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## GSC 40xxx: Transnational Feminisms

In the two decades since the UN General Assembly ratified the Declaration Against Violence Toward Women (1993), the first human rights document to specifically address violence against women and women's rights were included in the UN Human Rights mechanism (1994), increasing attention has been paid to women's issues and the growth of transnational feminisms. These advances were furthered by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1994; the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995; and the Beijing+5 UN Special Session, held in New York in 2000. By challenging the traditional distinction between the private-public realms, the international women's movement has effected a radical redefinition of human rights violations to include domestic violence, mass rape, violations of a woman's physical integrity, and violations of women's sexual and reproductive rights; efforts to address violations of women's bodily integrity from the human rights framework continue in the face of conservative and reactionary pushback.

In this course, we will consider feminisms and feminist praxis from around the world in order to study transnational feminist engagements with global women's issues, including maternity, labor issues, domestic work, and the impact of tourism. This work will engage both with understanding the impact of intersecting oppressions and undertaking structural critiques of systems of power. This course will be conducted seminar-style, and active participation is encouraged.

### Texts (available in the Hammes Bookstore):

1. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera—The New Mestiza*
2. Buchi Emecheta, *Kehinde*
3. Nilda Flores-Gonzalez, Anna Romina Guevarra , Maura Toro-Morn, *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age*
4. Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*
5. Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*
6. Ananya Roy, *Poverty Capital: Microfinance and the Making of Development*
7. Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar, *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis*
8. Vania Smith-Oka, *Shaping the Motherhood of Indigenous Mexico*
9. Melissa W. Wright, *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*

Consistent with the mission of the University of Notre Dame, the Gender Studies Program is dedicated to fostering a learning community that represents and builds on a rich diversity of human experiences, backgrounds, cultures, histories, ideas, and ways of living. We also commit to the task of negotiating the dual priorities of authentic free speech and active regard for all others in a safe, supportive, and anti-oppressive classroom environment. An anti-oppressive environment means that we work against language, actions, interactions and ideologies that hurt people. Hate speech of any kind will not be permitted. This includes use of racial, sexual, gender, or abled slurs and personal attacks on others' ideas.

**Class etiquette:** In developing the following policies, I was primarily guided by an understanding of our purposes in gathering twice a week, which I see as 1) developing your reading and literary analysis skills, primarily of the Caribbean, and 2) preparing you as future professionals; they are intended to facilitate both objectives.

- Plagiarism cannot be tolerated. Please be mindful of the Honor Code pledge – “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.” – I will ask you to sign it on your exams and research paper, which must be done on your own, with any ideas of scholars properly cited (Please use MLA style). You may discuss the readings with classmates both before and after class meetings; I ask that you acknowledge your peers' ideas should they influence your response paper (a simple footnote to that effect will suffice).
- Attendance – We will cover a book every 2-3 class sessions. You need to attend everyday – it's hard to contribute to discussions at which you are not present. That said, more than TWO absences will be reflected in your final grade (loss of half a grade level per absence after two). **Missing more than FOUR class sessions may result in a FAILING grade for the course. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING OUT FROM A CLASSMATE WHAT YOU HAVE MISSED. Additionally, ABSENCE IS NOT AN EXCUSE TO NOT TURN IN WORK ON TIME – EMAIL IT TO ME.**
- Email – Please use a subject line that indicates your content. Also, please compose the email in a professional manner (i.e., greeting and closing, including your name)
- I expect that class will not be interrupted by cell phones or text messages.



**Schedule of readings:****Week 1:**

- T: Introduction
- H: Introductory Frameworks  
 Adale Sholock, 2012. "Methodology of the Privileged: White Anti-racist Feminism, Systematic Ignorance, and Epistemic Uncertainty." *Hypatia* 27(4):701-716.  
 Chandra Talpade Mohanty. "Cartographies of Struggle: Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism"  
 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, ("The homeland, Aztlan" and "Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan")

**Week 2: Theory and Praxis**

- T: Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera* (finish)
- H: Chapter 1: Cartographies of Knowledge and Power: Transnational Feminism as Radical Praxis, **CTFP**  
 Chapter 2: Disavowed Legacies and Honorable Thievery: The Work of the "Transnational" in Feminist and LGBTQ Studies, **CTFP**

**Week 3:**

- T: Chapter 3: Seeing Beyond the State: Toward Transnational Feminist Organizing, **CTFP**  
 Chapter 4: Conflicts and Collaborations: Building Trust in Transnational South Africa, **CTFP**
- H: Chapter 5: Feminist Academic and Activist Praxis, **CTFP**  
 Chapter 6: Still Playing with Fire: Intersectionality, Activism, and NGOized Feminism, **CTFP**

**Week 4: Representing Resistance**

- T: Chapter 8: Remapping the Americas: A Transnational Engagement, **CTFP**  
Social Location Assignment due
- H: Film Screening: Sabiha Sumar's *Khamosh Pani (Silent Waters, 2002)*  
 Chapter 9: Envisioning Justice: The Politics and Possibilities of Transnational Feminist Film, **CTFP**

**Week 5:**

- T: Azar Nafisi, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*  
 "Lolita" and "Gatsby"
- H: Nafisi, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*  
 "James" and "Austen"

Response due**Week 6: Maternity, Transnationally Experienced**

- T: Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Lifeboat Ethics: Mother Love and Child Death in Northeast Brazil"
- H: Vania Smith-Oka, *Shaping the Motherhood of Indigenous Mexico*  
 Introduction and Chapter 1

**Week 7:**

- T: Smith-Oka, *Shaping the Motherhood of Indigenous Mexico*  
 Chapters 2-3
- H: Smith-Oka, *Shaping the Motherhood of Indigenous Mexico*  
 Chapters 4-5

Week 8:

T: Buchi Emecheta, *Kehinde*

H: Emecheta, *Kehinde*

Response due

Semester Break

Week 10: Labor Issues

T: Melissa W. Wright, *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*  
Introduction (chapter 1)

H: Wright, *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*  
Part I: Storylines

Week 11:

T: Wright, *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*  
Part II: Disruptions

H: film screening: *Mardi Gras: Made in China*  
[[http://www.carnivalesquefilms.com/Mardi\\_Gras.html](http://www.carnivalesquefilms.com/Mardi_Gras.html)]

Response due

Week 12:

T: Nilda Flores-Gonzalez, Anna Romina Guevarra, Maura Toro-Morn, *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age*

Part 1: Critique of the Neoliberal State

H: Flores-Gonzalez, et. al, *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age*

Part 2: Ethnic Enclaves

Week 13:

T: Flores-Gonzalez, et. al, *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age*  
Part 3: Informal Economies

H: Flores-Gonzalez, et. al, *Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Age*  
Part 4: Grassroots organizing and Resistance

Week 14: Tourism

T: Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*

Response due

H: Thanksgiving break

Week 15: Economics of Poverty and Opportunity

T: Ananya Roy, *Poverty Capital: Microfinance and the Making of Development*

H: Roy, *Poverty Capital: Microfinance and the Making of Development*

Week 16:

T: Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*

FINAL EXAM PERIOD, TBD

**Assignments:**

1. **Response papers** (3-4 pages). These papers ask you to offer an interpretation of the creative text of the unit, using the theoretical/analytical readings as support. Your paper must have a clear thesis, correctly-formatted documentation, and a works cited page. (40%)
2. **Social Location Assignment** (5-6 pages). \* This paper asks you to explore and analyze who you are in terms of the larger forms of difference we will study, such as gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion and nationality. Research the place (town, city, rural area) that most formed you growing up; if you moved around, explore the causes and effects of your migration. There are two parts to this assignment. (10%)
  - a. The demographic survey, in which you should answer the following questions:  
 What are the demographics of your hometown in terms of race and class?  
 What are the major sources of jobs?  
 How has this changed over your lifetime?  
 How did these forces shape your family?  
 How do gender and sexuality inform the experiences of you and your family?
  - b. The family interview, for which you should interview at least one member to explore questions of culture, race/ethnicity, citizenship and nationality. You should answer the following questions:  
 What citizenship do you carry?  
 What citizenship do your family members carry?  
 What does your relative/interview subject see as the chief external factors shaping your family's history?  
 If you are a U.S. citizen or your family lives in the U.S., the interview will help you determine where your family immigrated from and when that took place.  
 If you are a citizen of another country and/or your family lives in another country, how long have they been in that country?  
 How does your family fit into class and race/ethnic frameworks in that country?
3. **Participation** – active participation is expected in class discussions. (15%)
4. **Group Project (Presented at the exam period)** (35%)
  - a. Each group (2-3 students) will select an issue/country to examine using the theoretical tools and lenses we have assembled this semester. The presentation should inform the class about the issue (much like one might pitch an issue to a foundation in seeking funding to implement a solution); 10 minutes max. (15%)
  - b. Each student also submits an individual position paper, in which s/he outlines the issue, provides relevant demographic information, and proposes a solution (8-10 pages). (20%)

\* This assignment is adapted from Prof. Gina Velasco of Portland State University.

**GRADE SCALE:**

A – 93-100	B+ – 87-89	C+ – 77-79	D – 60-69
A- – 90-92	B – 83-86	C – 73-76	F – 59 or lower
	B- – 80-82	C- – 70-72	