

Introduction to Feminist Theory

GSWS 0500/CRN# 30696/Spring 2016

Schedule: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Site: 402 Cathedral of Learning

Instructor: Dr. Julie Beaulieu

Email: jrb107@pitt.edu

Office: 402B

Office Hours: TBA

TA: Christopher Hill (csh29@pitt.edu)

Required Texts

Carole R. McCann and Seung-kyung Kim, *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives* (third edition)

Required Readings

All required readings are listed on the syllabus. The book [*FTR* on schedule] is available at the Pitt Bookstore and PDFs can be found in courseweb. Please bring the readings to class.

Course Description

This course will familiarize students with some of the key issues, questions, and concepts in feminist thought. The readings included in the syllabus reflect a range of perspectives and methodologies. Through readings and discussions, we will explore the ideas and methods that articulate and define the field of feminist theory. This course is designed to introduce you to some of the canonical texts in feminist thought, and to enhance your ability to think critically about the world we live in. Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions every week. This course fulfills both the “writing-intensive” and “philosophy” general education requirements.

Course Objectives

- Define and critically read feminist theory
- Compare, contrast, and critique various perspectives of feminist theorists
- Explain feminist epistemology and critically analyze the ways in which knowledge is produced
- Use feminist approaches to theory to think systematically about power and resistance in both public and private relations
- Analyze current events and cultural artifacts from feminist perspectives
- Apply feminist theory to your own research interests and home discipline(s)

Assignments

◇Participation [10%]

◇Short Writing Assignments (3 total, 1 page single spaced) [15%]

◇Paper One (3-4 pages double spaced) [15%]

◇Paper Two (3-4 pages double spaced) [15%]

◇Revision of Paper One or Two (5-6 pages double spaced) [15%]

◇Final Paper (10-12 pages double spaced) [30%]

All assignments and readings are due on the day that they appear on the syllabus. Please submit hard copies of your work (no email copies). Late work will be marked down 10 points per day.

Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted in courseweb/blackboard.

Course Policies

Attendance

Attendance is required. Please come to class on time and prepared. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to contact me about missing work and subsequent assignments. "Excused" absences will be given if you provide documentation. **Please expect your grade to reflect your commitment to this course.** If you miss 3 or more classes, you forfeit a portion of your participation grade. If you miss 4 or more classes, you risk failing the course.

Participation

Thoughtful participation is expected, appreciated, and part of your grade.

"A" participants: read assigned readings; maintain solid attendance; contribute to the class environment by being awake, alert, and engaged; demonstrate a willingness to participate in productive, academic, and relevant ways; refrain from private conversations during class time; do not use a telephone or any other electronic device for anything besides coursework; contribute to class discussions during every class.

"B" participants: follow the above rubric 85% of the time.

"C" participants: follow the above rubric 75% of the time; arrive late and/or have poor attendance

"D" participants: follow the above rubric 65% of the time; arrive late and/or have poor attendance

"F" participants: follow the above rubric 50% of the time; arrive late and/or have poor attendance

Written Work/Assignments

All written work must be proofread. If you are absent, your work is still due. Late assignments will be marked down 10% per day. Please use MLA in-text citation for all sources. NOTE: You must submit a midterm and final in order to pass the class.

Academic Integrity

All of the writing you present in this course must be your own work. Presenting the work of others as if it is your own constitutes plagiarism, and is a serious breach of academic integrity. Plagiarism refers not only to copying someone else's paper, but also to including someone else's sentences or paragraphs in your work without acknowledgement. Whenever you draw on the writing of others (for ideas, information, or examples), you must properly cite your sources. If you have questions about plagiarism, please see the University's statement on this subject, available at: <http://www.as.pitt.edu/academicintegrity.html>. Students caught plagiarizing will receive an F on the assignment, an F for the course, and/or will be reported to the university.

Assistance (Disability Statement)

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, 412-228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Cell Phones, Computers, & etc.

Use of any technology for any reason other than coursework will negatively impact your participation grade. If you are expecting an emergency call, or if you have any other reasonable reason for needing

to have access to your phone during our scheduled meetings, please let me know before class. Laptops and other PDF readers (excluding phones) are permitted for course readings only.

Classroom Recording Policy

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

“Turnitin”

Students agree that by taking this course all required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.

ANY use of someone else’s work is grounds for failure.

E-mail Policy

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address.

Please give me time to respond to emails. I will do my best to reply to emails within 24 hours (M-F). I will respond to weekend emails when time permits; I will reply to urgent weekend emails as soon as possible, but otherwise please wait until Monday for a response. Email is ideally used for quick questions/clarifications. All other concerns—questions about your progress, written work, your grade, class in general—should be addressed during office hours.

Please feel free to send a reminder/follow up if I have missed an important email.

Gender-Inclusive Language Guidelines

Aspiring to create an academic environment in which people of all identities are encouraged to contribute their perspectives to academic discourse, The University of Pittsburgh Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program provides guidelines regarding gender-inclusive/non-sexist language. Following these guidelines fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment that will strengthen and enrich academic discussion and writing.

Just as sexist language excludes women’s experiences, non-gender-inclusive language excludes the experiences of trans, intersex, and genderqueer individuals. Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that recognize and affirm how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language avoids assuming a male speaker (freshman, upperclassman, chairman, mankind, etc.), erasing non-binary gender identifications, and conflating biological sex with gender expression.

Mature Content, Classroom Climate, and “Trigger Warnings”

Our course readings and classroom discussions will often be mature in content. If you're uncomfortable with discussions about sexuality, you might want to find a course that's more suited to your interests and comfort level. I expect everyone to come to class prepared to discuss the topic in a mature and respectful way. As with any course in the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies program, readings are often political *and* personal. Readings and discussions might trigger strong feelings—anger, discomfort, anxiety, confusion, excitement, humor, and even boredom. Some of us will have emotional responses to the readings; some of us will have emotional responses to our peers' understanding of the readings; all of us should feel responsible for creating a space that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree), use each others' preferred pronouns, and be conscious of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

SCHEDULE: READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, & EVENTS

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Thursday, 1/7

- Introduction to the course

Week 2: Early Classics

Tuesday, 1/12

- Simone de Beauvoir, “*The Second Sex*: Introduction” [FTR 40-48]
- Monique Wittig, “One is not Born a Woman” [FTR 246-251]

Thursday, 1/14

- Audre Lorde, “I am your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities” [FTR 292-295]
- The Combahee River Collective*, “A Black Feminist Statement” [FTR 116-122]

Week 3: Early Classics

Tuesday, 1/19

- Luce Irigaray, “This Sex Which is not One” [FTR 426-432]

Thursday, 1/21

- Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto” [PDF]

Week 4: Early Classics

Tuesday, 1/26

- Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” [PDF]

Thursday, 1/28

- Shulamith Firestone, “The Culture of Romance” [FTR 123-128]
- Short Writing Assignment # 1 (hard copy due in class)

GSWS EVENT

Thursday, 1/28

Lecture for Undergrads: "Hard Hatted Women & Wild Sisters: Lesbian Organizations in Pittsburgh Women's Movement Community"

January 28, 2016 - 4:00pm - 5:15pm

Speaker/Participants:

Patricia Ulbrich, GSWS Visiting Scholar

602 Cathedral of Learning

Week 5: Sexual and Reproductive Health

Tuesday, 2/2

Sônia Correa and Rosalind Petchesky, "Reproductive and Sexual Rights: A Feminist Perspective" [*FTR* 134-147]

Thursday, 2/4

"Women and their Bodies" (Boston Women's Health Collective) [PDF]

GSWS EVENT

Lecture: "In Search of the Clitoris: Writing and the Body in Our Bodies, Ourselves"

February 5, 2016 - 3:00pm - 4:30pm

Speaker/Participants:

Prof. Susan Wells

<http://www.cla.temple.edu/english/about-us/susan-wells/>

William Pitt Union - Lower Lounge

Week 6: Masculinity & Femininity

Tuesday, 2/9

Sandra Lee Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" [*FTR* 447-461]

Short Writing Assignment # 2 (hard copy due in class)

Thursday, 2/11

Raewyn Connell, "The Social Organization of Masculinity" [*FTR* 252-263]

Week 7: Masculinity & Femininity

Tuesday, 2/16

- Jack Halberstam, "An Introduction to Female Masculinity" [PDF]

Thursday, 2/18

- Lisa Walker, "The Future of Femme: Notes on Femininity, Aging, and Gender Theory" [PDF]

GSWS EVENT

Lecture: "Career Porn: Blogging and the Good Life"

February 18, 2016 - 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Speaker/Participants:

Gabriella Lukacs, Associate Prof. of Anthropology and GSWS Faculty Fellow

401 Cathedral of Learning

The talk is taken from Prof. Lukacs's book manuscript titled: "Diva Entrepreneurs: Gender and Labor in the Digital Economy."

Week 8: Trans/Feminism

Tuesday, 2/23

- Leslie Feinberg, "Transgender Liberation: A Moment Whose Time Has Come" [*FTR* 148-158]

Thursday, 2/25

- Raewyn Connell, "Transsexual Women and Feminist Thought" [PDF]
- Short Writing Assignment # 3 (hard copy due in class)

GSWS EVENT

Lecture: "Are My Pants Lowering Your Test Scores?: Blaming Girls for Challenges Facing Boys"

February 25, 2016 - 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Speaker/Participants:

Sara Goodkind, School of Social Work (Pitt)

1228 Cathedral of Learning

Week 9: Intersectionality

GSWS EVENT

Lecture: "Queer/Asian Filipinos in Oregon: A Trans*Colonial Approach"

February 29, 2016 - 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Speaker/Participants:

Prof. Kale Fajardo, University of Minnesota

602 Cathedral of Learning

Tuesday, 3/1

Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women" [PDF]

Thursday, 3/3

Leslie McCall, "The Complexity of Intersectionality" [PDF]

Week 10: Spring Break

Tuesday, 3/8

No Class/Spring Break

Thursday, 3/10

No Class/Spring Break

Week 11: The Limits of Western Feminism

Tuesday, 3/15

Leila Ahmed, "The Veil Debate, Again" [*FTR* 306-316]

Thursday, 3/17

Uma Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives from a Nonwestern Feminist" [*FTR* 370-378]

Paper One (hard copy due in class)

Week 12: Chicana Feminism

Tuesday, 3/22

Paula M. L. Moya, "Chicana Feminism and Postmodernist Theory" [*FTR* 571-588]

Thursday, 3/24

Readings TBA

Week 13: Feminist Disability Studies

Tuesday, 3/29

- Alison Kafer, "Time for Disability Studies and a Future for Crips" [PDF]
- Paper Two (hard copy due in class)

Thursday, 3/31

- Class Meets at Conference (see schedule online)

GSWS EVENT

National Conference: Doing the Body in the 21st Century

March 31, 2016 - 9:00am - April 2, 2016 - 7:00pm

Pittsburgh Athletic Association, Cathedral of Learning, University Club
Hosted by GSWS

GSWS EVENT

Performance: Kate Bornstein

April 2, 2016 - 5:30pm - 7:00pm

Title TBA
Location TBA

Week 14: Organizing & Solidarity

Tuesday, 4/5

- Andrea Smith, "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy: Rethinking Women of Color Organizing" [PDF]
- Revision of Paper One or Paper Two (hard copy due in class)

Thursday, 4/7

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited" [FTR]

Week 15: Gender Studies

Tuesday, 4/12

- Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" [FTR 462-473]

Thursday, 4/14

- Jack Halberstam, "Gaga Gender" [PDF]

Week 16: New Approaches

Tuesday, 4/19

- Toby Beauchamp & Benjamin D'Harlingue, "Beyond Additions and Exceptions: The Category of Transgender and New Pedagogical Approaches for Women's Studies" [PDF]

Thursday, 4/21

- Final Paper Workshop

Week 17: Finals Week

- Final Paper Due (date TBA)

ASSIGNMENTS (IN DETAIL)

Participation (10%)

Please see the "attendance" policy for more information about your participation grade. Quizzes and in-class writing will also be factored into your overall participation grade.

Written Assignments (90%)

Instructions and rubric for written assignments will be distributed in class before assignments are due.

GSWS EVENTS (extra credit)

Extra credit will be given for 1 page (single spaced) responses to GSWS events. Responses must be turned in within 2 weeks of the event. You may submit a maximum of 3 responses. Late responses will not be accepted.