

WOST 791B
Weds. 3:35-6:05 pm

Professor Ann Ferguson
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Office Hours Weds. 2-3, Thurs.
2:30-3:30 or by appointment
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Feminist Theory Seminar

Required Books (available at Food for Thought Bookstore, N. Pleasant St., Amherst)

Required (available at Food for Thought Bookstore):

1. Diana Tietjens Meyers, ed. Feminist Social Thought (1997, Routledge)
2. Chandra Talpade Mohanty Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity (2004, Duke University)
3. Judith Butler Undoing Gender (2004, Routledge)

Optional Books:

1. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Mohanty, eds. Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures (Routledge)
2. Rosemary Tong Feminist Thought, 2nd edition. (Westview)
3. Butler, Judith The Psychic Life of Power (Stanford University Press).

Other Required Readings and Library Reserve Readings: Most of the readings not in the above texts will be available in Xerox copies to borrow from Nancy Patteson, the WOST Graduate Coordinator, in Bartlett 208, and on Library Reserve in the Dubois University Library, 3rd floor. **The readings in Bartlett 208 will be arranged by week required, and there will be a sign-up sheet for using them with date and time to be noted. Please do not keep them for more than 2 hours or overnight to allow other seminar members to use them!!** There is also a list serve for discussions of the seminar and announcements: grad-seminar@wost.umass.edu.

Course Requirements:

- 1. Class Report/Discussion:** Members of the seminar will be grouped in pairs, asked to choose one seminar question (noted for each week on the syllabus below) and to prepare a 10 minute presentation on it, in conjunction with one or more of the readings for that seminar. A sign up sheet will be passed around the second seminar for people to sign up for their report. The object of the presentation is to present a point of view on the question in order to stimulate class discussion.
- 2. Short Paper (with copies for all participants) due in class Oct. 26 :** Students should address one of the questions discussed in Seminars I through VI. Arguments on all sides of the issue should be presented, and your own position defended. Papers should be from 4-8 pages.

3. **Term Paper:** The term paper can be either a research paper or an extended thought paper, depending on the topic, which demonstrates your command of the debate around a particular issue, or a defense or critique of a particular feminist theoretical approach. Your term paper can be an extended development of your short paper for the seminar. **An abstract and outline of your term paper, including initial references, will be due at the last seminar Dec. 14. Final term paper is due Monday, December 19 by 5 pm in my mailbox in Bartlett 208.**

Syllabus of Readings

I. Sept. 7 Introductory Seminar: The Isms!! 1st and 2nd level Questions for Theory

Calás and Smircich “From the Woman’s Point of View”,
Delphy “Rethinking Sex and Gender” in McCann and Kim eds. Feminist Theory Reader, handouts

Optional: Ferguson Blood at the Root, ch. 1; Tong Feminist Thought, pp.10-20, 45-71, 94-110.

II. Sept. 14 Liberal, Radical, and Materialist Feminism and The Agency/Structure Question, Part I : *What are the structures that perpetuate social domination? To what extent are they universal and to what extent historically specific? How do they operate, and which are key for perpetuating male domination?*

Williams “The Equality Crisis” in Meyers Feminist Social Thought text

MacKinnon “Feminism, Marxism, Method and the State” in Meyers, Feminist Social Thought text

Bunch “Lesbians in Revolt” in McCann and Kim, eds. Feminist Theory Reader

Fraser “Beyond the Master/Subject Model” (from Justice Interruptus).

Hartmann “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism; Toward a More Progressive Union”, reprinted many places, including in Carol McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim, eds. Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives.

Mohanty “Women Workers and the Politics of Solidarity”, Mohanty text, ch. 1 (skim, will read in depth later) and 6

Optional: Carby “White Woman Listen!!”, in Hennessy and Ingraham, ed. Materialist Feminism; Ferguson “On Conceiving Motherhood and Sexuality”, Meyers, Feminist Social Thought; Wekker “One Finger Does Not Drink Okra Soup: Afro-Surinamese Women and Critical Agency”, Alexander and Mohanty Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures; Hennessy “The Material of Sex”, Profit and Pleasure, ch 3.

III. Sept 21 The Agency/Structure Question, Part II *Where is the agency? If social structures enforce gender and other domination systems, to what extent are individuals free to challenge them? How is social change possible? The Feminist Analysis of Rape.*

Butler “Quandaries of the Incest Taboo”, Undoing Gender, ch. 7

Chodorow “Toward a Relational Individualism” from Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory

Mardorossian “Toward a New Feminist Theory of Rape”, Signs, (v.27, #3, Spring 2002)

Burton “Resistance to Prevention: Reconsidering Feminist Anti-violence Rhetoric”, Teays et al, eds., Violence against Women.

Marcus “Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Practice of Rape Prevention”, Butler and Scott eds. Feminists Theorize the Political

Woodhull “Sexuality, Power and the Question of Rape”, from Diamond and Quinby, eds. Feminism and Foucault .

Optional: Harland “Analyzing the Structures that Maintain and Resist Sexual Violence” (Undergraduate Honors thesis, review of the literature on rape, on library reserve).

IV. Sept 28 Psychoanalytic Feminism: Subjectivity, Gender, Sexual Difference, and Sexuality (Chodorow, Irigaray, Butler) *Do we perform our gender or does it perform us? How important is sexual difference and the “bodily imaginary”? How important is symbolic gender in the social construction of subjectivity? Of sexuality? How does gender connect to sexuality? Regarding the Agency/Structure question, how does the psychoanalytic theory of the split self allow for agency, and for challenging psychological/symbolic patriarchal structures?*

Chodorow, “Gender, Relation and Difference in Psychoanalytic Perspective”, Meyers text

Irigaray, “This Sex which is not One”, in This Sex Which is not One

Butler The Psychic Life of Power, ch 5

Alsop, Fitzsimons and Lennon, eds. Theorizing Gender, “Bodily Imaginaries” (ch. 7)

Weedon Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory, ch 3

Optional:

Chodorow “Psychoanalytic Feminism and the Psychoanalytic Psychology of Women”, in Chodorow Feminism and Psychoanalytic Thought; Kristeva “Stabat Mater”, Meyers text; DiQuinzio The Impossibility of Motherhood, ch. 6 and 7; Rose Introduction II in Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne, print reserve and reserves.

[Oct 1 and 2: SOFPHIA conference in Leverett discusses Chandra Mohanty’s Feminism without Borders, seminar participants invited]

V. Oct 5 Post-structuralism: *How important are discourses and power/knowledges in the construction of reality? Can the “linguistic turn” help us avoid over-universalizing claims and provide a “history of the present” that can be a helpful tool for feminist analysis? What problems does post-structuralism involve?*

Butler “Contingent Foundations” from Butler and Scott eds. Feminists Theorize the Political, reserve

Weedon Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory, ch 2

Bartky “Foucault, Femininity. .”, Meyers text

Scott “Deconstructing Equality vs. Difference”, Meyers text

Mohanty “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”, in Feminism without Borders, text

Butler, excerpt from Gender Trouble, Meyers text

Optional: Foucault History of Sexuality, v. 1, ch 2; Butler The Psychic Life of Power, ch 3

Weds. Oct 13 no seminar: Monday class schedule

VI. Oct 19 Intersectionality: Race/Ethnicity: *How can we understand gender and race/ethnicity as interlocking systems? How do racial and ethnic differences alter gender identity and political priorities? Are there problems with the intersectionality metaphor as an analytic tool?*

Lugones, “Playfulness, ‘World’-Traveling, and Loving Perception”, Meyers text.

Abel “Race, Class and Psychoanalysis? Opening Questions”, Meyers text

King “Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology”, Meyers text

Mohanty “Cartographies of Struggle: Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism”, in Feminism without Borders text

Moya “Postmodernism, “Realism” and the Politics of Identity: Cherrié Moraga and Chicana Feminism” in Alexander and Mohanty, eds. Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures

Crenshaw “Whose Story is it Anyway? Feminist and Anti-racist Appropriations of Anita Hill” from Morrison ed., Race-ing Justice, Engendering Power

Brewer “Theorizing Race, Class and Gender”, from James and Busia, eds. Theorizing Black Feminisms

Optional: hooks “Feminism and Class Power” from Where We Stand: Class Matters (2000, Routledge); Collins “Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images”, from Hill Collins, Black Feminist Thought; Kanneh “Black Feminisms”, from Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones, eds. Contemporary Feminist Theories; Morrison, ed. Race-ing Justice, Engendering Power, passim

VII. Oct. 26 Intersectionality: Sexuality and Queer Theory: *To what extent is sexual identity connected to gender identity? Is the connection universal or historically specific?*

How does Queer Theory challenge lesbian/gay identity politics? What is (should be) Queer Theory's relation to feminism?

Student Short Papers Due in Seminar, with copies for all other seminar participants

MacKinnon "Sexuality" in Linda Nicholson, ed. The Second Wave
Wittig "One is Not Born a Woman", in K. Conboy et al, ed. Writing on the Body;
also in McCann and Kim, eds. Feminist Theory Reader
Butler Undoing Gender, ch 2 and 3
Hausman Changing Sex: Semiotics of Sex, Gender and the Body, ch 6
Stone "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto", from Epstein
and Straub, eds. Body Guards; also in K. Conboy et al, eds. Writing on the
Body

Optional: Butler "Imitation and Gender Insubordination", from Diana Fuss, ed.
Inside/Out; Halperin "The Queer Politics of Michel Foucault", from
Halperin Saint Foucault, Katz The Invention of Heterosexuality, passim;
Hennessy Profit and Pleasure, ch 4.

VIII. Nov. 2 Student Short Papers Discussed

Reading: Student Short Papers

Homework: Please come with written comments and feedback on each paper

IX. Nov. 9 Queer Theory continued: *How can a non-essentialist feminism understand the oppression of women under patriarchal systems? And how can queer identities linked to different racial, identity and class positions be understood? How can a feminist coalitional politics resolve the tensions within queer identities, such as bisexual and transsexual identities that challenge the concept of feminist identity politics based on organizing natural born "women"?*

Butler Undoing Gender, ch 5, 10
Smith "Mistaken Identity", from Morton ed. The Material Queer
Lorde "I Am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing across Sexualities", in
McCann and Kim, eds. Feminist Theory Reader
Aguilar-San Juan "Going Home: Enacting Justice in Queer Asian America", in
Ibid.
Spivak (with Ellen Rooney) "In a Word: Interview" in Nicholson ed. The Second
Wave
hooks "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women", Meyers text

Optional: Warner Fear of a Queer Planet, Introduction; Fuss Essentially
Speaking, passim; Hennessy, Profit and Pleasure ch 6

X. Nov. 16 Feminist Epistemology, Objectivism and Ethical Relativism: *Can the idea of epistemological standpoints resolve the traditional problem of objectivism (there are universal ethical values and independent facts) vs. relativism (values and facts are*

relative to observers' perceptions)? How does a pluralist democratic politics deal with the problem of relativism? Do where values originate (e.g from the West, or within non-Western cultures) make a difference as to whether they apply to other cultures?

Hartsock "The Feminist Standpoint", Meyers text
Haraway "A Manifesto for Cyborgs", Meyers text
Collins, Black Feminist Thought, 2nd edition, ch. 11, "Black Feminist Epistemology"
Jaggar "Global Responsibility and Western Feminism", mss., reserve
Nicholson and Fraser "Social Criticism without Philosophy", Meyers text.
Narayan "Contesting Cultures: 'Westernization', Respect for Cultures, and Third World Feminists" in Nicholson ed. . The Second Wave

Optional: Harding Whose Science, Whose Knowledge: Thinking from Women's Lives

No seminar Weds. Nov. 24 before Thanksgiving

XI. Nov. 30 Human Rights and Justice: *Are there universal human rights? If so, what are they and how do they relate to women's liberation? Should feminists promote a universal ethics of justice? How do we take context into account*

Butler, Undoing Gender, ch.1
MacKinnon "Rape, Genocide and Women's Human Rights", Harvard Women's Law Journal 17 (1994),
Burn "Women's Rights as Human Rights", in Burn Women Across Cultures: A Global Perspective
Fraser Justice Interruptus, ch. 2
Young Justice and the Politics of Difference (selected chapters)
Lewis "Women (Under) Development: The Relevance of the Right to Development to Poor Women of Color in the United States", in Wing, ed. Global Critical Race Feminism.

Optional: Nussbaum and Glover, eds. Women, Culture and Development, passim (or Nussbaum Women and Human Development, passim)

Abstract and Outline of Term Paper due in Seminar Dec. 1

XII Dec. 7 Global Feminism, Development Theory, and Theory and Practice: *Is there some universal model of human, national and global development and human good(s) that feminists can accept? If not, are there other models on which we can build global feminist coalitions? Should national governments provide safety nets and basic human services for their citizens, e.g. education and health, thus challenging neo-liberalism? If they don't, can NGOs empower women by doing so?*

Nussbaum "Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings", in Nussbaum and Glover, eds. Women, Culture and Development

Jaggar "Saving Amina", mss.
 Ferguson "Resisting the Veil of Privilege: Building Bridge Identities as an Ethico-Politics of Global Feminism", Hypatia v. 13, #3 (Summer 1998),
 Charlton et al "Women, the State and Development", from Charlton, et al, eds. Women, the State, and Development
 Bourque "Gender and the State: Perspectives from Latin America", from Charlton et al, eds., Ibid
 Ewig "Strengths and Limits of the NGO Women's Movement Model: Shaping Nicaragua's Democratic Institutions", Latin American Research Review, v. 34 #3 (1999)
 Tinsman "Reviving Feminist Materialism: Gender and Neo-Liberalism in Pinochet's Chile", Signs, v. 26 #1 (Autumn 2000).

Optional: Dandekar "International Development Paradigms and Violence Against Women:" in French, Teays and Purdy, ed. Violence Against Women; Hirschman "Women and Development: A Critique", from Marianne Marchand and Jane Parpart, eds. Feminism/Postmodernism/Development; Hennessy Profit and Pleasure ch 5, 7; Sen and Grown Development, Crises and Alternative Visions, especially "Gender and Class";

XIII. Dec. 14 Post-colonialism and Globalization

How can Western feminists avoid a neo-colonialist understanding of women's empowerment in poor countries of the South? What is globalization and how do globalization processes both undermine and provide opportunities for women? How should feminists deal with religious fundamentalisms of East and West?

Hochschild "Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value", from Hutton and Giddens, eds. Global Capitalism
 Mohanty, Feminism without Borders, ch 4, 9.
 Mills "Postcolonial Feminist Theory" in Jackson and Jones, eds., Contemporary Feminist Theories
 Yuval-Davis "Women, Ethnicity and Empowerment", in Oakley and Mitchell, eds. Who's Afraid of Feminism?
 Moallem "Transnationalism, Feminism and Fundamentalism", in Kaplan, Alarcón and Moallem, eds. Between Woman and Nation
 Ferguson "Can Development Create Empowerment and Women's Liberation?" www.globaljusticecenter.org. Go to Encuentro 2004, papers.

Optional: Molyneux "Mobilization without Emancipation? Women's Interests, the State and Revolution in Nicaragua", in Women's Movements in International Perspective, reprinted in McCann and Kim, eds. Feminist Theory Reader: Miles Integrative Feminism, ch. 6, 9.

Final term paper due Monday, Dec. 19 by 5 pm in Bartlett 208