

AIS 233A: WOMEN: A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE
Fall Trimester 2008
Augsburg College – ROCHESTER CAMPUS

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Class Hours: Tuesdays: 5:45 PM – 9:45 PM

Catalog Description: This course examines a variety of issues concerning the biological, political, evolutionary and historical origins of women's roles and status in society. Comparative roles of women are examined across various cultural contexts in local, national and global settings.

Texts: Sizoo, Edith (ED.) Women's Lifeworlds, 1997.
Kyoko, Mori, Polite Lies, 1997.
Alvord-Arviso, Lori, The Scalpel and the Silver Bear, 1999.
Brin, Ruth F., Bittersweet Berries, 1999.
Nelson, Jill, Straight, No Chaser, 1997.

Course Goal: To appreciate the various manifestations of culture through a mutual and personal exploration of what it means to be a woman as defined by our politics, history and society.

Course Objectives:

1. The students will be able to articulate the broad descriptors of culture and its various manifestations.
2. The students will demonstrate an understanding of cultural diversity through their personal exploration of what this means for them individually and collectively.
3. The students will be able to describe historical, political and societal factors that shape one's view of the world.
4. The students will be able to demonstrate a deep appreciation of cultural synergy and understand how this inclusive philosophy positively impacts society today.

Attendance and Participation is required.

Honesty Policy: The Augsburg College policy on academic honesty applies to this course.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Students with special learning or physical differences (formally diagnosed) have legal rights to course modifications. Please identify yourself to the professors so that they may assist you with your course progress.

All students have the right to use the College Counseling and Student Development staff services, as well as to receive tutoring assistance from the Writing Lab program.

Detailed Class Schedule:

Sept 16: Introductions and Course Overview

- Complete Information Sheet
- Introductions
- Course Overview/Expectations
- Videos: *Still Killing Me Softly* (32 min.)
Female Circumcision (41 min.).
- Discussion of videos
- Defining features of culture
- Attitudes that hinder the study of culture
- Cultural Relativism
- Sign up for Country Presentation from Women's Lifeworlds.

Sept 30: Countries/oral presentations

- Discussion of the *Vulnerable Observer*
- Women's Stories and Cultural Contexts
 - Philippines
 - Israel
 - Sudan
 - Palestine
 - The Gambia
- **Each student will present a current article on women and distribute copies to peers.**

Assignments/Readings:

1. Read *The Vulnerable Observer* (handout) by Ruth Behar, 1996.
2. Select a country from above and prepare for an oral presentation on the geography and what roles do the women have in their homeland? (**#1 assignment**)
3. Register on the Blackboard and respond to questions.
4. Obtain a current article, with reference. Make copies enough for peers.
5. Read Women's Lifeworlds, pp. 3-136.
Be prepared to answer the following from Lifeworlds reading:
 - a. What facts and factors had a determining influence on the lives of women concerned?
 - b. What were the major constraints and opportunities affecting their feeling of "personal integrity," of wholeness—of being complete?
 - c. Discuss your reactions to these opportunities and constraints.
 - d. From an encyclopedia of your choice, read and describe (oral report) the geographical context (paper #1, 2-3 pages) of India, Pakistan, or the Netherlands (with a map of your choice).

Note: The Lifeworlds readings reflect the countries you will present.

Oct. 14: Women change places and places change women: How does this occur?

- Oral presentation of geography and women's roles in the county.
- Responses to Lifeworlds and your written paper.
- Video: Strangers in Good Company (101 min.)

Assignments/Readings:

1. Select one of the countries and be prepared to locate it on a map along with some basic descriptions of the country—its geography....(#2 assignment).

Geographical Contexts:

Ecuador
Brazil
Mexico
Ireland
Belgium
Finland

2. Read Lifeworlds, pp.137-248.

3. Write a 3-5 page synopsis (#1) of Women's Lifeworlds, including the following:

- Major cultural insights gleaned from your readings of Lifeworlds
- Highlight the themes you saw in the women's stories
- Your reactions to their stories

Oct 28: Koyoko's Story

- Discuss Blackboard Experiences.
- Kyoko's Story Discussion, visit Blackboard.
- Film: Dim Sum, 88 min. (1985)
- Intro to American Indian Women
- Video: Wacipi, 60 min.

Assignments/Readings:

1. Read Polite Lies by Kyoko Mori.

2. Write a 3-4 page synopsis, #2 of the book including the following:

- Summary of the main themes/concepts
- Describe how Kyoko reaches resolution to the dilemma of being a woman caught between two cultures.
- Describe your reactions and insights about the book.

3. Search the World Wide Web, Augnet or Clicknet resources, Topics: Women, Women and Culture, Women and Politics, Women and History, Women and Society, Women and the Arts, Women and Education, Women and Leadership.

- Post two (2) websites on the Blackboard e-mail to the class.
 - Inside the message box, please put your full name with:
 - Name of the Website and description of information.
 - Evaluate the usability of the site.

Rate the web site's usability, on a scale of 1-5, with 5 = Excellent.

* = Not Recommended,

** = Careful when using this information,

*** = Average Site, state why not rated higher.

**** = Clear, educational, information, you would return to site.

***** = Excellent Site, you would recommend this site to others.

Indicate if you feel the web site is: “authentic”, “attempt to authenticity”, or “not authentic”.

- Comments: Why you rated as you did. Other comments.
- Your initials and date posted (sjj/01/03/02)
- Enjoy!!!
- Grades for this assignment will be via e-mail.

Nov 11: The Scalpel and the Silver Bear

- Discussion and distribution of statistics
- Discussion of the *Menstrual Cycle*
- Dr. Arviso’s Story
- Discussion & presentation of projects
- Video: The Navajo Way
- The Dine (Navajo) Culture

Assignments/Readings:

1. Read The Scalpel and the Silver Bear by Lor Arviso Alvord.
2. Read the *Menstrual Cycle* by Christiane Northrup (handout).
3. Blackboard questions, post your own questions.
4. Synthesize Silver Bear by writing a summary paper or art piece (PROJECT), highlighting the cultural tensions of Lori’s story and how she reached resolution.
5. Obtain **current statistical information** with resource regarding women with handouts for peers.

Nov 25: Bittersweet Berries & Straight, No Chaser

- Ruth's Story
- Discussion
- View the video: *Fires in the Mirror*, 82 min.
- Jill Nelson's Story
- Discussion
- Film: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, 96 min.
- Final Projects Due

Assignments/Readings:

1. Read Bittersweet Berries by Ruth F. Brin.
 2. Read Straight, No Chaser by Jill Nelson.
 3. Be prepared to compare Ruth and Jill's stories. What common elements do you find? How do these stories relate to your story?
 4. Submit your tread paper 5-7 pages. Include the threads you will keep and not keep.
- Final Projects: Your project will be an individual project. You will share the major "threads" of your personal story. You can share your project either through dramatizations, art projects, poetry, dance, music, or whatever medium is most expressive of what you want to say.

Papers returned & Presentation of your story.

- You speak and we listen....

Dec 6: Final Exams

NOTE: All papers must be typed, one and one-half or double-spaced. Top sheet (not a separate cover page) must include your name, title of course, project, and date.

All assignments are required. Only partial credit may be given for late papers. Effort and hard work will be recognized and generously rewarded.

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>POINTS</u>
# 1:	20 points
# 2:	20 points
SYNOPSIS PAPER 1 (Lifeworks):	30 points
SYNOPSIS PAPER 2 (Polite Lies):	25 points
SYNOPSIS PROJECT (Silver Bear):	25 points
Current Article, copies for peers	20 points
Website Postings (2)	20 points
Current statistics, copies for peers.	20 points
FINAL EXAM/PRESENTATION	60 points
Attendance/Preparation/Participation	<u>160 points</u>
8 days x 20 points	
	400 points

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>
381-400	4.00	311-320	2.0
361-380	3.5	291-310	1.5
341-360	3.0	271-290	1.0
321-340	2.5	251-270	.5 (Below 250 points=0)

Rubrics for papers/Projects:

4.0 Handed in on schedule, following the assigned guidelines for the assignment. Paper/Project clearly indicates a grasp of the content and an understanding of the more subtle metaphorical implications of the readings and lectures. The reader grasps the writer's message easily without having to make inferences. Integration of major concepts is evident.

3.5 Handed in on schedule, following the assigned guidelines for the assignment. Paper/project clearly indicates a grasp of the content and an understanding of the metaphorical implications of the readings and lectures. The reader has to fill-in some minor gaps in the message.

3.0 Paper is late (follows the assigned guidelines for the assignment) and/or paper/project shows some confusion about the content and does not understand the more subtle metaphorical referents included in the readings and lectures.

2.5 Paper is late (follows most of the guidelines for the assignment) and/or paper/project shows some confusion about the content and reader has to make inferences about what the writer is trying to say.

2.0 paper is late (roughly follows the guidelines for the assignment) and/or paper/project shows confusion about the content and reader has to make inferences about what the writer is trying to say. It is readily apparent that the writer did not "internalize" the message in the readings.

