

## GAH 2358, Fall 2007

### Perspectives on Women—Locating Women's Studies

Section 001: MWF 12:45-2pm, N115

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**Instructor:** Dr. Kristin J. Jacobson (aka Dr. J)

**Office phone:** (609) 626-5581 **Office Location:** J-236

**Email:** Please use our WebCT email

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays 2:15-3:15pm, Fridays 11:30am-12:30pm, and by appointment

**Mailbox:** Arts and Humanities, K-150

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**Course Description and Objectives:** This introductory, interdisciplinary survey course *locates* Women's Studies. We will travel through diverse discursive and physical terrain in order to map this discipline. For example, we will read popular and academic texts drawn from literature, film, history, psychology, sociology, and the natural sciences. We will analyze built and natural environments, focusing in particular on women's relationships with the home, work, the city, mobility, nation, and the natural environment. Additionally, we will explore social institutions—such as U.S. media and education—to discover their gendered implications. This course does not only consider differences between women and men, but also explores differences among women. The readings and discussion examine ideas about race, class, sexuality and other aspects of identity in addition to gender. Together we will discuss the relationships among these categories and will analyze when and how such categories operate. The course focuses primarily on the United States but incorporates information and perspectives from non-Western cultures as well.

There is no single way to understand the controversial issues touched on in this course. Disagreement and debate are not only present in society at large, but are an important part of the theory and practice of Women's Studies. As a result, the class requires a commitment to critical dialogue about course materials. In this forum, intimidating remarks, particularly of sexist, racist, or homophobic natures, will not be tolerated. Also important to keep in mind throughout the course is that there is no such thing as "the" feminist understanding of issues we will be covering; feminists are a diverse and complicated group. The goal is to expose you to some feminist tools for understanding and analyzing social phenomena and to help you develop a more critically informed perspective on the issues.

In particular, this course has three essential goals. Students should:

- **Learn fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories** (e.g. commonalities and differences among women, continuities and changes in women's experiences, gender as a tool of analysis, and feminist definitions, analysis, methods, and theories)
- **Learn to apply course material** (e.g., to apply feminist analysis as an ideology for social change and an academic methodology)
- **Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas** (e.g., to use feminism to analyze and evaluate critically the world around us)

An important goal for this course is:

- **Developing skill in expressing yourself orally and in writing** (e.g., sharpening your critical verbal and written analysis skills, particularly in regard to your writing about feminist issues)

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**Accommodation for Students with Special Needs:** Stockton College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations should contact the Learning Access Program located in the West Quad Building, Suite 110 or by call 652-4988. Additional information on the program may be obtained from <http://www2.stockton.edu/wellness/lap.html>.

**Academic Honesty:** Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and risk failing the course. Other sanctions may also apply. For more information, see <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=14&pageID=62>

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**Office Hours:** Think of my office as an extension of the classroom and use my office hours to discuss any aspect of the reading and material covered during class: come chat with me about your class projects, writing, questions about the reading, quizzes, lecture or discussion, ideas you wish to develop, reading and interpretive strategies you'd like to try, and so on.

**Email Policy:** Please keep the following in mind when communicating with me outside of class:

- (1) Use WebCT email for all course-related correspondence.
  - (2) I usually check my email each day in the morning. Please plan your email questions accordingly and, while I often respond immediately, allow a twenty-four hour time frame for my reply.
  - (3) Always try to visit my office hours with specific questions about course material. If you were absent, contact a classmate with questions about missed material and then visit office hours if you still have questions.
  - (4) Visit instructor office hours to discuss grades. This includes final grades. Grades should be discussed in person during office hours or other arranged meetings. I will not discuss grades via email.
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**Required Texts & Key to Syllabus Abbreviations:**

*Putting Women in Place: Feminist Geographers Make Sense of the World* (2001), Mona Domosh & Joni Seager (**D&S**)

*Feminism is for Everybody* (2000), bell hooks (**bh**)

*Blanche Cleans Up* (1998), Barbara Neely (**BN**) [Note: this book is also available on 4 hour reserve in the library]

*The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (1997), Joan Jacobs Brumberg (**JJB**)

Electronic Reserve Readings (**ER**)

WebCT: In addition to the required texts, you need to have an active stk account and Internet access to our course webpage in WebCT. You should check our WebCT site regularly, preferably prior to each class. I use WebCT to send all course and individual announcements. You will use WebCT e-mail to communicate with other students in the class as well as the instructor. All electronic reserve readings (ER) are available in WebCT and all of our quizzes also take place in WebCT. If you have questions about using WebCT, consult a computer lab assistant or your instructor. See also: <http://gannet.stockton.edu/cts/publish/WebCT.pdf>

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**Course Requirements:**

You will be expected to:

- (1) **Attend class:** you are allotted 6 absences for fatigue, illness, cocktail flu, personal reasons, malfunctioning alarm clocks, doctor's appointments, etc. (Note I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. If you miss six days and then get the flu and miss another day, you will lose 50 points for the seventh absence.) **Students entering class after the instructor records attendance or who leave before class ends will be considered absent.** For each absence after your first six, your final grade **will be reduced 50 points per additional absence**, down to and including "F." Regular, spirited class attendance is a crucial component to passing this course;
- (2) **Attend class meetings prepared:** this means DO THE READING WITH GUSTO; this is a discussion-based class and if you haven't done the reading and thought a little about it, you won't be able to contribute and the class (as well as your grade) suffers accordingly;
- (3) **Participate in large and small group discussions and assignments:** this course is what you make of it and will work *only* if everyone actively contributes;
- (4) **Complete all assignments:** passing the course requires timely completion of ALL assignments, long and short, in-class and out-of-class. No late/incomplete assignments will be accepted after the last day of class;
- (5) **Unplug:** silence cell phones, cease text messaging, and do not surf the web or check email during class.

**Grading Scale**

100-95: A	89.9-87: B+	79.9-77: C+	69.9-67: D+
94.9-90: A-	86.9-83: B	76.9-73: C	66.9-63: D
	82.9-80: B-	72.9-70: C-	62.9-60: D-
			59.9 & below: F

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**Graded Assignments:**

You risk failing the course if you do not complete **all** graded assignments.

<b>WebCT Quizzes</b>	200 points
<b>Close Reading Women's Magazines</b>	200 points
<b>New Jersey Women's Voices Interview</b>	100 points
<b>Feminism's Definitions Analysis Paper</b>	200 points
<b>Class Activism Project</b>	200 points
<b>Class Participation</b>	100 points

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1000 total points

**Assignment Descriptions:**

**WebCT Quizzes:** All quizzes take place in WebCT on the designed day and time listed in the syllabus. All quizzes are "open book" (books & notes allowed). They may contain multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer or essay responses. If you work with another student while completing the quiz, make sure you devise distinctive responses to the essay and short answer questions. This is a *reading and discussion intensive course*. The best preparation for the quizzes will include close readings of the texts on your own and regular class attendance. If you know you will not be able to take a quiz during the scheduled quiz period, you must consult with the instructor **in person prior to the quiz period** to make alternative arrangements (usually a closed book/note quiz taken during the instructor's office hours). **NO MAKE UP QUIZZES WILL BE OFFERED AFTER THE DESIGNATED QUIZ PERIOD.** The four quiz grades will be averaged to compute your final quiz grade.

**Close Reading Women's Magazines:** This project asks you to evaluate three women's magazines. See assignment description for more information. Due: September 28.

**New Jersey Women's Voices Interview:** Each student will identify a New Jersey woman to interview (The woman should not be a relative or a Stockton student, staff, administration, or faculty member.) The class will determine the questions asked each participant. All interviews will be digitally recorded and posted and/or transcribed for our website. Question Due: Sept. 14. Interview podcast or transcript posted to website Due: Nov. 9.

**Feminism's Definitions Analysis Paper:** This assignment asks each student to interview a Stockton student (who is not a student in our class) about his/her definition of feminism. All interviews will be digitally recorded and posted to our class site. Students will then select three student definitions to compare with one or two scholarly definitions; see assignment description for more information. Interview post to website Due: Oct. 22. Analysis Paper Due: Nov. 21.

**Class Activism Project:** All class members will participate in a class activism project. This class project identifies a key women's issue for our community and produces some type of activism related to this issue. The class project will illustrate the principles of feminist activism with regard to the topic the class selects. Some websites that might help you think about topics from a feminist and activist perspective are: [www.feminist.org](http://www.feminist.org), [www.FeministCampus.org](http://www.FeministCampus.org), <http://www.guerillagirls.com/index.shtml>, and [www.MsMagazine.com](http://www.MsMagazine.com). The class activism project could involve a class performance or panel presentation, petition drive, the creation of pamphlets, posters, videos, handouts, surveys, and/or volunteer activities. Instructor, individual, and classmate evaluations determine your grade for this project. Consult the assignment sheet for more information. Individual research on local women's issues Due: Oct. 12. Class project completion Due: Dec. 7.

**Class Participation:** Your class participation grade consists of an evaluation of class preparation and contributions, any Message Board discussion posts, office hour visits, and attendance. A lack of preparation—i.e. failing to read the assignment or to come to class without questions or discussion topics related to the reading—negatively impacts your participation grade. Exceptional participation in the class activism project may also raise your participation evaluation. (Attendance policy described above.)

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**Late Assignment Policy:**

I understand that life is full of surprises and sometimes those surprises influence your coursework and your ability to complete assignments. As a community of learners, we also recognize that we have a responsibility to the group, to our instructor, and to ourselves. We understand that every action has a consequence—even when circumstance may limit our power to act. To balance individual and community needs, we have the following guidelines for late assignments.

**Written Assignments:** *Papers are due at the beginning of class.* Late papers will be docked 5 percentage points per day late. So, if a B (85%) paper due on Tuesday were passed in on Wednesday, the recorded grade would be B- (80%). If it were passed in on Thursday, the paper would earn a 75%. And so on and so forth.

**Paper Extensions:** Any student who asks the instructor **prior to** the due date may receive a 2-day extension from the due date listed on the syllabus. After 2 days the late paper penalty will go into effect. No exceptions. *Due to the College's grade submission deadline for graduating seniors, no graduating senior may receive an extension for any final papers or projects.*

Of course, the extension policy will only help students who have drafted a paper and follow the expected practice of backing up documents. Back up all your files and you will be a much happier and successful individual. You may not be happy when your computer explodes or your flash drive crashes, but at least you will not be despondent. I also strongly encourage all students to keep a personal copy of every assignment and to keep all returned assignments with my feedback until the end of the term. Reminder, no assignments will be accepted after the last class meeting.

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Source: <http://www.moca.org/wack/>

## Course Syllabus\*

### NOTA BENE:

SOME OF THE MATERIALS COVERED IN THIS COURSE MAY BE CONSIDERED CHALLENGING OR "OFFENSIVE." OUR CLASSROOM PROVIDES AN OPEN SPACE FOR THE CRITICAL EXCHANGE OF IDEAS.

### UNIT 1: WOMEN'S STUDIES PRIMER—DETECTING FEMINISMS

#### **Week 1: Introduction to Women's Studies**

Sept 05: **Introductions:** To the course, WebCT, instructor, and classmates. Introduction to Class Activism Project and New Jersey Women's Voices Interview Assignment.

Sept 07: **Women's Studies 001:** D&S: "Preface" (xix-xxiii). bh: "Introduction" (vii-x), chapter 4 (19-24). Introduction to Close Reading Women's Magazines Assignment.

#### **Week 2: Introduction to Feminisms**

Sept 10: **3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Feminism:** ER: Baumgardner and Richards, "What is Feminism?" (50-86). Introduction to Feminism's Definitions Analysis Paper. **Practice Quiz Open.**

Sept 12: **Feminism According to hooks:** bh: chapters 1-3 (1-18), chapters 7-8 (37-47); chapter 12 (67-71).

Sept 14: **Can you say the f-word?:** ER: Morgan, "the f-word" (27-46). bh: chapter 19 (110-18). **Due: New Jersey Women's Voices Question**

#### **Week 3: Detecting Women's Experiences**

Sept 17: **Show and Tell:** Bring to class an example of feminists in action or a location where feminist action is needed. Search the web for articles and/or web sites; browse the newspaper—college, local, regional, national—for articles; draw from personal experience. Be prepared to explain how your example illustrates feminists in action or how feminist action may intervene. Class designs interview questionnaire for NJ Women's Voices.

Sept 19: **Detecting Gender:** BN: chapters 1-3 (1-80). **Quiz 1 (open 4pm, Sept. 19—8am, Sept. 21)**

Sept 21: **Detecting Class:** BN: chapters 4-6 (81-146).

#### **Week 4: Detecting Feminist Experiences**

Sept 24: **Detecting Race:** BN: chapters 7-9 (147-219).

Sept 26: **Detecting Feminisms:** BN: chapters 10-17 (220-306).

Sept 28: **American Puberty:** JJB: introduction & chapters 1-2 (xvii-55). **Due: Close Reading Women's Magazines**

### UNIT 2: LOCATING WOMEN'S STUDIES IN THE BODY

OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MONTH

#### **Week 5: From Corsets to Crunches**

Oct 01: **Skin Deep:** JJB: chapter 3 (59-94).

Oct 03: **My Body, My Project:** JJB: chapter 4 (97-137).

Oct 05: **MEET IN COMPUTER LAB AS203** Podcasting projects! Learn how to record and post podcasts.

#### **Week 6: Sexual Empowerment or Coercion?**

Oct 08: **Let's Talk About Sex:** JJB: chapter 5 (141-92).

Oct 10: **You go girl!:** JJB: chapter 6 (195-214). **Quiz 2 (open 4pm, Oct. 10—8am, Oct. 12)**

Oct 12: **MEET IN COMPUTER LAB AS203** Podcasting projects! **Due: Local Issue Report Due.**

#### **Week 7: Class Activism Project Planning**

Oct 15: **Local Reports:** share local reports in small groups; begin selection of class activism project.

Oct 17: **Class Project:** select and begin planning class activism project; assign individual and small group duties.

Oct 19: **MEET IN COMPUTER LAB AS203** Podcasting and class activism project workday!

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\* subject to changes with notice; reading are due on dated listed

**Week 8: My Body, My Choice**

Oct 22: **Body of Feminism**: bh: chapters 5-6 (25-36); chapter 10 (55-60). **DUE: Feminisms Interview Posted to website.**

Oct 24: **Sex and Violence**: bh: chapter 11 (61-66); chapters 15-16 (85-99).

Oct 26: **Class Activism Project Work Day**

**UNIT 3: LOCATING WOMEN'S STUDIES—AT HOME, WORK, AND IN THE CITY**

**Week 9: Women at Home and Work**

Oct 29: **Home**: D&S: Chapter 1 (1-34).

Oct 31: **Home**: bh: chapters 13-14 (72-84); chapters 17-18 (100-9). **Quiz 3** (open 4pm, Oct. 31—8am, Nov. 2)

Nov 02: **Work**: D&S: Chapter 2 (35-66).

**Week 10: Women at Work and in the City**

Nov 05: **Work**: bh: chapter 7 (37-43), chapter 9 (48-54).

Nov 07: Preceptorial Advising—No classes until 3:35pm.

Nov 09: **City**: D&S: Chapter 3 (67-109). ER: Hayden, "Domesticating Urban Space" (225-38). **Due: NJ Women's Voices Interview transcript or podcast on class website. Send thank you note to participant.**

**UNIT 4: LOCATING TRANSNATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES**

**Week 11: Women on the Move**

Nov 12: **Mobility**: D&S: chapter 4 (110-39).

Nov 14: **Mobility**: ER: McDowell, "Displacements" (203-23).

Nov 16: **Class Activism Project Work Day.**

**Week 12: Nations and Empires**

Nov 19: **Nations & Empires**: D&S: Chapter 5 (140-73).

Nov 21: **Nations & Empires**: ER: Sharoni, "Middle East Politics through Feminist Lenses" (425-46). **Due: Feminism's Definitions Analysis Paper**

Nov 23: NO CLASSES. THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.

**UNIT 5: LOCATING WOMEN'S STUDIES— SPIRITUALITY, THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, & ACTIVISM**

**Week 13: Spirituality, Ecology, and Feminism**

Nov 26: **Feminist Spirit**: bh: chapters 17-18 (100-9); ER: Solari, "In Her Own Image" (297-303).

Nov 28: **Ecofeminism**: ER: Merchant, "Ecofeminism" (183-210).

Nov 30: **Ecofeminism**: ER: Seager, "The Earth is Not Your Mother" (171-73); Shiva, "Women in Nature" (174-77).

**Week 14: Class Activism Project**

Dec 03: *Middle Sexes* Screening.

Dec 05: *Middle Sexes* Discussion. **Quiz 4** (open 4pm, Dec. 5—8am, Dec. 7).

Dec 07: **Reflections**: Complete class activism project and class discussions. **Due: Peer and Individual reflection paper and evaluation. Extended class schedule: Class Meets Friday, Dec. 7, 11:30am-2pm.**

**Richard Stockton College of New Jersey  
Pomona, NJ  
Women's Studies Events: 2007 – 2008  
All events open to the public.**

***Wednesdays On Women: Discussion Series on the First Wednesday of Each Month***

All discussions will be 5:30 – 6:15 in the Tutoring Center Multi-purpose Room (J-105)

October 3<sup>rd</sup> W.O.W. Topic: *Domestic Violence Awareness*

November 7<sup>th</sup> W.O.W. Topic: *To Gardasil or Not to Gardasil?*

December 5<sup>th</sup> W.O.W. Topic: *Current Events*

February 6<sup>th</sup> W.O.W. Topic: *Women's Rights, the Constitution, and the Supreme Court*

March 5<sup>th</sup> W.O.W. Topic: *Barriers Facing Women Lawyers*

April 2<sup>nd</sup> W.O.W. Topic: *Current Events*

***Other Events:***

*Annual Fannie Lou Hamer Civil Rights Symposium.* Featuring Vanita Gupta of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

Thursday, October 4, 2007

2:30 – 4:30

Performing Arts Center

*Girls Gotta Run: Artists Supporting Ethiopian Athletes.* Presentation by Patricia Ortman, Foundation Director, Girls Gotta Run Foundation

Thursday, October 18, 2007

3:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Townsend Residential Life Center, Room 125 (Multi-Purpose Room)

*Striking a Balance: Work, Family, Life.* Talk by author Robert Drago of Pennsylvania State University.

Monday, March 24, 2008

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Location To Be Announced

More Events, including for Women's History Month in March, are being planned.

For information on these and other events, visit the College's web site: [www.stockton.edu](http://www.stockton.edu) and search for the General Studies Current Events web site.