

Winter 2-2014/5

EDST 576-022 Feminist Theories, Pedagogies and Curricula

Prof. Leslie G. Roman

Meets: Mondays, 1:00 - 4:00 PM (WMAX 110)

Office Hours: By email appointment

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The Adventure Begins: Points of Departure

This seminar will introduce how feminist theories have prompted a rethinking of educational practice and research. It will examine the experiences of girls and women as students, mothers, teachers and care-givers. Differences by racial background, social class, and sexuality, dis/ability, nation and age will be discussed. Topics shall include what counts as knowledge, power relations in classrooms and subcultures, schools and many other contexts of diversity in human social relations will be discussed.

Course Goals:

Is shopping politics? How is shopping or consumption situated in the broader context of global feminism and women and children's work? What are the ethics of global feminism? How may we think globally in feminist terms and what are the limits of failing to do so? How may feminist ethics be globalized without sacrificing sensitivity to local contexts? Is taking pleasure from particular forms of media politics? If so, what do feminists have to say about cultural otherness in the politics of cross-cultural communication and global feminist ethics? What are the politics of North-South feminist theorizing across great disparities of wealth, power and cultural differences? What are the consequences of keeping sexual choices private and apparently individualized, as in the recently overturned U.S. military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy? Should government have a say in family life? What all these questions have in common is their questioning of the boundaries between public and private, the individual and the communal, the personal and the political, the boundaries and fluidity of local, national and global material conditions. Do national security policies make women and children safe? How are policies of militarism gendered? How feminists answer these questions informs the issues we adopt and the sites of our activism and the ways in which we theorize social change and justice. In turn, how we theorize what feminism means to us affects the choices we make for both for feminist activism (e.g. from the sites of struggle to forms in which we struggle) and feminist theorization. This course explores the inner workings of feminist activism and feminist theorization through a critical evaluation of second and third wave theories and practices, especially as they concern the boundary between public and private, personal and political. It will help you understand the waves of feminist theories and your own relationship to their varying and conflicting traditions of feminism (radical, liberal, feminist materialist, post-structural and post-and anti-colonial feminism in a global context of inequalities) and their contentious stakes. This course will allow students (1) become familiar with the main conceptual and theoretical framework in feminist theory; (2) improve their critical thinking through cross-cultural and cross-or interdisciplinary analyses of gender dynamics in different contexts and historical moments; (3) locate their own work and interests within wider perspectives; (3) understand feminist theory as a field of power and struggles over recognition, territory and legitimacy among feminist voices and scholarship. By the end of the semester students will be able to identify, critique, compare and choose among the feminist theories or productive compatible combinations of traditions those which offer the most satisfying account of differently and differentially-located women's oppression in different geo-political contexts and conditions.

Who is the Course For?

This is an interdisciplinary feminist cultural studies course located in education. I encourage participation from students outside of formal education. The course lectures, readings, and class discussions pay close attention to questions confronted by educators. However, the course interprets the frame of education broadly to include any practice that teaches (e.g. through the non-formal curricula of popular media, culture or youth subcultures, leisure or compulsory leisure such as unemployment). These practices do form the larger context in which curricular, pedagogical and policy practices find themselves situated. The course thus promises to be relevant and engaging to people from other disciplines outside of education as well. It provides a means through which practicing teachers, scholars of education, and administrators may consider issues of gender equality and policy in schools in light of an overview of the implications for particular notions of social change and justice. The course will be concerned with shifting away from the problem of essentialism and middle-class, Anglo-centric and First-World-centric conceptions of equal opportunity for young women and men to one of *equality of condition* for all groups. Discussions in class will also include group work, role playing, films, and other short written assignments deemed relevant to the issues of the course.

Course Description: Feminist theory has uncovered the structural, institutional, social, cultural and global forces shaping gender identifications, differences and hierarchies. It has shown that gender is an organizing principle of societies, culture, politics and the economy. Analyses of gender are linked to analyses of power. Since power is inherent to the production of knowledge, the course themes are organized as debates among liberal, postmodern, postcolonial, and transnational feminist perspectives on knowledge/epistemology, methodology and practice, structure and agency, body and body politics, sex and sexualities, politics and political economy, race and empire. These debates reflect the way in which race, culture, class, sexual identity and localities shape other hierarchies within feminist theory itself and contribute to its development.

Class Format: The class is organized as a seminar with students taking an active role in the learning process. This involves reflecting on the readings, leading class discussions and bringing provocative thoughts and questions to the class.

Course Requirements: The students are expected to engage the following: **(1) Talking points and class participation/attendance-30%** [class participation **10%** and talking points journal, **20%**]-read all assigned texts and write one page comments addressing the content and concepts on the reading. You may bring outside sources but the main focus should remain on the readings. **(2)** Present their comments in class and bring provocative questions to the rest of the class; **(3)** bring to class their comments and questions as “talking points” –a kind of serious journal of academic reflections , questions and probing concerns raised for you by the readings and discussions; **2)** Twice during the semester students will lead a class discussion. Once will be on the day’s readings and a second time will be a book or topical issue, theme “report” on chosen from a book on the recommended reading list that is connected to some facet of your own research or interest. The goal of these presentations is to help the students reflect on one another’s work and explore possibilities to integrate the themes and readings into your own research area **20%** each for a total of **40%**. Each of these should be no longer than 5 (excluding the cover) double-spaced pages of reflections (12 point font, with proper cover page, your name, student number, properly paginated and stapled) prepared as class handouts for the day of your presentation.

3) Final Assignment – 30%. 12-15 page double-spaced 12 point font term paper which is among the following types should flow and follow from one of your two class presentations/reflections: 1) topical issue such gender, militarization and “security” as reflected on by a particular feminist tradition or competing traditions—topics are open for choice; 2) an exploratory theoretical paper, in which you draw upon a particular feminist theoretical concept such as conceptions of the “public”, “justice” or “feminist methodology” in the context of your own research interests. Or, you might explore how competing feminist theorists/theories have conceived of democratizing feminist research methods; how feminists from a particular tradition conceive of knowledge as partial and politically informed or the how “voice” can be appropriated in the name of feminist empowerment; Or, you might investigate feminist conceptions of “empowerment” as it connects with your own research in light of how particular feminist thinkers or tradition(s) views such a concept.

Your grade is divided among all these assignments. The final paper is due April 5th at 4 pm and may be emailed, if virus-scanned first! Attendance will be taken and only medically excused absences or properly approved absences given to the

instructor will be allowed without a deduction of class marks. If you are absent you must provide the proper documentation. If you miss three classes without proper notice, you will lose all of your class participation marks.



Finding ourselves in the world



See others at the UBC Bookstore under the course title and instructor's name. From time to time, the instructor may make other readings available pertinent to the class's discussions available through a class list-serve as occasional pdf files or put them on Connect.

Feminist Theory, Pedagogies and Curricula

Required Books

Sara Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*. Duke University Press, 2014. ISBN paperback: 9780-82235763-4 (WS)

Patricia White, *Women's Cinema: World Cinema*. Duke University Press, 2015, ISBN: 978-0223-5805-3 (WC)

Uma Narayan and Sandra Harding, 2000. *Decentering the Center: Philosophy for a Multicultural, Postcolonial, and Feminist World*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Referred to as (DC) ISBN Paperback: 0-253-2184.

Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim, Eds. 2013 (3rd ed). *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. Routledge. (FTR) ISBN Paperback: 978-0-415-52101

Minoo Moallem. 2005. *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister*. University of California Press. ISBN Paperback: 0-520—24345-5

Zillah Eisenstein.2004. *Against Empire: Feminisms, Racism and the West*. London and NYC: Zed ISBN Paperback: 184277395x

Mernissi Fatema. 2001. *Scheherazade Goes West: Different Cultures, Different Harems*. Simon and Schuster. New York. ISBN Paperback: 0-7-344-1243-5.

Several other titles have been ordered as recommended or optional for your reading and the assignment of the book review from which you may choose one (listed by author/title).

Recommended Readings--Select one for your book review assignment to be chosen in class. Only the reviewer needs to purchase.

Allison Jaggar (2008). *Just Methods: A Feminist Interdisciplinary Reader*. Paradigm Publishers. 978161205-303-5.

Tong, *Feminist Thought* (2009). Boulder, CO: Westview Press. ISBN Paperback: 978081334841-4.

Sandra Harding (Ed.) *Sciences from Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities & Modernities*. Duke University Press. ISBN-978022342823-4282-3.

Sutton (Ed.) (2010). *Security Disarmed: Critical Perspectives on Gender, Race & Militarization*. ISBN Paperback: ISBN-10: 0813543606.

Schedule of Readings**

Unit I: Globalizing Feminist Ethics: How Feminisms are Conceived? By whom?

Week one/ Jan. 4

Introductions

Week Two/Jan. 11. Theorizing Intersectional Identities in a Globalized World

Instructor's Lecture: Feminist Materialism's Interventions into Traditional Marxism and Liberal Feminism

FTR: Read any two among these: Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism"; Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemologies: Perspectives from a Non-Western Feminist," Lorde, "I am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities". Also read:

(DC): Jaggar, *Globalizing Feminist Ethics*, Code, "How to Think Globally: Stretching the Limits of Imagination," & Stone-Mediatore "Chandra Talpade Mohanty and the Revaluing of Feminist Experience".

(SR) From DC: Aída Hurtado, "Sitios y Lenguas: Chicanas Theorize Feminism".

Week Three/Jan. 18 Theorizing Feminist Knowledge, Agency & Politics: Thinking through Bodies, Experience, and Movements

(FTR) Mani, "Multiple Mediations: Feminist Scholarship in the Age of Multinational Reception," Butler, "Performative Acts of Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory", Connell, "The Social Organization of Masculinity", & Wittig, "One is not Born a Woman", Hill Collins, "It's all in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation"

Instructor's Lecture: Post-structural feminist interventions into Liberal and Traditional Marxist Understandings of Women's Oppression and Gender

Week 4/Jan. 25 Post-colonial Feminist Understandings of Gender, Culture and Women's Oppression.

(RG) My understanding now from the Bookstore is that is that RG is on back-order and further that the publisher does not know when it will become available. Given that news as of today, I have made that book a recommended book and not a required one and will rely on the readings we currently have as required.

(DC) Moller Olkin, *Feminism, Women's Human Rights, and Cultural Differences*, Nayaran, "Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism"; Schutte, *Cultural Alterity: Cross-Cultural Communication and Feminist Theory in North-South Contexts*; Nye, "It's Not a Philosophy".

(FTR) Kreps, "Radical Feminism 1" in the "Groundings" section of the edited book.

Instructor's Lecture: Post-colonial feminism's critique of gender and cultural essentialism in liberal, radical and post-structural feminism.

Unit Two: Can there be Feminist Standpoint Epistemology after Globalization?

Week 5 Feb. 2 Standpoint Epistemologies: Feminist Materialism and Situated Knowledges in Globalized Contexts and Times

(FTR) Nancy Hartsock: "The Feminist Standpoint: Toward a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism";

(DC) Wright, *Maquiladora Mestizas and a Feminist Border Writing Politics: Revisiting Anzaldua*; Ferguson, "Resisting the Veil of Privilege: Building Bridge Identities as an Ethico-Politics of Global Feminisms" and Harding, "Gender, Development and Post-Enlightenment Philosophies of Science".

Film: TBA or *Global Assembly Line*

***Feb. 16 Reading Week

Begin reading Moallem, White or Ahmed on your own. See above in required readings but select only one.

Week 6/Feb. 23 The Politics of Piety: Whose Piety is Sacred? Whose is Demonized?: Transnationalism, Feminisms, and Fundamentalisms

Choose one of the following to read over the break: Mollam, White or Ahmed.

Moallem reading discussion. Read the entire book. Our discussion will focus on chpts. 1 & 5, in particular. (FTR) Lila Abu-Lughod, "Orientalism and the Middle East Feminist Studies".

White-reading discussion. Read the entire book.

Ahmed, Read entire book.

Edward Said's film "On Orientalism"--YouTube

Week 8/March 2 On Patriarchies: Transnational Feminist Perspectives

Discussion will focus on the remaining chpts of the book (chapters 2, 3 & 4).

(FTR) Ong, "Sisterly Solidarity: Feminist Virtue under 'Moderate Islam'"

Week 9/ March 9 Social Processes and Con/figuring Differences

(FTR) Cantu with Luibuheid and Stern, "Well Founded Fear" Political Asylum and the Boundaries of Sexual Identity in the U.S. –Mexico Borderlands"; Matsuda, "Beside My Sister: Facing the Enemy: Legal Theory out of Coalition"; Rushin, "The Bridge Poem" and Feinberg, "Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come". Walters, "From Here to Queer: Radical Feminism, Postmodernism, and the Lesbian Feminist (Or, Why Can't a Woman be More Like a Fag?)".

Unit Three: What can be Learned from the Politics of Difference and Intersectionality?

Week 10/March 16 Moving Towards a Politics of Difference and Relational Genealogies

Eisenstein

Week 11/March 23

Mernissi

Week 12/ March 30

Student papers

Week 13 /April 5th Final Thoughts: Provisional Feminisms

Student papers

Final Papers Due: April 5th

Statement on Academic Misconduct:

The integrity of academic work depends on the honesty of all those who work in this environment and the observance of accepted conventions such as acknowledging the work of others through careful citation of all sources used in your work. Plagiarism - including self-plagiarism- and other forms of academic misconduct are treated as serious offences at UBC, whether committed by faculty, staff or students. You should be aware of the sections of the University Calendar that address academic integrity (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/>) and plagiarism (<http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/policies.htm/>). The UBC library also has a useful web-based Plagiarism Resource Centre that explains what plagiarism is and how to avoid it

(www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism/). If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies or conventions in relation to how they apply to the work you do in this course, please discuss them with me. I reserve the University Instructor's right to submit any paper to Turn-it-In as per UBC policy on academic misconduct.