

Humanities 195j
Fall 2003
Mon. 2:45-4:15 (sometimes longer)
and by Institute calendar
Humanities 105

Professor Liss
Humanities 214, x73541
Office Hrs: Mon. 11-12,
Th 2:30-3:30

Humanities Institute Junior Fellows Seminar

The theme for the Fall 2003 Scripps College Humanities Institute is Poverty. Throughout the semester, we hope to address a number of issues involving the history of poverty and poor relief, social policy and social activism, narratives of inequality and the documentary tradition, the gendering of poverty, health and inequality, food and hunger, inequality and development. The program is divided into three sections: The Other America: The Hiddenness of Poverty in the U.S.; Poverty and Development; and Women and Poverty in the U.S., a conference organized with Intercollegiate Women's Studies. In addition, we will begin the semester with an exhibit of photographs, "Empty Pockets: Images of Children in Poverty," curated by Ellie Irons '03, and continue with a film series.

Course requirements:

All Fellows will participate in a seminar that accompanies the lecture series. We will read texts recommended or written by the speakers in preparation for their visits. Fellows are expected to attend the weekly seminar and all other Institute events. Fellows will have opportunities to meet individually with the speakers.

Each student is expected to fulfill the following requirements throughout the semester:

- Read all of the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them
- Write weekly, two-page reading responses (due at the beginning of class)
- Make an oral presentation on one week's assignment to initiate and focus discussion. This presentation includes summarizing the argument, presenting what is at stake (why does this argument matter?), and posing questions for discussion. In order for these presentations to be productive and helpful, you should be as clear as possible about what you think the author's main concerns are and about your own analysis or reactions to them.
- Write a response paper about the Institute events; this may include an interview with one of the speakers
- Write a fifteen-page research paper on a topic of your choice related to the topics we discuss this semester. You must discuss your topic with me beforehand as noted in the schedule below. Students will present their work to the class at the end of the semester. Students may pursue a project in another format, equivalent in scope and rigor to a research paper, e.g. a video or an art project based on the readings for the semester. This alternative also needs to be discussed with me.

Schedule of meetings and readings:

We will meet regularly on Mondays to prepare for the Institute events. The week of Fall break, we will meet instead on Thursday at 4:15.

Students are required to attend Institute events. Although there is not a single time for these events, I have tried to limit the variations. The opening for the gallery exhibition and talk is on Thursday at 4:15 and the September symposium also begins on Thursday at 4:15. The symposium will include a follow-up discussion on Friday morning. Vandana Shiva will lecture on Tuesday evening October 28. The November conference begins on Thursday at 4:15 and will continue through Friday, concluding after lunch on Saturday. There are two luncheon talks (Oct. 6—Monday and Nov. 5—Thursday). The films will be screened and discussed in the evenings (Sept. 11 [Thurs], Oct. 8 [Wed], Nov. 3 [Mon.] and Nov. 20[Thurs.]). Details are included in the syllabus.

The readings are assigned based on what the speakers made available as of the first day of class. Changes or additions may be necessary. Books listed are available at Huntley bookstore. Xeroxed articles and selections are available from Claire Bridge in the Humanities Institute office.

Introduction

September 4 (Thursday): “Poverty” as a problem; Today’s Other America
HSS Poverty Guidelines
Jack Newfield, “How the Other Half Still Lives”
Barry Bearak, “Why Famine Persists”
Eric Tang, “Collateral Damage”

Sept. 8: Michael Harrington, The Other America
Maurice Isserman, The Other American (selections)

Sept 11: “Stranger with a Camera” (Elizabeth Barret, 2000, 62 minutes)
Film screening, introduction and Q&A with Professor Susan Seizer, Hum. 204, 7 p.m.

Sept. 15: Alex Kotlowitz, There Are No Children Here

Sept. 18: Exhibit opening: “Empty Pockets: Images of Children in Poverty,” curated
by Ellie Irons ’03, 4:15 p.m.

Sept. 22: Dorothy Roberts, Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare

Sept. 25: Symposium: The Other America: The Hiddenness of Poverty in the U.S.

Sept. 29: Discussion of symposium; Arturo Escobar, Encountering Development (selections)

Oct. 6: Christine Ahn, FoodFirst (Noon, Hampton Room, Malott Commons)
Class will still meet at 2:45: read: Ahn, Shafted: Free Trade and America’s Working Poor

Oct. 8: “Life and Debt” (Stephanie Black, 2001, 86 minutes)
Film screening, discussion with Director, Rose Hills Theatre, Smith Campus Center,
Pomona College, 7 p.m.

Oct. 13: Vandana Shiva, Stolen Harvest

Oct. 20: Break

Oct. 23 (Thursday): Diana Dujon & Ann Withorn, For Crying Out Loud, pp. 1-153
Final project proposals due

Oct. 27: Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon in For Crying Out Loud, pp. 235-267
Frances Fox Piven in For Crying Out Loud, pp. 183-199
Felicia Kornbluh “The Goals of the National Welfare Rights Movement” (xerox)

Oct. 28 (Tues.) Vandana Shiva, 7:30 p.m., Humanities Auditorium

Nov. 3: “Señorita Extraviada, Missing Young Woman” (Lourdes Portillo, 2001, 74 minutes)
Film screening, discussion with Director, Humanities Auditorium, 7 p.m.
Project outlines due in class

Nov. 5: Majid Rahnema, Pitzer College (Noon, Hampton Room, Malott Commons)

“Give us our poverty back!': A View of the Modern Economic Myth from the Poor's Perspective”

Nov. 10: Gwendolyn Mink, “Aren't Poor Single Mothers Women?” (xerox)

Eva Feder Kittay, “Welfare, Dependency and a Public Ethic of Care” (xerox)

Mimi Abramovitz, “Toward a Framework for Understanding Activism...” (xerox)

Nov. 13-15: Women and Poverty in the U.S. Conference

Nov. 17: Discussion of conference

Nov. 20: “Eating Welfare” (Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence, 2001, 57 minutes)

Film screening, intro. and Q&A with Professor Seung Hye Suh, Humanities Aud., 7 p.m.

Nov. 24: Presentations

Dec. 1: Presentations

Project drafts due

Dec. 8: Presentations

Dec. 12: Reading day: Presentations, if necessary

Dec. 18: Final Projects due by Noon