

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
GSWS 9550A Feminist Theory
Fall 2022

Instructor: Helen Fielding (Philosophy/Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies)
Class time: Wednesday, 1:30-4:30
Classroom: LWH 2205
Offices: STvH 2157A and LH 3237
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Office Hours: TBA or by Appointment

Land Acknowledgement:

I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Neutral peoples, on lands connected to several Treaties including Treaty 6 London Township, Treaty 7 Sombra Township, Treaty 21 Longwoods and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This place continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples who are recognized as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to society.

Course Description:

In this course we orient our reading towards making sense of the worlds we live from feminist, decolonial, and queer theoretical perspectives. In these theories there is no theory/practice divide. Theories emerge out of lived experiences and evolve accordingly. Theories help us to make sense and help to guide us in our analyses. That's why they need to come out of our lived experiences. They also need to come from listening to the experiences of others. Theories that are top down impose perspectives on others. Instead, theories are negotiations, questions, and queries. We dialogue with theories about our research questions. We will engage with readings that help us to ask meaningful questions about our own research and the research of others, and that will guide us in our own thinking and practices. Our primary goal here is to understand the texts and to find the voices that speak most saliently to our own research.

Course Objectives

This course will enable students to:

- Articulate how feminist theories shape academic research
- Draw on feminist theories to further research projects
- Understand the ways in which feminist theory intersects with practice
- Recognize social and ethical issues in relation to feminist theory.
- Develop critical thinking and writing skills
- Make sense of their own research projects

Course Materials

- Copies of articles will be made available through OWL or through Weldon library

Evaluation

Essay 1	25% (5-7 pages) due Oct. 26
Final Essay	35% (10-12 pages) due Dec. 21
Participation	20%
Conference presentation	20% (Dec. 7)

Short essay: In this first short essay students will be expected to take up a theme that runs through one or more readings and come to a conclusion about this theme. In other words, this exercise is largely interpretive, ie. making sense of the readings by coming to an insight about what you have read. You may begin to apply it to an area of your research, ie. one research question, but the trick will be to focus your essay—focus, focus, focus. We'll talk about how that works in class.

Final essay and Conference Presentation: The final essay can be connected to the first one, a continuation and deepening of the initial discussion; but it does not have to be connected. Students are encouraged to apply course readings to an area of their own research—to find readings that help them make sense of their own research questions. Students will prepare a course proposal based on their chosen theme and present their research in progress in the Conference to be held the last class of the semester. Each student will present on their theme for 10 minutes and there will be 5 minutes for discussion of each paper. The goal will be to provide everyone with constructive and helpful feedback for their projects in process.

Participation: participation will be assessed in terms of having read the texts, participating in, and leading small group discussions, and making appropriate contributions to conversation. Each student will be expected to lead a small group in discussion and report back to the class two times during the semester. A short summary of the group's conclusions will be posted by each group leader on the class Owl forum. Class attendance is mandatory.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Essays will be submitted through OWL.

Plagiarism Checking

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the

commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

A Note on Course Content

In this course we will be dealing with themes that affect each of us differentially at a personal, social and intellectual level. While full discussion of the issues is encouraged – please be respectful of others—which can include being willing to question your own perspectives. Hatred and intolerance (including racist, trans phobic, homophobic, ableist perspectives) will not be tolerated. If you find the material is causing you distress, please let me know—I can also help you to find appropriate support if required.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519-661-3030 (during class hours) or 519-433-2023 after class hours and on weekends.

Course Schedule

Sept. 7 Introduction to Feminist Theory

1. Audre Lorde, “Uses of Anger,” in *Sister Outsider* (Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1984), 124-133. Weldon library https://search-alexanderstreet-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C4401746#page/120/mode/1/chapter/bibliographic_entity%7Cdocument%7C4401763
2. Malinda S. Smith, “Disciplinary Silences: Race, Indigeneity and Gender in the Social Sciences,” in *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*, eds. Francis Henry et. al. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 239-262.

Sept. 14 Theory Practice Intersections

1. Sara Ahmed, “Introduction: Bringing Feminist Theory Home” and “Feminism is Sensational”, in *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), pp. 1-64. Weldon Library <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?docID=4769414&pg-origsite=primo>

Sept. 21 Getting Oriented

1. Sarah Ahmed, "Orientations: Towards a Queer Phenomenology," in *GLQ* 12.14 (2006): 543-574.

Sept. 28 Identity

1. Salaman, Gayle. "Movement", in *The Life and Death of Latisha King: Critical Phenomenology of Transphobia* (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 63-87. (Weldon <https://www-degruyter-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/document/doi/10.18574/nyu/9781479835911.001.0001/html#contents>)
2. Talia Mae Bettcher, "Comments on Gayle Salamon's *The Life and Death of Latisha King*" *Philosophy Today* 66.1 (2022): 191-198.
3. C. Riley Snorten, "Introduction," and "DeVine's Cut: Public Memory and the Politics of Martyrdom", in *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), pp. 1-14, 177-198. (Weldon <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/cgi-bin/eb1.pl?url=https://west.eb1ib.com/patron/Authentication.aspx?ebcid=9ffcf753754344cfb34b8131990bffad&echo=1>)

Further Reading:

4. Talia Mae Bettcher, "What is Trans Philosophy", *Hypatia* 34.4 (2019): 644-667.
5. The rest of Salamon, "Movement". In fact, the rest of the book.

Oct. 5 Logics of Race

1. Katherine McKittrick. "Diachronic loops/deadweight tonnage/bad made measure." *Cultural Geographies* 23.1 (2016): 3-18.
2. Alia Al-Saji, "The Racialization of Muslim Veils: A Philosophical Analysis." *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 36. 8 (2010): 875-902.

October 12 Racist Habits

1. Helen Ngo, "Racist Habits," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 42.9 (2016): 847-872.
2. Frantz Fanon. Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness" from *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (NY: Grove Press, 1967), 109-140.

Further Reading:

3. Alia Al-Saji, "Too Late: Fanon, The Dismembered Past, and a Phenomenology of Racialized Time", in *Fanon, Phenomenology and Psychology*, eds. Leshwin Laubscher et. Al (NY Routledge), 177-193.
4. George Yancy, "Confiscated Bodies," in Gail Weiss et. al., *50 Concepts in Critical Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press), 69-75.
5. Axelle Karera, "The Racial Epidermal Schema," in *50 Concepts*, 289-293.

October 19 Decolonization

1. Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument," in *The New Centennial Review* 3.3 (2003): 257-337. Weldon Library

Further Reading:

2. Katherine McKittrick, ed. *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*, ed. Katherine McKittrick (Durham: Duke U Press, 2015), 9-89. Weldon.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?docID=1884075&pg-origsite=primo>
3. Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." *Diacritics* 17.2 (Summer 1987): 64-81.
4. Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics." *Public Culture*, 15.1 (2003) 11-40.

October 26 Radical Resurgence

1. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Kwe as Resurgent Method", "The Attempted Dispossession of Kwe", "'I see Your Light': Reciprocal Recognition and Generative Refusal," and "Constellations of Coresistance," in *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 27-37, 39-54, 175-189, 211-231. Weldon library
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?pg-origsite=primo&docID=5047206>

Further Reading:

2. Kyle Whyte, "Collective Continuance," in *50 Concepts*, 53-59.
3. Dolleen Tisawii'ashii Manning, "The Murmuration of Birds: An Anishinaabe Ontology of Mnidoo-Worlding," *Feminist Phenomenology Futures*, 154-182.

November 2 (Reading Week)

November 9 Rehearsals for Living

1. Eve Tuck, Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review* 79.3 (2009): 409–27.
2. Robyn Maynard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Rehearsals for Living/areyousurethatyoureallywanttobewell," in *Rehearsals for Living* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, 2022): 237-264. Owl and Weldon
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?pg-origsite=primo&docID=6814938>
3. Robin Wall Kimmerer, "In the Footsteps of Nanabozho: Becoming Indigenous to Place," and "The Sound of Silverbells," in *Braiding Sweet Grass* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013), pp. 205-222. Owl and Weldon
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?pg-origsite=primo&docID=1212658>

November 16 Misfits

1. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Misfits: A Feminist Materialist Disability Concept," *Hypatia* 26.3 (2011): 591-609.

2. Alison Kafer, "Introduction", in *Feminist Queer Crip* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), pp. 1-24. Owl and Weldon
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=1189107>

Further Reading:

3. Alison Kafer, *Feminist Queer Crip* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).
4. Tanya Titchkosky, "Disability: A Social Phenomenon", in *Disability, self and society: Situating Disability*, U of T Press, 2003, pp. 3-45.

November 23 Multiplicitous Becomings

1. Mariana Ortega, "Multiplicitous Becomings: On Identity, Horizons, and Coalitions." In *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity and the Self* (SUNY, 2016): 145-169.
2. Gloria Anzaldúa, "L Concienciade la Mestiza: Towards a new Consciousness." In *Borderlands/La Frontera* (Aunt Lute Books, 1987): 99-113.

November 30 Cultivating Perception

1. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective", *Feminist Studies* 14.3 (1988): 575-599. (Weldon https://www-jstor-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/stable/pdf/3178066.pdf?refregid=excelsior%3A5c87cab9801f4630ef570a699fe1172e&ab_segments=&origin=&acceptTC=1)
2. Helen Fielding, "Introduction," *Cultivating Perception Through Artworks: Phenomenological Enactments of Ethics, Politics, and Culture* (Indiana University Press, 2021), 2-23. (Weldon <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/cgi-bin/eb1.pl?url=https://west.eb1ib.com/patron/Authentication.aspx?ebcid=9ffcf753754344cfb34b8131990bffad&echo=1>)

December 7 Conference Day

Note: This Outline is Subject to Change before the Course Begins.