

WOST 692B
History of Feminist Theory
Syllabus Fall 2009

Professor Ann Ferguson
Office: Bartlett 7-C
Hours: Tues. 4-6 pm & by arrangement
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Texts (at Food for Thought Books, N. Pleasant St. Amherst):

1. Silvia Federici *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (2004, Autonomedia).
2. Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger, eds. *Theorizing Feminisms* (2006, Oxford University Press).

Optional:

1. Rachel Alsop, Annette Fitzsimmons and Kathleen Lennon *Theorizing Gender* (2002, Polity Press).
2. Rosemarie Tong, ed. *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, 2nd ed. (1998, Westview Press).

Other recommended:

1. Richard Schmitt *Introduction to Marx and Engels*, 2nd ed. (1997: Westview Press).
2. Steven Seidman *Contested Knowledge: Social Theory Today* (2004, Blackwell publishing)
3. Sigmund Freud *Sexuality and the Psychology of Love* (1997, Touchstone/Simon & Shuster Press).
4. Juliet Mitchell *Women's Estate* (1973, Vintage).

All readings for the course are either on University Library reserve or available online at: <https://udrive.oit.umass.edu/xythoswfs/webui/ferguson>

Books for class reports:

1. Gloria Anzaldúa *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987, 1999, Aunt Lute Books)
2. Simone de Beauvoir *The Second Sex* (1953, Vintage Books).
3. Judith Butler *Gender Trouble* (1990, Routledge).
4. Nancy Chodorow *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1979, Stanford University)
5. Friedrich Engels *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Pathfinder Press).
6. Ellen Feder *Family Bonds: Genealogies of Race and Gender* (2007, Oxford University).
7. Leslie Feinberg *Transgender Warriors* (1996, Beacon Press)
8. Michel Foucault *The History of Sexuality, v. 1* (1978, Vintage Books).
9. Luce Irigaray *This Sex which is Not One* (1985, Cornell University).
10. Catharine MacKinnon *Feminism Unmodified* (1987, Harvard University).
11. Juliet Mitchell *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (1974, Pantheon).
12. Charles Mills and Carol Pateman *Contract and Domination* (2007, Polity).
13. Chandra Mohanty *Feminism without Borders* (2003, Duke University).
14. Chris Weedon *Feminist Practice and Post-structuralist Theory* (1987, Blackwells).

Class Requirements and Grading Policies

There are 3 components through which the course will be graded: class participation, short paper, class report and final term paper. The work done by each student for each of these components will be weighted as follows: class participation (including class report) 30%, short paper 30%, and final term paper 40%.

- A. Class Participation (30%):** Students will be expected to do the reading before the class for which they are assigned and to contribute to the discussion about them, including discussion questions posed as homework from time to time which should be responded to on the course email list. The class report involves a book that the student picks at the beginning of the course to do a short report on [No More than Ten Minutes!!] with the aim of stimulating class discussion. Therefore, the presenter should think of several serious questions for discussion that suggest support for or problems with the author's approach.
- B. Short Paper (30%):** Students should pick a question or issue that connects to one or more of the course readings that have been completed by the week of 10/20 (topic VIII on the syllabus) and write a thought paper presenting the topic, indicating how the author or authors deal with the topic, and defending your own view. **PAPER IS DUE IN CLASS OCTOBER 27.**
- C. Term Paper (40%):** Students should pick a topic in the history of feminist theory that has involved disagreements among feminist theorists and activists and research it carefully, either concentrating on the work of one key author or by comparing and contrasting the work of several authors. You can present the historical context of the debate among the authors if you wish, but the basic emphasis in your paper should be on the debate itself and the reasons given on both sides of the issue, e.g. the Equality-Difference debate. This should be a research paper, so secondary sources are welcome, but the emphasis of the paper should be on the clear presentation of the positions of the authors and the statement of their reasons, as well as how well you defend your own position on the issue. **ABSTRACT/OUTLINE OF TERM PAPER IS DUE IN CLASS DECEMBER 1. Appointments to discuss this abstract should be made for 12/1, 12/2 or 12/3. TERM PAPER IS DUE IN THE INSTRUCTOR'S MAILBOX IN BARTLETT 208 BY 5 P.M. WEDS. DEC. 16.** Please provide a self-addressed and stamped manila envelope if you wish your term paper returned to you, OR you can pick it up in Bartlett 208 in January. Leave a self-addressed and stamped postcard if you want to receive your course grade and term paper grade by early January.

Syllabus

I. Week one: What is feminism? What is feminist theory? Sex vs. Gender: Equality, Difference or Dominance? (9/8, 9/10)

Readings:

- (1) MacKinnon "Difference and Dominance", in H&H text
- (2) Delphy "Rethinking Sex and Gender"
- (3) Fausto-Sterling *Sexing the Body*, chs 4, 9

Optional: Ferguson *Blood at the Root*, ch. 1; Alsop et al, *Theorizing Gender*, ch. 1 Natural Women and Men

II. History of Feminist Theory and Liberal Feminism (1 week: 9/ 15, 9/17)

Readings:

- (1) De Gouges "Declaration of the Rights of Woman"
- (2) Rousseau, selection from *Emile*
- (3) Wollstonecraft, selection from *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
- (4) Mill and Taylor, selection from *The Subjection of Women* in Hackett and Haslanger (H&H) text
- (5) Sojourner "Ain't I a Woman?" Truth in H&H text
- (6) Goldman "Woman Suffrage" in H&H text

Optional: Tong *Feminist Thought*, ch 1 Liberal Feminism, Hunt Botting "Mary Wollstonecraft's Enlightened Legacy"

III. Marxism (1 week: 9/22, 9/24)

Readings:

- (1) Schmitt *Introduction to Marx and Engels*, chs. 5, 7-10
- (2) Marx, Marx and Engels, Selections from *The Economic and Philosophical Mss.* and *The Communist Manifesto*, also available in R. Tucker *The Marx and Engels Reader*
- (3) Kadi "Stupidity Deconstructed" from H&H text
- (4) Engels *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, excerpt
- (5) Flax "Do Feminists Need Marxism?"

Optional: Zweig "The Working Class Majority"

Report on Engels and Flax

IV. Marxist-Feminism (one class 9/29)

Readings:

- (1) Benston "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation"
- (2) Federici text, ch. 2

Optional: Quick, "The Class Nature of Women's Oppression", Tong ch. 3 Marxist and Socialist-Feminism

V. Existentialist Feminism (one class 10/1)

Readings:

- (1) Beauvoir in H&H text
- (2) Alsop et al text, ch. 7, pp. 171-181.
- (3) Braidotti "Theories of Gender: Or Language is a Virus", *Nomadic Subjects*, ch. 15

Optional: Tong ch 5 Existentialist Feminism, Beauvoir *The Second Sex*, Pt IV, ch 15 The Lesbian

VI. Radical Feminism (1 week 10/6, 10/8)

Readings:

- (1) Mitchell *Women's Estate*, ch. 4
- (2) Wittig "One is Not Born a Woman" from Nicholson, ed. *The Second Wave*
- (3) Millett selection, from Janet McCracken, ed. *Thinking about Gender*
- (4) MacKinnon "Desire and Power" in H&H text

Optional: MacKinnon "Feminism, Marxism, Method and the State" from Meyer, ed. *Feminist Social Thought*, Radicalesbians "The Woman-Identified Woman" from Nicholson, ed. *The Second Wave*

Report on MacKinnon

NO CLASS TUES 10/13: MONDAY CLASS SCHEDULE

VII. Freud and Psychoanalytic Feminism (1 week: 10/15, 10/20)

Readings:

- (1) Freud "Anatomical Distinctions between the Sexes"
- (2) Freud "Female Sexuality"
- (3) Freud "Femininity", all from Rieff, ed. *Freud and the Psychology of Love*
- (4) Chodorow "Family Structure and Feminine Personality"
- (5) Mitchell "Femininity", selections from *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, Conclusion, Pt. 2

Optional: Chodorow "Introduction to Freud's Essays on a Theory of Sexuality", Mitchell "Freud on the Anatomical Distinctions between the Sexes"

Report on Chodorow and/or Mitchell

NO CLASS 10/22

SHORT PAPERS DUE IN CLASS 10/27

VIII. Psychoanalytic Difference Feminism (1 class: 10/27)

Readings:

- (1) Irigaray "This Sex which is Not One"
- (2) Braidotti *Nomadic Subjects*, ch 8 "Sexual Difference as a Nomadic Political Project"

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(3) Christ "Why Women Need the Goddess" in H&H text

Optional: Tong, ch. 4, Alsop et al, ch. 8 "Sexual Difference"

Report on Irigaray

IX. Materialist/Socialist-Feminism and Dual Systems Theory (1 class: 10/29)

Readings:

(1) Rubin "Traffic in Women"

(2) Mitchell *Woman: Women's Estate*, ch 5 (Move one of these to Optional)

(3) Bubeck "Justice and the Labor of Care", from Kittay and Feder, eds. *The Subject of Care*.

Optional: Young "Socialist Feminism and the Limits of Dual Systems Theory" in H and H text; Hartmann "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism" in Nicholson, ed. *The Second Wave* OR "The Family as Locus of Gender, Class and Political Struggle: The Example of Housework" in Herrmann and Stewart, eds *Theorizing Feminism*; Hennessy, *Profit and Pleasure*, chs. 3, 7; Ferguson *Blood at the Root*, ch. 4.

X. Foucault and Poststructuralism: Sexuality and Disciplinary Power (1 week: 11/3, 11/5)

Readings:

(1) Foucault Interview on History of Sexuality from Gordon, ed. *Power/Knowledge*

(2) Foucault Interview on Body/Power from Gordon, ed. *Ibid.*

(3) Foucault *History of Sexuality* Pt. 4 #3,4, Pt 5.

(4) Braidotti *Nomadic Subjects*, ch 6 (on Foucault and Irigaray)

Optional: Foucault *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 82-103 (on generalized punishment); Fraser "Foucault's Body-Language", Seidman *Contested Knowledge: Social Theory Today*, chapter on Foucault

Report on Foucault

XI. Feminist Uses of Foucault and Debates on Social Construction Theory (1 class: 11/10)

Readings:

(1) Bartky "Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power"

(2) Feder *Family Bonds*, ch. 4 "Of Monkeys and Men"

Optional: Alsop et al, ch. 3; Alcoff "Feminist Politics and Foucault"; Sawicki "Identity Politics and Sexual Freedom"

Report on Feder

XII. Critical Race Theory (1 week: 11/12, 11/19)

Readings:

(1) Omi and Winant *Racial Formations in the US*, ch. 4

(2) Mills and Pateman selections *Contract and Domination*, ch 2, 4.

(3) Feder *Family Bonds*, ch. 5

Report on Mills and Pateman

XIII. Intersectional Approaches (1 week: 11/21, 11/26)

Readings:

- (1) Leslie McCall "The Complexity of Intersectionality", from *Signs*, vol. 30, no. 3 (2005).
- (2) Young "Five Faces of Oppression" from *Justice and the Politics of Difference*
- (3) Crenshaw "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color" in H&H text
- (4) Grillo "Anti-essentialism and Intersectionality" in H&H text
- (5) Combahee River Collective "A Black Feminist Statement" from H&H text
- (6) Anzaldúa from H&H text
- (7) Feinberg "Walking our Talk" from H&H

Optional: Collins "The Politics of Black Feminist Thought" in H&H text; hooks "Feminism and Class Power" from *Where We Stand: Class Matters*, ch. 9

Report on Anzaldúa or Feinberg

TERM PAPER ABSTRACTS DUE 12/1, Appointments 12/1, 12/2 and 12/3

XIV. Poststructuralist Feminism, Sexuality and Queer Theory (1 week: 12/1, 12/3)

Readings:

- (1) Butler *Gender Trouble*, excerpt in H&H text [OR Butler *Gender Trouble* article in Nicholson, ed. *Feminism/Postmodernism*]
- (2) Alsop et al, *Theorizing Gender*, ch. 4
- (3) Weedon *Feminist Practice & Poststructuralist Theory*, ch. 2
- (4) Marcus "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention" in H&H text
- (5) Minter "Do Transsexuals Dream of Gay Rights?" from Currah, Juang and Minter, eds. *Transgender Rights*

Optional: Weedon, ch 3, 4; Butler "Melancholy Gender" from *The Subject of Power*; Stone "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto"; Hausman *Changing Sex*, ch. 6; Moya "Postmodernism, Realism and the Politics of Identity" from Moya and Hames-Garcia, eds. *Identity Politics*

Report on Butler or Weedon

XV. Postcolonial Feminism (1 week 12/8, 12/10)

Readings:

- (1) Gandhi in H&H text

- (2) Stoler, in H & H text
- (3) Mohanty *Feminism without Borders*, ch. 2, 6
- (4) Federici, ch. 5

Optional: Ong "Colonialism and Modernity", Mies "Colonization and Housewification"

Report on Mohanty

**FINAL TERM PAPER DUE WEDS. DEC. 16
In Bartlett 208 by 5 pm**

