

GSWS 398-4 W
BLU 9655, Tue 9am - 12:20 pm

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COURE DESCRIPTION

This course examines major ideas in post-third wave feminist writing while exploring various forms of critical and creative expression. We will focus on the following themes: third wave and postfeminist debates; activism and creativity; men, masculinity and feminism; gender variance and trans issues; pedagogy and critical thinking in the classroom. The writing intensive component of the course helps students develop analytical, writing, and research skills through a variety of writing assignments including blogging, exploratory writing, a group 'zine project, and a sequence of short assignments that build up to a final writing project. We will also use writing as a vehicle for reading comprehension, ideas generation, creative expression, and group communication. Students are encouraged to contribute actively to the learning environment with ideas from their own experience, practices, and visions of feminism.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students are expected to:

- gain a comprehensive understanding of post-third wave feminist debates
- practise using different critical and creative conventions in contemporary feminist writing
- develop skills to articulate advanced critical ideas on gender and sexuality through a variety of writing and research practices
- develop the habit of using writing as a vehicle for learning, communication, and expression
- experience working in groups while cultivating awareness of the collaboration process

REQUIRED TEXTS

Alison Piepmeier & Andi Zeisler, *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism* (NYU Press, 2009).

Genz and Benjamin, *Postfeminism: Cultural Texts and Theories* (Edinburgh, 2009).

Shira Tarrant, *Men and Feminism* (Seal Press, 2009).

Kate Bornstein & S. Bear Bergman, *Gender Outlaw: The Next Generation* (Seal Press, 2010).

bell hooks, *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* (Routledge, 2009).

GRADING PROFILE

Attendance	10%
Blog Contributions	10%
Short Assignment 1	10%
Short Assignment 2	10%
Short Assignment 3	10%
Final Writing Project	30%
Group 'Zine Project	20%

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING CRITERIA

ATTENDANCE:

Full attendance is expected. An unexcused absence will result in a 1 point (out of 10) deduction from the attendance grade.

EXPLORATORY WRITING ACTIVITIES

BLOG

Students are required to write blog entries on a website created for the course. Blog entries can be a response to assigned reading, exploratory thoughts on topics relevant to the course, or observations on the relation between feminism, popular culture, and everyday experience. The blog entries need not be polished pieces of writing but they should be thoughtful, focussed, and grammatically correct. Each student is expected to write at least one blog entry per week. The blog provides students with the opportunity to write frequent, informal responses to ideas, to develop editing and proofreading technique as natural steps in the writing process. The blog will be graded primarily on efforts.

IN-CLASS WRITING

Much of contemporary feminist writing is about “writing theory in the flesh,” i.e. theorizing from one’s personal experience. Students will explore this feminist credo of writing through in-class writing sessions where they develop the creative and personal aspects of their writing. We will also practice using writing as a means to comprehend and generate ideas, express oneself, and communicate with others. In addition, we will explore the unique challenges each student faces in their experience of writing and collectively search for solutions. In-class writing exercises will be checked but not graded.

FORMAL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

SHORT ESSAYS & FINAL PAPER

Students are required to write a sequence of short essays (3-4 pages), each using analytical, writing, and research skills learned throughout the semester:

- The first essay explores what you would consider a feminist argument on an assigned issue. Students write a one-page argument, then in 2-3 pages reflect on what constitutes its feminist dimension, what is its intended audience, the style of address, and the contributions and/or challenges the piece offers to contemporary feminism.
- The second essay asks students to situate an assigned article in the wider context of an academic and/or political and/or cultural debate. Students are expected to conduct outside research. We will reflect on the research process and its challenges.
- The third essay identifies a final project idea and develops an annotated bibliography. Each student will make a short (10-min.) presentation on his/her idea and research findings to date.
- Using the critical, writing, and research skills learnt in the previous three assignments, students develop a 8-10 page final paper to be included in an anthology entitled *The F-Word: Explorations in Feminisms*. Techniques on how to brainstorm, formulate and research topics will be discussed prior to the writing of this paper. As a class, we will hold editorial meetings to conceptualize and organize the anthology.

Throughout the semester, students will prepare drafts of each assignment and meet in workshops for peer critique and feedback. Students are strongly encouraged to revise their essays after the workshops before submitting a final copy.

GROUP WRITING ACTIVITY

'ZINE PROJECT

Students will work in groups of 4-5 to produce a 'zine, which is a format frequently used in third wave feminist writing. Both the content and format of the 'zine will be decided by the students. The project aims at stimulating students' interest in alternative forms of writing while exploring feminist ideas of creativity and activism through writing. Students will develop ideas in an initial workshop and then collectively produce and assemble the 'zines together in subsequent writing sessions. The finished 'zines will be exhibited on the last day of class. The 'zines can be in paper or digital formats and can (but do not have to) contain multi-media components.

CLASS POLICIES

- Late assignments will not be accepted unless an extension has been negotiated with me at least four days prior to the due date.
- All assignments should be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-pt font. Please observe the word limit for every assignment. Pages over the limit will not be marked.
- Please use MLA documentation style in all research assignments to reference your sources accurately and consistently.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in an F in the assignment. It is highly recommended that all students finish the "Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism: A Self-Directed Tutorial" provided by the SFU library on-line resources. Please keep all outlines and drafts in case questions of plagiarism arise. Also, keep back-up copies of all assignments.

TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

- Class handouts will be emailed to you at least one day prior to class. Please check your sfu email regularly or provide me with an alternative email address that you check regularly. Please print and bring handouts with you to class or download to your mobile devices.
- Use a folder or scrapbook to collect all your exploratory writing - they may be useful when you develop your final project idea.
- Bring scratch paper or a notebook to class even if you write primarily on a laptop or tablet. Some exercises may be more suited to hand-writing. Experiment with different media and see what works best with which kind of writing.

READING SCHEDULE (* Assignment schedule and deadlines will be emailed to you)

Week 1 Jan 10

Introduction

Week 2 Jan 17

Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism

Week 3 Jan 24

Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism

Week 4 Jan 31

Postfeminism: Cultural Texts and Theories

Week 5 Feb 7

Postfeminism: Cultural Texts and Theories

Week 6 Feb 14

READING BREAK NO CLASS

Week 7 Feb 21

Men and Feminism

Week 8 Feb 28

Men and Feminism

Week 9 Mar 6

Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation

Week 10 Mar 13

Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation

Week 11 Mar 20

Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom

Week 12 Mar 27

Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom

Week 13 Apr 3

Final Paper Workshop

Week 14 Apr 11

Final Paper Workshop

'Zines Exhibition