# WS/SOC 332

# Women, Culture, and Identity

# DePauw University

**Spring 2015**

Class time and place: Tuesday, Thursday, 12:40-2:10, East College 15

Instructor: Dr. Beauboeuf (“Dr. B”)

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Office hours: Tuesday, 2:30-4 p.m., and by appointment

One is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one.

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*

Whatever you put on after you get out of the shower is your drag.

RuPaul, *Workin’ It*

We have still to recognize that all women do not have the same gender.

Elsa Barkley Brown, Polyrhythms and Improvization: Lessons for Women’s History

Course description:

*Women, culture, and identity* is an interdisciplinary examination of the experiences of girls and women in society. Drawing on work in sociology, psychology, and cultural and feminist studies, we will investigate how women from various ethnicities, socio-economic strata, and age groups make sense of gendered norms, expectations, opportunities, and constraints. Through a combination of theoretical analyses, empirical research, and reflective personal essays, we will explore the social construction of gender, femininity as a mandated performance, sexualities, the embodiment of feminine goodness, violence, eating patterns, emotional distress, intimate relationships, and reproductive as well as productive labor. In the process, we will place particular emphasis on the diversity of the term “woman” and the ways in which women both encounter and resist circumstances they find limiting of their human potential.

Objectives:

My objectives in teaching this course are that you will:

1. gain facility in the language of social analysis, critique, and transformation developed by feminist scholars in the social sciences;
2. appreciate both similarities and diversity in women’s experiences across the social distinctions of race, class, and sexuality;
3. identify and reflect on the cultural norms and structural constraints that have shaped your own views about women and society;
4. contribute meaningfully to the development of our collective understanding of girls’ and women’s experiences;
5. effectively introduce a cultural artifact that enhances the quality of our discussions; and
6. conceptualize and complete library research that further develops course concepts and your own questions regarding women’s lives.

Required texts:

1. hooks, bell. 2002. *Communion: The female search for love*. New York: Perennial.
2. Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. [1911]2014. *Our androcentric culture: The man-made world and a cry for feminist revolution*. New York: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform.
3. Readings on our Moodle course site. As these constitute our major text for the semester, you are expected to print them all out to read, comment on, and bring to class.

Course requirements:

1. Daily class attendance, preparation, and participation

* This is an upper-level course in women’s studies and our readings are all primary sources – empirical and theoretical articles written by leading feminist scholars. They will require your careful attention and active reading. I expect you to come to class with the day’s texts printed off and annotated with your understandings and questions. Our time together will be spent working through the readings’ conceptual language, their implications for our lives, and their shortcoming as ‘human’ attempts to grasp social reality.
* I expect you to come to class regularly and punctually (that is, being late or being absent no more than **TWICE** during the semester). Excessive tardiness and absences will result in a reduction of your final grade.

1. Cultural artifact

* Each of you will have the opportunity to contribute to our appreciation of women’s studies’ relevance to our everyday lives. Your task is to focus the class’s attention on an important argument from a course text and to relate it to an aspect of contemporary society (e.g., via film clips, poetry, advertisements, news stories, pictures, and other cultural media). This artifact should be in electronic form (e.g., word document, web link, pdf).
* Accompanying your artifact should be a **two-page reflection** that discusses what you found significant about the text, its connection to our ongoing discussions, and the relevance of the cultural artifact to the text’s argument about women’s lives. These essays and artifacts should demonstrate an incisive approach to the text and not rehash basic and obvious information. In other words, your contributions should challenge and move us beyond what we already know from the reading. The reflection with an embedded link to the artifact should be posted on Moodle by 9 p.m. of the night before your scheduled contribution.

1. Written assignments

* During the semester, you will complete **THREE** assignments of varied formats. Details about individual papers will be passed out and discussed in advance of their due dates.

1. Final paper

* Each of you will select a topic of interest to you and related to course content to explore through scholarly literature and popular sources. More information about this assignment will be given out during the semester.

Grades:

Your final grade for the course will be based on the following:

1. Daily class attendance, preparation, and quality of participation ..…… 20%
2. Focusing device and reflection ….. ………………………………..…….. 15%
3. Three written assignments ………………………..………………..……… 10%, 20%, 15%
4. Final paper ………………..………………………………………….....….. 20%

TOTAL 100%

A (94%+) A- (90-93%)

B+ (87-89%) B (84-86%) B- (80-83%)

C+ (77-79%) C (74-76%) C- (70-73%)

D+ (67-69%) D (64-66%) D- (60-63%)

F <60%

Grading rubric:

I will use the following criteria to evaluate your work during the course:

A-level work:

* Reveals an accurate and nuanced (rather than superficial) knowledge of concepts discussed
* Includes some intriguing questions/observations that “push” the concepts to higher levels of precision
* Has very few typos (i.e., grammatical and punctuation errors; misspelled words) and has accurate citations

B-level work:

* Demonstrates a generally good (but not adequately detailed) understanding of the concepts selected
* Offers analyses that tend to be general and gloss over important distinctions
* Has quite a few typos that suggest the paper was handed in without being re-read and/or edited

C-level work:

* Contains significant flaws in the understandings of key concepts
* Makes claims that are unsupported by the concepts and readings referenced
* Has inconsistent, incomplete, or inaccurate citations: Quotation marks are often missing and the source of ideas is often unclear
* Has a significant number of grammatical errors and typos that at times make comprehension difficult

D-level work:

* Demonstrates several serious misunderstandings of the concepts
* Lacks a focused argument and evidence to support claims
* Has an unacceptable number of grammatical and typographical errors
* Is unintelligible in many places

Academic integrity policy:

Cheating, plagiarism, and the submission of the work of others as your own violate DePauw’s policy on academic integrity and may result in penalties ranging from a lowered grade to course failure and expulsion. The academic integrity policy and discussion of each student’s obligations and rights are outlined in the Student Handbook -- <http://www.depauw.edu/handbooks/student/>

Note: In your papers, you will need to incorporate the ideas of our readings. When you use the general idea of an author or place this idea in your own words, you need to note the author’s name and the source of the idea – e.g., (Brown 1998: 42). When you use the exact wording and word order of an author, you need to set this information apart from your own writing with quote marks and note the author’s name and the source. All papers should include a references page with complete bibliographic information for citations. Such information is provided in the schedule of readings at the end of this syllabus. My preference is that you use the American Sociological Association Style Guide -- <http://www.buffalostate.edu/library/docs/asa.pdf>

Students with disabilities:

DePauw University provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Students are responsible for contacting the Coordinator of Student Disability Services, Pamela Roberts (101 E. Seminary St., \*6267; pamelaroberts@depauw.edu), to formally request accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive and must be renewed each semester.

Schedule of readings and assignments:

**Topic Date Required readings**

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| **Understanding oppression and feminist consciousness** | **T: 1/27** | Gay, Roxane. 2014. The bad feminist manifesto. |
|  | **R: 1/29** | Frye, Marilyn. 1983. Oppression. In *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*. Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press, 1-16.  Fuller, Abigail. 2004. What Difference Does Difference Make? Women, Race-Ethnicity, Social Class, and Social Change. *Race, Gender and Class* 11(4): 8-29. |
| **Life in an androcentric culture** | **T: 2/3** | Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. 2014[1911]. *Our Androcentric Culture: The Man-made World and a Cry for Feminist Revolution*. New York: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, pp. 3-74. |
|  | **R: 2/5** | Perkins Gilman, pp. 75-118, 163-173. |
| **Seeing heterogender** | **T: 2/10** | Rich, Adrienne. 1980. Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence *Signs, 5*(4), 631-660.  Levitt, Heidi, Elisabeth Gerrish, and Katherine Hiestand. 2003. The Misunderstood Gender: A Model of Modern Femme Identity. *Sex Roles* 45(3-4): 99-113. |
| **Theorizing and practicing multiple, intersecting femininities** | **R: 2/12** | Hurtado, Aida. 1998. Sitios y lenguas: Chicanas theorize feminism. *Hypatia* 13(2): 134-161.  Rose, Margaret Rose. Dolores Huerta: Passionate defender of La Causa.chavez.cde.ca.gov/.../Documents/**Dolores**\_**Huerta**\_Essay.pdf. Accessed 20 January 2015.  Huerta, Dolores. 2005. Enacting change for social justice in organizing. scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=.... Accessed 20 January 2015. |

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| **Doing and undoing gender** | **T: 2/17** | Butler, Judith. 1988. Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. *Theatre Journal* 40(4): 519-531.  Finley, Nancy J. 2010. Skating Femininity: Gender Maneuvering in Women’s Roller Derby. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 39(4): 359-387. |
|  | **R: 2/19** | In class film: *French Twist* (1996) |
|  | **F: 2/20** | **Paper #1 due on Moodle by 9 a.m.!** |
| **First sex, first love?** | **T: 2/24** | Tolman, Deborah, Celeste Hirschman, and Emily Impett. 2005. There is More to the Story: The Place of Qualitative Research on Female Adolescent Sexuality in Policy Making. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 2(4): 4-17.  Garcia, Lorena. 2009. ‘Now why do you want to know about that?’ Heteronormativity, Sexism, and Racism in the Sexual (Mis)education of Latina Youth. *Gender & Society* 23(4): 520-541. |
| **What is feminist love?** | **R: 2/26** | Garcia, Lorena. 2009. Love at First Sex: Latina Girls’ Meanings of Virginity Loss and Relationships. *Identities* 16(5): 601-621.  hooks, bell. 2002. Communion, vii-74. |
|  | **T: 3/3** | hooks, 75-139. |
|  | **R: 3/5** | hooks, 140-244. |
| **Unpacking cultural scripts of love** | **T: 3/10** | Perry, Diana C. and Tracy Penny Light. 2014. Fifty Shades of Complexity: Exploring Technologically Mediated Leisure and Women’s Sexuality. *Journal of Leisure Research* 46(1): 38-57.  Schearing, Linda S. and Valarie H. Ziegler. 2013. Eden’s Enduring, Troubling Enticements. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. B13-B14. |
|  | **R: 3/12** | **Library Instruction!** |
| **Sex as liberation? Of raunch, hook ups, and strip hop** | **T: 3/17** | Hamilton, Laura. 2009. Trading on heterosexuality: College Women’s Gender Strategies and Homophobia. *Gender & Society*  21(2): 145-172.  Hunter, Margaret and Kathleen Soto. 2009. Women of Color in Hip Hop: The Pornographic Gaze. *Race, Gender & Class* 16(1-2): 170-191. |
| **Dance floor genders** | **R: 3/19** | Ronen, Shelly. 2010. Grinding on the Dance Floor: Gendered Scripts and Sexualized Dancing at College Parties. *Gender & Society* 24(3): 355-377.  Excerpt from Andreana Clay’s essay, “I used to be scared of the dick” <http://www.racialicious.com/2009/04/14/quoted-andreana-clay-on-queer-women-of-color-and-hip-hop-masculinity/> (accessed 8.14.14) |
|  | **F: 3/20** | **Paper #2 due on Moodle by 9 a.m.!** |
|  | **T: 3/24,**  **R: 2/26** | **Spring break!!!!** |
| **How women’s bodies matter** | **T: 3/31** | Kim, Ellen. 2003. Asian Americans and eating disorders: A silent struggle. *Seattlepi*, January 27.  Gimlin, Debra L. 2013. ‘Too Good to be Real’: The Obviously Augmented Breast in Women’s Narratives of Cosmetic Surgery. *Gender & Society* 27(6): 913-934. |
|  | **R: 4/2** | Mernissi, Fatima. 2001. Ch. 13: Size 6: The Western Woman’s Harem. In *Scheherazade Goes West: Different Cultures, Different Harems.* Ode Magazine.  Heyes, Cressida. 2006. Foucault Goes to Weight Watches. *Hypatia* 21(2): 126-149. |
| **Reading women’s emotional distress** | **T: 4/7** | Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. 1899. *The Yellow Wallpaper*. Boston: Small & Maynard.  Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. 1911. Why I Wrote *The Yellow Wallpaper.*  Crowley Jack, Dana. 1999. Silencing the Self: Inner Dialogues and Outer Realities. In T. E. Joiner & J.C. Coyne (Eds.). The Interactional Nature of Depression: Advances in Interpersonal Approaches. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 221-246. |
|  | **R: 4/9** | Ussher, Jane. 2004. Premenstrual Syndrome and Self-Policing: Ruptures in Self-Silencing Leading to Increased Self-Surveillance and Blaming of the Body. *Social Theory & Health* 2(3): 254-272.  Anderson-Fye, Eileen. 2003. Never Leave Yourself: Ethnopsychology as Mediator of Psychological Globalization Among Belizean Schoolgirls. *Ethos* 31(1): 59-94. |
| **Undergrads doing gender** | **T: 4/14** | Stone, Amy and Allison Gorga. 2014. Stone, Amy L. and Gorga, Aliison. 2004. Containing pariah femininities: Lesbians in the sorority rush process. *Sexualities* 17(3): 348-364.  Mullen, Ann L. 2014. Gender, social background, and the choice of college major in a liberal arts context. *Gender & Society* 28(2): 289-312. |
| **Women’s lives in a rape culture** | **R: 4/16** | Girshick, Lori. 2002. No Sugar, No Spice: Reflections on Research on Woman-To-Woman Sexual Violence. *Violence Against Women* 8(12): 1500-1520.  Van Buskirk, Beverly. 2005. Mother Speaks Out on Teen Dating Violence. *LeMars Daily Sentinel*, September 28.  Waston-Franke, Maria-Barbara. 2002. A World in which Women Move Freely Without Fear of Men: An Anthropological Perspective on Rape. *Women’s Studies International Forum* 25(6): 599-606. |
|  | **F: 4/17** | **Paper #3 due on Moodle by 9 a.m.!** |

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| **Love makes a family** | **T: 4/21** | Park, Shelley M. 2006. Adoptive Maternal Bodies: A Queer Paradigm for Rethinking Mothering. *Hypatia* 21(1): 201-226.  Deutsch, Francine. 2001. Equally Shared Parenting. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 10(1): 25-28. |
|  | **R: 4/23** | Knudson-Martin, Carmen and Anne Rankin Mahoney. 1999. Beyond Different Worlds: A ‘Postgender’ Approach to Relational Development. *Family Process* 38(3): 325-340.  Mainardi, Pat. 1970. The Politics of Housework. |
| **Women on the field: The politics of sport** | **T: 4/28** | McKay, James and Helen Johnson.  2008.  Pornographic Eroticism and Sexual Grotesquerie in Representations of African American Sportswomen.  *Social Identities* 14(4): 491-504.  Mc Caughey, Martha. 1998. The Fighting Spirit: Women’s Self-Defense Training and the Discourse of Sexed Embodiment. *Gender & Society* 12(3): 277-300. |
| **In the workplace: The ‘choices’ and ‘tests’ women face** | **R: 4/30** | Stone, Pamela and Meg Lovejoy. (2004). Fast-Track Women and the ‘Choice’ to Stay Home. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 596: 62-83.  Garcia-Lopez, Gladys and Denise A. Segura. 2008. ‘They are Testing You All the Time’: Negotiating Dual Femininities Among Chicana Attorneys. *Feminist Studies* 34(1/2): 229-258, 344, 347. |
|  | **T: 5/5** | **Work day!** |
| **Feminist visions of human possibility** | **R: 5/7** | Eisler, Riane. 2004. Pragmatopia: Revisioning Human Possibilities. *Tikkun* 19(6): 44-46.  Schor, Juliet. 2011. Less Work, More Living. *Yes Magazine*. September 2. |

**FINAL EXAM DUE: Wednesday, May 13, 2015, by 4 p.m.**