

**Providence College**  
**PSP 470, AMS 470 & WMS 470 Special Topics: Women and Service**  
**Monday / Thursday 10:00 – 11:15am**  
**Spring 2013**

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**Instructors:**

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**Course Description:** This seminar will explore the complexity of women's multiple roles in work, service, care, and activism in both the public and private spheres. We will study how the roles of women as caregivers and community service providers may limit their participation in the labor force, the political realm, peacemaking, and social change, both in the United States and globally. We are going to consider how, why and in what capacities women do service now and in recent history, beginning with a focus on US based movements and its links to global service and women's activism. We will be looking at how women have impacted "the streets", "the classroom", "the community", "the state house" and "the home" as transformative centers of engagement, while ending the course examining the tensions among these places both theoretically and practically (specifically in relation to how students see themselves balancing community, service, personal beliefs and gendered expectations). We will cover issues around activism, education, political representation, health/social services, nonprofit work and care work, all as examples of how we might conceptualize what "service" is, while continually examining the gendered nature of each. The style of the course will be an active, student-centered seminar, with a focus on the centrality of women's stories in feminist practice. The main project (linked to both the mid-term and final) is a practice of listening to and recording women's stories, and sharing collective stories to the class and campus community. The active story telling is the service-learning/civic engagement portion of the course. Through readings, civic engagement, meaningful conversations and a class project we will explore all of these issues. We will also examine the ways in which community service learning and women's studies can enrich one another, create alternative models which allow both women and men to share equally in their responsibilities for care, community service, and paid work, and advance the creation of peaceful, just, and sustainable communities. Finally we will explore how we can create balance in our own lives.

**Learning Objectives**

- Study the history of feminism and service in a U.S. context, with links to global impacts
- Examine feminist perspectives on woman doing paid work, and unpaid (family) care, and community service – including issues of activism, education, health, care and environmentalism.
- Explore globalization's effect on women
- Study women doing justice work on an international level
- Look at political and economic systems that might serve as more sustainable alternatives than the ones currently used
- Consider our own balance between paid work, unpaid care, and civic engagement

These learning objectives will be met through

- Readings
- Class conversations
- Written reflections on readings and course topics
- “Telling Women’s Stories” Project
- Written mid-term and final papers

### **Texts and Readings:**

#### Main texts:

Collins, G. (2009), *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to Present*. New York: Little, Brown and Company Publishers.

Folbre, N. (2001). *The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values*. New York: The New Press.

Maathai, W. (2006). *Unbowed: A Memoir*. New York: Anchor Books.

*All other articles and readings will be posted on the course Angel page.*

### **Assignments and Grading**

1. Students will write 2 page weekly reflection papers on the readings and class discussions, responding to questions posed by the instructors. There are 10 reflection paper assignments, worth 3 points each.
2. A midterm paper of 6-8 pages
3. A final paper of 10-15 pages
4. Women’s Story Telling Project and in-class exercise
5. Class participation.

<b>Reading Reflections (10)</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Midterm paper</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Paper</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Class participation &amp; In-Class Women’s Story Telling Exercise</b>	<b>20%</b>

## Course Outline and Readings

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
Thursday 1/24	Intro to course; Winter Break reading discussion	Gail Collins, <i>When Everything Changed</i> (all)	
Monday 1/28	Intro to feminism and the US feminist movement	bell hooks, "The Significance of the Feminist Movement"  Gail Collins, <i>When Everything Changed</i> (discussion continued)	<i>Reading reflection #1 due by 5pm 1/27</i>
Thursday 1/31	Intro to community service in US culture:	Robert Coles, "The Call of Service"  Bernadett Chi, "What is Wrong with this Picture?"	
Monday 2/4	Who does service, now and in the past?	Nick Longo & Gary Daynes, "Jane Addams and the Origins of Service-Learning Practice in the US"  Tobi Walker, "Feminist Challenge of Community Service: A Call to Politicize Service-Learning"	<i>Reading Reflections #2 due by 5pm 2/3</i>
Thursday 2/7	Gendered Expectations, Service and Care work	Folbre, <i>The Invisible Heart</i> Introduction and Chapters 1-2 (xi-56)	
Monday 2/11	Gendered Expectations, Service and Care work	Robert Drago, "The Care Gap"	<i>Reading reflection #3 due by 5pm 2/10</i>
Thursday 2/14	Organizing for Educational Rights: Title IX	Bernice Sandler, "Too Strong for a Women: Five Words that Created Title IX"  In class: Video, <i>Heroes for Daisy</i>	
Monday 2/18	<b>PRESIDENT'S DAY – No Classes; Monday Schedule Followed on Tuesday 2/19</b>		
Tuesday 2/19	Women in the classroom: student, teachers & scholars	Marylou Salvatore, "Why Literacy is a Feminist Issue"  In Class: Video blog interview, Carinne Brody, PhD candidate working with the "Girl Effect" project	<i>Reading Reflection #4 due by 5pm Monday 2/18</i>
Thursday 2/21	Women & Health: Care, Service or work?	Judith Lorber, "Gender Hierarchies in the Health Professions"	
Monday 2/25	Women & Health: Activism through Storytelling	Kate Sidley "The Power of Eve"  Jeffrey Gettleman, "Rape Victims' Words	<i>Reading reflection #5 due by 5pm 2/24</i>

		Help Jolt Congo into Change”	
Thursday 2/28	Telling Women’s Stories	Margaret Wheatley, excerpt from “Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future”  In class: Videos from StoryCorps	
3/2-3/10	<b>Spring Break – No Classes</b>		
Monday 3/11	Telling Women’s Stories II	No readings: Practicing story telling and collective memory exercise in class	<i>Midterm paper due</i>
Thursday 3/14	Women, Power, Politics and Participation I	Viewing of <i>Miss Representation</i>	
Monday 3/18	Women, Power, Politics and Participation II	Luista Lopez Torregrosa, “No Longer Is Leadership a Men’s Club”  Jennifer Lawless, excerpt from <i>It Takes A Candidate</i>	<i>Reading reflection #6 due by 5pm 3/17</i>
Thursday 3/21	Women and Political Participation: International Perspectives	No readings discussed in class (begin <i>Unbowed</i> ” for Thursday’s class)  In class: Video, <i>Women on the Frontlines</i>	
Monday 3/25	International Service: Wangari Maathai	<i>Unbowed</i> , pp. 1-163	
3/28-4/1	<b>Easter Break – No Classes</b> <b>Monday Schedule followed Wednesday April 3</b>		
Wednesday 4/3	Wangari Maathai	<i>Unbowed</i> , pp. 164-end	<i>Reading reflection #7 due by 5pm on Monday 4/1</i>
Thursday 4/4	Globalization, Development and Women’s Service	Nancy Folbre, <i>Invisible Heart</i> , pp. 185-208	
Monday 4/8	Philanthropy and Women’s Economics: The Example of Microcredit	“Why Credit?” – Goldin Institute  “Improving Microcredit Programs: Listening to Recipients” – Goldin Institute	<i>Reading Reflection #8 due by 5pm 4/7</i>
Thursday 4/11	Diversity and the challenge of “women”	Sojourner Truth: “Ain’t I a women?”  Kimberle Crenshaw. ”Intersectionality”	
Monday 4/15	Diversity and the challenge of “women”	Stewart, Kathryn “Family, Social Policy and Gender Inequality: An LGBT Perspective”	<i>Reading Reflection #9 due by 5pm 4/14</i>
Thursday 4/18	Sharing our encounters with women	No readings: Collective storytelling exercise I (in class)	<i>Complete interviews and prepare to share with class</i>

Monday 4/22	Sharing our encounters with women	No readings: Collective storytelling exercise II (in class)	
Thursday 4/25	Sharing our encounters with women	No readings: Collective storytelling exercise III (in class)	
Monday 4/29	Alternative models of living and serving: Balancing paid work, unpaid care, and service	Elizabeth Pope, "Coming together to make ageing a little easier"  Sandra Goodwin & Barbara Risman, "Twentieth-Century Changes in Economic Work and Family"  Emily Nussbaum, "The Rebirth of the feminist Manifesto"	<i>Reading reflection #10 due by 5pm 4/28</i>
Thursday 5/2	Where do we go from here? Course Reflection	Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House"	
Saturday 5/12	<b>Course Final – Papers Submitted by 1:00pm on Angel</b>		

## Written Assignments

Throughout the course, there are several written assignments accompanying readings, service and coursework. All reading reflections are to be posted on Angel by 5:00pm, usually on a Sunday (with the exception of #4 & #7). The midterm is due Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. The final paper is due during our scheduled final date, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Each assignment, including post due date and content, is listed below:

### **Reading Reflections:**

- Reading Reflection #1

Respond to readings due 1/24 & 1/28 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 1/28

*Framing questions: What are your initial reactions to the feminist movement readings? What questions and concerns are you left with that you hope we can address in this course?*

- Reading Reflection #2

- Reading Reflection #3

Respond to readings due 2/7 & 2/11 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 2/10

*Framing questions: What is the importance of gendered care expectations in relation to women's roles in community?*

- Reading Reflection #4

Respond to readings due 2/14 & 2/19 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on **Monday** 2/18

*Framing questions: Is educating service? Does gender matter for educators and learners?*

- Reading Reflection #5

Respond to readings due 2/21 & 2/25 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 2/24

Framing questions: *Discuss the links between service, work, activism and politics in health care, including your views on the potentials and limitations of health as basis for feminist action.*

- Reading Reflection #6

Respond to readings due 3/14, 3/18 & video and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 3/17

*Framing questions: Does having women in politics matter? What is/are the benefit(s) to political action over service projects?*

- Reading Reflection #7

Respond to readings due 3/25 & 4/3 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on **Monday** 4/1

*Framing questions: What aspect(s) of Wangari Maathai's story is most compelling to you? Why?*

- Reading Reflection #8

Respond to readings due 4/4 & 4/8 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 4/7

*Framing questions: How does globalization undermine the well-being of women?  
How is globalization attacking programs that support women, children, and the poor?  
What are the possibilities of micro-credit in empowering women?*

- Reading Reflection #9

Respond to readings due 4/11 & 4/15 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 4/14

*Framing questions: Does diversity in women's experience matter to collective ideas of service, feminism and community?*

- Reading Reflection #10

Respond to readings due 4/29 and post on Angel by 5:00pm on Sunday 4/28

*Framing questions: How do you think balancing civic, social, domestic and occupational responsibilities should be conducted? How do you hope to balance your own life, and where (if anywhere) do you see feminist alternative models of working, living and serving help you in this balance?*

## **Midterm Paper**

- *Project Outline and Reflection on Telling Stories*  
Due Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> by 10:00am  
Should be 6-8 pages in length

## **Final Paper**

- *Analysis of Telling Stories Project and Course Reflection*  
Due on the date of the final exam, Friday May 10<sup>th</sup> by 3:30pm  
Should be between 12-15 pages in length.

## Telling Women's Stories Project Women & Service (WMS/PSP 470), Spring 2012

*"We completely underestimate the power of human conversation to change the world" – Margaret Wheatley*

Telling stories has a rich history in both feminist practice and the practice of community organizing and community service; in fact, the notion of the "personal is political" is a cornerstone of early U.S. women's movements that both drew upon and enhanced methods of organizing and community activism that have long been part of U.S. traditions around civil rights and citizenship. Although telling stories can appear to be a progressive narrative—following along the chronological experiences of an individual, group or community—the experiences of any individual and group represents the multitude of often contradictory and complex factors that influence individual and political histories. Stories can be somewhat anachronistic, contradictory and even unexpected when we look at the multifaceted expectations, experiences and actions of a group or even an individual. While this makes telling collective stories difficult, it is also what makes this process so necessary and enriching.

In considering the histories and practices of both women's studies and civic engagement, the Telling Women's Stories project is an opportunity to use a combination of speaking, listening, recording and reflecting in order to understand how gender and women's experiences of service are shaped in contemporary society. Each student will identify three women to interview who "serve" in any/all of the capacities we discuss in this class—in the community (including nonprofits, activism/community organizing, military service, medical services), political sphere (activism, elected office, lobbying), classroom (teachers or other educators), or home (caregivers—both paid and unpaid). These interviews will be conducted in person or through a face-to-face online interview (i.e. skype) and includes asking participants to share their stories of service as women, as defined both by the interviewer and interviewee. The culmination of these exercises will be a collective memory exercise, in which students together will create narratives representing PC, local and global women's experiences in singular stories and/or artistic representations.

The **midterm project** has two components: First, in class we will have an introduction to storytelling followed by 45 minutes of practicing telling and recording stories in pairs, groups and to the whole class. The second part of the midterm is a short paper (6-8 pages) in which each student will reflect on the in class experience of storytelling and collective memory and use this reflection to inform their decisions as to the three women they plan on interviewing. This includes outlining their process and interest in these people as interviewees, including proposed questions and things the student hopes to gain from conversations (perspectives, professional guidance, etc.). The paper will be due Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> by 10:00am on SAKAI.

The **final project** has three components: First, students interview the three women they have identified, recording notes along the way. Second, we will dedicate three in class sessions for sharing stories (PC, local and global) to create collective stories based on those commonalities. Third, the final paper (12-15 pages) will reflect on the interviews, what they gained and how this informed the student's learning in regards to at least two different ways women serve that we looked at (community, activism, home, classroom, politics, etc) and will be due the day of the final exam. Friday, May 11, by 1pm on SAKAI.