

**Cultural Analysis & Theory Department**

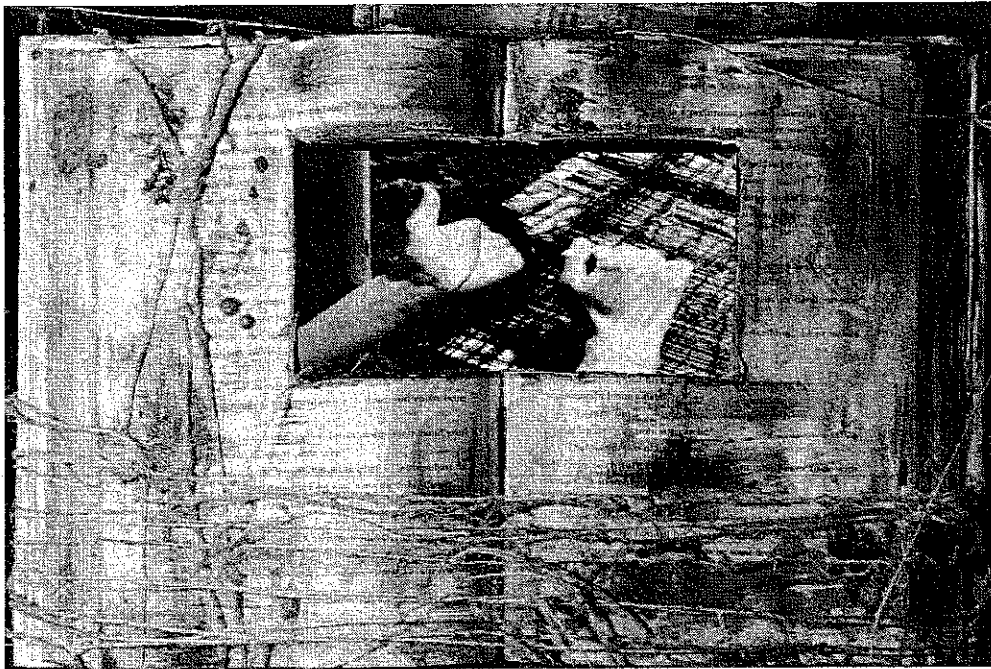
**Core Courses**

**and Electives**

**In**

**Women's and Gender Studies**

**Spring 2013**



*Late Night Readings (2005) Amy Bagshaw*



**Stony Brook  
University**

## CORE COURSES

WST 600.01

**History and Methods of Women's Studies:  
"Feminist Histories and Methodologies"**

**Victoria Hesford**

*To ignore questions of methodology is to assume that knowledge comes from nowhere allowing knowledge makers to abdicate responsibility for their productions and representations.*

Beverley Skeggs

*We need the power of modern critical theories of how meanings and bodies get made, not in order to deny meaning and bodies, but in order to live in meanings and bodies that have a chance for a future.*

Donna Haraway

The point concerns rather the significance of thinking feminism as a knowledge project that might intervene in field formations and disciplinary domains in new and different ways.

Robyn Wiegman

Rather than begin with an exploration of "the" feminist methodology in Women's Studies, or an account of "the" history of feminism, this course will explore what counts as "history," as "method," and as "evidence" in feminist scholarship. Since its emergence as a distinct "knowledge project" within the academy feminism has sought to raise questions about how we know what we know, who gets to speak and for whom, and what are legitimate fields of inquiry. Our goal will not be to seek answers to these (and other) questions, but to trace some of the ways in which feminist scholars have sought to intervene in debates about disciplinary as opposed to interdisciplinary forms of knowledge, objective as opposed to "situated" knowledges, evidence versus experience, history versus fiction, etc. A central part of the feminist project for many scholars has been an engagement in self-reflexive questioning of the status, history, methods and goals of feminist scholarship. This course will attempt to continue that practice. To that end, students are encouraged to engage with the material with their own projects in mind, and to use the course in order to be self-reflexive about the methods and theories they intend to use for their graduate work.

**Wednesdays**

**4:00-6:50 p.m.**

**Humanities Room# 2052**

**WST 699.01**

**Practicum in Women's Studies**

**"Practicing Women's and Gender Studies"**

**Liz Montegary**

The teaching practicum is designed for Women's and Gender Studies certificate students who anticipate teaching classes outside of, or in addition to, their disciplinary home. To help students prepare for this likelihood, we will spend several sessions working together to construct an introductory course syllabus in Women's and Gender Studies. At the same time, we will consider broader questions about the university as an institution in the current moment as well as the place of Women's and Gender Studies within the contemporary university. Along with a consideration of the changing practices and objects of feminist knowledge production, we will also discuss the changing politics and economics of academia and the impact of the wider academic milieu on what and how knowledge is produced. We will ask: where did women's and gender studies come from, and where has the field been heading?; what kinds of interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are possible within feminist, queer, and transgender studies?; what might women's and gender studies become?

**Tuesdays**

**4:00-6:50 p.m.**

**Humanities Room# 2018**

**ELECTIVES**

**AFS 550**

**Women of Color in the Modern World:**

**"Shifting Identities and Feminist Visions"**

**Tracey Walters**

This course explores the various ways in which gender, race, and class, along with other aspects of identity, shape the lives and experiences of women of color in the United States and globally. It presents the ongoing debates concerning the interconnections of gender, race, and shifting identities. It will examine the relationships between the construction of personal identities, identity statuses, cultural and ideological meaning systems, and the search for alternative images. Permission from advisor required.

**Tuesdays**

**2:30 -5:30 p.m.**

**SBS S202**

**CLT/CST 609.01**  
**Topics in Cultural Theory:**  
**“Queer Historiography”**

**Kadji Amin**

This course is an introduction to a recent direction in queer studies termed “queer historiography” and to the series of related alternative approaches to historiography that have emerged, in recent years, from the interdisciplinary humanities and interpretive social sciences. The scholars we will study under the rubric of queer historiography critique “traditional” historiography for the social and affective phenomenon that, they argue, cannot but escape it. In particular, we will focus on scholars who argue that telling the histories of various disenfranchised social groups, including sexual minorities, requires a different approach to evidence and to the historical archive and a renewed emphasis on affect and temporality.

We will begin with texts by Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Benjamin that critically historicize and locate “modern” historiography and temporality at the moment of their emergence. We will then turn briefly to empirical and speculative interventions in historiographic method emerging from the fields of gay and lesbian history and the history of sexuality. The bulk of the class will be spent exploring and evaluating a range of alternative approaches to historiography. Topics explored will include affective historiography, historiographic identification and desire, the Foucaultian “history of the present,” haunting as a historiographic figure, the postcolonial critique of the uneven geographic and racialized distribution of “modernity,” alternative archives, and queer temporalities. One of the goals of this course is to help students in interdisciplinary fields to think critically and inventively about their use of figures of time and history in their own research.

**Tuesdays**

**1:00-3:50 p.m.**

**Humanities #2052**

**EGL 585**  
**Topics in Cultural Studies:**  
**“Disability Language, Rhetoric & Narrative”**

**Patricia A. Dunn**

—A requirement in new doctoral program in Health and Rehabilitation Science (Disability Studies Strand)

The Society for Disability Studies, an interdisciplinary organization, says in its mission statement, “disability is a key aspect of human experience.” So is language. This course focuses on how language and rhetoric frame how disability is perceived, experienced, and treated. It will include critical and rhetorical analysis of professional discourses as well as personal disability narratives and memoirs. It will explore the interdisciplinary nature of disability studies and the role rhetoric plays in representations of disability. Some questions to be explored include: In what ways do clinical/professional discourses and personal narratives reveal experiences of power and powerlessness? How is the bodily experience of disability described in professional contexts as compared to personal narratives? How does description and perception influence the practice of professionals and quality of life for people with disabilities? What assumptions about disability are revealed through rhetorical analysis? These questions will help frame our attention in this course to representations of disability in a variety of texts: academic, professional, literary, clinical, personal, and visual.

**Tuesdays**

**7:00 -9:50PM**

**Humanities # 2045**

**EGL 608.03**  
**“Modern Things”**

**Celia Marshik**

Readers have traditionally prioritized the human characters in literature, finding in those figures a correlative for our own experience of the world. The rest of the substance of a book has often been subsumed under the category of “setting,” a distinction that affirms a subject/object binary in which people exercise varying degrees of control over an inert material world. Recent work in literary and cultural studies, philosophy, sociology and anthropology has worked to trouble this opposition; in various ways, “thing theory” and associated schools of thought have suggested that objects act and constitute human subjects in ways we have only begun to recognize. This course will offer a survey of foundational and recent work in the field, including studies by Elaine Freedgood, Bill Brown, Barbara Johnson, Robyn Wiegman, Liz Conor, Bruno Latour, Alfred Gell, and many others. Among our questions will be: under what circumstances might an object become an actant? Does the power that accrues in objects endanger the subjectivity of humans? And what is the distinction between commodities/objects/things/stuff? Students will help to identify literary and cultural examples we will use as shared texts. Requirements include active and informed participation, presentations, and a seminar paper. Students who plan to apply this course to the WaGS Certificate will need to write a paper appropriate to that program.

**Thursdays**

**1:00-3:50 p.m.**

**Humanites 2094**

**PHI**  
**“Global Ethics”**  
**Serene Khader**

This course examines the moral questions that arise in attempts to diagnose and respond to global poverty. We will focus on the following three questions:

- a) What types of obligations, if any, do people in the global North have to end deprivation in the global South?
- b) What constitutes deprivation and what moral commitments do we need to identify it in cross-cultural contexts?
- c) Is the feminization of poverty morally significant, and if so, how?

**Wednesdays**

**2:30 p.m.**

**PHI 500.60**  
**Feminist Ethic**

**Eva Kittay**

The development of a feminist perspective on moral philosophy has introduced not only new areas of ethical inquiry such as sexual harassment, reproductive ethics, mothering, among others, it has also brought into play new ways of thinking about the project of ethics. That is, it has questioned whether the modes of ethical inquiry that have been thought of as universal in scope and method have not been constrained and shaped by men's lives. When one asks ethical questions through the lens of experiences that have characterized women's lives, lives infused by responsibilities of care and subject to men's dominance, lives lived in a female body, important shifts in emphasis, method and content take place. The specificity of ethical inquiry as viewed from the perspective of gender has forced the question of whether other important perspectives such as race, sexuality, disability and the intersection of these are not equally relevant to shaping both the content and the form of ethical inquiry. Thus feminist ethics has opened the space for an ethics that far more grounded in actual lives and experiences. The most recent developments focus on the need for a global feminist ethics. Topics will include the ethics of care; sexual violence; the role of embodiment for ethical concern; the question of intersectionality; the role of emotion and reason in ethics; the need for a global feminist ethic. Reading will include the work of Alison Jaggar, Sara Ruddick, Iris Young, Virginia Held, Margaret Walker, Sally Haslanger, Judith Butler, among others.

Reading will be drawn from the following material.

Kittay and Feder, *The Subject of Care: Feminist Perspectives on Dependency*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2002

Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Peace Politics*, Beacon Press, 1995 edition.

Susan Brison, *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of the Self*, Princeton University Press 2002.

Virginia Held, *Justice and Care, Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*, Westview Press, 1995

Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Harvard UP, 1993 edition.

Virginia Held, *The Ethics of Care* Oxford University Press 2006 (Also available online).

Cheshire Calhoun, *Setting the Moral Compass*  
*Among others*

**Thursdays**

**11:00-2:00 p.m.**

**Stony Brook Manhattan**

**WST 610.01/CLT /CST 609.03**

**Topics in Cultural Theory:  
Science Fiction Literature and Media: Transbody”**

**Ritch Calvin**

This course will begin by examining critical literary definitions of science fiction as a genre (Suvin, McHale, Csiscery-Ronay) and the ways in which feminist and queer theorists (Barr, Haraway, Vint, Pearson, Melzer, Hayles) have challenged and critiqued those historical definitions. We will then focus on the concept of the "trans" body as it appears in feminist science fiction. Through the "trans" body, we will examine some of the ways in which feminist writers have imagined a transcendence of the body, as a post-human body, as an augmented body, or as a radically altered/alterable body. Primary readings may include works by James Tiptree, Jr., Marge Piercy, Octavia Butler, John Varley, Melissa Scott, Amy Thomson, Larissa Lai, Kate Bornstein & Caitlin Sullivan. Primary works may also include the film *Tank Girl* and the TV series *Dollhouse*.

**Thursdays**

**4:00-6:50 p.m.**

**Humanities #2052**