

Women's Studies 55

Gender, Race and Class in the United States

9:30 - 10:20 Mondays and Wednesdays in 100 PH

Professor Dawn Rae Davis

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email is always the best way to contact me outside class

Professor Naomi Greyser

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Teaching Assistants

Rebecca Hix

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office hours:

W. 1:30-3:30 in JB 509

Sarah Holmes

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office hours:

M. & W. 10:30 – 12:00 in JB 511

Elizabeth Newbury

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office hours:

T., 1-2 & W. 4-5, or by appt., in JB 509

Course Description:

This class engages us in understanding three of the most important categories through which identity and experience are structured in the United States: gender, race and class. Our course goal is to increase our knowledge of the inequities in our society and the consequences of those inequities for different communities and individuals within the nation. Throughout the class we ask: How are individual lives shaped by larger societal forces? How do our own social positions affect how we see and engage the world?

Students examine how gender, race and class inform each other, so that each is understood as inseparable from the other. This means analyzing, for example, the racialization of gender, the gendering of class, and the sexing of race. Through readings and films, we will investigate how social categorization contributes to the inequitable distribution of political power, resources, and social and individual well-being. Students will also work to map their own positions with respect to these categories to come to a more self-reflexive understanding of their own daily practices.

Required Texts:

- Joanna Kadi, *Thinking Class: Sketches from a Cultural Worker*, available at Prairie Lights Bookstore at 15 South Dubuque
- Nina Revoyr, *Southland*, also available at Prairie Lights
- all other course readings are available on ICON – students are required to download and **print** readings and bring them to class, ready to engage.

Requirements:

You are expected to come to lecture with hard copies of the readings, having read through the materials that the syllabus or your TA specifies. Occasional quizzes will be given in lecture or section based on the reading or on material presented on a previous day. These quizzes cannot be made up.

Arriving on time, being prepared, and taking good notes are essential to doing well. You are responsible for taking notes in class; the lecture overheads and PowerPoint could never substitute for notes that you take. Your notes allow you to translate, synthesize, and process the material. Try to concentrate during lecture not on copying down what is on the lecture hall screen but on *tracking* themes, arguments, issues, and debates.

Active participation in lecture and section are a crucial part of the course and of your grade. Your participation grade will be based on: attendance, preparedness for class, and *active* contribution to discussion. Active contribution includes not only listening but also regular participation. Excellent participation scores will be given only to those students whose comments regularly shift the course of class discussion and/or noticeably and substantially enrich conversation.

On Course Reading and Coming to Lecture and Section Prepared

Students are graded on their ability to understand and thoughtfully respond to the research and arguments that the course readings cover. All of these begin with making time to practice careful reading. You will want to underline in your texts and make comments in the margins while you read. Don't expect to understand all the concepts you encounter and every topic presented by the individual readings right away. This expectation will be frustrating. It will be more helpful to think of the readings as pieces of a larger conversation, about which you will understand more as the semester progresses. At its best, university life involves lively engagement with course material, and the fun is to think together about topics that challenge us. Students should feel that it is okay to ask questions and talk with the professors and TA's. Curiosity is an important part of the learning process, and learning *is* a process!

COURSE POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and any other activities that result in a student presenting work that is not his or her own are academic fraud. It is university policy to report academic fraud to the departmental DEO and then to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Services in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Students may find information about plagiarism

and academic fraud at:

http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml.

Suggestions, Complaints and Faculty Actions

Students may find information about faculty conduct at:

http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml. University policy asks students who have concerns, suggestions, or complaints about faculty actions (including communication, parity, and disability accommodations) to first approach their instructor to talk whenever possible. After this step, students may approach the D.E.O. (department executive officer) to discuss a situation, if appropriate. The D.E.O. of Women's Studies for 2007-08 is Professor Lauren Rabinovitz.

Disability Services and Accommodations

All students deserve equal access to course materials and activities. A student seeking academic accommodations first must register with Student Disability Services and then meet with a SDS counselor who determines eligibility for services. A student approved for accommodations should then meet privately with the course instructor to arrange particular accommodations. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/.

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Visit www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/ for definitions, assistance, and the full policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

If severe weather is indicated by the UI outdoor warning system, class members will seek shelter in the innermost part of the building, if possible at the lowest level, staying clear of windows and of free-standing expanses which might prove unstable. The class will resume after the severe weather has ended. See the Operations Manual section 16.14. i.

Administrative Home of the Course

The administrative home of this course is the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which governs academic matters relating to the course such as the add / drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, issues concerning academic fraud or academic probation, and how credits are applied for various CLAS requirements. Please keep in mind that different colleges might have different policies. If you have questions about these or other CLAS policies, visit your academic advisor or 120 Schaeffer Hall and speak with the staff. The CLAS Academic Handbook is another useful source of information on CLAS academic policy: www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml

STUDENT RESOURCES

The Writing Center is a wonderful resource. The center is an extremely friendly and helpful place where students can receive help with any stage of the writing process. You can visit The Writing Center at 110 English-Philosophy Building or www.uiowa.edu/~writingc. Their phone number is 335-0188.

The Speaking Center is another useful resource. It can be found at 12 English-Philosophy Building, 335-0205,

The Women's Resource and Action Center (WRAC) is a diverse community dedicated to fostering women's individual empowerment and systemic solutions to multiple forms of oppression. The Center leads and collaborates on projects that serve UI students, staff, faculty, and the greater community. To explore their resources for yourself, or to become involved in the center, you can visit 130 N. Madison St and <http://www.uiowa.edu/~wrac/> or call 319/ 335-1486.

Classroom Protocol:

- Support your classmates and be respectful in your communications with each other, the TAs and the instructors. Exchanging emails and phone numbers and conversing with fellow students in study groups or work sessions can make the course more productive and fun.
- Please turn off, or to silent, cell phones, computer volume controls, pagers, etc., at the start of each lecture and section.
- If you prefer to take notes on your computer, please do not distract other students -- or yourselves -- by also intermittently surfing the web or engaging in outside work or activities. It is hard for any of us to focus on lecture when Facebook is up on a monitor nearby: class time is for intellectual engagement with the course material.
- Phones and other text messagers will be held during exams – students who bring these to class should be prepared to give them over to a TA for safekeeping. Those who need to make special arrangements to hold onto phones should speak with the instructor.
- Students who become ill or cannot come to class are responsible for contacting their TAs and for making appropriate arrangements to keep up with work. People are required to provide medical documentation of injuries or illness. *If you miss class, TAs are not responsible for contacting you, although they may do so. You are responsible for making arrangements.* Attending office hours to discuss a missed section is one way to keep up; be in touch with TAs.
- Those who require make-up times for the examinations will need to contact the instructors and their TAs at least three weeks before the exam, to make alternative arrangements. Telling us as soon as you know is even more helpful!

Policy Regarding Grades

Students with concerns over their grades should always first approach their teaching assistant to discuss their concerns. Conversations about grades should happen in person; TAs will not respond over email to questions about scores, they will email students back and require that they come to their office hours to talk. Students who feel unsatisfied with a conversation with a TA may, of course,

approach Professor Davis and/or Greyser. To do so, each student must type a letter explaining how and why they feel that their grade does not accurately reflect the quality of their work. The professor will then re-grade the assignment from scratch: as a result, students may receive a higher grade, the same grade, or even possibly a lower one. It should go without saying that graciousness and attention to the intellectual content of the work, rather than to scores for their own sake, will set the tone for such conversations.

Grades will be computed based on the following:

Identity Essay:	150 points
Midterm:	250 points
Research Presentation:	150 points
Final:	300 points
Course participation:	100 points
Quizzes, Assignments, etc.:	50 points

Total: 1000 points

Grades will be assigned according to the following:

- 950-1000 → A
- 900-949 → A -
- 870-899 → B +
- 830-869 → B
- 800-829 → B -
- 770-799 → C +
- 730-769 → C
- 700-729 → C -
- 670-699 → D +
- 630-669 → D
- 600-629 → D -
- 590 points and below → F

COURSE SCHEDULE: The following is our reading and assignment schedule – all readings and papers are due the day noted. Please keep in mind that all classes are organic and subject to some shifts and changes: check ICON regularly for any updates or changes to the schedule.

Economics and Class in the U.S.

Wed. Jan. 23rd

- Introductions
- clips from *People Like Us* (2001)

Friday, Jan. 25th

- read the syllabus
- the following excerpts from Joanna Kadi's *Thinking Class*:
 - "preface"
 - "writing as resistance, writing as love"
 - "working class culture: not an oxymoron"
 - "catholic school days: sketch #1" and

Mon., Jan. 28th

- Joanna Kadi, "stupidity 'deconstructed'"
- Donna Langston, "Tired of Playing Monopoly?"
- Barbara Ehrenreich, "The Silenced Majority"

Class and the Construction of Femininity

Wed., Jan. 30th

- Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood"

Fri., Feb 1th

- Joanna Kadi, "catholic school days: sketch #3"

Mon., Feb 4th

- "To Be a Woman, Sublime" from Paula Giddings' *When and Where I Enter* (1984)
- Guest Lecture: Lisa Mott

Wed., Feb. 6th

- clip from *People Like Us* on debutante balls in Black America
- Beverly Skeggs, "Respectability, Femininity, Capital" from *Formations of Class and Gender* (1997)

Fri., Feb. 8th

- DISCUSSION DAY in Section
- Identity Essay due.

Body/Property/Work

Mon., Feb. 11th

- Patricia Williams, "On Being the Object of Property"

Wed., Feb. 13th

- "Migrating from Exploitation to Dignity: Immigrant Women Workers and the Struggle for Justice" (An Interview with Miriam Ching Yoon Louie from the *Multinational Monitor*, Oct. 2001)

Fri., Feb. 15th

- DISCUSSION DAY in Section

Mon., Feb. 18th

- Katharine Frank, "Hustlers, Pros, and the Girl Next Door: Social Class, Race, and the Consumption of the Authentic Female Body" from *G-Strings and Sympathy*

Wed., Feb 20th

- excerpts from George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*

Fri, Feb. 22nd

- DISCUSSION DAY in Section

Labor/Identities

Mon. Feb. 25th

excerpts of Deborah Fink's "Frankly She's Not Worth It" from *Cutting Into the Meatpacking Line: Workers and Change in the Rural Midwest*

Wed., Feb. 27th

- Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Service Work" from *Unequal Sisters*
Guest lecture: Rebecca Hix

Fri, Feb. 29th

- DISCUSSION DAY in Section

Mon., March. 3rd

- Gail M. McGuire, "Gender, Race and the Shadow Structure: A Study of Informal Networks and Inequality in a Work Organization"

Feminization of Poverty

Wed., March 5th

- clip from *People Like Us* on living on minimum wage
- Newman, "Working Hard, Working Poor"

- Randy Albelda and Chris Tilly "It's a Family Affair: Women, Poverty and Welfare"

Fri., Mar. 7th

- Midterm Review

Mon., Mar. 10th

- Janet E. Kodras, "The Changing Map of American Poverty"
- Chuck Collins, "Aid to Dependent Corporations: Exposing Federal Handouts to the Wealthy"

Wed. Mar. 12th

MIDTERM EXAM

Fri., Mar. 14th

- NO SECTION

SPRING BREAK

Gender/Migration/Borders

Mon. Mar. 24th

- Erika Lee, "The Chinese Exclusion Example: Race, Immigration, and American Gatekeeping, 1882-1924" (2002)
- Excerpt from C. Matthew Snipp, *The First Americans: American Indians*

Wed., Mar. 26th

- Gloria Anzaldua's "La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness" from *Making Face, Making Soul*
- Gloria Anzaldua's poem "Borderlands" (1995)
at: <http://www.uwm.edu/~gjay/Multicult/anzaldua.htm>

Fri., Mar. 28th

- Kit Yuen Quan, "The Girl Who Wouldn't Sing"

Mon., Mar. 31st

- Barbara Mellix, "From Outside, In"
- Dianne Neumaier's "Judy Baca: Our People Are the Internal Exiles"

Tue. April 1st

- SCREENING of TRAFFIC (2001)
This screening will be in the evening. (Location to be announced.)

Wed., April 2nd

- Discussion of *Traffic*, gender, class, race and racism

Fri., April 4th - DISCUSSION DAY in Section

Gender, Class, Race and Racism

Mon., Apr. 7th

- From Angela Davis, "Are Prisons Obsolete?"
- Alan Berkman and Tim Blunk, "Thoughts on Class, Race and Prison"
- Guest Lecture: Adrienne Hurley
- RESEARCH PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT handed out in lecture: "Gender, Race, Class and <insert your interest here>"

Wed., Apr. 9th

- excerpt from Cornel West, *Race Matters*
- Gloria Yamato, "The Subject Makes It Hard to Name"
- begin reading Nina Revoyr's *Southland*

Fri., Apr. 11th

- PAIRING UP and SELECTING TOPICS
- **Homework over the weekend:** going to the library and finding a source that *actively interests you*.

Sexuality, Race and the U.S. Nation

Mon., Apr. 14th

- Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege"
- Lynet Uttal, "Inclusion Without Influence: the Continuing Tokenism of Women of Color"
- Guest Lecture: Liz Newbury
- *Southland* cont'd

Wed., Apr. 16th

- *Southland* cont'd
- Dereka Rushbrook, "Cities, Queer Space, and the Cosmopolitan Tourist"
Guest lecture: Sarah Holmes

Fri., Apr. 18th

- RESEARCH PROSPECTUS DUE to TA in Lecture
- *Southland* cont'd
- DISCUSSION DAY in Section

Mon. Apr. 21st

- finish *Southland*

Wed. Apr. 23rd

- Joanna Kadi, "Homophobic Workers or Elitist Queers?"

Fri., Apr. 25th

- PRESENTATIONS in section: listen, evaluate and vote

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Mon., Apr. 28rd

- film

Wed., Apr. 30th

- TBA

Fri., May 2nd

- PRESENTATIONS – listen, evaluate, and vote

Mon., May 5th

- Final Presentations – attendance required

Wed. May 7th

- Final Presentations – attendance required

Fri., May 9th

- Review for Final