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WST 2309G-002: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

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**Intro to Women's and Gender Studies
Spring, 2019**

Dr. Jeannie Ludlow

WGS 2309G sect. 002, CRN 33588

11-12:15 TR in CH 3609

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Office Hours: MT 3:00-4:30 p.m., W 9:30-11:30
am, and by appointment

The best way to reach me is via email [on D2L](#). Please allow 24 hours for answers to emails.

Course Description for WGS 2309G:

From Undergraduate Catalog: "Examines gender roles and development in a historical context from a variety of theoretical and disciplinary perspectives and within a variety of frameworks: political, economic, cultural, religious, and social."

WGS 2309G is a Social Sciences General Education course that fulfills the cultural diversity requirement. As such, this course aims to foster "responsible citizens[hip] in a diverse world" through "understanding [of] society and the individual. In these courses, students will have the opportunity to apply various methods of inquiry and analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, to the study of the human condition. These sciences emphasize the importance of understanding the diversity of human cultures, their socio-historical context, and one's personal responsibility for being not only a good citizen, but also a steward of the environment" (Undergraduate Catalog http://catalog.eiu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=16&poid=1865&bc=1).

Course Format: This is a writing-intensive, discussion- and participation-oriented course; assignments function as preparatory work for and the bases of the learning process, not as ends in themselves. Students have primary responsibility for the focus and tone of class discussions. Written work may be revised at the discretion of the professor and within a reasonable time frame.

Course Expectations: It is my educational philosophy that each student is responsible for their own education; the role of the professor is to guide and facilitate learning, not to tell students what (or how) to think. Therefore, it is expected that students will come to class having done all assignments, fully

prepared to engage in discussions, activities, etc., that revolve around the assigned materials. We will be discussing ideas and information that make some people uncomfortable (e.g., racism, sexuality). It is absolutely necessary, if we are to learn, to ask questions (especially the difficult ones), to express opinions, and to be respectful of others, especially when we do not agree with them. All opinions and ideas are encouraged in this class; it is never expected that students will agree with everything they read, see or hear. Students will not be evaluated on their opinions but on their ability to analyze and evaluate situations and concepts, clearly and thoughtfully. Critical thinking and articulation of disagreements and difficulties are encouraged.

Please note: Several of the works we are reading this semester include very frank representations of a variety of women's experiences, from the joyful (including first love, sexual experiences, pregnancy decision-making, activism) to the traumatic (including sexual assault, war, oppression). I do not issue "trigger warnings"; please be aware that you will be reading these frank representations and do what you need to do to take good care of yourself both inside and outside of the classroom. If you need to talk, to debrief, to decompress with someone, I am 100% available to you for this. I care about your success and your ability to experience fully the amazing texts we will be reading together.

Student Learning Objectives for WGS 2309G—in this course you will:

1. demonstrate critical thinking about gender issues;
2. articulate how political, social, economic, and/or religious factors influence gender role expectations;
3. demonstrate awareness of comparative gender differences within and across cultures and subcultures;
4. demonstrate an appreciation of the diverse experiences and perspectives that shape human culture, in service of global citizenship;
5. improve your public speaking skills through course discussions and in-class presentations;
6. improve your writing skills through formal and informal writing assignments

Special circumstances: Any student who needs disability accommodations for this course should please speak with me as soon as possible. Please note that the University's Office of Disability Services (581-6583) will help with designated learning needs, mobility needs, etc.

Materials:

PLEASE NOTE: You are required to do all assigned reading for this course. Many texts were ordered for this course from Textbook Rental; we are using the five listed, below, in class. Some required readings will also be available only online or via D2L.

TRS TEXTS—in order of use

Gay, Roxane. *Bad Feminist: Essays*.

Launius, Christie, and Holly Hassel. *Threshold Concepts in Women's and Gender Studies*.

Bornstein, Kate. *My New Gender Workbook*.

Cisneros, Sandra. *Woman Hollering Creek*.

Andrews, Arin. *Some Assembly Required*.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Readings on D2L or online, as required.

You will need regular access to a computer and the ability to use D2L. If you need help with this, let me know. Please note: "My computer wouldn't access this reading" or "my printer is out of ink" are not excuses for incomplete homework. If your computer isn't cooperating, go to the library lab and download, read, or print there.

IN ORDER TO PASS THIS CLASS,
YOU MUST COMPLETE FOR GRADING:
FIVE EXAMS, FOUR PAPERS,
AND ONE PAPER REVISION.
EXCESSIVE ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN
AUTOMATIC FAILURE OF THIS COURSE.

GRADES will be earned through the following components, each of which will be assigned a letter grade:

25% Participation (includes attendance, in-class writing, in-class activities, quizzes, and discussion, and successful completion of all reading and out-of-class assignments)

20% Four unit exams (5% each)

10% Paper #1 and Paper #2 (5% each)

20% Paper #3 and Paper #4 (10% each)

15% Final exam (take-home essay plus in-class work)

10% Revision of Paper #1

NOTE: There will be no makeups for participation credit, including attendance, in-class writing assignments or quizzes. Makeups for other assignments (papers, exams) may be permitted in cases of documented hardship or emergency. If you experience hardship or emergency, please let me know as soon as is reasonable.

LATE POLICY: Late work is strongly discouraged.

However, late is better than not at all. Work will depreciate in value one letter grade for each school day it is late, beginning at the beginning of class on

the day it is due, unless otherwise noted. All work is due at the time noted in the schedule.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: You should make your own choices about attending class; do remember that any choice one makes comes with consequences. In this class, the consequence for absence is lower grade or failure of the course. I take attendance using a student sign-in sheet. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to remember to sign the sign-in sheet at the end of class that day; if you forget, you will be counted absent. When you are absent, you earn an F in participation that day. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed (from a classmate or during my office hours) and for making sure that you get copies of handouts, worksheets, etc. on D2L. Please do not email your professors and ask, "did I miss anything?" and please do not interrupt the whole class to ask about something you missed.

Email guidelines: (NOTE: this is good advice for emailing all your instructors) Communication with your instructors, whether by email, by phone, or in person, is a professional exchange. Please be sure to reflect this professionalism in your communication. All emails must have: an appropriate salutation ("Dear Jeannie," "Hello, Dr. Ludlow," etc.); the course info in the subject line (e.g. WGS 2309G); and a recognizable signature. Your emails should be written with complete words and in complete sentences ("May I schedule an appointment with you?" not "Can I C U?"), not in textspeak; this is true even if you are sending the emails on your phone. Also, please note that I only check my email two or three times each school day. It often takes me one full school day (24 hours, M – F) to answer any email message—I typically do not check email on weekends. ALL COURSE-RELATED EMAILS SHOULD BE SENT TO ME ON D2L.

CLASSROOM BILL OF RIGHTS AND

RESPONSIBILITIES—the following constitutes an agreement between the students and professor for this course.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the right to work in a harassment-free, hostility-free environment; harassment of others and explicit or deliberate hostility are not tolerated.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the right to be treated with respect

and dignity at all times, even in the midst of heated disagreement.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the responsibility to behave as a competent adult and to be open and polite to one another.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and academic guests) has the responsibility to come to every class fully prepared to listen, to participate, to learn and to teach.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the responsibility to work together to create, in this class, an environment in which active learning, including responsible and respectful questioning, is encouraged.

The professor has the responsibility to treat all students fairly and to evaluate students' work accurately, in terms of the skills that any student in this course is expected to gain.

The professor has the responsibility to make assignment requirements and evaluation criteria clear.

Students have the right to feel confident that their work is being evaluated on its own merits, not on the basis of the students' personal opinions.

Students have the responsibility to view their professor as a partner in their education, not as bent on causing students anxiety and frustration.

Students have the responsibility to understand that the professor is not primarily responsible for making students understand; it is students' job to study, ask questions, and learn.

Students have the responsibility to keep an open mind and to try to comprehend what the professor and the texts are trying to get across to them.

Students have the responsibility to read the assignments carefully, noting important ideas and rephrasing information in their own words.

Students have the responsibility to work through examples in the assignments and in class discussions or lectures and to ask questions if they do not understand concepts or examples.

Students have the responsibility to do every bit of assigned homework with proper attention and thought.

Students have the responsibility to ask for help when they need it; help is available from the professor, from other students, from the Writing Center, the Student Success Center, and the Reading Center, and from other resources on campus.

Students have the responsibility to accept that their work will be evaluated in terms of the

skills any student in this course is expected to gain.

Students have the responsibility to try to integrate the information from this course into other courses and into other areas of their lives.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: In this course, we will comply with EIU's academic integrity policy (please see your catalog). I have absolutely no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. Please note that "plagiarism or cheating" includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1. **quoting** from a source without citing that source and/or without using quotation marks
2. **paraphrasing** from a source without citing that source
3. turning in a paper with an incorrect or incomplete **works cited list**
4. **falsifying** data
5. turning in **someone else's work** as your own—this includes (but is not limited to)
 - a. **copying** another's work from a quiz or assignment
 - b. turning in work that **someone else wrote**
 - c. using online or hard copy **paper mills**
6. turning in **your own work that was written for another course**, without prior permission from both professors.

Violations of EIU's academic integrity policy will result in an **automatic failing grade** in this course and notification of the Office of Student Services. For more information, see www.eiu.edu/judicial. **In this class, you may use either MLA, APA, ASA, or Chicago citation styles. Whichever style you choose, you must use consistently and correctly.**

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

All in-class writing for grade (quizzes, exams, daily writings) will be hand-written in ink unless otherwise specified. All out-of-class writing will be typed, double-spaced, in a standard font, with your name and page numbers on every page and submitted via D2L. **Please do not include cover pages and do not submit paper copies to me, if you can avoid it—we are all responsible for conserving natural resources.** We will use D2L dropbox for submission of written work. If your work is not in the dropbox, it was not turned in, even if you sent it via email. When you submit papers via D2L, please be sure that all parts of the paper are in **one document**; never submit the Works Cited as a separate document. If you have questions about D2L or need help, please ask!

PARTICIPATION

Participation consists of regular attendance and productive participation in class discussions and in-class activities. The items in **bold** are the most important.

- A = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **active and substantive participation in class discussions, explicitly about the materials assigned for that day or unit**, involving obvious **critical thought** and making connections to other materials or examples; avoidance of “side” conversations in class; leadership role in group activities and discussion; professional interactions with others in class, even when disagreeing strongly, and in all communications with professor; using cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class only when instructed to, and only for class assignments;
- B = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **consistent participation in class discussions and activities, even when confused or struggling with ideas**; professional behavior in class (including not carrying on “side” conversations and not being rude) and in all communication with professor; using cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class only when instructed to, and only for class assignments;
- C = consistent attendance with full preparation of course materials but **little to no verbal participation in discussions** unless required; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; consistent “follower” role in group activities; OR consistent enthusiastic participation in discussions and activities, **with no explicit evidence of full preparation of course materials**; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; using cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class only when instructed to, and only for class assignments;
- D = frequent tardiness; unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior in class or on discussion boards (including, but not limited to, doing homework for other classes, reading newspapers, “side” conversations, etc.)
- F = absence; disruptive or hostile behavior in class or on discussion boards; frequent attention to cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other

electronic devices for non-class-related activities.

EXAMS

Exams give you an opportunity to show off your understanding of course materials and concepts when you to answer particular questions in a focused and extended way. You will have four unit exams and one final exam in this class:

Exam #1 will be a short in-class exam on Tue., Jan. 22.

Exam #2 will be a short in-class exam on Tue., Feb. 12.

Exam #3 will be a take-home essay exam due to D2L before midnight on Thu., Mar. 7.

Exam #4 will be on Tue., April 2. The class will vote on whether to have a take-home exam or an in-class exam.

Your **final exam** is comprehensive (covers the entire semester) and has two parts: a take-home essay, due to D2L by 2:45 pm on Tue., April 30; and an in-class exam, to be completed during our final exam time, which is Tue., April 30, 2:45-4:45 pm.

WRITING GRADES

All writing will be graded on the following criteria:

- how strong and clear your thesis statement is and whether it is an arguable thesis;
- how consistently your argument is presented throughout the paper;
- how well you use course materials and course concepts to answer the question (i.e., show that you have done your reading and thought about it);
- how well you use examples to support your thesis;
- how well your paper is written to your audience of readers (your audience is made up of smart people who have not taken Women’s Studies classes, unless otherwise indicated in the essay prompt);
- if your paper fulfills all the requirements of that particular assignment (e.g., length, focus, required readings, etc.);
- how well you document your sources.

All papers must include citations of course readings and works cited lists in correct citation format (either MLA or APA). Any paper without citations and a works cited list will **fail automatically**. If you have questions about the paper assignments, please ask them in class, via email, or in my office hours.

PAPERS

You will write four short papers throughout the semester. Each paper will analyze an example of a key concept or idea from our course materials. While

you will be graded on your understanding of the concept or idea as it is defined in our course materials (and not in dictionaries), your paper should mostly aim to analyze one (and only one) concrete example of the key concept or idea that you find through research.

Paper #1 asks you to critique your own lived experiences with gender, using core vocabulary and ideas from our course materials. Due to D2L on Sat., Feb. 2.

Paper #2 is an analysis of oppression in one work of fiction. Please choose one work of fiction (e.g., novel, fairy tale, TV program, film, etc.) with which you are familiar and comfortable. Of course, your paper will be much stronger if you also choose one that actually includes one or more instances of oppression to analyze. Due to D2L on Fri., March 1.

Paper #3 is an analysis of intersectional feminism (or of a failure of feminism to be intersectional), drawn from the news or current events. Due to D2L on Sun., April 7.

Paper #4 is a reflection paper in which you explain and defend your personal definition of "feminist activism," based on our course materials. This paper

is due to D2L as part of your course writing portfolio (see below), on Wed., April 24.

WRITING PORTFOLIO

Your course writing portfolio is due to D2L on Wed., April 24. Your portfolio will include:

Paper #4 (see above); and a strong re-write on Paper #1. Your re-write of #1 should demonstrate the influence of new knowledge about gender, gender politics, feminism, and intersectionality.

Your portfolio will be graded on the basis of how well it demonstrates that you have learned from our course discussions, readings, and activities.

PARTICIPATION BOOST

If you want to boost your participation grade, you may do so by setting up a study group that meets on a regular basis. I will help you set up study groups if you request them. I will meet with individual study groups when I can, if you would like me to. Each group is required to meet at least two times in the first four weeks of class. After that, if your group continues to meet, your participation grade will be boosted.

WGS2309G

tentative schedule

BF = *Bad Feminist* by Roxane GayWHC = *Woman Hollering Creek* by Sandra Cisneros

DATE	KEYTERM OF THE DAY	READINGS DUE ON THIS DATE	IN CLASS
T 1/8	WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES	syllabus—please bring questions to class	Adichie, "We Should All Be Feminists" (YouTube)—as you watch, take notes; try to figure out Adichie's definition of feminism
R 1/10	FEMINISM definitions	Gay, "Introduction" and "Bad Feminist: Take Two," in <i>Bad Feminist</i> (pp. ix-xiv, 314-318) NOTE: there is a TED talk based on "Bad Feminist: Take Two," linked to your D2L page)	Ashia Ajani, Tolu Obiwole, Abby Friesen-Johnson, and Alexis Rain Vigil "Feminism" (2014) (YouTube)—take notes
T 1/15	EDUCATION AS POWER claiming education, banking model of education, problem-posing education	Freire, "Models Summary" (D2L) Rich, "Claiming an Education" (D2L) hooks, "Integrity" (D2L)	video clips: <i>Mona Lisa Smile</i> discussion: types of education
R 1/17	FEMINISMS	Gay, "Bad Feminist: Take One" (BF303-13) and "The Illusion of Safety" (BF147-53)	Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I A Woman?" (1851) read by Alice Walker (YouTube)
T 1/22	FEMINISMS EXAM	Launius and Hassel, "Introduction," <i>Threshold Concepts</i> chp. 1 (pp. 1-23)	11-11:30 discussion 11:30-12:15 EXAM #1
R 1/24	GENDER essentialism social constructionism	Bornstein, <i>My Gender Workbook</i> (8-58)—complete all quizzes as you read, on your own paper note: long reading	box of masculinity, box of femininity power pyramid Williams, "When I Was a Boy"
T 1/29	PATRIARCHY power empowerment disempowerment	Johnson, "Patriarchy" (D2L) Gay, "Beyond the Measure of Man" (BF170-76)	activity: power discussion: what is patriarchy and how do you see it at work in your world, today?
R 1/31	IDENTITY	Bornstein, chp. 3—complete all exercises as you read Cisneros, "Mericans" (WHC 17-20); Gay, "The Racism We All Carry" (BF 290-3)	Styles identity pinwheel discussion: "doing gender" and refusing gender
Sa 2/2	Paper #1 due to D2L	topic: gender in your life	Critique your own experiences with gender, gender expectations, and/or the gender binary.
T 2/5	GENDER CONFORMITY institutionalized	Gay, "How to Be Friends with Another Woman" (47-50) Cisneros, "Barbie-Q" (14-16) Butler, "Blood Child" (D2L)	sociocultural institutions
R 2/7	GENDER NONCONFORMITY	Gould, "X: A Fabulous Child's Story" (D2L) Cisneros, "Remember the Alamo" (WHC 63-67)	Noah Debi Jackson transgender, cisgender, genderqueer, intersex
T 2/12	SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER EXAM	Launius and Hassel, "The Social Construction of Gender" chp. 2	11-11:30 discussion 11:30-12:15 EXAM #2
R 2/14	OPPRESSION	Frye, "Oppression" (D2L)	activity: the birdcage of oppression

	systemic systematic institutionalized	Harjo, "The Woman Hanging from the 13th Floor Window" (D2L) Yamato, "Racism" (D2L) Gay, "Dear Young Ladies..." (BF 183-86)	discussion: types of oppression
T 2/19	SEXISM	Gay, "Careless Language of Sexual Violence" and "Trouble with Prince Charming" (BF 128-36, 192-204) "Just Shut Up" blog post (D2L) Syfers, "I Want a Wife" (D2L)	sexism within intimate relationships
R 2/21	GENDERED VIOLENCE	no readings due	quest speakers from HOPE and SACIS
T 2/26	DOMINATION AND SUBORDINATION	Miller, "Domination and Subordination" (D2L) Cisneros, "Eleven" (WHC 6-9)	discussion: oppression as an effect of domination and subordination
R 2/28	RESPECTABILITY POLITICS	Pharr, "Homophobia as a Weapon of Sexism" (D2L) Gay, "The Politics of Respectability" (BF 257-60)	discussion: how do stereotypes enforce systemic oppression?
F 3/1	Paper #2 due to D2L	topic: oppression in fiction	note: "fiction" = literature, film, TV, or any other artistic medium; choose a text you are familiar with
T 3/5	PRIVILEGE	McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege" (D2L) Gay, "Spectacle of Broken Men" (BF 154-59)	discussion: privilege is the flip side of oppression
T 3/5, 6pm	EXTRA CREDIT OPP: Doudna Lecture Hall	Julie Proscia, attorney, member of IL Senate Task Force on Sexual Misconduct	EXTRA CREDIT: 2 page response to Proscia's talk, due 3/18/19 to D2L
R 3/7	PRIVILEGE AND OPPRESSION EXAM NO CLASS MEETING	Launius and Hassel, "Privilege and Oppression" chp. 3	EXAM #3 (take home exam, due to D2L by 11:59 pm on Thu. 3/7)
3/11-16	SPRING BREAK Have a safe & fun break!	Over break, read Andrews, <i>Some Assembly Required</i> (all)	ALSO: start revising Paper #1
T 3/19	HETEROSEXISM AND CISGENDERISM	Andrews, <i>Some Assembly Required</i> (all) NOTE: keep revising Paper #1	guest presenters
R 3/21	INTERSECTING OPPRESSIONS	Gay, "The Solace of Preparing Fried Foods" and "When Less Is More" (BF 201-17, 250-53)	discussion: racism and sexism
T 3/26	BLACK FEMINISM	Combahee River Collective statement (D2L) Walker, "Womanism" (D2L) Painter, "Sojourner Truth's Defense of the Rights..." (D2L)	discussion: overlapping oppressions call for intersectional feminisms
R 3/28	INTERSECTIONALITY	Lorde, "Master's Tools" and "Age, Race, Class, and Sex" (D2L)	discussion: intersectional oppression and intersectional feminisms
T 4/2	INTERSECTIONALITY EXAM	Launius and Hassel, "Intersectionality" chp. 4	11-11:30 discussion 11:30-12:15 EXAM #4
R 4/4	ACTIVISM	Ayvazian, "Interrupting the Cycle of Oppression" (D2L) Gay, "What We Hunger For" and "When Twitter Does What Journalism Cannot" (BF 137-46,	discussion: activists, advocates, and allies

		261-66)	
Su 4/7	Paper #3 due to D2L	topic: an example of intersectional feminism or of a feminist failure to recognize intersectionality	helpful hint: get your examples from current events/news. You'll have lots to choose from!
T 4/9	PRAXIS Reproductive Rights	McDonough, "There Is So Much Shame" (D2L) Gay, "The Alienable Rights of Women" (BF 267-79)	Emily Letts video discussion: reproductive rights
R 4/11	PRAXIS social change = information + vision + action	Ross, "Understanding Reproductive Justice" (D2L)	Trust Black Women, "We Always Resist!" video racist billboards
T 4/16	PRAXIS feminism	Tolentino interview with Rebecca Gomperts (D2L)	video: <i>Vessel</i> , part 1
R 4/18	PRAXIS	no reading due	video: <i>Vessel</i> , cont'd
T 4/23	FEMINIST PRAXIS	hooks, "Feminism: A Transformational Politic" (D2L)	discussion: if we want to change the world, we have to be willing to change ourselves
W 4/24	Portfolio due to D2L includes: Paper #4 plus a re-write of Paper #1, based on knowledge you've gained in class	topic of paper #4: your personal definition of "feminist activism"	note: be sure to demonstrate your understanding of the many ways we discuss feminism in this class
R 4/25	PRAXIS	Launius and Hassel, "Praxis" chp. 5 and Cisneros, "One Holy Night" (WHC 27-35)	discussion: preparing for the final exam
T 4/30 2:45	COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM essay due by 2:45 to D2L	2:45-4:45 pm: In-class portion of final exam