

WOST 691B Issues in Feminist Research Seminar
Spring 2004

Professor Ann Ferguson, Philosophy and WOST
Bartlett 370 Phone 5-5802, Tues: 1-4 pm or by
appointment
Email: ferguson@philos.umass.edu

Required Books (available at Food for Thought Books, Amherst)

Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Michelle L. Yaiser eds. Feminist Perspectives on Social Research (2004, Oxford University Press) [Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text]

Optional texts:

Ruth Behar Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story (1993, Beacon)

Patricia Hill Collins Black Feminist Thought, 2nd edition (2000, Routledge)

Sandra Harding, ed. Feminism and Methodology (1987, Indiana University)
[abbreviated: Harding text]

Shulamit Reinharz Feminist Methods in Social Research (1992, Oxford University Press)

Rosemarie Tong Feminist Thought, 2nd edition (1998, Westview Press)

Description of Course:

This course is a 3 credit seminar for graduate students, primarily those who are students in the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate Program in Advanced Feminist Studies, and those interested in applying for the program. (Applications to the Program for next year, which will include retroactive credit for courses taken this year, are due in March in the WOST office: Call Nancy Patteson at 5-5332 for further information).

Goal of Course:

The goal is to provide an introductory framework for thinking about methods of research from a feminist perspective. The hope is that we can apply theory to the research practice presented, and that our theory of feminist methods can also be developed in the process. Also, we aim to create a transdisciplinary community of feminist faculty and graduate students on campus who can network with each other to provide help on our joint and individual research and its ethical and political implications.

Course Requirements:

1. Class Participation: Reading, Class Reports and Discussion: There will be a regular syllabus of reading that students should be prepared to discuss. **Seminar students will be expected to sign up to give two class reports [CR on the syllabus]. These should be no more than a 5-10 minute summary of a reading. Reporter should raise some questions for class discussion after the summary. Please sign up for at least one Class Report by the second seminar.**

2. Short paper: Students will be expected to write a short paper on some problem or issue for feminist research ethics or procedure that is raised by discussion or the reading. Your paper should present your own critical position on this issue, critiquing other views and defending your own. **These papers will be due Thursday, March 25 with copies for all seminar participants.**

3. Presentation and Term Paper: Students will be expected to give a research paper presentation, or a proposal for a research project. It is expected that this research will be related to an actual or possible project in their major discipline. Some part of this presentation should refer to one or more relevant issues in feminist research that we discuss during the semester and way(s) of handling such issues in this particular research. This research paper will be presented in one of the last two seminars--**a 3-5 page abstract and outline due by April 29 with copies for the class--and due as a Term Paper of 10+ pages at the end of the semester. Please sign up for your presentation date by the third seminar. (Note: No e-mail attached papers will be accepted—hard copies only, please!!)**

4. Peer Feedback: For the last seminar, students will be expected to bring some critical suggestions for development and revision of all the student papers which were presented in the seminar, to aid in students' revisions of their term paper submission.

Syllabus of Seminars, Lectures and Readings

NOTE: Most readings, except handouts and xerox packets, are on regular 3 day Reserve in the main Library (3rd floor), including the required and optional texts for the course. Check out the Reserve reading, because some of it is not listed on the syllabus, but all is of interest. Most handouts will be organized into Course Packets I and II and sold to students in the class.

NOTE: AN INFORMAL LECTURE SERIES OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH WILL ALSO OCCUR THIS SPRING (Dates and times to be announced). SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THIS SERIES

Syllabus of Readings

1/29 Introduction: *Feminist Paradigms, Epistemologies and Methodologies*

Handouts: 1) Feminist Epistemological Research Paradigms
2) Distinction between Epistemologies, Methodologies and Methods (Harding)
3) Internal critique of paradigms and methodologies (Papers by J. Butler “Butler
“Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: an Essay in Feminist and
Phenomenological Theory” and A. Ferguson “Butler, Sex/Gender and a Post-modern
Gender Theory”, short version)

[Optional Background Reading : R. Tong Feminist Thought, 2nd edition; M. Calas and L. Smircich “From the Woman’s Point of View”; P. Hill Collins Black Feminist Thought, 2nd edition]

2/5 *Feminist Paradigms and Epistemology*

Q. Is there a specific feminist epistemology (standpoint, way of knowing)?
Specific feminist research methodologies? Methods?

S. Hesse-Biber, P. Leavy and M. Yaiser “Feminist Approaches to Research as a Process: Reconceptualizing Epistemology, Methodology and Method” [Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text]

D. Smith “Women’s Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology” [Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text]

S. Harding “Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is Strong Objectivity?” [Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text]

J. Sprague and D. Kobryniewicz “A Feminist Epistemology”, Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

Optional: S. Harding Feminism and Methodology, Introduction, Conclusion; K. Bhavani “Tracing the Contours: Feminist Research and Feminist Objectivity”, in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

2/12 *Epistemologies and Methodologies, Pt. II*

Z. Tang Halpin “Scientific Objectivity and the Concept of ‘the Other’”, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, v. 12, #3, 285-294, 1999, Packet I

A. Peshkin “In Search of Subjectivity--One’s Own”, Educational Researcher: 17 (7), 17-22, Reader I [**CR on both Halpin and Peshkin**]

G. Burrell and G. Morgan Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis, intro, chs. 1,2, Packet I

W.L. Neuman (1991), Social Research Methods, ch. 3, Packet I

J.S. Chafetz “Some Thoughts by an Unrepentant ‘Positivist’ Who Considers Herself a Feminist Nonetheless”, Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text

[Optional: L. Stanley and S. Wise "Method, Methodology and Epistemology in Feminist Research Processes", in L. Stanley, ed. Feminist Praxis; M. Belenky et al, eds.

Women's Ways of Knowing, skim; D. Haraway "Situated Knowledges", in E. Fox Keller and H. Longino Feminism and Science]

2/19 *Ethical Issues of Feminist Research*

Q. How should the feminist researcher approach human research subjects and what are the ethical issues involved?

G. Kirsch Ethical Dilemmas in Feminist Research, ch. 2 and 3, Packet I [CR]

D. Flinders "In Search of Ethical Guidance: Constructing a Basis for Dialogue".

Qualitative Studies in Education, 1992, v. 5#2: 101-115 , Packet I

J. Rollins Between Women: Domestic and Their Employers, introduction. [CR]

A. Jaggar "Globalizing Feminist Ethics", Packet I.

2/26 *Intersectional/Integrative Feminist Epistemology and Methodologies*

Q. Do social differences between women (race, ethnicity, class, sexuality) create different epistemological standpoints and ways of knowing?

P. Hill Collins Black Feminist Thought, ch. 2, 10, 11, Packet I [CR]

L. Weber "A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality", in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

S. Harding ". . . and Race"? Toward the Science Question in Global Feminism", ch. 8 of S. Harding Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives, Packet I

A. Hurtado "Sitios y Lenguas: Chicanas Theorize Feminisms", Hypatia, v. 13 #2 (Spring 1998), Packet I

K. Crenshaw "Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence against Women of Color", M. Lyndon Shanley and U. Narayan, eds. Reconstructing Political Theory: Feminist Perspectives, Packet I [CR]

b. hooks "Postmodern Blackness", from hooks Yearning, Packet I

Optional: G. Anzaldua "Mestiza Consciousness" from Anzaldua Borderlands/La Frontera.

Seminar on 3 /4 will only be 1 hour long: Students urged to go to Drucilla Cornell lecture

3 /4 *Methodologies: Comparative, Poststructuralist and Postcolonial Examples*

D. Kandiyoti "Islam and Patriarchy: A Comparative Perspective", Hesse-Biber, ed. Packet I.

K. Canning "Feminist History After the Linguistic Turn", Packet I.

A. Ong "Colonialism and Modernity: Feminist Re-Presentations of Women in Non-Western Societies", Packet I

[Optional: C. Weedon Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory, ch 2-4;_M.

Marchand "Latin American Women Speak on Development: Are We Listening Yet?" in Marchand and Parpart, eds. Feminism/Postmodernism/Development]

3/11 *More Applications of Intersectional (Integrative) Feminisms*

S. Lanser “Feminist Criticism, ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’ and the Politics of Color in America”, Packet I [CR]

H. Carby “White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood” , Packet I

R. Brewer "Theorizing Race, Class and Gender", in S. James and AM Busia, eds. Theorizing Black Feminism, Packet I

F.W. Twine “Racial Ideologies and Racial Methodologies”, Packet I

S. Hesse-Biber and D. Leckenby “How Feminists Practice Social Research”, Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

K. Weston “Fieldwork in Lesbian and Gay Communities”, Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

[Optional: N. Naples “The Outsider Phenomenon”, in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

D. Reay “Rethinking Social Class”, in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.]

SPRING BREAK

SHORT PAPERS ON FEMINIST RESEARCH ISSUE DUE IN SEMINAR

3/25 (please bring copies for everyone in seminar)

3/25 Methods: Oral History, Consciousness Raising and Action Research

A. Oakley “Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms” from H. Roberts, ed., Doing Feminist Research

J. Scott “The Evidence of Experience” , Packet II

S. Stone-Mediatore "Chandra Mohanty and the Revaluing of 'Experience'", Hypatia,v.13, #2 (Spring 1998), Packet II [CR on both Scott and Stone-Mediatore]

M. Devault “Talking and Listening from Women’s Standpoint: Feminist Strategies for Interviewing and Analysis”, in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

S. Geiger “What’s So Feminist about Women’s Oral History?” in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

D. Henderson “Consciousness Raising in Participatory Research: Method and Methodology for Emancipatory Nursing Inquiry”, Adv. Nurs. Sci., 1995: 17 (3), 58-69 [CR]

[Optional: S. Reinharz, Feminist Methods in Social Research, ch. 10; P. Reason, ed. Human Inquiry in Action, esp. articles 1 and 2 by P. Reason and J. Heron; E. Clift and V. Freimuth “Changing Women’s Lives: A Communication Perspective on Participatory Qualitative Research Techniques for Gender Equity”, Journal of Gender Studies, v. 6 #2, 1997: 289-296; S. Wise "Becoming a Feminist Social Worker", in L. Stanley, ed. Feminist Praxis; P. Maguire “Uneven Ground: Feminisms and Action Research” from P. Reason and H. Bradbury, eds. Handbook of Action Research]

4/1 Discussion of Student Papers on Feminist Research Issue

Directions: Read other students’ papers, type out comments or write on paper, and be prepared to discuss your reactions and your own views.

4/8 *The Methods and Ethics of Ethnography and Cross-cultural Research*

A. Errante "But Sometimes You're Not Part of the Story", in Hesse-Biber and Yaiser text.

D. Patai "US Academics and Third World Women: Is Ethical Research Possible?" S. Berger Gluck and D. Patai, eds. Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History, Packet II [CR]

A. Ferguson "Resisting the Veil of Privilege: Building Bridge Identities as an Ethico-Politics of Global Feminism", Hypatia, v. 13 #4 (Summer 1998), Packet II.

C. Mohanty "Women Workers and Capitalist Scripts: Ideologies of Domination, Common Interests and the Politics of Solidarity", Hesse-Biber et al, eds., Packet II

I. Grewal "On the New Global Feminism and the Family of Nations: Dilemmas of Transnational Feminist Practice" in E. Shoat, ed. Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age, Packet II [CR]

[Optional: R. Behar Translated Woman ch.15, 17; S. Reinharz Feminist Methods in Social Research, ch.3, 6; U. Narayan "Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism", Hypatia, v.13 #2 (Summer 1998); A. Jaggar "Globalizing Feminist Ethics", Hypatia, v. 13 #3 (Spring 1998); D. Wolf Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork, ch. 1; C. Stack "Writing Ethnography: Feminist Critical Practice", in Ibid.]

4/15 *Women's Studies: Interdisciplinarity, and Feminist Cultural Studies*

Feminist Interdisciplinary Research Q. Why interdisciplinary research? What is the reason for feminist interdisciplinarity? Are there some specific contents, concepts and methods specific to feminist interdisciplinarity? How does feminist cultural studies challenge disciplinary approaches to literature and culture?

A. *Women's Studies and Interdisciplinarity*

J. Allen and S. Kitch "Disciplined by Disciplines? The Need for an Interdisciplinary Research Mission in Women's Studies", Feminist Studies, v 24 #2, Packet II [CR]

S. Hesse-Biber et al, eds., Introduction, Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology, Packet II

K. Wissoker "Negotiating a Passage between Disciplinary Borders", Packet II

B. *Feminist Cultural Studies*

T. Lovell, ed. Feminist Cultural Studies, Introduction, Packet II

S. Franklin et al "Feminism and Cultural Studies", from Ibid, Packet II [CR]

J. Bettie "Women without Class: *Chicas, Cholas*, Trash and the Presence/Absence of Class Identity", Packet II

No Seminar Thursday, April 22, Monday schedule followed

4/29 *Feminist Pedagogy*

J. Gore “What We Can Do for You! What *Can* We Do for “You”? Struggling over Empowerment in Critical and Feminist Pedagogy” from C. Luke and J. Gore, eds. Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy Packet II [CR]

P. Lather “Critical Pedagogies: A Feminist Reading”, Ibid. Packet II

b. hooks Teaching to Transgress, chs. 3, 8, Packet II

B. Tatum “Talking about Race, Learning about Racism”, Packet II.

**STUDENT RESEARCH PAPER ABSTRACTS/OUTLINES DUE Thurs. April 29
with copies for all seminar members**

5/6 Presentations and discussion by seminar participants of their research paper, highlighting an issue of feminist research

5/13 Finish Presentations and Conclusion

Last Class Homework: A short set of comments or feedback to give to all the presenters on their presentations, to aid them in writing their final term papers.