WOST 101. Introduction to Women’s Studies: Ourselves in Our Worlds
Dr. Annette L. Benert revised January 27, 2010 Syllabus, Spring 2010
Priscilla Payne Hurd Campus, The Hill 410 benert@moravian.edu

Class meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:10-2:20; January 19-March 4; March 15-April 29
Office: Zinzendorf 104 Regular hours: Tuesday-Wednesday 2:45-4:00; by appointment

Conferences are best arranged by appointment.

Course description: Introduction to issues, topics, and methodologies of women’s studies cross cultures but with focus on the US. This course examines the lives of women of various ages, classes, cultures, and societies, primarily in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We will focus particularly on social constructions and definitions of gender, gender biases, feminist methods of analysis, and contributions of women and women’s movements. Students are expected to engage in the issues and information this course presents and to contribute their own as well. (M5)

Goals: By the end of this course students should have improved their ability to:
1. Appreciate that gender is a social constructed category and what that means
2. Understand the ways that cultural and social differences affect the status of women
3. Assess the ways that power differences between and within societies affect women
4. Understand the way that race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other systems of domination affect how one experiences gender and subordination.
5. Read and think thoughtfully, carefully, and critically
6. Write, speak, and collaborate effectively


Evaluation for this course will be based on several factors:

1. Attendance is expected for every class and will be recorded. You are responsible for all material presented, discussed, and assigned, both in class and on Blackboard. Late papers will be penalized unless prior alternative arrangements have been made.
2. You are expected to work an average of three to four hours for each class and to arrive on time with all assignments completed; written work must be word-processed. College-level communication skills are expected. If writing presents special challenges, you are encouraged to seek help from the Writing Center.
3. In all your work—written, oral, visual, technological—you are expected to adhere to the academic honesty policy in the current Student Handbook, which also outlines the consequences of failure to meet those expectations. You should neither hinder nor unfairly assist other students in efforts to complete their own work. This policy of academic integrity is the foundation on which learning at Moravian is built.
4. Grades will be accorded as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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4 reading responses @ 25 points 100 points = 20.0% A = 93-100% C = 73-76%
2 short essays @ 100 points 200 points = 40.0% A- = 90-93% C- = 70-72%
Presentation with partner 100 points = 20.0% B+ = 87-89% D+ = 67-69%
Class participation 100 points = 20.0% B = 83-86% D = 63-66%
Total 500 points = 100.0% C+ = 77-79% F = 0-59%
You need to register promptly for Blackboard, the online mode of communication for this class. I will use it to post announcements, assignments, discussion boards, and documents.

**Reading Responses (25 points each; 100 points) will be evaluated on:**
- Inclusion of writer(s), work(s), and your thesis in the opening sentence.
- Development and illustration of your idea with specific references and page numbers
- Conclusion stating the importance of what you have observed
- Length no more than a page, with your name, this assignment, the due date at the top
- Document format double-spaced, one-inch margins, left justification, 12-point font

**Essays (3-5 pages, 100 points each) will be evaluated on:**
- Thoughtful, imaginative integration of relevant material from our text and elsewhere
- Effective statement, development, and demonstration of your thesis
- Clear, consistent organization and paragraph structure leading to a convincing conclusion
- Specific analysis of the specific strengths, emphases, and qualities of your sources, with generous use of actual language and information
- MLA-style documentation and standard format for layout, title page, header (your name and pagination at the upper right), double-spacing, and one-inch margins

**Historical presentation with a partner (20 minutes, 100 points) will be evaluated on:**
- The importance and clarity of your information on a person or movement that have significantly and positively affected the lives of women in a specific time and place
- The relationship of your topic to what we have read or discussed together and to the larger context of the relevant history, culture, and society
- A consistent, unifying thesis making clear the importance of your topic and a logical order leading to an explicit, substantial conclusion.
- An interesting format using appropriate audio and/or visual materials. You are encouraged to use the technology in our classroom.
- Communication skills that make your audience feel connected to you and your material

**Class participation, including Blackboard postings (100 points) will be evaluated on:**
- Your evident thoughtfulness and thoroughness in reading and responding
- Your engagement in the discussion of those works, in class and on Blackboard
- Your clarity and coherence, your use of specific illustrations and examples
- Your timeliness, e.g. for a posting on Friday, your response is due Monday
- Your involvement in activities we are exploring or pursuing together as a class
Private Lives and Public Norms; or, Bodies and Beliefs

After an introduction to women’s studies as a discipline, our text focuses the next five chapters on the physical, bodily aspects of being human, from birth through adult sexuality and what those physical elements mean for various times and societies. As you approach this first substantial writing assignment, choose a topic we’ve read about and/or discussed in class that has risen to the surface for you, grabbed your attention, intrigued you. Before you go further, write down your thoughts, impressions, opinions, even feelings about that topic. Then choose at least three works from our text and make notes on the relevant information and ideas. You are also required to use at least three other sources, only one of which may be from the Internet. All that you use must have been refereed, for example books from academic presses, journal articles, or other material that has passed through a professional evaluation process and is based on convincing evidence. You may design your own topic, or consider one of the following:

• How American beliefs about sexuality or sexual behavior have changed in the last century
• How American beliefs about gender and gender norms have changed in the last few decades
• How American attitudes toward sexual or gender behavior differ from those in another society
• Extremes to which people in our culture, or some other culture, go to achieve gender norms
• How a public institution—government, school, church, organization—enforces gender norms
• How the intersection of sex and “race” or culture affects Americans not of European descent
• The socio-emotional effects of strict sex and/or gender on male and/or female maturation
• Beliefs and/or behaviors that have liberated a group of people from sex or gender strictures
• The effects of sex and/or gender strictures on beliefs and behaviors about reproduction

Your essay must include all of the following elements, constructed in MLA format:
1. A title page, with your name, the date, the course, and a clear, specific title
2. The body of your paper, which should include:
   a. An introductory paragraph that leads the reader into your essay and states your thesis
   b. Good organization and logical evidence, which require:
      1) A well focused argument, and a logical structure, with visible sub-sections
      2) Coherent paragraphs, which are also related to the whole essay
      3) Ample and specific examples, including quotations
      4) MLA-style documentation throughout of all borrowed material
   c. A conclusion stating the value of your observations for an understanding of the writers, their works, and/or their value as American cultural history
   d. Effective use of the English language
      1) Standard grammar and sentence structure, including effective integration of quoted and other borrowed material
      2) Appropriate style and diction
      3) Correct spelling and punctuation
3. Correct MLA format throughout
   a. Page layout with 1" margins and a header at the upper right with last name and pagination
   b. A Works Cited page with all the sources you have cited in MLA format

Use this green sheet as a check-list of the requirements for this assignment, and staple it behind your essay when you turn it in on March 4.

Distributed Tuesday, February 23, 2010
Social Institutions — for Better and for Worse

The focus for this essay is the harm an institution has inflicted on women in our society (and/or some other) and than a hope for improvement. You are encouraged to choose a topic we’ve read about and/or discussed since March 16 that has risen to the surface for you. Use at least three works in our text and make notes on the relevant information and ideas. You are also required to use at least three other sources, only one of which may be a website. Everything else you use must have been refereed—academic books, professional journal articles, any signed material that has substantial documentation and had professional evaluation, which of course includes sources from the Reeves EBSCO sites. Consider one of the following institutions, or suggest another:

- The Family
- The Home
- Marriage
- Organized Religion
- Education
- Medicine
- Social Work
- The Arts
- The Workplace
- Commercial Television
- Hollywood movies
- Popular music or other entertainment
- The Government, any branch
- The Police
- The Military
- A Corporation

Your essay must include:
1. A title page, with your name, the date, the course, and a clear, specific title
2. The body of your paper, which should include:
   a. An introduction that effectively leads into your topic and states your thesis
   b. Good organization and logical evidence, which require:
      1) A well focused argument, and a logical structure, with visible sub-sections
      2) Coherent paragraphs, clearly related to the whole essay
      3) Substantial, specific examples from all sources, including quotations
      4) MLA-style documentation throughout of all borrowed material
   c. A conclusion summarizing how an institution inflicts challenges, even active harm, on women and what is being done, or might be done, to remedy the situation
   d. Effective use of the English language
      1) Standard grammar and sentence structure with effective integration of quoted material
      2) Appropriate style and diction, without wordiness or repetition
      3) Correct spelling and punctuation and appropriate word choice
3. Correct MLA format throughout
   a. Page layout with 1" margins, uniform double-spacing, left justification only, and a header at the upper right with your last name and pagination
   b. A Works Cited page with all the sources you have cited in alphabetical order in standard MLA format (sample reprinted on the back of this sheet)

When you turn in your essay on May 7, be sure this sheet is stapled behind it. I will use it as a check-list of the requirements of this assignment, as I hope you will as well.

Distributed Tuesday, April 20, 2010
Working with at least one other person, choose **at least two possible topics and dates** for your oral presentation, which should be about **20 minutes long**. Then choose a chapter that seems particularly interesting to you and page through noticing particularly the pictures, photographs, and side bars. Consider also what and whom you know about, or have heard of, in that women's studies area. Then figure out at least two people and/or movements that seems especially interesting and important to you, as well as two class dates on which we will probably be discussing that topic. On the day assigned to you, you will teach the class about the specific issues, events, conflicts, and importance of your person or movement. Your research will require first reading through the relevant sections in our text and then drawing upon the resources of Reeves Library for the larger historical and cultural contexts of your topic. Then go searching for illustrative materials, probably primarily on the Internet, being aware of the reliability of the sites you choose, the value and interest of the visual information, and how you will present it to the class.

You will be evaluated on:
1. The thoroughness of your research and analysis
2. The significance of the material you have chosen to present and explore
3. Your engagement with the rest of the class through questions, challenges, whatever occurs to you. Help the rest of us to think about and to learn what you have.
4. Your public speaking skills, including eye contact, voice projection, body language, and coherent organization
5. The quality and usefulness of your visual and/or audio material
6. The substance and form of your **MLA-style annotated bibliography**.

List below the topics you have chosen and appropriate dates and then your contact information.

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<th>Full names</th>
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When all this is sorted out, please fill out an extra form and give it to me so that your presentation can be included in my revision of our class schedule.

**Women's Studies 101. Presenters**
Introduction to Women’s Studies
Evaluation Sheet for Presentation

Topic: __________________________
Date: ________________  Evaluator (optional)______________________________

Rate the presentation according to the following criteria and numerical scales, and make specific observations in the spaces provided. Be as clear and precise as you can about what worked well and what did not. Make as fair a judgment as you can about how well this presentation provided:

1. The thoroughness of your research and analysis (0-10) ______
2. The significance of the material you have chosen to present and explore (0-10) ______
3. Speaking skills: Eye contact, voice projection, body language, organization (0-10) ______
4. The quality and usefulness of your visual and/or audio material (0-10) ______
5. Your engagement with the rest of the class, such as questions, challenges (0-10) ______

Total (0-50) ______

Other general observations:

Women’s Studies 101.
Introduction to Women’s Studies
Evaluation Sheet for Presentation

Topic: __________________________
Date: ________________

Rate the presentation according to the following criteria and numerical scales, and make specific observations in the spaces provided. Be as clear and precise as you can about what worked well and what did not. Make as fair a judgment as you can about how well this presentation provided:

1. The thoroughness of your research and analysis (0-10) ______
2. The significance of the material you have chosen to present and explore (0-10) ______
3. Speaking skills: Eye contact, voice projection, body language, organization (0-10) ______
4. The quality and usefulness of your visual and/or audio material (0-10) ______
5. Your engagement with the rest of the class, such as questions, challenges (0-5) ______
6. Annotated bibliography with substantial resources, MLA format (0-5) ______

Total (0-50) ______

Other general observations:
WOST 101. Introduction to Women’s Studies:
Ourselves in Our Worlds 

Reading Response 1  
25 points  
due Tuesday, February 2, 2010  
Contributions of non-white and/or non-Western women to feminism

Though many feminists have had visions that extended beyond their own class, culture, and society, those of the first and second wave were dominated by the experiences and perspectives of educated middle-class women of European ancestry. This pattern began to shift all over the world in the 1980s. Relying primarily on the essays in our text by Deborah Siegel, bell hooks, Estelle Friedman, Patricia Hill Collins, and Peggy McIntosh, describe what you see as the single most important contribution that women of African, Near Eastern, and/or Asian birth or descent have given to feminism, to women’s movements. Choose at least two of those essays, begin your response with your thesis and the authors and titles of the works you have chosen. Then, from those essays, develop the contribution you have chosen with several examples, including quotations. Conclude with what you think middle class people of European descent might learn from these writers.

Be sure to make your sources clear by naming the author and providing page numbers in parenthesis for all quotations, ideas, and examples. You may discuss your thoughts with friends, but your language must be your own. Your response should be less than a page, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins all round, and your name, this class, and the date at the top, and this page stapled behind it.

Distributed Tuesday, January 26, 2010

[You may use this page for preparatory notes]

The contribution/topic you chose

Your tentative thesis: That

The writers and essays you chose

Your thoughts, notes, examples

Your tentative conclusion
Living in the U.S., raised as Americans, we are accustomed to thinking of ourselves as autonomous beings, as having choices about every aspect of our lives, as having the responsibility to make those choices, and to make them well. We are in charge of ourselves, our activities, our relationships. We are probably more comfortable reading psychology than sociology, of learning about our “interior” rather than about the exterior forces that have affected, some would say even created, that interior. For many of us, nothing is more personal, more intimate, that our sense of ourselves as women or men, perhaps especially in relationship to those we love, especially in a romantic or sexual way. We can be very disconcerted to learn about that gender is a social construct, than even sex can be indeterminate or fluid, that our most intimate relationships are deeply affected by our society, by family, school, television, movies, music, church, other groups—the whole cornucopia of social as well as biological influences on our lives.

As before, I ask you to choose two of the works assigned from chapters 3 and 4 in our text on the Schedule for this course. Topics you might consider include:

- How internal, biological forces influence how we experience gender
- How various social influences affect how we experience gender
- The political implications and importance of gender
- How gender is defined and enforced in public life, e.g. the market, media, religion
- Another topic on the significance of gender of your own devising
- How “race” (color) and sexual orientation affect gendering; cf. the poem by Nellie Wong, the personal essay by Cherrie Moraga, and Paula Gunn Allen, “Some Like Indians Endure” (1998) 211-12 (another poem)

You are, as always, expected to provide several specific, concrete examples, including quotations, and to provide author and page number in parenthesis for all quotations, ideas, and examples. You should conclude with what you see as the importance of these materials for yourself, for our society, for our world. This response must again be less than a page, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and your name, this class, and the date at the top, with this page stapled behind it.
In the weeks immediately before and after spring break, we’ve been reading and discussing ways that women have been trying to take control of their lives – their bodies, their domestic roles and responsibilities, and their employment outside the home. We’ve learned of many challenges, many discouragements, many victories, and many complexities. Choose one specific social institution in which women have attempted to exercise control over their lives and explore the challenges they have faced in so doing in two different cultures, either two in the U.S. or one each in two of the following: North America, Latin America, Europe, the Mid-East, Asia, or Africa. Consider the source(s) of these challenges, and how intractable they seem to be. You might focus on one of the following (or devise another):

- Addressing the needs of their home
- Meeting the needs of their children
- Taking care of their bodies, their health
- Choosing a line of work, a profession
- Earning a living for themselves (and their children)
- Learning a skill, a craft, a profession
- Acquiring full time employment
- Working for an international corporation
- Starting, owning and running a business

This time, you may write this reading response alone or with one other person. As before, you will need to provide several specific, concrete examples, including quotations, and to provide author and page number in parenthesis for all borrowed material. Conclude with what you see as the similarities or differences in this aspect of the cultures you chose, and attempt to account for them. This response must be no more than a page, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, your name(s), this class, and the date at the top (single-spaced), and this page stapled behind it.

Distributed Tuesday, March 23, 2010
Chapter 11. State, Law, and Social Policy in our text surveys a wide range of legalized injustices that government laws and agencies, both in the United States and elsewhere, have introduced and activated in recent years — a very disheartening prospect. In addition to the essays listed in our syllabus, you may also wish to consult that by Robin Templeton, “She Who Believes in Freedom: Young Women Confront the Prison Industrial Complex” (2004), 650-56, which focuses specifically on Third Wave Feminism, that of your generation. In a sense we are returning to conversation about “liberty and justice for all” we had last week. For this fourth and last reading response, you are to use two of the essays in Chapter 11 to explore one type of injustice that has affected women, though you will see that gender issues usually cross into race and class as well. This “intersectionality” of the limitations of justice, and sometimes also of liberty, has emerged in the last 20-30 years, in your own lifetimes. This round, you may need to consult end notes for the sources of the claims these writers make. You are encouraged to conclude with a sign of hope with which any of these essays includes. Of course you are free to design your own topic, making it as concrete and specific as possible. Topics you might consider include:

• Laws against domestic violence, sexual abuse, pornography
• Laws of child custody, of joint custody of children
• “Government by consent of the governed”
• Access to litigation, to legal redress of injustice
• “Arbeit Macht Frei” (“Work Sets You Free”)
• “Ending welfare as we know it,” “welfare reform”
• “Security” both here and abroad
• “Child soldiers”
• “Peacekeepers”
• The “liberation of Iraq”
• The “War on Drugs”
• Wearing khaki
• The “Prison Industrial Complex”

Again, you may compose this reading response with one other person. As usual you will need to provide several specific, concrete examples, including quotations, and to provide author and page number in parenthesis for all borrowed material. Conclude with what you see as the similarities or differences in this aspect of the cultures you chose, and attempt to account for them. This response must be no more than a page, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, your name(s), this class, and the date at the top (single-spaced), and this page stapled behind it.

Distributed Tuesday, April 13, 2010
January 19 Introduction to this course, each other, “what women’s studies is all about”

Chapter 1. Women’s Studies: Perspectives and Practices 1-24
   Deborah Siegel, “The Movement That Has No Name” (2007) 31-39
   bell hooks, “Feminist Politics: Where We Stand” (2000) 40-42

   Scheduling of presentations

Chapter 2. Systems of Privilege and Inequality in Women’s Lives 59-75
   Patricia Hill Collins, “Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, Gender . . .” (1993) 76-84

February 2 Reading Response 1 due
   Chapter 3. Learning Gender in a Diverse Society 124-39
   Anne Fausto-Sterling, “Two Sexes Are Not Enough” (2000) 140-42

February 9 Debra Rosenberg, “(Rethinking) Gender” (2007) 158-62
   Chapter 4. Sex, Power, and Intimacy 170-85
   Pepper Schwartz & Virginia Rutter, “Sexual Desire & Gender” (1998) 186-93

   Cherrie Moraga, “La Güera” (1979) 205-8
   1. Sluts and Studs — Richelle Daly, Stephanie Restrepo, Karryssa Schmidt
   2. Body Image — Jaki Borden, Elizabeth Kussler, Mer Wright
   Assignment of Essay 1
February
Maya Angelou, “Phenomenal Woman” (1978) 284-85
3. Inscribing Gender in African Cultures — Julie Bisci, Katie Kercher

Chapter 6. Health and Reproductive Rights 296-325
Preparation for Essay 1

March 2
Margaret Sanger, “My Fight for Birth Control” (1931) 358-60
4. Reproductive Choice—Francine Krause, Sam Milita, Lauren Ruth
5. Sexually Transmitted Diseases—Jennifer Guffy, Kate Harrison, Abbey Potts
4 Essay 1 due at beginning of class

[March 6-14 Spring Break . . . but keep reading . . . ]

March 16 6. Women in Medical Professions — Ashley Elliott, Andrea Loiacano
Chapter 7. Family Systems, Family Lives 378-95
Emma Goldman,”Marriage and Love” (1910) 396-98
Heidi Bruggink “Don’t Give Up Your Day Job” (2007) 404-7

March 18 7. The Evolution of Fatherhood — Joe DeBerardinis, Eric Dziengelski

March 23 Chapter 8. Women’s Work Inside and Outside the Home 426-47
Barbara Ehrenreich, “Maid to Order” (2000) 464-70
8. Sexual Harassment — Lindsay Connolly, Ali Gushman
9. The Glass Ceiling and the Second Shift — Lindsay Henkelman, Mary Lang

March 30 Reading Response 3 due

Chapter 9. Women Confronting and Creating Culture 498-514
Virginia Woolf, “Thinking About Shakespeare’s Sister” (1929) 515-17

10. Women in Pop Culture — Kayla Smull

April 1 Gloria Anzaldúa, “Tlilli, Tlapalli/The Path of Red and Black Ink” (1987) 519-21
Aya de Leon, “If Women Ran Hip Hop” (2007) 534
Jessica Valenti, “Pop Culture Gone Wild” (2007) 549-53

[April 3-5 — Easter Break]
April 6  Chapter 10. Resisting Violence Against Women 555-77
Andrea Smith, “Beyond the Politics of Inclusion” (2004) 578-80
Debra Anne Davis, “Betrayed by the Angel” (2004) 590-93
Grace Caroline Bridges, “Lisa’s Ritual, Age 10” (1994) 600

11. Intimate Partner Violence — Jen Balliet, Kyleigh Mackiewicz

April 8  John Stoltenberg, “Pornography and Freedom” (1989) 601-4

12. Human Trafficking — Katie Engwall, Jessie Ervin

April 13  Chapter 11. State, Law, and Social Policy 611-32
Susan B. Anthony, “Constitutional Argument” (1898) 633-34

Bay Fang, “The Talibanization of Iraq” (2007) 656-58

April 20  Reading Response 4 due

Chapter 12. Religion & Spirituality in Women’s Lives 669-82
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Introduction to The Women’s Bible” (1895) 683
Karen McCarthy Brown, “Fundamentalism & Control of Women” (1994) 684-88

April 22  Paula Gunn Allen, “Grandmother of the Sun” (1989) 689-92
Judith Plaskow, “Standing Again at Sinai” (1990) 697-700
Alicia Suskin Ostriker, “Everywoman Her Own Theology” (1986) 700
Starhawk, “Witchcraft and Women’s Culture” (1979) 701-3
Assignment of Essay 2

April 27  Chapter 13. Activism, Change, and Feminist Futures 707-21
Michael Kimmel, “Real Men Join the Movement” (1997) 729-33
Preparation for Essay 2


May 7  Essay 2 due — Bring to my office by 1:30 pm