

FINAL REPORT

Sept. 14, 2012

Core Course workshop

1. COURSE TITLE: Revolution Girl Style: Punk Feminism, Then and Now
FIRST YEAR SEMINAR: Culture, Art and Society
INSTRUCTOR: Evelyn McDonnell
2. Course Description:
In the early 1990s, a group of young women from both coasts of the United States began calling for, as the punk band Bikini Kill put it, Revolution Girl Style Now. Twenty years later, their cry was picked up by a performance-art collective in the Soviet Union who, in homage to their Riot Grrrl predecessors, called themselves Pussy Riot. Revolution Girl Style will explore the flash point in feminist and musical history that's generally known as Riot Grrrl. By analyzing the music, art, and writings of such acts and artists as Bikini Kill, Mecca Normal, Bratmobile, the Runaways, Tribe 8, Fifth Column, Guerrilla Girls, the Slits, X-Ray Spex, Sleater-Kinney, and Pussy Riot, the course will examine how music can be used for political action, and visa versa. Students will explore the activist and artistic history and context of Riot Grrrl and its global resuscitation in 2012. By crafting their own print or multimedia fanzines, students will learn how to express themselves politically and creatively. I will call on my own experience with and expertise in punk feminism, bringing musicians, artists, scholars, and experts to speak about their involvement with RGS.
3. As a four-unit course I would be able to go more in-depth into each of the unit topics, both in lectures and discussions and in the amounts of required reading. There would also be a required in-class final exam essay. I would prefer to teach this as a four-unit course.
4. As Revolution Girl Style calls on my personal expertise, it is not designed to be taught by others.
5. I am not currently considering teaching other core courses.
6. Every fourth class will be devoted to workshopping reaction papers to the topic presented in the previous two weeks. The writing instructor and I will work with the students collectively and individually, critiquing their writing and having them rewrite these papers for incorporation into the final project. The writing instructor would also assist in grading these papers as well as the midterm paper and final project.
7. The course is not part of a collaboration.
8. The course is not based on an existing course.
9. I initially proposed a course called Promised Land: The Gospel According to Bruce Springsteen. However, as I researched reading materials for this course, I was disappointed in the quality of scholarship on that subject, although I was also surprised by the quantity. I realized that I should design a course based more upon

my own particular expertise as a longtime writer of feminist pop criticism. Around the same time, the members of Pussy Riot went to trial. Their case reawakened the activities of and reignited interest in punk feminism globally. As a participant in early Riot Grrrl, I felt re-inspired to speak and teach about this movement I hold near and dear.

10. No special requirements.

11. Syllabus attached.