This course is intended to present a rigorous, theoretically-informed understanding of structures and practices of power in 20th and early 21st century American society, viewed primarily through the lenses of class and economics, race, and gender. The course is not intended to present an exhaustive understanding of power in modern American society, but to provide students with the tools of analysis that will allow them to think intelligently about it.

The course will consist partly of lecture and partly of discussion. Class attendance and participation are mandatory, and will be the basis for a significant portion of course grades (see below). It is expected that students will have completed the assigned reading before class, and will bring the day’s texts with them to class. **The amount of reading assigned in this course will be substantial.**

The themes and subjects of this course are obviously delicate subjects for conversation, and the professor will treat all students with respect. It is expected that students will do the same.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America*

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*

Allen Ginsberg, *Howl and Other Poems*

James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*

Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*

Malcolm X & Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

*It is strongly recommended that you order a copy of this from Amazon or another source. The version available at the bookstore is not recommended.*

All other readings, along with lecture slides, syllabi, essay prompts, and all other course documents, can be accessed via the course website, adamgomez.wordpress.com/teaching/polisci506. Films are on reserve at the College Library, and class showings will be arranged. Students who cannot attend the showings are responsible for seeing the movies on their own time.

**GRADES**

Grades will be based on class participation (25%) and three 5-8 page take-home essays (25% each). All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class. Late essays will be penalized 1/3 grade per day late. Grade scale: A 92-100; AB 87-92; B 82-87; BC 77-82; C 70-77; D 60-70; F < 60
COURSE SCHEDULE

I. POWER & FREEDOM
1/22 Introduction
1/24 Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty” (1958)
1/29 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (1975), The Body of the Condemned
1/31 *Discipline and Punish*, Panopticism
2/5 Allen Ginsberg, “Howl,” “Footnote to Howl” (1956)

II. CLASS & ECONOMY AS PRACTICES OF POWER
2/7 Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed* (2001), Introduction, ch. 1
2/12 *Nickel and Dimed*, ch. 2 & 3
2/14 *Nickel and Dimed*, Evaluation & Afterword
2/21 *One-Dimensional Man*, ch. 3, 5, & 6
2/26 *One-Dimensional Man*, ch. 9 & 10
   **Essay 1 assigned**

III. RACE, IDENTITY, & SOCIAL ORDER
   **Essay 1 due**
3/12 *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, ch. 9-15
3/21 *The New Jim Crow*, ch. 2
3/26-28 Spring break
4/2 *The New Jim Crow*, ch. 3 & 4
4/4 *The New Jim Crow*, ch. 5 & 6
   **Essay 2 assigned**
IV. GENDER, BODIES, POWER, & VIOLANCE

4/11  Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (1963), ch. 1-4

4/16  The Feminine Mystique, ch. 5-9
        Essay 2 due
4/18  The Feminine Mystique, ch. 10-14, Epilogue

        Shulamith Firestone, selection from “The Dialectic of Sex” (1970)
        Toni Morrison, “What the Black Woman Thinks About Women’s Lib” (1971)
        Strange Women Without Being Maced” (2009)
        Lisa Jervis, “An Old Enemy in a New Outfit: How Date Rape Became Gray
        Rape and Why It Matters” (2008, from Friedman & Valenti, Yes Means Yes: Visions of
        Female Sexual Power & A World Without Rape)
        Latoya Peterson, “The Not Rape Epidemic” (2008, from YMY)
        Thomas Macaulay Millar, “Mythcommunication: It’s Not That They Don’t
        Understand, They Just Don’t Like The Answer” (2011)

4/30  Thomas Macaulay Millar, “Toward a Performance Model of Sex” (2008, from
        YMY)
        Jessica Valenti, “Purely Rape: The Myth of Sexual Purity and How it
        Reinforces Rape Culture” (2008, from YMY)
5/2   Jadyn Friedman, “This Is What Rape Culture Looks Like” (2009)
        Jessica Valenti, “Ending Rape Illiteracy” (2012); “Asking For It” (2013)
        E.J. Graff, “Building a Respect Culture” (2013); “To Stop Rape Culture,
        Ring the Bell” (2013)
        Essay 3 assigned

5/7   Ridley Scott, Thelma & Louise (1991)
5/9   Quentin Tarantino, Death Proof (2007)

5/13  Essay 3 due

All dates on course schedule are approximate: reality will no doubt intrude. All papers and the final
exam must be completed to receive a passing grade. Late essays will be penalized 1/3 grade per day
late. This course adheres to all university standards for academic honesty, and all papers must be
submitted to turnitin.com for plagiarism detection in order for credit to be received. Plagiarism is
when an author “uses words, ideas or work products, attributable to an identifiable person or
source, without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained, in a situation
in which there was a legitimate expectation of original authorship, in order to obtain benefit, credit or
gain” (“Is it plagiarism? Well, it is Rather Difficult To Say,” by Hannah Fearn, Times Higher
Education Supplement, July 1, 2010).