

**WS 100  
Puotinen  
Fall 2003  
Final Project**

The purpose of this project is to enable you to critically reflect on what you have learned in the class. Please pick one of the following options for your final paper/project. Your paper/project should be roughly 8-10 pages, double-spaced and in 12 point font. Make sure to carefully proofread and spell-check your writing. All quotations from class articles or outside sources must be correctly cited. **MAKE SURE THAT YOU READ ALL OF THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR CHOSEN TOPIC THOROUGHLY AND CAREFULLY!!**

**1. What is women's studies and why is it important?**

Drawing upon the articles we have read and our class discussions, develop your own definition of women's studies and then carefully (in good detail) describe why it is important. To help in your discussion, pick at least three (3) articles that we have read and effectively explain:

1. Why they are representative of women's studies. That is, why they should be considered articles appropriate for a women's studies class.
2. Why they are important for you, for other Emory students, for family members and/or for society to read. How do these articles help make us more aware of the world and the ways in which we are shaped (positively and negatively) by society? Basically, how do these articles make us more critically aware?

Your essay should be roughly 8-10 pages long and should involve a compelling and well-developed argument for what women's studies is and why it is important. You are welcome to be as creative as possible in your response, but your essay must include direct evidence (in the form of quotes or paraphrased examples) from your three selected articles and a critical reflection on your own experience in Introduction to Women's Studies.

**2. Novel Analysis**

Pick a novel or autobiography and do a critical analysis of it in terms of gender, race, class, and sexuality. Your essay should not be a mere summary of the book—although you should offer a brief summary of it—but instead should be a critical analysis of the book in terms of the issues of our class. What is the experience of women in the novel? Does the author accurately depict the situation of women? Why/why not? What are the key issues in terms of women in this novel? What roles do gender, race, class and/or sexuality play in this novel? Why is this novel an important one for a women's studies class? Make sure to address issues from the class and use at least two essays that we read. If you choose this option, remember that it requires that you read the novel very carefully and critically—this means reading the novel more than once. The following are some suggested novels:

*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker  
*In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez  
*Bastard out of Carolina* by Dorothy Allison  
*The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison  
*Gender Outlaw* by Kate Bornstein

If you would like to write on a novel other than the ones listed above, it must be approved by me first. This book analysis should be roughly 8-10 pages long.

**see other side**

**3. Media Notebooks**

Construct a notebook of at least eight (8) media images of women. This notebook must include a thoughtful analysis of the implications of these images for women in terms of gender, race, class

and sexuality. Acceptable media images include: publication ads and articles, comic strips and comic books, book illustrations, postcards, greeting cards, internet images, posters, CD covers, billboards and bumper stickers (you must present photographs of these two examples), music videos, prime time TV—including television ads (you must include a video tape of these two) and song lyrics (you must include song lyrics). You must organize your notebook around a theme, such as: images of beauty, ways in which women are silenced/objectified, the performance of gender, women and sexuality, woman as passive, etc. Your analysis should include the following:

1. 1-2 page introduction in which you clearly define the organizing theme of your notebook and explain the process you went through in collecting these images.
2. At least 3/4 page of detailed analysis of your chosen image. This analysis should not be a mere description of the ad, but instead should be a critical engagement with the ad and its implications for women. In your analysis, you should draw upon articles from class, class discussions/films and your own observations. In total (that means for the whole notebook) you need to incorporate at least five (5) of the texts that we have read and discussed this semester.
3. 1-2 page conclusion of your finding and an overall summary of what you learned from this process. You should include some questions that this project raised for you.

Your notebook should be roughly 8-10 pages long and all images (excluding music videos and/or TV clips) should be neatly placed in a binder and clearly identified as to what they are and where they are from.

#### **4. Interview**

Interview a woman from another generation (mother, relative, professor, community activist) about women and feminism and then write an analysis of your findings. For the interview, develop questions that are related to the class—the articles that we have read, the films we have watched and the discussion that we have had—and that explore the differences (or similarities) between generations of women. Some possible questions are: Would you consider yourself a feminist? Why/why not? What does it mean to be a woman? How does your experience as a woman differ from that of younger women? How have women's lives changed since you were younger? Have you ever felt silenced? When did you develop your own voice?

Your paper should be 8-10 pages and include the following (in no particular order):

1. A discussion of your experience of the interview. Make sure to discuss what you learned through the interview process. Any answers surprise you? Did you learn some things about this woman that you didn't know before? Do you understand her better? less? Did this process make you think about the articles that we have read in a different way?
2. A brief description of the woman that you interviewed—her background, how you know her, age, where she lives, interests and/or job, economic background, race/ethnicity, sexual preference—and of the interview itself—where it took place, for how long. Also include a list of the questions that you asked.
3. An analysis of your findings. Critically reflect on your conversation with this woman and the answers that she gave to your questions. Make sure to connect your analysis with at least two (2) of the articles that we have read this semester. Also make sure to address some of the themes that we have discussed in class (e.g. alienation/competition between women, complexity of women's lives/intersectionality, tension between generations/mother-daughter relationships, role of storytelling/writing) in your questions and your analysis of those questions.

#### **5. Your Own Project**

If you have an idea for a project not listed here, you are welcome to propose your suggestion to me *in writing no later than Thursday, November 20*. Your proposal must include a clear

**Sara L. Puotinen**  
**Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness**  
**Examples of Course Materials/Activities**

trajectory of your plan: questions your project will undertake, sources that will be used, appropriateness of this project to the class and the form the project will take.

**Although not required, I strongly encourage you to meet with me to discuss your final project sometime in November or the first week of December. Remember this assignment is worth 20% of your final grade. Good Luck!**

Final projects are due in my mailbox (or on the table beneath, clearly marked) in the WS Lounge by **Friday, December 10, at 4:30 p.m.** I will collect them at that time exactly, and any projects that exceed that deadline will drop by a letter per day late. No extensions or exceptions without a verifiable doctor's excuse or Dean's letter.