

WMST 302-01 Selected Topic: Global Feminism

Fall 2003

Tuesdays, 5:30-8:00pm, S/C 209

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Office hours: by appointment

"[A]s feminists we need to attend both to issues within particular nations and to urgent transnational or international issues if we are to achieve greater justice within particular nations, and greater global justice in an increasingly interdependent world."

--Uma Narayan, Dislocating Cultures 39.

Course Overview: The contours, complexities, and contributions of global feminism demand our attention. We will begin our analysis of global feminism by exploring the different geographic, historical, political, economic, and social spaces women inhabit. We will analyze the conditions that promote and inhibit activism around women's lives taking into account how gender is defined, deployed, and deconstructed. From this space of local praxis we will see how cross-cultural and transnational connections are built. This look at local/global relations will help us understand the shifting connotations for the term "feminism" and what it means to speak about "global feminism." Our work is to examine how local and transnational feminisms that attend to the kalideoscopic range of factors--class, migration, sexual politics, race, religion, geopolitics, to name only a few--comment on, critique, challenge, and in many cases creatively change the day-to-day situations women confront in this era of globalization.

Objectives:

- 1) interrogate the definition of feminism from various geographic and cultural locales;
- 2) examine the multiple forms of women's activism;
- 3) develop an understanding of the relationship between local and global forms of women's activism;
- 4) comprehend the relationship between political and economic structures to women's lives and their responses to these structures;
- 5) demonstrate a comprehension of how indigenous women's activism complicates and extends the concept of "global feminism"; and
- 6) become self-reflective regarding our own views/relationships to local and global issues affecting women's lives and the various forms of feminist activism.

Texts:

- 1) Dislocating Cultures, Uma Narayan
- 2) Women's Activism and Globalization, Nancy Naples and Manisha Desai, eds.
- 3) course packets available from instructor

Course Requirements:

This course will be run as a seminar which means that you are obliged to be an active and prepared participant for each class session. Descriptions of the written papers and

group projects are provided in separate handouts (and all the course materials are available on our Blackboard webpage).

- 1) Regular participation in discussions about assigned readings and videos (see reading schedule);
- 2) three assigned response papers (see reading schedule for due dates);
- 3) One group presentation (with paper);
- 4) One short essay on South African feminism;
- 5) in-class final examination.

Conferences: Each project group will meet with me during the preparation phase for the presentation. I would also encourage each of you to see me throughout the semester to discuss any issues that you find perplexing (these issues might be related to course content or classroom activities and dynamics).

Grades:

Participation:	15%	Response papers:	15%
Group presentation/paper	30%	Short Essay:	20%
Final Exam:	20%		

Late Paper Policy:

1. Response papers are due on the assigned dates. Any late papers will be dropped one grade point and will be accepted only during the week they are assigned.
2. The short essay and the group presentation paper are due on their assigned dates. Please see me in advance of due dates if you have extraordinary complications in meeting the deadlines.

Paper Format: All writing done outside of class must be typed unless I tell you otherwise. Be sure to keep a copy of all the typed work you give me on the off chance that the original is lost.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the presentation of other people's work as your own, whether or not the writer has given you permission. It is never acceptable and is cause for failing this course. Bottom line: Always credit your sources--theorists we've read; internet sources you've consulted; your peers if you use one of their ideas in your writing. If you are feeling pressured about getting the assigned work done, come and see me **before** you get overwhelmed.

Reading Schedule

The following abbreviations are used throughout the reading schedule:

DC = Dislocating Cultures by Narayan; and

WA&G = Women's Activism and Globalization by Naples and Desai.

Other articles are in the course reader unless otherwise indicated.

What is Global Feminism?

wk 1 9/2 opening day; no class.

Please read the following to get ready for our first class session. Also do the assigned readings for 9/9/03 and write a response paper.

DC Chapter 1 "Contesting Cultures"

"Introduction" to The Challenges of Local Feminism, Basu (on reserve)

wk 2 9/9

"Whither Feminism?" Mamphela Ramphalele (on reserve)

"Wishing/Hoping," Zillah Eisenstein (on reserve)

[optional: "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles," Chandra Talpade Mohanty (on reserve)]

Write: Bring a one-page response about the readings to class.

In class: We'll discuss your responses, the readings, and "Are My Hands Clean" sung by Sweet Honey in the Rock; plus we'll go over the course requirements.

Is Feminism "Western"?

wk 3 9/16

DC Chapter 4 "Through the Looking-Glass Darkly"

WA&G Chapter 1 "Changing the Terms"

WA&G Chapter 2 "Transnational Solidarity"

In class: Share response paper #1; sign up for presentation project group.

Locating Colonial, National, and Transnational Contexts

wk 4 9/23

DC Chapter 2 "Restoring History and Politics to 'Third-World Traditions'"

DC Chapter 3 "Cross-Cultural Connections, Border-Crossings, and 'Death by Culture'"

WA&G Chapter 12 "The Limits of Microcredit: Transnational Feminism and USAID Activities in the United

States and Morocco" (189-219)

In class: Share response paper #2; meet with members of your presentation group.

wk 5 9/30

"Self-Employed Women's Association: Organising Women by Struggle and Development,"

Renana Jhabvala

"Sheroes and Villains: Conceptualizing Colonial and Contemporary Violence Against Women in Africa,"

Amina Mama

"The Dynamics of WINning: An Analysis of Women of Nigeria (WIN)," Ayesha M. Imam
In class we'll screen the video "Made in India"

Historizing Feminism

wk 6 10/7 South Africa and Women's Activism--readings our in course packet #2

"The Dawn of a New Day: Redefining South African Feminism," Amanda Kemp et.al.

"Why Women Rebel: A Comparative Study of South African Women's Resistance in Bloemfontein (1913)

and Johannesburg (1958)," Julia C. Wells

"No Freedom without the Women': Mobilization and Gender in South Africa, 1970-1992," Gay Seidman

In class: Share response paper #3

wk 7 10/14

"Gendered Citizenship: South Africa's Democratic Transition and the Construction of a Gendered State,"

Gay Seidman

www.cge.org.za Review the mission, projects, monitoring and interventions of the Commission on Gender

Equality

articles from AGENDA (to be announced)

[optional: "Nongovernmental Organizations, 'Grassroots,' and the Politics of Virtue," Deborah Mindry]

In class: Group Presentation Proposals due. Discuss short essay assignment.

wk 8 10/21 Women's Policies in Korea

"*Minjung* Feminism: Korean Women's Movement for Gender and Class Liberation,"

Miriam Ching Yoon Louie

In class we'll have as our guest speaker Prof. Kim Jae-In (formerly Director General of Research, Planning, and Co-ordinating of the Korean Women's Development Institute; currently PhD Senior Research Fellow at KWDI).

Geo-Politics, Economics, and Militarization

wk 9 10/28

WA&G Chapter 6 "Las Mujeres Invisibles/The Invisible Women"

WA&G Chapter 8 "Creating Alternatives from a Gender Perspective: Transnational Organizing for

Maquila Workers' Rights in Central America"
In class we'll screen the video "Senorita Extravida, Missing Young Woman"
(74mn)

Plus your short essay on South African feminism is due.

wk 10 11/4

WA&G Chapter 14 "Redefining Security: Okinawa Women's Resistance to U.S. Militarism"

"When Soldiers Rape," Cynthia Enloe

"Remotely Sensed: A Topography of the Global Sex Trade," Ursula Biemann

In class we'll screen the video "Remote Sensing" (53mn)

The State, Fundamentalism, Feminism

wk 11 11/11

Please read 3 of the 5 interviews in Gender in a Time of Change, on reserve at Sprague Library

"The All China Women's Federation and Women's NGOs," Liu Bohong

"Searching for 'Authentic' NGOs: The NGO Discourse and Women's Organizations in China,"

Naihua Zhang

In class we'll have guest speaker Heidi Johnson, Program Officer at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University, speaking about funding networks for women's activism in the PRC and Taiwan.

wk 12 11/18

"Practicing NGOness and Relating Women's Space Publicly: The Women's Hotline and the State,"

Virgina Cornue

"Chinese Queer (*Tongzhi*) Women Organizing in the 1990s," He Xiaopei

"A Great Leap Forward for Girls," Helen Zia

"Feminist Collaboration Between Diaspora and China," Xiaolan Bao with Wu Xu

In class: Group #1 Presentations

wk 13 11/25

www.rawa.org (read sections on "Our Social Activities" and "RAWA events")

"Islam and Feminism: An Analysis of Political Strategies," Haleh Afshar

In class: Group #2 Presentations

Women's Rights as Human Rights

wk 14 12/2

read info on webpage: [www/un.org/womenwatch/daw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw) (read about Beijing Platform, Beijing follow-up,

Beijing +5)

"On the New Global Feminism and the Family of Nations," Inderpal Grewal

"Individual versus Community," Chilla Bulbeck

WA&G Chapter 10 "Linking Local Efforts with Global Struggle: Trinidad's National Union of Domestic Employees"

WA&G Chapter 11 "Women Activists in Mali: The Global Discourse on Human Rights"
In class: Group #3 Presentations

wk 15 12/9

WA&G Chapter 4 "Women to Women: Dissident Citizen Diplomacy in Nicaragua"
"Constructing Global Feminism: Transnational Advocacy Networks and Russian Women's Activism,"

Valerie Sperling, Myra Marx Ferree, and Barbara Risman

In class: Group #4 Presentations

Discuss the study guide to the final examination.

Final exam: 12/16