

Women in Latin America

WMST/ANT210.A03

Spring 2013

Instructor: Risa Cromer

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“Office” Hours: Email me to schedule appt. by phone



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A. Course Description

Welcome! This course seeks to provide students with grounding in a significant topic within the field of cultural anthropology – *gender* – in the context of Latin America. As a group, we will endeavor to expand our personal and academic understanding of the role of gender, race, class, and ethnicity in people’s lives across Latin America’s diverse geographies (Central America, Brazil, the Caribbean, Mexico, and Latinas in the United States) and throughout history (colonial era to the present). We will aim to meet the following objectives

1. To understand, use, and relate key concepts and theoretical vocabulary relating to the study of women and men in Latin America.
2. To explore through ethnography the complexities of women’s and men’s lives in Latin America.
3. To demonstrate in written, oral, group and individual work an understanding of how a focus on gender illuminates and intersects with other social inequalities, including race, class and sexuality.
4. To develop critical thinking skills.

By doing this, we are able to see how diverse contexts and conditions inform how women interpret and negotiate their worlds. Ethnographic readings, group discussion, films, and student presentations serve as our primary learning media and methods. Careful reading, clear writing, and thoughtful, respectful speaking are the most important skills that we will develop.

NOTE: All students are encouraged to contact me if some personal problem is affecting your performance in class.

****If you have a disability for which I can make an accommodation, please contact me****

B. Required Readings

Books: The following books are **required**. They are available at the Lehman Campus Bookstore.

Kelly, Patty (2008). *Lydia’s Open Door: Inside Mexico’s Most Modern Brothel*. Berkeley: University of California Press (ISBN 0520255364)

Lopez, Iris (2008). *Matters of Choice: Puerto Rican Women’s Struggle for Reproduction Freedom*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press (ISBN 08135543734)

Articles: Readings are listed in the Course Schedule below on the day they are *due*. You will access the required articles by downloading them from the Blackboard course website in the “Assignments” tab; they are organized numerically by Topic. **Note:** all readings on Blackboard are in .pdf format. Visit www.adobe.com to download the free software for opening .pdf files in you do not have this software already.

C. Course Expectations

Expectations of Students:

- To have reliable access to the Internet and one's Lehman email account
- To access the Blackboard site daily.
- To complete all assigned coursework on time. While there are no exams for this course, the key to success is being aware of the assignment schedule and planning accordingly.
- To take reasonable precautions by keeping back-up copies of submitted work. Breakdowns in computer, internet, email, and other malfunctions are not the instructor's responsibility. In the event of disasters – big and little – your instructor will usually accept reasonable explanations. But the course will continue, and your responsibility is to maintain access and participation.

Expectations for Instructor:

- ❖ Will respond to emails within 24-48 hours
- ❖ Will review course activity each weekday
- ❖ Will grade weekly Discussion Board forums the Tuesday after Reading Responses and Comments are due
- ❖ Will return graded Major Essays within a week of submission

Academic Integrity

Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by failing grades, suspension, or expulsion. Academic Dishonesty includes plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or copying information without citing the source, and "cutting & pasting" from various sources without proper attribution. *Student's found plagiarizing will receive a failing grade.* **NOTE: All students must complete the Topic 00: Honor Code assignment.**

Attendance

In this online course, "attendance" means "participation." It is not a separate grade but incorporated into the grading requirements for Reading Responses, Comments and Major Essays.

Blackboard

Blackboard is an essential feature of this course. You are responsible for activating your Lehman email account and checking it multiple times a week. For any technical assistance, contact Lehman's IT Center (Phone: 718-960-8421; Email: itr@lehman.cuny.edu; Website: <http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/itr/index.php>). *How do I get to our class Blackboard page?* Go to www.cuny.edu and sign in (In order to do this, you need to have an active Lehman email account and a CUNY Portal Account. If you need help with this, contact IT help Desk in Carman Hall a.s.a.p.). Click on "Blackboard Direct 9.0." This will take you to the courses in which you are enrolled this semester. Click on our LEH course.

Class Announcements

Please check the Announcements page on Blackboard *daily* because this is the main way the instructor will communicate with you and give you feedback. Any changes and updates will be posted in this section of the course website.

Email Communication

During the term, the instructor checks email (risa.cromer@lehman.cuny.edu and risacromer@gmail.com) at least once a day and does her best to respond to emails within 24-48hrs. Please include your name and the course title (e.g. LEH 300 Global Politics of Health) in the subject line of the email to help make responding more efficient.

Lectures & Media

In "Assignments," each Topic is accompanied by background lectures, links to online media, and/or film viewing information. Review these materials in preparation for Discussion Board activity, which must be completed by midnight on the day listed in the Course Schedule.

Standard Paper Format

The Major Essay assignments should be typed using standard format: 1x1in margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced. All writing submitted for this course should be edited for grammar and spelling mistakes.

Time Zone

Online coursework can be completed from anywhere in the world, but all deadlines for this course are for the Eastern Standard Time zone.

D. Course Requirements

Reading Responses – 280pts

A central part of this course will be participation on the Discussion Board and will occur in corresponding Topic Forums most weeks this semester. These discussions are designed to help you synthesize the reading material into an intelligent and substantive response, to learn from your peers' insights, and to foster critical thinking. *See the Reading Tips section below for questions that will help you draft your responses.* NOTE: Reading Responses are due by Fridays at 11:59pm.

- Reading Responses (20pts possible for each Topic): Due Fridays by 11:59pm. Each Topic Forum has 2-3 questions listed and students will post a Reading Response for *each* of them. Your answer to each question should be around 300-500 words. There are fifteen required Topics (00-14); Topic 00 will not be graded, but is required.

Comments – 140pts

Students will thoughtfully engage with each other's Reading Responses by posting comments to two other students within each Topic Forum. It is up to you to select the posts that you wish to comment on.

- Comments (10pts possible for each Topic): Due Mondays following Reading Response due dates by 11:59pm. Students will submit two thoughtful comments to other students Reading Responses within each Topic Forum. Comments should respond substantively to the points made in the original post. This includes being respectful of each other's opinions, and having read the material before making comments. Comments are required for the twelve graded Topics (01-14)

Latina Interview Project – 150pts

In Unit II, we devote attention to Iris Lopez's definition of reproductive freedom and the limitations of an "agency v. victimhood" model for understanding women's reproductive experiences. Through this assignment, students will have the chance to extend these lessons by conducting an ethnographic interview with a woman about one of her fertility experiences. A fertility experience can include menarche, sex, family planning, pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, labor, sterilization, menopause, etc. A complete description of the assignment is available in the "Interview Project" tab on Blackboard. The complete project materials are **due May 17th**.

Final Essay – 150pts

By **May 17th**, students will submit a Final Essay. This paper is structured to incorporate materials across the course and does not require outside research. A complete description of the assignment is available in the "Final Essay" tab on Blackboard.

E. Grading Distribution

Thus, your final grade will be determined by the following breakdown of points:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Reading Responses | 280pts (39%) |
| Comments | 140pts (19%) |
| Interview Project | 150pts (21%) |
| Final Essay | 150pts (21%) |
| <hr/> TOTAL | <hr/> 720pts |

F. Reading Tips

Keep the following questions in mind as you read and take notes to help you formulate your thoughts for each reading:

- What is the main message or argument the author is trying to convey? Does her/his evidence support it?
- How do the texts relate to each other and to themes we've encountered in class?
- What concepts seem significant, and why?
- What questions are you left with after reading the piece?
- Were there parts of the reading that you found intriguing, troubling, insightful, or informative? Why?
- Do you disagree with any points the author made and why?
- Have you had similar experiences to those discussed in the text?

G. Online Course “Keywords”

Announcements: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage where all important course announcements will be posted. Announcements made during the semester will also be emailed to your Lehman email account.

Course Information: Tab on the left-hand side of the main course homepage with all informational documents about the course, including the Course Syllabus and Grading Rubric. Consider this tab a key reference point for any questions about how the course works.

Assignments: Tab on the left-hand side of the main course homepage that houses folders for each Topic within the course. Note: each Topic corresponds with a title and due date that is echoed on the Course Syllabus. Within each folder, you will find downloadable versions of the required reading (except for the Fadiman book, which needs to be purchased or borrowed), any required lectures for viewing, links to any required films, links to optional websites and enrichment information, and a link to the corresponding Discussion Board Forum.

Discussion Board: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage and place where all Reading Responses and Comments are posted. Discussions are organized by Topics (e.g. Topic 01, Topic 02, etc), or “forums.” All Readings Responses and Comments will be posted as a “Reply” to the leading discussion question. Please paste your writing into the message box and post rather than attach a document.

Major Essays: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage with assignment directions for the three major essays due this term. You will also submit your Major Essays within this tab.

Films: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage that links you to iTunes University where most of the films for this course are found. Within iTunes University, you can stream or download the required film. Other films are viewable online through YouTube, Google Video, etc. These links will be found both in the Films tab as well as in the corresponding Topic within the Assignments tab.

Extra Credit: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage with a document explaining the Extra Credit assignment as well as the link for submitting the assignment.

Staff Information: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage with some information about your instructor.

Communication: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage under “Tools” with links to useful tools for communicating with the instructor and other students in the course. Note: all emails sent through Blackboard go to your Lehman email account.

Course Tools: Tab on the left-hand side of the course homepage under “Tools” with links to other course tools. The most relevant one for this course is “My Grade” where you can track your progress in the course.

H. Course Schedule

Note: This is a tentative schedule. It is intended to provide the student with the specific topics covered. The instructor has the discretion to adjust this calendar to fit instructional needs and concerns.

| Topic | Due Date | TOPIC | Readings and Assignments DUE |
|--|----------------|---|---|
| Unit I. Intersections & Histories | | | |
| 00 | Jan 28 | Honor Code & Introductions | Review course site and Complete Topic 00 assignments |
| 01 | Feb 1 | Premises of Gender | Alma Gottlieb, "Interpreting Gender and Sexuality: Approaches from Cultural Anthropology" Maxine Baca Zinn, et al., "Sex and Gender Through the Prism of Difference" |
| 02 | Feb 8 | Questioning Marianismo & Machismo | Evelyn Stevens, "Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo" Maryssa Navarro, "Against Marianismo" Matt Gutmann, "Machismo" from <i>Meanings of Macho</i> |
| 03 | Feb 15 | Race, Gender, Nation | Peter Wade, "Race and Sex in Latin America" <i>Film: Black in Latin America</i> |
| 04 | Feb 22 | Colonialism, Power and the State | Ruth Behar, "Sexual Witchcraft, Colonialism and Women's Powers" |
| Unit II. Politics of Reproduction | | | |
| 05 | Mar 1 | Population/Birth Control | Iris Lopez, <i>Matters of Choice</i> Intro, Ch1-3 <i>Film: La Operacion</i> |
| 06 | Mar 8 | Beyond Agency v. Coercion | Iris Lopez, <i>Matters of Choice</i> Ch 4-6 |
| 07 | Mar 15 | Understanding Reproductive Freedom | Iris Lopez, <i>Matters of Choice</i> Ch 7-8 |
| 08 | Mar 22 | Interview Project | |
| Unit III. Work, Sex and the Economy | | | |
| -- | Mar 25 - Apr 2 | <i>Spring Break</i> | <i>Get started on Interview Project and Lydia's Open Door</i> |
| 09 | Apr 5 | Neoliberalism and Power | Patty Kelly, <i>Lydia's Open Door</i> Preface (xii-xviii), Introduction, Ch 1 |
| 10 | Apr 12 | Sex, Women's Work and the Mexican State | Patty Kelly, <i>Lydia's Open Door</i> Ch 2, 3, 5 |
| 11 | Apr 19 | Exploitation and Freedom | Patty Kelly, <i>Lydia's Open Door</i> Ch 6-8, Epilogue |
| 12 | Apr 26 | Racism, Poverty, Motherhood | Carolina Maria de Jesus, <i>Child of the Dark</i> (selections) |
| Unit V. Mobilization and Resistance | | | |
| 13 | May 3 | Women Revolutionaries | Margaret Randall, <i>Sandino's Daughters</i> (selections) <i>Film: When Mountains Tremble</i> |
| 14 | May 10 | Activism Today | |

| # | DATE DUE | BY 11:59pm ON | TOPIC | READING | WRITING | FILMS |
|----|----------|---------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 0 | Jan 28 | Mon | Honor Code & Introductions | | | |
| 1 | Feb 1 | Fri | Premises of Gender | Gottlieb, Baca Zinn Stevens, Navarro, | RR01 | |
| 2 | Feb 8 | Fri | Questioning Marionismo & Machismo | Gutmann | RR02 | |
| 3 | Feb 15 | Fri | Race, Gender, Nation | Wade | RR03 | Black in Latin America |
| 4 | Feb 22 | Fri | Colonialism, Power and the State | Behar | RR04 | |
| 5 | Mar 1 | Fri | Population/Birth Control | Lopez | RR05 | |
| 6 | Mar 8 | Fri | Beyond Agency v. Coercion | Lopez | RR06 | |
| 7 | Mar 15 | Fri | Understanding Reproductive Freedom | Lopez | RR07 | Rosita |
| 8 | Mar 22 | Fri | Interview Project | TBD | RR08 | |
| 9 | Apr 5 | Fri | Neoliberalism and Power | Kelly | RR09 | |
| 10 | Apr 12 | Fri | Sex, Women's Work and the Mexican State | Kelly | RR10 | |
| 11 | Apr 19 | Fri | Exploitation and Freedom | Kelly | RR11 | |
| 12 | Apr 26 | Fri | Racism, Poverty, Motherhood | De Jesus | RR12 | |
| 13 | May 3 | Fri | Women Revolutionaries | Randall | RR13 | When Mountains Tremble |
| 14 | May 10 | Fri | Activism Today | TBD | RR14 | |
| -- | May 17 | Fri | | | Final Essay, Interview Project | |