29th

TOPIC: What do [some] women of color think?

- EmPOWERment
- Race
- Community

READINGS:

Angelou, M. (2003). From a Black woman to a Black man.. In M. Manning, N. Frazier, & J. McMillian (Eds.), *Freedom on My Mind: The Columbia Documentary History of the African American Experience* (pp. 103-109). New York: Columbia University Press.

Carby, H.V. (2001). The politics of difference. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Darraj, S. M. (2002). It's not an oxymoron: The search for an Arab feminism. In D. Hernandez & B. Rehman (Eds.), *Colonizethis!: Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism* (pp. 295-311). New York: Seal Press.

Jordan, J. (2001). Report from the Bahamas. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Lee, T.S. (2006). Balancing the margin is my center: A Navajo woman's navigations through the academy and her community. In T. R. Berry & N. D. Mizelle (Eds.), *From Oppression to Grace: Women of Color and Their Dilemmas in the Academy* (pp. 44-58). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Pegueros, R.M. (2001). Sharing power: A Latina in NOW. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Ramji, R. (2001). Ink: black on white. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Walker, R. (2001). Becoming the Third Wave. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

****ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Journal Entry # 3

Multimedia Presentation

TBD

Tuesday, August 5th

TOPIC: Resistance

- Multiple Identities: Advocacy for, against or neutral
- Inclusive Perspectives
- Addressing the “status quo”

READINGS:

Berry, T. R. (2006). What the f*ck, now what? The social and psychological dilemmas of multidimensional being as a woman of color in the academy. In T. R. Berry & N. D. Mizelle (Eds.), *From Oppression to Grace: Women of Color and Their Dilemmas in the Academy* (pp. xi-xix). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

DeLeon, C.R. (Sept/Oct 2006). Closeted violence: Abuse between queer women of color stays under the radar. *Colorlines*.

Hill, A. (2003). Statement of Anita Hill to the Senate judiciary committee, October 11, 1991. In M. Manning, N. Frazier, & J. McMillian (Eds.), *Freedom on My Mind: The Columbia Documentary History of the African American Experience* (pp. 103-109). New York: Columbia University Press.

Hooks, B. (1992). A feminist challenge: Must we call every woman sister? In *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (pp. 79-86). Boston, MA: South End Press.

Klein, B.S. (2001). “We are who you are”: Feminism and disability. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Naber, N. (Spring 2006) Arab American Femininities: Beyond Arab Virgin/American (ized) Whore. *Feminist Studies*, 32(1) 87-111

Ortega, M. (Summer 2006). Being Lovingly, Knowingly Ignorant: White Feminism and Women of Color. *Hypatia*, 21(3) 56-74

Patai, D. (2001). The struggle for feminist purity threatens the goals of feminism. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Paul, D. G. (2001). Opposition and the valuation of difference. In *Life, Culture and Education on the Academic Plantation* (pp. 1-8). New York: Peter Lang.

Queen, C. (2001). Sex radical politics, sex-positive Feminist thought, and whore stigma. In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Rushin, K. (2002). The bridge poem. In C. L. Moraga & G. E. Anzaldúa (Eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (pp. lvii-lviii). Berkeley: Third Woman Press.

Severson, K., & Stanhope, V. (2001). Identity politics and progress: Don't fence me in (or out). In B. Ryan (Ed.), *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*. New York: New York University Press.

Yamada, M. (2002). Invisibility is an unnatural disaster. In C. L. Moraga & G. E. Anzaldua (Eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (pp. 34-40). Berkeley: Third Woman Press.

Multimedia Presentation

TBD

Tuesday, August 12th - NO CLASS SESSION

Tuesday, August 19th

TOPICS: Authentic Allies
 Final Exam Projects

READINGS:

Corman, J. (2001). Organizing international Women's day in the Niagara peninsula. In B. Ryan (Ed.), Identity Politics in the Women's Movement. New York: New York University Press.

Jordan, J. (2001). Report from the Bahamas. In B. Ryan (Ed.), Identity Politics in the Women's Movement. New York: New York University Press.

Keating, C. (Summer, 2005) Building coalitional consciousness. NWSA Journal, 17(2), 86-103.

Lorde, A. (2001). Our difference is our strength. In B. Ryan (Ed.), Identity Politics in the Women's Movement. New York: New York University Press.

Ryan, B. (2001). Having it all: The search for identity and community. In B. Ryan (Ed.), Identity Politics in the Women's Movement. New York: New York University Press.

****ASSIGNMENT DUE:** Journal Entry # 4

Final Research Presentation

Students have the autonomy to work in a group of 2 to 4 people, or they can work on their own. The presentation should address a feminist issue/topic that we did not have time to cover in class. Students are encouraged to present the information using an 'artistic renaissance' method. In addition, presentations should be no more than 20 minutes in length.

Be sure to unpack the research using the following questions as a guide:

What group (or person) is the focus?

Why?

What impact has the group (or person) had on the feminist movement?

How do the research topic compliment materials covered in class?

Students must provided a bibliography of the sources (APA citation) used for this project