

FALL 2017 FEMINIST STUDIES SEMINARS

FEMST 185BC – Gender and Culture: Feminist Politics of the Body

Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-4:45pm HSSB 4201

Going beyond biological understandings of the body, this course examines the body as culturally mediated and politically salient. Focusing on the contemporary U.S., this course will ask such questions as: How do gender, race, class shape the social construction of the body? Which bodies are considered discursively important in the political and cultural terrain, and why? How does the body figure into feminist understandings of power? Throughout the course, we will read books and articles that address these questions as well as how women have challenged and redefined the terrain of body politics.

FEMST 185CC – Gender and Culture: Gender and the Rhetoric of Mystery

Professor Tomlinson

Tuesdays 6:30-9:20pm Girvetz 1116

FEMST 186AE - Gender and Society: The Meaning of Serena Williams- Complexities of Gender, Race, and Sexuality in Sports Celebrity

Mondays and Wednesdays 11am-12:15pm HSSB 4201

The title for this course is borrowed from Claudia Rankine's *New York Times Magazine* cover story, "The Meaning of Serena Williams: On Tennis and Black Excellence." The article's authorship and publication capture the significance that Williams has across many arenas of US discourse. She is Black. She is a woman. She is a Jehovah's Witness. She is by many measures one of the greatest athletes who ever lived. She also lives at the intersection of racialized and gendered oppression. This course puts together feminist theory with popular media about the tennis star to help students better understand the theory through analysis and application, while also giving students the tools to better analyze other cultural productions they encounter. Every week is focused around a theme such as critiques of respectability politics; science criticism, gender testing, and biological racism in sport; critical whiteness studies and erasures of Black women's accomplishments. The reading assignments for the first class meeting of the week consist entirely of academic work which will be carefully analyzed and discussed by itself in class. For the second meeting of every week, students will be assigned readings and screenings by and about Serena Williams coming from popular media. The discussion will bring together academic theory with popular discourse to better understand both.