

American Studies 320
Women in American Society
Spring 2012
MH 264; Tu/Th 10:00-11:15am

Professor: Dr. Carrie Lane
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:30am-12:30pm & by appointment
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Description: This course concerns American women and American ideas *about* women. We will study gender relations in American culture, surveying the experiences of women from an interdisciplinary perspective. Topics of specific interest will include women's participation in the workforce, domestic sphere, consumer culture, and political and social movements. We will pay particular attention to how cultural ideas about gender shape the experiences of individual women, and how those ideas change across time and place. We will also consider how differences between women, such as race, class, religion, ethnicity, generation, and sexual orientation, have shaped female experience and cultural definitions of femininity. Finally, since the readings illustrate several approaches to the study of women, they allow us to sample a variety of methodologies used in the cultural analysis of gender.

General Education and Learning Goals: This course fulfills GE categories D.5 (Explorations in Social Sciences), E (Lifelong Learning and Self-Development), and Z (Cultural Diversity).

Learning Goals for Category D.5: Explorations in Social Sciences

- a. Examine problems, issues, and themes in the social sciences in greater depth; in a variety of cultural, historical, and geographical contexts; and from different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.
- b. Analyze and critically evaluate the application of social science concepts and theories to particular historical, contemporary, and future problems or themes, such as economic and environmental sustainability, globalization, poverty, and social justice.
- c. Analyze and critically evaluate constructs of cultural differentiation, including ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, and their effects on the individual and society.
- d. Apply theories and concepts from the social sciences to address historical, contemporary and future problems confronting communities at different geographical scales, from local to global.

Learning Goals for Category E: Lifelong Learning and Self-Development

1. Further their own critical self-understanding and acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to engage and reflect in learning and self-development practices.
2. Develop strategies to be integrated physiological, socio-cultural, and psychological beings to promote a holistic awareness of lifelong learning throughout their lives.
3. Actively apply and participate in developing a lifelong commitment to health for both personal well being (such as physical, financial, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social/interpersonal, and/or environmental aspects) and societal responsibility. UPS 411.201 Page 13 of 13 UPS 411.201 Effective Date: 6-20-11
4. Develop themselves as responsible citizens, employees and employers, family members and members of the global society.

Learning Goals for Category Z: Cultural Diversity

1. Demonstrate understanding that culture is socially constructed and fundamental to social interaction.
2. Demonstrate appreciation of the complex relationships that various factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, and class bring to a discussion of society and culture.
3. Demonstrate understanding that because we live in an inter-connected world, we need to understand the diversity and relationships within and among cultures.
4. Recognize and evaluate how one's cultural history affects one's sense of self and relationship to others.

Requirements: This course entails a combination of lecture and class discussion. I expect you to come to class having completed all assigned reading for that day and prepared with questions and comments for discussion. Bring the readings to class each week so you can reference them in class discussion. **The reading load for this class is heavy for a G.E. course. It is crucial that you stay on top of the reading in order to keep up in class. If you're having trouble with a particular reading or topic, I'll be happy to talk it through with you during class or office hours.** I do not take attendance, but it is essential that you attend class consistently, as you will be accountable for material from readings, lectures, and discussions. You will receive a zero for any assignments missed due to absence. If you miss a class, you should obtain class notes from one or more of your fellow students.

In-Class Conduct & General Advice:

- Get to class on time. I make most important announcements in the first 5 minutes.
- Cellphones must be off (not on vibrate) and stowed away (not on your desk).
- No texting. No sleeping. No doing anything other than paying attention to what your classmates and I have to say about the subject matter at hand.
- You are not permitted to take notes on computers or audio record lectures unless specifically authorized to do so by Disabled Student Services.
- Please don't ask me questions to which the answers are available on the syllabus or assignment sheet (e.g., When is the final exam? What do we have to read this week?). I'm happy to answer your questions, but make sure you've exhausted other, more obvious sources before contacting me.

Exams & Assignments: For this class you will write **one take-home essay** and take **two in-class exams**. Your essay must be submitted in hard copy and through TurnItIn. If you are unhappy with your paper grade and would like to revise and resubmit it please contact me within two weeks of receiving your graded essay. In grading your assignments and exams I will pay close attention to both substance and form (grammar, spelling, organization, and clarity of expression). In evaluating the substance of an essay, I will examine whether you have demonstrated a critical understanding of course materials **and** presented a coherent thesis or argument. I reserve the right to modify or add assignments throughout the semester.

Required Texts:

- Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South*
- Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*
- Susan Douglas, *The Rise of Enlightened Sexism*
- Additional **required** readings available on our course website

All books are available at Little Professor Book Center (725 N. Placentia) and the University Bookstore. I don't require specific editions, so feel free to purchase used copies (**try www.half.com**). Let me know **immediately** if you have any trouble getting the books.

Grading Procedures:

Take-Home Essay	30%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final In-Class Exam	40%

A+	Over 100%	B+	88-89%	C+	78-79%	D+	68-69%	F	Under 59%
A	93-100%	B	83-87%	C	73-77%	D	63-67%		
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%		

I will use the +/- grading system in this course. There is one optional extra-credit assignment for this class. Keep all graded assignments so that any discrepancies can be easily and fairly straightened out.

Academic dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes such things as cheating, inventing false information or citations, plagiarism, and helping someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty. When you use information from sources external to yourself, you must reference the source appropriately. **Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated** and will result in a failing grade on that exam/assignment, as well as possible removal from the course or suspension from the university.

Students with special needs: Please inform me during the first week of classes about any disability or special needs you may have that may require specific arrangements related to attending class, carrying out assignments, or taking examinations. CSUF requires students with disabilities to register with the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS), located in UH-101 and at 657-278-3117, in order to receive prescribed accommodations appropriate to their disability.

Emergency Procedures: See http://www.fullerton.edu/emergencypreparedness/ep_students.html.

Office Hours: I encourage you to attend office hours or schedule an individual appointment if those hours are not compatible with your schedule. I am always happy to talk with you about the course readings, assignments, and broader questions about American Studies. It is a true pleasure for me to get to know you and your intellectual interests, so never hesitate to drop by with any questions or to mull over something you've been thinking about. If you're struggling in the class, come see me sooner, rather than later, so we have time to work together to improve your performance before the semester ends.

Policy on Selling Lecture Notes: Per California Education Code Section 66450, it is illegal to reproduce course lectures--including your own hand-written or typed lecture notes--for commercial purposes. Thus while you may occasionally loan another student your lecture notes when they have been absent, it is illegal to request money for those notes or to offer them for sale, online or in person. If you have any questions about this policy, or about what constitutes the legal and ethical sharing of class materials with another student, please contact your professor for guidance. Students who violate this standard are subject to disciplinary sanctions by the University, including failure in the course and suspension from the university. Any student who violates this code will be referred to the Dean of Students Office, Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Code.

AMST 320: Women in American Society
Course Schedule

*All reading for the week must be completed by Tuesday's class.

Introduction

1/24 No reading

PART ONE: The First American Women (all readings on Titanium)

1/31 Camilla Townsend, *Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma*, Preface & Ch. 1
Daniel Richter, "Living with Europeans"

2/7 Richard Godbeer, "The Dangerous Allure of 'Copper-Coloured Beauties'"
Sherrole Benton, "Pocahontas as a Traitor"
Disney's *Pocahontas* press kit
Mary Talbot, "He Really Means Business..."
The Powhatan Nation Responds to *Pocahontas*

****Recommended activities:**

- See images of Pocahontas at <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/pocahontas/images.php>
- Re-watch *Pocahontas* & read "The Real Pocahontas" (<http://pocahontas.morenus.org/>)
- See *Reel Injun* (Native Americans on film: <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/reel-injun/>)

PART TWO: American Women in Slavery & Freedom

2/14 Deborah Gray White, *Arn't I A Woman?*, Intro. & Ch. 1-2

2/21 Deborah Gray White, *Arn't I A Woman?*, Ch. 3-6

****Recommended activities:**

- Visit the California African American Museum (600 State Drive, Los Angeles)
- Watch *Unchained Memories: Readings from the Slave Narratives*

Midterm Exam

2/28 Wrap-up and Review Session

3/1 **In-Class Midterm Exam**

PART THREE: Working Women in Labor and Leisure

3/6 Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, Introduction & Ch. 1-3

3/13 Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, Ch. 4-6

3/20 Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, Ch. 7 & Conclusion

****Recommended activities:**

- Watch *Iron Jawed Angels* (movie about the women's suffrage movement)
- Watch *It*, a silent film with Clara Bow (1927)

* * * **SPRING BREAK** * * *

PART FOUR: Women in WWII: At War and on the Homefront (all readings on Titanium)

- 4/3** Sara Evans, "Women at War: The 1940s"
Robert Westbrook, "I Want a Girl, Just Like the Girl That Married Harry James"
- 4/5 DUE: TAKE-HOME ESSAY ON PEISS**
- 4/10** Shirley Lim, "'A Feeling of Belonging': Chi Alpha Delta, 1928-1941"
Elizabeth Escobedo, "The Pachuca Panic: Sexual & Cultural Battlegrounds in WWII L.A."
- 4/17** Susan Hartmann, "Prescriptions for Penelope"
Betty Friedan, "The Problem that Has No Name"

****Recommended activities:**

- Visit the Japanese American National Museum (369 East 1st St., Los Angeles)
- Visit the Nikkei Heritage Museum on campus at the Fullerton Arboretum
- Visit El Pachuco, the zoot suit store (801 S. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton)

PART FIVE: Women (Real and Imagined) in Contemporary America

- 4/24** Douglas, *The Rise of Enlightened Sexism*, Intro. & Ch. 3-4
- 5/1** Douglas, *The Rise of Enlightened Sexism*, Ch. 5-7
- 5/3 DUE: OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT PAPER**
- 5/8** Douglas, *The Rise of Enlightened Sexism*, Ch. 8-10 & Epil.
- 5/10** Wrap-Up and Review Session

****Recommended activities:**

- Watch *The Celluloid Closet* on representations of homosexuality in American film

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 15 (9:30-11:20am) in MH 264