“We Are Here Because You Were There.” Contemporary Political Slogan (Britain).

Every place on the map is also a place in history (A. Rich, 1984).

Globalization of the capitalist economy has been matched by a similar dispersal of populations. Forced removal, exile and relocation are forms of displacement that are the legacies of slavery and colonialism. In this course we will examine a variety of accounts (e.g., film/video excerpts, prose, essay, field studies) from women of the “diaspora.” Of particular interest are the ways in which the dynamics of race, gender, nation and class have shaped their lives and the formation of their identities. While we will focus on narratives of “Black” (e.g., multiracial) women from Britain, and the West Indies, accounts from Asia and the U.S. and Canada will also be considered. Some of the issues that we will examine include migration, the politics of location, narratives of memory, home and belonging, in addition to tourism, “mixed race” identities, and “interracial” relationships. This course is designed to encourage students to examine how legacies of imperial domination and colonialism have influenced our everyday understanding of cultural difference and identity. One of the goals therefore is to provide students with the means to critical thinking about the “local” construction of identities of race, gender, sexuality and nation in a global context.

Two feature films will be shown: 1) Secrets & Lies 2) Life & Debt

Video excerpts include: S. Hall: Race, the Floating Signifier; The Life and Times of Sarah Baartman; Hanging Out; Under the Willow Tree, The Edge of Each Other’s Battles.

REQUERED TEXT:

COURSE READER:
- A course reader containing the course readings will be available for purchase.
- Supplementary readings will be on reserve in the library.

EVALUATION:
- Attendance and Participation: 15%
- In Class Midterm: 25%
- Film Analysis/Reading Report: 20%
- Term Paper: 40%

Prerequisites: 60 credit hours

THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING. STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT.