

Introduction to Women's Studies (WMNST 100)

Kathleen Marchetti

Spring 2013

Class time: Mon/Wed/ Fri 11:15am-12:05pm

Location: 122 Thomas Building

Kathleen's office hours: Mondays 12:05pm-2:45pm or by appointment

Office Location: 117 Willard Building

Email: kmm516@psu.edu (This is the best way to reach me.)

Required Reading:

Buy:

1. Textbook: *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions* (McGraw-Hill, 5th edition; eds. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee)
2. Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale* (Random House, 1985)
3. Articles and documents on ANGEL (please print these out and bring to class for discussion)

Required Viewing (in class)

<i>Tough Guise</i>	<i>(on course reserve- Music and Media Center, Pattee)</i>
<i>MissRepresentation</i>	<i>(on course reserve- Music and Media Center, Pattee)</i>
<i>Telling Amy's Story</i>	<i>(on course reserve- Music and Media Center, Pattee)</i>
<i>Killing Us Softly 4</i>	<i>(on course reserve- Music and Media Center, Pattee)</i>
<i>The Day My God Died</i>	<i>(on course reserve- Music and Media Center, Pattee)</i>
<i>The Virgin Daughters</i>	<i>(available online)</i>
<i>The Last Abortion Clinic</i>	<i>(available online)</i>

The syllabus may be changed at the discretion of the instructor according to the needs of the course. If I make any changes to the syllabus (either by adding or deleting), I will email the class. Students are responsible for making note of all changes.

PLEASE SYNCHRONIZE YOUR ANGEL EMAIL AND PENN STATE EMAIL

(Emails sent via ANGEL will be my primary form of communication with the class)

Grading

20% Participation (10% ANGEL postings, 10% class discussion)

35% Two in-class Exams (17.5% each) *There is no final exam*****

35% Two short papers (17.5% each)

10% Poster and Presentation

Calculating your grade: [(0.2*Participation Score) + (0.175*Exam 1 Score) + (0.175*Exam 2 Score) + (0.175* Paper 1 Score) + (0.175* Paper 2 Score) + (0.1*Poster Score)]

Participation grade breakdown:

10% Discussion forum posts – most weeks a posting is due by 6am, Friday. The best learning takes place when a student like yourself engages in the texts you read, asks questions, mounts objections to ideas, tries to figure out why the author wrote the article or book the way she did--and what relation this book has to your own experiences and perceptions. In this class discussion forum, you can offer your responses, questions, confusions, recognitions. You should post responses to the forum approximately once a week.

These postings should be either thoughtful posings of questions based on the texts—or thoughtful responses to those questions. **You can earn a score of 1 or 2 for each week’s postings:** a score of 1 indicates that your posting was not very developed or thoughtful while a score of 2 indicates that your posting was well-developed, thoughtful, and useful for facilitating class discussion that week. This portion of your assessment will address the *quality*, not simply the quantity of your weekly posts. To earn a score of 2 on your discussion post, you should write *at least* one to two paragraphs in response to that week’s question.

10% In-class discussion/participation

Given the weight of participation in your final grade, attendance is obviously important. I will pass around a sign in sheet for you to initial at the beginning of every class. In addition to showing up for class, active participation in class is essential to your learning and performance in the course. **You have three “excused” absences** which will be automatically added to your grade at the end of the semester. Unless you are missing an exam, an assignment, or are absent due to a long-term illness or issue, you do not need to notify me if you need to miss class. Please keep in mind that excessive absences will negatively affect your participation grade and understanding of course material.

This is a discussion class in which your participation in the class meetings is necessary. We will read, watch films, and discuss and debate the material extensively. Please do the reading, in advance of class, and be prepared to both ask and answer questions. **You can earn a score of 1 or 2 for your participation in each class session.** A score of 1 indicates that you attended class but did not participate while a score of 2 indicates that you both attended class and participated in that day’s discussion. Please check with me to see how you are doing in terms of your class discussion grade.

Thoughtful participation requires you to complete all of the course readings on time and to reflect on them enough to bring something cogent to class meetings. “Good” class participation is not just a function of quantity, but also quality. Simply coming to class does not guarantee a high participation grade; the frequency and quality of your comments also matter. You can earn maximum participation points by participating regularly and respectfully. Here are some things you can do to earn maximum credit for participation:

- Attend class
- Participate openly and regularly in discussions
- Ask questions when you have them – no matter how big or small
- Always consider and question, but never disrespect, others’ contributions

- Try not to interrupt or monopolize the conversation
- Help create discussion openings by which other students may participate
- Stay on topic

NOTE: If you have difficulty speaking in public or for some other reason do not feel comfortable participating in the manner described above please speak with me within the first two days of class so that an alternate method of evaluation can be arranged.

Cell phones, computers, etc.:

Unless you are a medical professional or have another reason you must be able to be instantly contacted, please turn your cell phones off, or put them away. You won't need them for class. Open laptops can be used for note-taking...though as much of our time will be spent in discussion, I would rather have you listening to each other with attention and not typing at all. I'm as addicted to social media as anyone, but please do your email/Facebook/Twitter, etc. on your own time. If your computer or cell phone use becomes a distraction for anyone in the class, you will be asked to turn it off.

Please be on time to class; it's disruptive to others (and to me) when you arrive late.

Further explanation of other assignments (short papers, exams and poster presentation) will be discussed in class. In addition, I will post the directions for all assignments on ANGEL.

Grading Scale:

A:	94-100
A-:	90-93
B+:	87-89
B:	83-86
B-:	80-82
C+:	77-79
C:	70-76
D:	60-69
F:	<60

Extra Credit Opportunity:

There is an opportunity for you to earn extra credit in this course. Though the poster assignment due at the end of the semester is only worth 10% of your overall grade, you have the opportunity to earn **three extra percentage points onto your participation grade** which is worth 20% of your overall grade. If you do an excellent job on the poster assignment by going above and beyond the

baseline requirements, you will earn these extra points (I will provide examples of excellent posters done by students in previous classes for you to review). For example, you might have an 87% (B+) on participation going into the poster presentation. If you complete an excellent poster, these additional 3 percentage points would bump your participation grade from an 87% to a 90% (A-).

On papers and assignments: I am available during office hours and by appointment to discuss your papers--before or after completion. I'm always happy to help improve your writing. In addition, we are fortunate to have a librarian at the main library who specializes in Women's Studies and who is willing to meet with any of you as you begin working on your papers. Here is her contact information: Paula Contreras, Social Science Librarian Specializing in Women's and LGBT Studies, University Library, 208L Paterno Library. Email pcc10@psu.edu.

Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be graded down 1/2 letter grade for each day late. For example, if your paper was one day late, you would receive an A- instead of an A; two days late means a B+ instead of an A, etc.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is a type of cheating, defined generally as the act of representing someone else's words or ideas as your own. It includes: a) the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without complete acknowledgment of the source, b) the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another agency or person providing term papers or other academic materials, c) the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of on-line material without complete acknowledgment of the source. *Whether deliberate or unintentional*, plagiarism is a serious breach of academic integrity that carries serious consequences.

NOTE: If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating, you will receive a 0 on the assignment, and your final grade will be reduced by an entire letter grade. The Academic Integrity Committee in the College of the Liberal Arts may be notified.

The best protection against unintentional plagiarism is to educate yourself: please see

1. The Penn State Faculty Senate Policy on Academic Integrity:
<http://www.psu.edu/oue/aappm/G-9.html>
2. The College of the Liberal Arts webpage on Academic Integrity:
http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Academic_Integrity/integrity.shtml

If you are panicking about meeting a deadline, PLEASE CONTACT ME rather than resort to deception. We may be able to work out a solution.

Disability Policy and Accommodations:

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State

University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-2801, Tel (814) 865-4700/ V, (814) 863-1150/TTY. Students who anticipate needing any type of accommodation to complete the requirements for this course, or have questions about physical access, please be sure to contact me. Remember that it is your responsibility to make me aware of any such needs-the earlier in the semester, the better.

Important Dates

1/21:	No Class (MLK day)
2/15:	Paper # 1 Due
2/28:	Exam # 1
3/4 to 3/8:	No Class (Spring Break)
3/22:	Paper # 2 Due
4/17:	Exam # 2
4/22 to 4/24:	No Class (Work on Posters)
4/26:	Poster Due

Schedule

Week 1: Beginnings

- 1/7 Introductions, Goals, Expectations
- 1/9 Read the Preface of *Women's Voice Feminist Visions* (henceforth *WVFFV*) and look through the text.
- 1/11 *WVFFV* pp. 1-27, 30-36

Week 2: Gender "Construction": "Becoming" a woman, a man, or....

- 1/14 *WVFFV* pp. 105-120
- 1/16 *WVFFV* pp. 121-140

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): How is gender reinforced by patterns of interaction in society? How is masculinity racialized? How does gender ranking reinforce sexism?

- 1/18 In-class film: *Tough Guise*

Week 3: Gender "Construction": "Becoming" a woman, a man, or....

- 1/21 *Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Class*
- 1/23 Finish and Discuss *Tough Guise*

WVFFV pp. 141-162

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): What are some benefits to boys and men of putting on the “tough guise”? When is it an effective and adaptive response, and when is it self-destructive and dangerous to others?

1/25 **Guest Lecture: Lauren DeCarvallo**
WVFFV pp. 213-232

Week 4: Inscribing Gender on the Body

1/28 In-class film: *Killing Us Softly 4*

1/30 WVFFV pp. 239-268

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): How do beauty norms affect women and men differently? How does a focus on beauty for women maintain women’s subordinate status? How are power relations reflected and reinforced in beauty norms?

2/1 WVFFV pp. 269-276
Naomi Wolf “The Beauty Myth” (ANGEL)

Week 5: Intersectionality/Systems of Privilege and Inequality

2/4: WVFFV pp. 42-58

2/6: WVFFV pp. 60-75.
In-class exercise: See p. 42-43. In your textbook, tick or circle any of the “axes” of privilege or non-privilege that you see as applying to you. Bring that to class, and we will discuss in groups.

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): How aware have you been about your “privilege” or lack thereof? Can you think of ways in which your position or status in society has given you more or less access to something you value, or that society values? In what ways have you “seen difference” as a social construction in your own life—particularly with regard to gender, but also to race, or to class, or to ability, or to any of the other categories you have identified yourself as affiliating with?

2/8: WVFFV pp. 76-98

Week 6: Sex, Power, and Intimacy

2/11 WVFFV pp. 163-181

2/13 In-class film: *The Virgin Daughters*
WVFFV pp. 182-194

Short Paper #1 Due by FRIDAY (2/15) 11AM. NO DISCUSSION FORUM DUE

2/15 WVFV pp. 203-210

Week 7: Health and Reproductive Rights

2/18 WVFV pp. 279-300

2/20 In-class film: *The Last Abortion Clinic*

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): Why is reproductive choice important for women? What have been the consequences of women's loss of control over their reproductive processes?

2/22 Finish film and discussion
WVFV pp. 310-325; 340-346

Week 8: Family Systems, Family Lives; Midterm Exam

2/25: WVFV pp. 354-371

2/27: Midterm Review

*No Discussion Forum Due

2/28: Midterm Exam

Week 9: Spring Break!

3/4 NO CLASS

3/6 NO CLASS

3/8 NO CLASS

Week 10: Women Making Culture

3/11 WVFV pp.450-478

3/13 In-class film: *MissRepresentation*

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): How are television and film examples of what Susan Douglas calls "enlightened sexism"? Give specific examples from current TV shows and films. How do these shows focus viewers' gaze away from barriers to women's equality?

3/15 WVFV pp. 479-502

Week 11: The Personal Is Political

3/18 *The Handmaid's Tale*: Night, Shopping, Night, Waiting Room (I, II, III, IV)

3/20 *The Handmaid's Tale*: Nap, Household, Night, Birth Day (V, VI, VII, VIII)

Short Essay #2 Due by FRIDAY 11AM. NO DISCUSSION FORUM DUE

3/22 *The Handmaid's Tale*: Night, Soul Scrolls, Night (IX, X, XI)

Week 12: Contemporary Sex Slavery

3/25 *The Handmaid's Tale*: Jezebel's, Night, Salvaging, Night (XII, XIII, XIV, XV)

3/27 WVFV pp. 446-468

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): Reactions to the book? Do you think Atwood's vision of the future is realistic? Why or why not? Can you draw any connections to today's society and/or political landscape?

3/29 In-class film: *The Day My God Died*

"Sexualities Worldwide" (ANGEL)

"Sacred Sex Slaves" (ANGEL)

Week 13: Women Resisting Violence

4/1 WVFV pp. 503-539
The Gift of Fear pp. 1-41 (ANGEL)

4/3 In-class film: *Telling Amy's Story*
The Gift of Fear pp. 172-193 (ANGEL)

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): How do violence and the threat of violence exert social control over women? Do you ever fear gender-based violence? How do you think your gender affects your answer to this question?

4/5 **Guest Lecture: Dana Cuomo**
The Gift of Fear pp. 277-299 (ANGEL)

Week 14: State, Law, and Social Policy

4/8 WVFV pp. 548-569

4/10 WVFV pp. 570-581

Discussion Forum (Posting due by 6am Friday): How do governmental laws and policies maintain social inequality? What might a truly "just" governmental system look like?

4/12 WVFV pp. 582-594

Week 15:

4/15 Exam II Review

4/17 Exam II

4/19 Explanation of Poster Assignment

Week 16: Poster Preparation and Presentation

4/22 No Class: Work on posters

4/24 No Class: Work on posters

4/26 Poster Presentation in Class