

WGS 210 Summer Online: Introduction to Women's Studies



“I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is. I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat ...” -Rebecca West

“Feminism encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians” –Pat Robertson

Professor: Cinnamon Brown

Contacting Me: Since we never see each other physically, it is important that you know how to contact me. Of course, e-mail is the best way to reach me. I will check my e-mail several times a day so that I can be available to you when you need me. For some of this class, I will be in Wales (United Kingdom). At that time, I will be six hours ahead of those of you in the Central Time Zone, so please factor that in when expecting a prompt response from me. I realize that there are just some issues, concerns, or questions that require face-to-face time or chatting. Therefore, we can always speak face to face or chat via Skype. All that you need for Skype is a microphone (most built into computers now) and speakers. The web camera is just an added accessory if you want me to see your beautiful face!! You are certainly not required to use Skype but it is one option if you want more interaction or face time with me.

E-mail address: cinnamon.brown@westminster-mo.edu

Skype address: cinnamon_brown

Note on Time: As I mentioned, I will be in Wales (United Kingdom) for some of this course. That means I will be six hours ahead of those of you in the Central Time Zone in the United States. Moreover, some of you might be traveling or at home in a different time zone. To alleviate any confusion, all times listed on this syllabus are based on the Central Time Zone in the United States (Fulton time). This includes posting times for assignments, discussion forums, and exams. If you are not in the Central Time Zone, please plan accordingly. Here is a link to a time zone map: <http://www.fgiennr.net/time-zone/fuseaux.gif>

Moodle and E-mail: Since this course is taught completely online, students are responsible for keeping up with course content, assignments, and announcements via Moodle. You can access your Moodle account through the college's homepage <http://moodle2.westminster-mo.edu/> or MyWC. Students also will find course material not in assigned books such as articles, primary source documents, and other relevant material on Moodle. Students also need to check Moodle EVERYDAY for important announcements and class related business.

E-mail is an official means of communication on this campus. Failure to keep up with e-mail does not excuse you from information, assignments, and/or due dates sent to you by regular e-mail. You need to check your e-mail regularly, especially since this is the only way I can correspond with you over the course of this class.

Course Goals and Objectives: Based on the quotes above, it is quite easy to see that there remains ambiguity and confusion over the meaning and function of feminism. Some see feminism as a means to promote equality between the sexes, while others fear that it challenges the very foundation of society. Before one can truly understand feminism or the place of women in the modern world one must first understand the dynamic and often complicated relationship between gender, institutions, people, and society. By using gender as a category of analysis, this introductory course in Women's Studies is designed to help students

develop a framework for thinking and assessing the gender world around you. To achieve this goal, WGS 210 is organized around four primary goals:

1. Clearly defining and understanding feminism as well as key social constructs such as gender
2. Identifying gender and feminism in theory and practice over space and time
3. Recognizing gender socialization and expectations in your own lives
4. Considering how we can address women and gender issues today

General Education Requirement: Successful completion of this course will fulfill the Fundamental Questions and Values context, Tier II requirement of the general education program. No prerequisites are required for this course. 3 semester hours

Teaching Philosophy: It is often easy to assume that in a college course you will be bombarded with facts and figures that you will eventually have to regurgitate for an exam. I, however, believe that teaching requires much more than just the transmission of facts and exam preparation. Instead, I seek to design courses that help you gain insights and meanings that are relevant to your current needs and concerns. In Introduction to Women's Studies (WGS 210), we will use gender as a category of analysis in order to explore the lives of men and women from diverse races, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds throughout history. By approaching the course material in this way, we can assess and appreciate the powerful role gender plays in modern society. To assist you in this endeavor, I will provide a learning environment that promotes free expression, open dialogue, and collaboration through various pedagogical methods and techniques. From discussion boards to personal reflections, you will better understand and appreciate the gendered world around you and the influence it has on your life.

Required Text:

- Susan Shaw and Janet Lee, *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*. 5th Edition
- Lynn Peril, *Pink Think: Becoming a Woman in Many Uneasy Lessons*

Grades:

- Final Exam: 25%
- Discussions Forum: 30%
- Gender Journal: 20%
- Pink Think Paper: 10%
- Favorite Things and Gender Project: 15%

Grading Scale:

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| A: 100 – 90 | A- 93.9-90 | |
| B+ 89.9 – 87 | B 86.9 – 83 | B- 82.9 – 80 |
| C+ 79.9 – 77 | C 76.9 – 73 | C- 72.9 – 70 |
| D+ 69.9 – 67 | D 66.9 – 63 | D- 62.9 – 60 |
| F Below | | |

Grading Policies: I do not give or curve grades in this class, you earn them. Your grade in this course is your responsibility and the product of your performance. I will apply consistent standards to all students when grading assignments and exams. Furthermore, needing a better grade to keep your scholarship, parental approval, or good academic standing are not relevant concerns when figuring your final grade. These are issues that should be addressed early in the semester. Ultimately, I will never work harder for your grade than you do.

Organization and Sequence of the Course: Although many of the courses you have taken in college are organized around weeks or even longer blocks of time, our class will be different since we only have six weeks. As you will notice when looking at your syllabus this course is organized and broken down by sections. In total we have Eight Section. For each section you will typically:

1. Read from our textbook *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions* (WVWV).
2. Have a Gender Journal Assignment or two to prepare for our online discussion.
3. Finally, we will have an online discussion where you will be engaging with your classmates in a discussion about what you have been reading.
 - a. Typically, our discussion will revolved around questions I pose or your Gender Journal Assignment.

This will be our pattern for the Eight Sections, although sometimes we have two discussion within in a section or read an additional book such as *Pink Think*. It is important to know our organization and sequences because when you look on your syllabus and on Moodle, you will notice that readings, assignments, etc. are organized around sections.

Discussion Forum: Much like if we were sitting in class together, discussing course material will be an indispensable part of this online course. Therefore, you are expected to keep up with assigned readings and material in order to be prepared to contribute to class discussion. Each section will contain at least one discussion component, if not more. As you will notice, I will post a question or a series of questions on the Discussion Forum that relate to our material for that section to get the ball rolling. Many of these questions will come from our Gender Journal Assignments. You will also be responding to my questions and to each other as part of the discussion. For each discussion you will have a specified amount of responses that you must post by a certain time. Please keep in mind that class discussion is an open dialogue between you, the instructor, and your classmates. Failing to engage in class discussion means you are missing out on this conversation, while dominating the discussion neglects the other members of the class. Your Discussion Forum grade is based solely on your ability to engage in this conversation with the required amount of responses and also with quality that reflects your knowledge and engagement in the class. It is a large part of your grade and you must take it seriously. Moreover, having discussion allows you to interact with your classmates and professor to really examine, explore, and assess the course material. For specific Discussion Forum guidelines and instructions please see the Helpful Resources section of Moodle.

Gender Journal: Throughout this class, you will be keeping a Gender Journal. This journal serves several important functions. For instance, I will be asking you to do small activities and assignments to prepare for discussion. Whether it is providing your own definition of masculinity or writing about a commercial you saw over the weekend, these small activities/assignments aim to enhance class discussion. You will be doing these activities/assignments in a word document that you will upload for me to look over. Moreover, these will be integral for our class discussion, so you must keep up with them. Periodically throughout the class I might ask you to provide a personal entry to record your thoughts, feelings, and questions about the gendered world that you see around you. Ultimately, these journals will trace the evolution of your thinking about gender and enhance your awareness of the world around you. You will find more specific guidelines and expectation for your Gender Journal on Moodle (Helpful Resources).

Papers: Over the course of the semester you are required to write two papers. One paper will be over the book *Pink Think* and the second will be a small project examining gender in your favorite book, movie, song etc. The purpose of these papers is two-fold. First, they allow you to begin perfecting your writings skills. From citing your work to crafting a strong argument using specific evidence, these papers will prepare you for other college classes. Secondly, these papers will help you learn how to organize your thoughts in a clear and concise manner. They also require you to think analytically to address the subject matter. When writing your papers for this course, please observe my Paper Guidelines found on Moodle under the Helpful Resources section. These Paper Guidelines list the dos and don'ts for writing for my class. I expect that you will use them to ensure you practice the proper mechanics of writing. Moreover, I will be using a Paper Rubric to grade your written assignments and to provide you with helpful feedback. It might be helpful to look over this Paper Rubric as you write your papers so that you know what I am looking for. You will find the Paper Rubric on Moodle under the Helpful Resources section.

You must turn in your papers on Turnitin via Moodle. Your paper must be submitted by midnight (Central time) the day it is due. Late work will not be accepted except in cases of extenuating circumstances (determined by the professor). In these cases, the student must communicate with the instructor regarding the circumstances prior to the due date or contact the professor within 24 hours. Accepted late assignments will receive point deduction at the professor's discretion. I do not accept papers via e-mail. Although it is convenient for you to send papers as e-mail attachments, it engenders many problems for me such as computer compatibility and viruses. Please submit your papers through Turnitin.

Due: Pink Think Paper—June 14

Gender and Favorite Things Paper—June 28


Final Exam: At the end of the course you will take a final that consists of several broad questions covering course material. These questions will revolve around the major themes discussed throughout the course. In this final, students will be expected to not only demonstrate their mastery of the course material, but also their writing and analytical skills. You will submit your final exam on Turnitin via Moodle like all other papers in the course. **This final exam will be due on July 10 at midnight (Central Time).**

Netiquette: Since a large portion of our class will be on discussion forums, it is essential that we all display professional behavior, showing respect and courtesy to fellow students and the instructor. Please keep in mind that in an online environment words can get lost in translation. It is much easier for comments to be perceived as hurtful or insensitive, even though that is not the intent. Use caution when interacting electronically, and use your best judgment when posting questions or responding to comments within

this class. Having that said, I hope that together we can all create a safe and open space for all of us to express our voices, views, and opinions.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to maintain academic integrity at all times and should avoid what I consider the deadly sin of college—cheating!!! According to the Westminster College Student Handbook, “No Westminster student shall commit any act of academic dishonesty in order to advance her or his own academic performance, or to impede or advance the academic progress of others.” (57) Any student who violates this code will automatically fail the assignment and possibly the course depending on the severity of the case. Moreover, the student will be reported to the Honor Commission. Cheating off someone else’s work, borrowing a friend’s paper, or cutting and pasting work off the internet without properly citing are all forms of academic dishonesty. The gravest of my college deadly sins is plagiarism. According to Webster’s Dictionary, plagiarism is the stealing and passing off the ideas or words of another as your own work. Plagiarism includes turning in a paper taken from the internet or papers that fail to cite appropriate sources. You can find a more detailed description of plagiarism in your Paper Guidelines on Moodle under Helpful Resources section.

<u>Section One</u>	<u>Bra-Burning Man-Haters?: Understanding Feminism</u>
<u>June 1</u>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is feminism? What is its relationship to women's studies? 2. What are the goals of feminism throughout American history? 3. Why do many see feminism as negative? <p>-Read <i>Women's Voices, Feminist Visions</i> (hereafter <i>WVWV</i>), pages 1-22</p> <p>***Gender Journal: What is your definition of feminism? Make a list of the traits, behaviors, and beliefs you ascribe to feminists? Make a list of the negative stereotypes associated with feminists and feminism. Where do you think these negative images come from?</p>
<u>June 2</u>	<p>-Read Feminist Across History Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Declaration of Sentiments</i> (Moodle) -SDS Women, "To the Women of the Left" (Moodle) -Manifesto: Redstockings (Moodle) -Radical Feminism and Love (Moodle) -Chicago Women's Liberation and Union, "Socialist Feminism" (Moodle) <p>***Gender Journal: After reading the material for the day, compare the <i>Declaration of Sentiments</i> to the other writings by radical feminists of the 1960s and 1970s. Do these women have the same goals? How might their vision be different? Based on the readings, what would you say are the main goals of feminists in American history?</p>
<u>June 3</u>	<p><u>Section One Discussion:</u></p> <p>****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section One Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate's responses in the Section One Discussion Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u> -All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u>
<u>Section Two</u>	<u>Peeling a Complex Onion: Identifying Layers of Privilege and Inequality</u>
<u>June 4</u>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is difference socially constructed? 2. How do ideologies and institutions reproduce and maintain gender inequality? 3. How does the web of privilege and inequality effect women of different racial and ethnic groups differently? <p>-Read <i>WVWV</i> pages 42-59, 238-239</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Do the activity "Challenging your Assumptions" on page 48 in <i>WVWV</i>. Jot down your answers!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What point is Gloria Steinem making when she poses the question "what if men could menstruate?"
<u>June 5</u>	<p><u>Section Two Discussion:</u></p> <p>****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section Two Discussion Forum by</p>

	<p><u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate's responses in the Section Two Discussion Forum</p> <p>-Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u></p> <p>-All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>
<u>Section Three</u>	<u>Nature vs. Nurture?: Defining and Understanding Gender</u>
<u>June 8</u>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is gender? 2. What is the difference between gender and sex? 3. How is gender socially constructed? 4. What is gender socialization? 5. How are ideas of masculinity and femininity constructed? <p>Read <i>WVAV</i> pages 105-120</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Do the activity "Speaking of Women and Men" on page 110 of <i>WVAV</i>. Jot down your answers. I encourage you to ask a friend or roommate to also do this exercise with you in order to get a variety of answers.</p> <p>-Our reading discussed gender socialization and how men and women are taught and "learn the appropriate thinking and behaviors associated with being a boy or girl in a given society." Jot down three examples of gender socialization that you have experienced in your life.</p>
<u>June 9</u>	<p>Masculinity—reading TBA</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Find two advertisements that you think promote and encourages masculinity. Be able to describe this advertisement in detail. For instance, how does it reinforce gender stereotypes about men? How are men and women depicted? What type of message is the ad sending to male and female viewers?</p>
<u>June 10</u>	<p><u>Section Three Discussion:</u></p> <p>****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section Three Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate's responses in the Section Three Discussion Forum</p> <p>-Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u></p> <p>-All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>
<u>June 11</u>	<p>Read Lynn Peril, <i>Pink Think: Becoming a Woman in Many Uneasy Lessons</i>, p. ix-133</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<u>June 12</u>	<p>Read Lynn Peril, <i>Pink Think: Becoming a Woman in Many Uneasy Lessons</i>, p. 133-218</p>
<u>June 14</u>	<p>***Pink Think Paper Due by midnight (Central time)</p>

<p><u>June 15</u></p>	<p><u><i>Pink Think Discussion:</i></u> ****Respond to my questions or prompts under the <i>Pink Think</i> Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate's responses in the <i>Pink Think</i> Discussion Forum -Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u> -All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>
<p><u>Section Four</u></p>	<p><u>Home and Away: Women in the Home and in the Workplace Institution</u></p>
<p><u>June 16</u></p>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some of the myths about the normative U.S. family? How do these myths help to perpetuate patriarchal power? 2. How do social institutions reinforce power relations in the family? What conflicts do women face between work and family? How do other social institutions create and reproduce this conflict? 3. What alternatives do feminist critiques of traditional marriage and traditional notions of the workplace offer? 4. How does sexism shape the experiences of women in the paid labor force? 5. What problems and conflicts arise among women around issues of work? <p>Read <i>WV</i> pages 354-371; 391-398. Read Karen Herzog, "Study says becoming a father lowers testosterone level" (Moodle)</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Do "Who Does the Work at Your School and In Your Home?" activity on page 396 of <i>WV</i>. Jot down your answers. Then divide a page into two columns with one side labeled "Mom" and the other side labeled "Dad." In each column list the roles and jobs each parent had in your home growing up. What do these lists tell you about societal ideas of the family and who does what within the family structure?</p>
<p><u>June 17</u></p>	<p>Read <i>WV</i> pages 398-413; 417-429; 436-438</p>
<p><u>June 18</u></p>	<p>Read <i>Taking Sides</i>: "Is the Gender Wage Gap Justified?" (Moodle)</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Write a response to the question posed by today's readings—is the Gender Wage Gap justified? Be sure to provide at least two arguments to back up your opinion? Also jot down a few ideas of how we, as individuals and as a society, can fix the gender wage gap.</p>
<p><u>June 19</u></p>	<p><u><i>Section Four Discussion:</i></u> ****Respond to my questions or prompts under the <i>Section Four</i> Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate's responses in the <i>Section</i></p>

	<p>Four Discussion Forum</p> <p>-Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u></p> <p>-All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>
Section Five	Power Relations that Hurt: Violence and Victimization
<u>June 22</u>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are three main factors in understanding violence against women? 2. How do violence and threat of violence exert social control on women? 3. How do myths about violence against women silence women and perpetuate sexist systems of oppression? 4. What are steps that can be taken to in order to address the issue of violence against women? <p>Read <i>WVFW</i> pages 528-534</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Identify and provide examples of the three main factors behind violence against women.</p>
<u>June 23</u>	<p>Read Melba Newsome, “ ... Asking for It” (Moodle)</p> <p>Watch Rape Prevention https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g-XvO-N_t8</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Although the Rape Prevention video is quite old (1970s) do you think that our modern society still blames the victim for getting raped? How do politicians, media, and other social institutions perpetuate this myth? What can we do to change our rape culture?</p>
<u>June 24</u>	<p><u>Section Five Discussion:</u></p> <p>****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section Five Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate’s responses in the Section Five Discussion Forum</p> <p>-Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u></p> <p>-All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>
Section Six	Victoria Secret Angels to Cover Girls: The Beauty Ideal
<u>June 25</u>	<p><u>Learning Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are power relations reflected and reinforced in beauty norms? 2. How do beauty norms affect women and men differently? How does a focus on beauty for women serve to maintain women’s subordinate status? 3. What role does the media, advertisements, and producers play in perpetuating an unhealthy beauty ideal? <p>Read <i>WVFW</i>, pages 213-232</p> <p>***Gender Journal: Find and describe in detail an advertisement that uses the female body to sell a product. How are the woman/women depicted? How is the female body portrayed? What message do you think this ad aims to convey to its audience? Repeat the process by finding and describing an advertisement that uses the male body to sell a product</p>
<u>June 26</u>	<p>Watch Killing Us Softly https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atI0K7YpbpM</p> <p>Read Body Image and BMI: 100 Years in the US</p> <p>http://www.rehabs.com/explore/womens-body-image-and-bmi/</p>

	<p>***Gender Journal: After watching Killing Us Softly and reading about Body Image and BMI, jot down your thoughts on how the media shapes what society deems “normal” and “perfect” when it comes to the female body. What might be the unrealistic and destructive effects of such expectations?</p>
<u>June 28</u>	<p>*** Favorite Things and Gender Paper Due by midnight (Central time)</p>
<u>June 29</u>	<p><u>Section Six Discussion:</u> ****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section Six Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate’s responses in the Section Six Discussion Forum -Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u> -All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>
<u>Section Seven</u>	<p><u>Our Bodies, Ourselves: Healthcare and Choices</u></p>
	<p><u>Learning Objectives</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are women treated differently in the health care system? What is the effect of this differential treatment? 2. How do patriarchal norms constitute a threat to women’s health? 3. Why is reproductive choice important for women?
<u>June 30</u>	<p>Read <i>WVFFV</i>, pages 279-309</p>
<u>July 1</u>	<p>Read the following articles:</p> <p>-http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/12/opinion/sunday/kristof-beyond-pelvic-politics.html?_r=0 -http://www.thedailybeast.com/witw/articles/2014/03/26/the-birth-control-mandate-debate-religious-freedom-or-abuse-of-power.html -http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/07/29/the-pill-is-more-than-birth-control.html</p> <p>***Gender Journal: After reading the following articles, try to outline the birth control debate. Why are some against providing free access to birth control? Why are others in favor of it? What are the effects for limiting women’s access to birth control?</p>
<u>July 2</u>	<p><u>Section Seven Discussion:</u> ****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section Seven Discussion Forum by <u>noon (Central time zone)</u></p> <p>****Respond to at least three of your classmate’s responses in the Section Seven Discussion Forum -Your first response must be done by <u>6:00 pm (Central time)</u> -All of your three responses must be done by <u>Midnight (Central time)</u> -</p>

July 3



Happy Fourth of July!!!

Section Eight

Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and Politics

Learning Objectives:

1. How do governmental laws and policies maintain social inequality?
2. How do early American assumptions that citizens were white men perpetuate contemporary social inequities?
3. What myths about gender and race reinforce discrimination in the military, welfare system, and the criminal justice system?
4. Why are there not more women in politics? What might policy look like if more women were in politics?

July 6

Read *WV*, 548-557, 570-571

Gender Journal: Look at “Where Women Rule: A Sample of Female Representatives in National Legislatures Worldwide” on page 555 of *WV*. Do these figures surprise you? Why? -Please watch the news or read an article about a female politician (Sarah Palin, Hilary Clinton etc.) List the words or phrases used to describe these female leaders. Do you find male politicians depicted in the same way? Do you think that women politicians are treated differently than men? How?

July 7

Watch video What if Women Were in Charge?

http://www.thewhatifconference.com/wi/women_were_in_charge

Gender Journal: After watching “What if Women were in Charge?” make a list of the benefits of having more women involved in policy making? In your mind, what might the world look like if more women were in charge?

July 8

Section Eight Discussion:

****Respond to my questions or prompts under the Section Eight Discussion Forum by noon (Central time zone)

****Respond to at least **three** of your classmate’s responses in the Section Eight Discussion Forum

-Your first response must be done by 6:00 pm (Central time)

-All of your three responses must be done by Midnight (Central time)

July 10

Final Exam!!!

-Due by midnight (Central time)

