

WS 2225F: Introduction to Girlhood Studies
Dr. Miranda Green-Barteet
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor: Dr. Miranda Green-Barteet
Office: Lawson Hall 3245

Course Description and Objectives:

In *Girl Power: Girls Redefining Girlhood*, Dawn H. Currie, Deirdre M. Kelly, and Shauna Pomerantz point to the fact that “until recently, girlhood has been ‘the other’ of feminism’s womanhood: girlhood was defined negatively, against womanhood” in ways that present adult femininity as the successful abandonment of young or adolescent womanhood (4). Currie, Kelly, and Pomerantz’s thesis holds that girls in Western civilization at the turn of the twenty-first century are “reinventing” girlhood to suit their own ideas and desires.

In this course, we will consider what it means to be a girl and how the concepts of girl and girlhood have been constructed across a variety of geographic and historical contexts, as well as how the intersections of race, class, gender, and ability have influenced these concepts. Drawing on a variety of disciplines, including literature, history, we specifically consider girlhood through a feminist lens and examine how definitions of girl and girlhood shape individual experience, historical narratives, cultural representations, and futures. Topics may include the commercialization of girlhood, popular culture and girls, negotiating identities, violence, sexualities, agency and activism in a globalizing world, and categories of difference, among other topics. We will also consider the fields of Women’s Studies and Gender Studies have contributed to and shaped Girlhood Studies.

Throughout the semester, in addition to gaining and sharing knowledge through the assigned readings, assignments, and discussions, you will

- develop a perspective on the growing field of Girlhood Studies paying particular attention to the issues facing women today, both locally and globally;
- understand how girls are represented in disciplines such as philosophy, literature, science, as well as in popular culture and media;
- consider how gender operates as a site of social and political control for girls and children;
- connect Girlhood Studies to Women’s and Gender Studies;
- consider girlhood from an intersectional perspective; and
- understand how gender and girlhood are socially constructed.

In addition, it will help students to

- ☐ apply rigorous critical thinking and analysis by engaging productively with new ideas;
- ☐ apply theory to field of girlhood studies;
- ☐ research, assess, and synthesize information;
- ☐ and locate, evaluate, and critique sources using appropriate disciplinary and/or (interdisciplinary research skills and tools.

Discussion Guidelines

We will cover a variety of topics pertaining to girls and girlhood in the class, including, but not limited to, race, class, gender, and sexuality. Some of the materials we will consider may include

topics that may be difficult to read about and to discuss. Ensure you are comfortable discussing this potentially sensitive material. Additionally, this class is a space in which students are free to express their views, to pose questions, or to raise issues without reprisal.

Texts

Course Packet, available at the Campus Bookstore

Term Work

Class Forum and Participation	10%
Short Essay	15%
Paper Proposal	10%
Research Paper	25%
Quizzes (4 @ 10% each)	40%

Class Forum: In my opinion, the most successful college classrooms have students and instructors equally engaged in a discussion about the readings. Throughout the term, you will be asked to respond to specific readings and to comment on your classmates' responses. Specific information will be posted in the Forum section of our course site on OWL.

The timeliness and quality of your discussion questions form one part of your overall participation grade for the year. Participation also includes reading each day's assignment, making insightful comments during discussion, and actively listening. I reserve the right to give reading quizzes as a part of the participation grade if it seems necessary (i.e., if class members do not keep up with the readings). No single portion (participation, reading posts, etc.) determines your participation grade.

Media Analysis Short Essay: For this assignment, you will be required to analyze a commercial, website, magazine, or television show that is targeted to girls. You will need to describe briefly the media you have chosen and critically analyze how girls are being targeted in the media. You will receive detailed directions several weeks before the assignment is due.

Quizzes: Instead of a traditional midterm and a final exam, we will have 4 quizzes throughout the term. Quizzes will include short answer and essay questions. Each will take approximately one hour and will cover material from readings and lecture. Quizzes will be given at the start of class, and we will have class once students have completed the quiz.

Paper Proposal and Research Paper: You will complete a Paper Proposal and a Research Paper, addressing a topic related to the course topic and readings. For the Paper Proposal, you will briefly outline your proposed topic, taking care to outline your topic and purpose. You will include a list of at least 3 academic sources, which you will use in your paper. For the Research Paper, you will write a paper that addresses an aspect of girlhood we have discussed during the term. You will receive detailed directions several weeks before either assignment is due.

Course Policies

Late & Missed Assignments : It is the expectation that students enrolled Women's Studies classes will submit assignments by, and sit tests and/or examinations on, the assigned dates. I will deduct a penalty of 5% per day for work submitted late, unless you have made arrangements with me in writing before an assignment is due. Thus, if you submit a paper 5 days late you will receive a 25% deduction off the final grade. Should you need an extension for any reason, please contact me by email in advance to discuss an extension. Be sure to include our course TA in any

correspondence requesting an extension.

Both electronic and hard copies of written assignments must be submitted; submissions are registered as the date/time the assignments are submitted to Turnitin.com (see below). Hard copies must also be handed in the day assignments are due; any assignments not submitted in class or tutorial must be deposited in the WS essay drop box, located across from the Main Office doors, Lawson Hall 3260. The date receipt of the assignment is determined by the time listed on Turnitin.com.

Missed tests or exams: an absence during a text or an exam will earn a “0” on the assignment, unless you have **medical or compassionate grounds** for accommodation. **In such circumstances, you need to see the Academic Counselor in the Dean’s office of the Faculty in which you are registered.** Please note that I am not permitted to receive medical/doctors’ notes or other confidential documentation; again, such documentation must be submitted directly by students to the Dean’s office. Please see the University’s Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness at: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>.

Turnitin.com: "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under licence to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>." (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/crsout.pdf>)

Scholastic Offences: “Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.”(see <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/crsout.pdf>)

Plagiarism constitutes an automatic failure of this course and goes on a student’s permanent record of conduct. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please contact me.

The following is a statement on plagiarism, which has been mandated by the UWO Senate: “Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.”

You cannot submit assignments in WS 2225F completed for other courses, including other Women’s Studies courses.

Electronic Devices: You may use a computer in class to take notes. Do not use class for anything other than academic purposes. You may not use a cell phone or similar electronic device in class at any time. Should you, for any reason, need to receive a phone call during class time, I ask that you keep your phone on vibrate and step out of the classroom to receive the call. If computers become distracting, I reserve the right to limit the use of computers.

No electronic devices are permitted during tests and exams.

Owl/Sakai: Use of Owl/Sakai is necessary for successful completion of this course. This including accessing readings as stipulated in the course outline, downloading instructions and guidelines for assignments, and submitting assignments to Turnitin.com. All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website. Go to owl.uwo.ca.

Medical Illness Policy: "Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>."

Students who miss work due to a medical illness will need to provide me with documentation regarding their illness; we will then devise a new schedule for assignments that we both agree upon.

*Please **note**: if you require an extension due to a medical illness, you must notify me that you are seeking an extension through the Academic Counseling Office and work out a revised due date with me. You simply need to email me to tell me you have requested an extension, and we will select a new due date together.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.