

Final Project Assignment:

Final Project (25%): Students will select a book from the list provided by the professors and provide a thoughtful and comprehensive discussion of the text. The final paper for this course will be 7-10 pages long, double-spaced and Times New Roman. An outline for this course project will be due in late October.

Students will provide a brief overview of the text that identifies key findings and themes presented in the text. The student will provide a thoughtful and robust analysis of the relevance, strengths and weaknesses of the authors argument. Students will avoid unsupported opinion, and make comprehensive logical arguments regarding the text.

Books include:

- *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*

Cultural Writing. Essays. Latino/Latina Studies. Rooted in Gloria Anzaldua's experience as a Chicana, a lesbian, an activist, and a writer, the groundbreaking essays and poems in this volume profoundly challenged how we think about identity. BORDERLANDS/LA FRONTERA remapped our understanding of what a "border" is, seeing it not as a simple divide between here and there, us and them, but as a psychic, social, and cultural terrain that we inhabit, and that inhabits all of us.

- *Mighty be our Powers: How Sisterhood, Prayer, and Sex Changed a Nation at War*

WINNER OF THE 2011 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE :In a time of death and terror, Leymah Gbowee brought Liberia's women together—and together they led a nation to peace.

As a young woman, Leymah Gbowee was broken by the Liberian civil war, a brutal conflict that tore apart her life and claimed the lives of countless relatives and friends. Years of fighting destroyed her country—and shattered Gbowee's girlhood hopes and dreams. As a young mother trapped in a nightmare of domestic abuse, she found the courage to turn her bitterness into action, propelled by her realization that it is women who suffer most during conflicts—and that the power of women working together can create an unstoppable force. In 2003, the passionate and charismatic Gbowee helped organize and then led the Liberian Mass Action for Peace, a coalition of Christian and Muslim women who sat in public protest, confronting Liberia's ruthless president and rebel warlords, and even held a sex strike. With an army of women, Gbowee helped lead her nation to peace—in the process emerging as an international leader who changed history. *Mighty Be Our Powers* is the gripping chronicle of a journey from hopelessness to empowerment that will touch all who dream of a better world.

- *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* Barbara Ehrenreich

Millions of Americans work full time, year round, for poverty-level wages. In 1998, Barbara Ehrenreich decided to join them. She was inspired in part by the rhetoric surrounding welfare reform, which promised that a job -- any job -- can be the ticket to a better life. But how does anyone survive, let alone prosper, on \$6 an hour? To find out, Ehrenreich left her home, took the cheapest lodgings she could find, and

accepted whatever jobs she was offered. Moving from Florida to Maine to Minnesota, she worked as a waitress, a hotel maid, a cleaning woman, a nursing-home aide, and a Wal-Mart sales clerk. She lived in trailer parks and crumbling residential motels. Very quickly, she discovered that no job is truly "unskilled," that even the lowliest occupations require exhausting mental and muscular effort. She also learned that one job is not enough; you need at least two if you intend to live indoors. Boys and how the "fag discourse" is as much tied to gender as it is to sexuality.

- *Lost in Transition: Ethnographies of Everyday Life after Communism*

Lost in Transition tells of ordinary lives upended by the collapse of communism. Through ethnographic essays and short stories based on her experiences with Eastern Europe between 1989 and 2009, Kristen Ghodsee explains why it is that so many Eastern Europeans are nostalgic for the communist past. Ghodsee uses Bulgaria, the Eastern European nation where she has spent the most time, as a lens for exploring the broader transition from communism to democracy. She locates the growing nostalgia for the communist era in the disastrous, disorienting way that the transition was handled. The privatization process was contested and chaotic. A few well-connected foreigners and a new local class of oligarchs and criminals used the uncertainty of the transition process to take formerly state-owned assets for themselves. Ordinary people inevitably felt that they had been robbed. Many people lost their jobs just as the state social-support system disappeared. *Lost in Transition* portrays one of the most dramatic upheavals in modern history by describing the ways that it interrupted the rhythms of everyday lives, leaving confusion, frustration, and insecurity in its wake.

- *What Is Veiling?: Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks*

Ranging from simple head scarf to full-body burqa, the veil is worn by vast numbers of Muslim women around the world. "What Is Veiling?" explains one of the most visible, controversial, and least understood emblems of Islam. Sahar Amer's evenhanded approach is anchored in sharp cultural insight and rich historical context. Addressing the significance of veiling in the religious, cultural, political, and social lives of Muslims, past and present, she examines the complex roles the practice has played in history, religion, conservative and progressive perspectives, politics and regionalism, society and economics, feminism, fashion, and art. By highlighting the multiple meanings of veiling, the book decisively shows that the realities of the practice cannot be homogenized or oversimplified and extend well beyond the religious and political accounts that are overwhelmingly proclaimed both inside and outside Muslim-majority societies. Neither defending nor criticizing the practice, "What Is Veiling?" clarifies the voices of Muslim women who struggle to be heard and who, veiled or not, demand the right to live spiritual, personal, and public lives in dignity.

- *Maid to Order in Hong Kong: Stories of Migrant Workers 2nd edition*

Middle-class Chinese women in the global city of Hong Kong have entered the workforce in unprecedented numbers over the past three decades, and the demand for foreign domestic workers has soared. A decade ago some foretold the decline in foreign workers and the influx of mainland workers. But today over

120,000 women from the Philippines, over 90,000 from Indonesia, and thousands more from other parts of South and Southeast Asia serve as maids on two-year contracts in Hong Kong, sending much needed remittances to their families abroad.

Nicole Constable tells their story by updating *Maid to Order* in Hong Kong with a focus on the major changes that have taken place since Hong Kong's reunification with mainland China in 1997, the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, and the outbreak of SARS in 2002-2003. Interweaving her analysis with the women's individual stories, she shows how power is expressed in the day-to-day lives of Filipina domestic workers and more-recent Indonesian arrivals.