

Portland State University

Introduction to
Women's Studies
WS 101, CRN 46066; 46068
Tuesdays, 5:30pm-9:00pm
Cramer Hall 183

Marlene Howell, Instructor

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The best way to contact me is via
Blackboard email.
Office hours:
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Teaching Assistants:

Shirley Rubin
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Welcome to Women's Studies!

This term we have much to cover and accomplish, learn and discern, ponder, and perhaps, act upon. An active participation course, it's important to be respectful yet honest in classroom and on-line discussions, listen carefully, speak thoughtfully. Even when opinions clash, and experiences bring us to different conclusions or understandings, calm reasoning and a sense of humor often make a greater impact than do facts and figures. This syllabus is a guide to the term we'll spend together. It may be changed if needed.

How This Class Works

This course has a variety of assignment options because people have a variety of learning styles. You choose most assignments you'll submit for a grade. I decide due dates and assess the academic quality of your work. Students who actively participate, listen well, come to class prepared, submit weekly assignments that show continual progress, learn the most. The goals are:

- ❖ to grow in understanding of the course content—feminism and women's lives
- ❖ to improve the academic quality of all types of assignments you submit
- ❖ to learn, and teach, in ways best suited to your learning style
- ❖ to have fun with the process and progress of learning.

How should you choose your assignments? It may be difficult if you are used to being told how learn in school, or if you have time management challenges. So, this is an opportunity to address those issues, as you put yourself in charge of your learning process and progress. Choose your assignments depending on your learning style, time allocation, academic curiosity, and the grade you want to achieve. If you have special learning needs in order to do your academic work, please let me know! I grade all assignments on a point system, and don't accept extra credit, late submission, or hard copies of assignments. Submit all written work through our course Blackboard site, which we'll review in class before using.

Classroom Etiquette

Each class period begins a moment of silence to honor all the people who have lost their lives due to domestic violence, or in the on-going wars around the world. Please respect this time, especially if you arrive late. Be polite! When you come into the classroom, talk quietly or read, and when it is time to start class, be quiet! RINGERS ON ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES MUST BE OFF, OR ON VIBRATE ONLY, DURING CLASS. IF YOU MUST TAKE A CALL, OR TEXT, OR TWEET, OR SURF, HAVE THE COURTESY TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM FIRST. NO PHONE CONVERSATIONS or IPOD LISTENING DURING CLASS! LAPTOPS in class are for note taking only. IF YOU BRING DRINKS/FOOD TO CLASS, BE CAREFUL! During discussions, please ask when something is not clear. By the same token, listen to one another before responding. Help one another to learn the material. Challenge yourself to really engage in a discussion, so that we teach, and learn, together.

Keys

Course Organization and texts

Weekly we focus on particular topics of relevance in contemporary women's lives. Megan Seely's *Fight Like a Girl*, readings and videos posted on the Blackboard Course Contents page, form the basis for classroom activities, and assignments.

As a requirement, each student reads two very different books-- Haifa Zangana's *City of Widows* and CJ Pasco's *Dude You're a Fag*— as part of a book group. Those who want may also do a written book report with a partner, reading Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* or *Poster Child* by Emily Rapp. *All book group work will be fully explained in class.*

We use a variety of approaches to learning, including discussions, poetry, music, classroom activities, lectures, films, guest speakers, creative and experiential exercises. We study herstory and current events. Even serious learning has elements of fun, as long as we respect each other, and realize there are many experiences, learning styles, interests, memories, and goals dancing together in the room.

Take time in the first week to create your assignment plan. Ask Sokreth or Shirley to help you.

for Your

Participation

The only way to learn anything in this class is participation. Every week, students earn credit for engaged and cogent participation! This includes regular attendance, preparation, and active involvement in discussions and activities.

Participation is qualitative, not quantitative. When you share your ideas, show that you've done the readings. If you are usually a talker, challenge yourself to be a listener, and remember, listening doesn't mean planning what you want to say next, or staring off into space. If you are shy, or more prone to only listening, take the risk to find your voice!

We learn more when we communicate. We also learn important lessons when we ascertain the challenges of group work, and what the politics of the dynamics really trigger. It is a learning community we're creating together. Let's make it happen!

Success!

BLACKBOARD

Blackboard is a software program used to submit your assignments, be part of after class discussions, email each other and the teachers, and keep track of your grades. If you are new to computer based assignments, this is an opportunity to learn a new skill! In Blackboard, you will submit your written work, find your up-to-date grades, email announcements of upcoming events, and my comments on your work. I don't accept hard copies of written work, and I rely on the electronic grade book to keep your scores up to date. So, Blackboard is an important component of this course! It's an electronic record keeping system!

Read the Blackboard directions carefully in the assignment drop box and follow those directions. Post all written work either in MS Word— any version, or HTML only. NO WPS or other program. Also, NO attachments please! I don't open them. Please read the Blackboard email a few times weekly. I announce events there, and share pertinent information that you need for class.

For Blackboard help, contact a TA, or the Student Help Desk-503 725 HELP, or visit them in Smith Hall, 18, in the basement.

Grades

As the table below indicates, all assignments except involvement in the book discussion group, are optional. Choose the assignments that fit your learning style, interests, time management, and the academic skills you wish to develop.

Required of Everyone	Group Book Reports— <i>Dude, You're a Fag,</i> <i>City of Widows</i>
Optional In-class and Blackboard Assignments	Participation in class Weekly Discussions in BB Content Fishbowls in-class Presentation of Creative Assignment Submission of content based essay in "Assignments" area of BB Book Report with a partner based on <i>Hogan's Solar Storms</i> or <i>Rapp's Poster Child</i>
Optional Assignments Out of Class	Attending Outside of Class activities –<u>only</u> if announced on BB

Group Book Reports:

Worth up to 250 pts each; 500 pts total possible

We read two books, City of Widows by Zangana and Dude, You're a Fag, by Pascoe, in book groups. The structure of these book groups will be fully explained in class. Book reports will be presented in class, orally. In order to earn full credit, each book group member must be prepared, active, reliable, and respectful of others in the group. Respectful disagreement is fine. Asking someone to cover for you, because you've not done the reading or your work for the project, is not. These two books give us excellent opportunities to learn about feminist frameworks across a wide spectrum of experiences, analysis, cultures, and ideas.

Participation/ Attendance:
Worth up to 100 pts weekly; 1000 total pts possible

Earn points toward your grade simply by participating in class. Each week you will assess your own participation score, out loud, at the end of class. Periodically, those with self grades of 90 points or higher will be given a pop quiz on the readings and discussions covered in class that night.

Base weekly self-grades on the following:

- ❖ *was I on time for class?*
- ❖ *did I do all of the readings ahead of time, highlighting important passages to share?*
- ❖ *did I bring at least one question about each reading to discuss in class?*
- ❖ *did I listen to others and respond to them by name, or did I simply wait until I could say my piece?*
- ❖ *did I participate in my book discussion group by reading the assigned part ahead of time, discussing it, reminding group members to stay on?*
- ❖ *did I take any risks?*
- ❖ *did my involvement show that I am making connections between the ideas in the various readings?*
- ❖ *did I use the vocabulary of the course in my discussions?*
- ❖ *did I whine, fall asleep, watch the clock, do homework for other classes, text message, use the internet on my laptop, take frequent smoke breaks, make derogatory comments under my breath, or disrupt anyone?*
- ❖ *did I try hard, even if the content or discussions were difficult for me?*
- ❖ *was I honest in my discussions? Did I allow myself to be challenged?*
- ❖ *as I leave class tonight, can I honestly say that I learned something about the content or myself? Am I proud of my accomplishments tonight?*

People who come late and/or leave early will forfeit any points they earn during a class period. Credit for participation is not earned on the first day of class.

Essays:
Worth up to
150 pts each;
Students may
submit up to two
essays

At the end of Jan and Feb, there is an optional essay assignment, based on the readings and class discussions. The essay asks a general, topic related question. Write an essay that answers the question by using examples and citations from the assigned readings in the analysis you make. Correct spelling and grammar, appropriate content citations—MLA or APA style—clarity, syntax, correct use of new vocabulary all contribute to the overall grade.

300 total pts
possible

An essay is an ANALYSIS, not a report or a summary. It shows your ability to discern and articulate the issues we discuss in class, putting together a cogent description that focuses on “how” and “why”, rather than “what”. Don’t repeat what the author said. Discuss what you think of it, and why. Demonstrate your framework of analysis in your essay. Let it get beyond the surface, “sound bite” or “headline” aspects of the issues. The best essays start with an outline and then a rough draft before the final draft is submitted for grading. How many pages or words? It’s up to you! I look for your best work and a clear indication that you grasp the topic. Length for the sake of length means little. Succinctness for the sake of submitting something also means little. A quality piece of writing covers the topic without excess and without cutting corners.

**Content based
in-class fishbowls:**
Worth up to
100 pts each ;
200 total pts
possible

Periodically, you'll have the opportunity to be part of a fishbowl exercise in which a group of students makes a semi circle in front of the class and discusses some aspect. Being prepared ahead of time by having done some critical thinking about the readings is the best way to be prepared to do this. Everyone may participate twice, though not everyone will participate in this exercise.

**Out of Class
Activities:**
Worth up to
100 pts each;
200 total pts
possible

Earn class credit by attending lectures, women's athletic events, plays, concerts, if announced on Blackboard . Write a review of the event, answering the questions listed elsewhere in the syllabus, and submit it in Blackboard. Each student may submit up to 2 events for credit.

**Weekly BB
Discussion:**
Worth up to
100 pts each week;
1000 total pts
possible
Open to all
who attend class
in any given week

Each week, the teaching assistants moderate a discussion board on BB, based topics we've studied that week, To earn full credit, first post one original comment that is substantive, and clearly reflective of your personal and political understanding of the readings and class engagement with the topic. Then respond to at least two other students' original comments, showing your ability to engage in dialogue thoughtfully and cogently.

Discussion boards are open from 9pm Tuesday night until Friday at 5pm for original comments to be posted, and then until Saturday at 5pm for responses to be posted. Earn full credit in BB discussions by not waiting until the last minute to participate, because doing so is only about chasing a grade, and not about learning together.

NOTE: The first discussion board will not open until noon on Jan 6.

**Creative
Works**
Worth up to 100 pts;
100 total pts
possible

Each student may bring a creative work—poem, song, photo montage, painting, dance, based on a topic we've explored/studied in class, and present it in class. Full credit presentations will include an explanation of the work as well as at least two quotes, from assigned readings, that fit with the project. Presenters must email Marlene through BB email at least one week prior to weeks when we have time set aside for creative projects.

**Written Book
Report**
on either
Solar Storms by
Linda Hogan,
or *Poster Child* by
Emily Rapp
Worth up to 300 pts

Working with a partner, develop a book report that does not repeat the book's narrative, but rather, uses race, class, or gender as a basis for analysis. Send Marlene an email through BB by Susan B Anthony's birthday, explaining which book you'll read and with whom you'll work. Marlene will send you a reply with the aspect of analysis you are to use as a basis for your framework. Once you know this, organize your report around three basic questions which form the framework of your analysis. Then, develop your report by answering these questions, using citations from lectures and assigned readings we've done in class, along with citations from book you've read. Due on the day the swallows always return to Capistrano, 5pm, BB assignments

Final Grades Final grades are based on these minimum cumulative point totals, with at least 400 pts of each point total coming from the assigned book group presentations. These points cannot be substituted with points from any other assignment.

A---2000 B---1700 C---1500 D---1300

Texts All assignments will be from these textbooks, available on campus, at the Women’s Resource Center in Montgomery Hall, the first week of classes.

Required Texts:

City of Widows by Haifa Zangana

Dude, You’re a Fag by CJ Pascoe

Optional Texts:

Fight Like a Girl by Megan Seeley

Poster Child by Emily Rapp

Solar Storms by Linda Hogan

Questions to address in reviews of events announced on Blackboard:

<i>Sporting Events</i>	<i>Art Shows</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Team, Date of Game • Place where game was held • Audience Demographic • Audience level of interest • What was new for you • How does the existence of this team relate to Title Nine? • Would you encourage other people to attend this team's games? Why? Explain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Art show, artist, location • Style of art • Medium • Theme in the art • Why this work is significant. • What you learned from the show. • If you could, would you put a piece of art by this artist in your home? Why? • Would you attend another show by the same artist? Why?
<i>Lectures and Readings</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of Speaker, Date and Place where event was held • Main ideas of the speaker • How does this issue relate to Women's Studies? • Your impression of the speaker--congenial, well prepared, easy to follow, thought provoking • Your analysis of the speaker's ideas--NOT whether or not you agreed, but whether or not you found the ideas to be solid and well grounded, and why • What you would tell someone about this speaker's ideas and presentation? 	

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Jan 5	<p>5:30 pm Music: <i>Regina Carter</i> 6:00pm Hello! Intro to the Course; works by Gioconda Belli, Alix Olsen; Alice Walker 6:30 Activity—15 minute Free write re: important gender issues in the 21st Century 6:45 Break 7:00 Lecture/Activity: What is Women's Studies? What is Gender? What is Feminism? 7:20 TA's say hello 7:45 Moment of Silence, Syllabus, Decorum in the Classroom; Blackboard 8:30 A Contemporary Woman Leader; Current Events</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*BLACKBOARD DISCUSSIONS BEGIN ON WEDS at NOON THIS WEEK! **Book Groups announced on BB Weds at NOON also!</p>
Jan 12	<p>5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Lila Downs</i> 6:00 Lecture: Learning Gender—Seely, Preface and pgs 1-26 6:45 Break 7:00 Book Groups—Assignment in preparation for today's Book Group meetings Zangana, <u>Chapters 3 and 4</u>; Pascoe, Chapters 1,2,3 8:00 Important Vocabulary 8:20 Self Grades 8:35 A Contemporary Woman Leader; Current Events</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT</p>
Jan 19	<p>5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>India. Arie</i> 6:00 Lecture: Body Image—Chernak, Mernissi (on BB Course Contents) 6:45 Body Image Exercise 7:00 Break 7:15 Book Groups Meet 8:00 Body Image Exercise 8:30 Self Grades 8:40 A Contemporary Woman Leader; Current Events</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT</p>
Jan 26	<p>5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Yoko Ono</i> 6:00 Race Exercise 6:15 Book Groups Meet 7:00 Break 7:15 Lecture: Understanding Race through the lens of Feminism—Tatum on BB 7:45 Ideas for Change Course Contents Page 8:40 Self Grades 8:50 A Contemporary Woman Leader; Current Events</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT **ESSAY NUMBER 1 and January Events' Reviews are DUE on SUNDAY, JAN 31, 5pm,</p>

Feb 2	5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Kim Kashkashian</i> 6:00 Book Groups Meet 6:30 Zangana Book Group Presents 7:15 Pascoe Book Group Presents 8:00 Open Evaluation of Book Group Presentations 8:30 Self Grades 8:50 A Contemporary Woman Leader; Current Events *BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT
Feb 9	5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Noa</i> 6:00 Lecture: Gendered Economics—Occupational Segregation; Class Identities 6:45 Break 7:00 Book Groups Meet Assignment in preparation for today's Book Group meetings Zangana, <u>Chapters 3 and 4</u> ; Pascoe, Chapters 1,2,3 7:30 Slide Show—AAUW Research Study, <i>Behind the Pay Gap</i> Institute for Women's Policy Research Studies on Gendered Economics (see URL's on BB Course Contents Page to prepare for class tonight) 8:40 Self Grades 8:50 A Contemporary Woman Leader; Current Events *BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT
Feb 16	5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Ustad Mahwash</i> 6:00 Harriet Jacobs and Lydia Maria Child 6:20 Book Groups Meet//Break 7:15 Lecture: Violence Against Women: Analysis and Solutions—Seely, pgs 185-217 8:40 Self Grades 8:50 A Contemporary Woman Leader, Current Events *BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT
Feb 23	5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Storm Large</i> 6:00 Lecture: Sex, Sexuality, Relationships--Seely, pgs 147-183; Lorde, BB Course Contents page 6:45 Break 7:00 Unraveling the politics of sexuality 7:45 Self Grades 8:00 A Contemporary Woman Leader, Current Events 8:15 Book Groups Meet *BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT **ESSAY NUMBER 2 and February Events' Reviews are DUE on SUNDAY, Feb 28, 5pm,

<p>Mar 2 5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Angelique Kidjo</i> 6:00 Book Groups Meet 6:30 Zangana Book Group Presents 7:15 Pascoe Book Group Presents 8:00 Open Evaluation of Book Group Presentations 8:30 International Women's Day 8:45 Distribute Hard Copies of Formal Evaluations 8:50 Self Grades</p> <p>*BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT</p>
<p>Mar 9 5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: Bibi Gurdev Kaur 6:00 ART: Maya Lin 7:30 Break 7:45 ART: Elizabeth Layton, Faith Ringgold 8:30 Self Grades 8:45 A Contemporary Woman Leader, Current Events</p> <p>*BLACKBOARD DISCUSSION BEGINS AFTER CLASS TONIGHT</p>
<p>Mar 16</p> <p>5:40 Moment of Silence 5:41 Music: <i>Jonatha Brooks; Sweet Honey In the Rock</i> 6:00 Formal Written Evaluations 6:30 Informal Evaluation, Final Learning Community Activity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*NO BB DISCUSSION THIS WEEK! March Events' Reviews due in BB by Friday, March 19, 5pm</p>