

WGSS 301: THEORIZING GENDER, RACE, AND POWER

Course mailing list: wgss-301-01-fall19@courses.umass.edu Term: Fall 2019

Instructor: K. Asher (kasher@umass.edu)

Office: W467 South College

Class time: MW 4:00-5:15pm

Meets in: W201 South College

Office Hours: Mondays 11am-noon (**Walk-in**); Weds: 2-3pm (**by appointment**)

Check **Moodle** for updates and changes to office hours

Course focus, approach and learning goals: Gender, race, and power play a key role in shaping our worlds and experiences. In this core course of the WGSS major, students will build on what they learnt about sex, gender and difference in WGSS 201 to critically interrogate gender, race, and power. Through [close readings](#) of a diverse range of classic and contemporary feminist theories of gender, race and power, we will enter in critical dialogue with feminist debates to understand and foster social change. In the first part of the seminar we will revisit the key terms of feminist concerns and debates from historical and methodological perspectives. In the second part of the semester, we will revisit selected themes to deepen our understanding of feminist engagements.

The course's approach is **grounded** in the premises that:

- ❖ **“women”** and **“gender”** are diverse and changing aspects of human subjectivity, embedded in and constituted in relation to a complex network of interlocking variables of race, class, sexuality, ethnicity and nationality. In the US this is often referred to as **“intersectionality”**
- ❖ Feminism is not unitary or singular. Rather **feminism(s)** are as plural, shifting and contested movements, historically and in contemporary times, in the US and transnationally committed to describing, analyzing and changing how power operates on and through “women” and “gender”
- ❖ Knowledge is political

This course aims to enable students to

- ❖ Envision and engage **“theory”** as an ongoing endeavor to understand, interrogate, and analyze the power-laden or political processes of constructing knowledge
- ❖ Recognize and understand **feminist theories** as interventions in the politics of knowledge (disciplinary and interdisciplinary), and committed to addressing women's resistance to oppression and struggles for positive change.
- ❖ Identify and critically examine the **analytical parameters** of diverse theoretical and analytical approaches to interrogating women, gender, race, and power
- ❖ Understand why and how feminist theories engage with the state, capitalism, colonialism, the governing of sexuality, and other workings of power
- ❖ Examine how feminist struggles are linked to others such as anti-racist, anti-imperialist, economic and environmental justice struggles
- ❖ See how the complex, contradictory and power laden connections between the “West” and the “Rest,” i.e. transnational thinking is key to feminist theories
- ❖ Develop your own critical and self- reflexive understandings of feminisms, feminist politics, organizing and analysis for social change.
- ❖ Develop strong reading, thinking, and writing skills
- ❖ Practice collaborative learning

Pre-requisites: Students **MUST** have prior analytical knowledge of the following terms: **sex, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, disability, religion, culture, and nationality**. They should also be able to articulate how these identities are shaped by and change the practices of **science, empire, colonialism, capitalism, political economy, nation-state, nationalism, and feminist struggles for change**. That is, students should be able to define these terms and locate them historically, geographically and transnationally within changing relations of power.

You can refresh your understanding of these terms by revisiting the material covered in prior WGSS classes (such as WGSS 201, 230, 290, WGSS General Education courses, or other courses with core WGSS faculty). If you have not taken WGSS courses, please download syllabi for these courses from the WGSS website and do the background work prior to the first day of WGSS 301. **Without the necessary pre-requisites, students will be unable to keep up with the terms of the course.**

Required Readings (ordered through Amherst Books and on reserve)

- ❖ McCann, Carole and Seung-kyung Kim, eds. 2017. [*Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*](#). 4th edition. Routledge. (FTR below)
- ❖ Amrita Basu, ed. 2017. *Women's Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms*. Second edition. Westview Press.
- ❖ Additional readings including **Suggested/Supplemental readings on Moodle** (uploaded or via Ereserves)

Background Readings (on reserve at the DuBois Library and/or ereserve)

- ❖ Disch, Lisa and Hawkesworth Mary. 2015. [*Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*](#). Oxford University Press.
- ❖ Grewal, Inderpal and Caren Kaplan, eds. 2006. *An Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World*. NY: McGraw-Hill. 2nd Edition.
- ❖ Hall, S. et al. eds. 1996. *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers. (I especially recommended Introductions to Parts I, II, III)
- ❖ Lemert, Charles, ed. 2017. [*Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings*](#). Boulder, CO: Westview Press. (I especially recommend Lemert's introductory essays to each section)
- ❖ Wolf, Eric. 1982/1997. *Europe and the People without History*. CA: UC Press.

Assignments and Grades

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|---|-----|
| ❖ Attendance & Participation | 25% |
| ❖ Syllabus and prerequisites quiz (complete on Moodle by Sept 16) | 2% |
| ❖ Reading Responses (see pages 12-13 for details) | 13% |
| ❖ Midterm review (workshop drafts Oct 16, final due Oct 19) | 25% |
| ❖ Second Critical review (due by Nov 22) | 10% |
| ❖ Final written Assignment (due Dec 13 via Moodle) | 25% |

Attendance and Absences: The success of the class depends on the instructor and students physical and intellectual presence in class. Being a little late occasionally is understandable, as is missing a few classes because of legitimate reasons (illness, injury, death of a loved one, prior appointments). If you miss more than two classes, excuse your

absence within a week of the missed session. Over three absences will automatically result in the lowering of your overall grade, as even excused absences will affect your participation grade (you get 2 points for each day you are present, and 1 point for late or excused sessions).

If you miss class unavoidably, it is still your responsibility to keep up with the readings, write reading responses, and catch up on what you missed. Set up a “study buddy” with whom you can exchange notes, review material, and check in about intellectual or logistical issues related to the class.

Study Buddy 1: _____

Study Buddy 2: _____

Reading and Preparation: Good participation and great conversations rest on good preparation. Learn to develop a practice of reading closely (<https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-do-close-reading>) to identify main theme(s) and examine the premise of an argument critically. Then write **critical responses on the assigned readings and bring HARD COPIES to each class**.

Participation and communication guidelines : Good participation means active and mindful engagement with the course material and class participants, including your peers. Active and mindful engagement goes beyond agreements and disagreements to foster collective learning through critical dialogues about the topics and ideas generated by the course material. Below are some guidelines on how to do this:

- Listen, think, talk, and ask questions of the material and of each other
- If you are a talker, learn to moderate yourself. If you are reserved, practice talking – keeping your thoughts to yourself deprives us the chance to learn from you
- Avoid getting into a direct exchange with specific class members. Always speak to the group and be sure that your comments will relate to and involve the entire class
- Always be curious and respectful. Never be derogatory or abusive. Use ‘door openers’: “Could you say more about that?”
- Sometimes it helps to jot down the essence of your ideas before you begin to speak

The best classrooms conversations are ones that expand your knowledge and understanding, and bring the intense pleasure of intellectual inquiry. These skills requires practice and like other academic skills they are useful far beyond the classroom.

Notes: Learn to keep notes on what you read. Instructions on writing critical reading responses provide guidelines on how to take good notes. For example, identify central claims, highlight key quotes (note the full citation with page numbers), understanding how an author develops an argument, how the terms of one article relate to the broader course themes. Notes are a good place to flag **what you don’t understand and on confusing** points, which we can discuss and clarify in class. So bring your readings and notes to class!

These notes are for your own use (or to share with your peers/study buddies). You may NOT sell these notes or critical reading responses to outside vendors, nor make audio or video recordings of class lectures and discussions without my permission.

Using smart phones in class is decidedly un-smart as it invites me to fail you. When in class **turn OFF your mobile devices**. You may seek permission to use your computer in class to refer to readings and notes, and to take notes. However, please do not connect to the Internet.

Online communications and Email etiquette: Instructions, study questions, and updates about the course will be posted on **Moodle** and/or sent through the class lists (see above). So ensure that your university email (yourname@umass.edu) works, and check Moodle regularly. I welcome appropriate email queries and will respond to them within a reasonable amount of time (24-48 hours is normal). For a distinction between appropriate and inappropriate email, familiarize yourself with [Emails as Professional Correspondences or Email Etiquette](#). In addition, review the syllabus and Moodle to check whether your question has already been answered. For example, office hours, due dates, assignment instructions, etc. are listed in the syllabus and on Moodle. All changes to readings, assignments, due dates, etc. are also listed on Moodle.

Office Hours (listed at the top of the syllabus and updated on Moodle) are for students. So do stop by with questions about class material, brainstorm research ideas, talk about topics that spark your intellectual curiosity, or discuss your performance in class. However, office hours are not the space to review course material you missed or entertain inquiry such as “I was absent, what did I miss?” Talk to your study buddies first and then follow up with me to discuss specific queries.

Research: Go beyond Wikipedia and Google. [UMass libraries](#) (click the Menu button on the upper right) have excellent resources and amazing professional staff to help you meet your learning goals. Learn to use them and to do library research.

Writing is a crucial tool for learning and an invaluable skill for communicating what you learn. So learn to write well. Check out [the Purdue Writing Lab \(https://owl.purdue.edu/site_map.html\)](#), one of the most extensive lists of handouts on writing and research help. You can also get free writing help at the [Writing Center](#), and from Kevin Henderson, the WGSS Department’s writing tutor (Office hours Tues, noon to 5 PM or by appointment at kevinant@umass.edu). When seeking help, take with you:

- a copy of the assignment instructions
- the course writing checklist and grading criteria
- notes or a draft (however rough) of whatever you have written
- comments from a prior assignment
- the willingness to engage your writing or editing process by articulating how you want the tutor to help you

Written assignments are worth **over a third of your course grade**. Details about them are listed separately and on Moodle. All written assignments:

- ❖ May be discussed with your peers, tutors, or with me during my office hours
- ❖ Must be submitted **by the stated deadlines**. By handing in assignments late you forfeit your right to comments and lose half a letter grade for every day that your work is late. So learn to manage your time <http://www.studygs.net/shared/mgmt.htm>
- ❖ May be revised and resubmitted accepted within two weeks of receiving comments back from the instructor. Submit hardcopies of your substantially revised written work along with the original submission. Resubmitting a paper does not guarantee a higher grade. Cursorily rewritten work may receive a lower grade than the original.
- ❖ Should comply with the **Checklist of Written Work guidelines** (see page 17).
- ❖ Will be graded according to the **criteria** listed below.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING WRITTEN WORK

A = a well organized, lucidly written paper free of mechanical errors (or oral argument) that indicates your thorough understanding of the material and your interesting insights or critical responses to it. In a phrase, an A paper is a “perfect 10” paper.

B = a paper (or presentation) that offers evidence of your understanding of the material, but in which your points are obscured due to mechanical errors, lack of organization, inadequate evidence and/or insufficiently developed arguments.

C = a paper in which the student’s understanding and response to the material is unclear or largely obscured due to any one or more factors listed under B.

D, F = indicate that students are submitting unacceptable work.

Slash grades (B/B+, B+/A-, etc.)=indicate that an assignment is tending towards the higher grade but is not there yet. If you do better in the next assignment of a similar nature, the prior one will automatically be graded higher.

GRADE SCALE

	Out of 10	Out of 5	GPA
A	9.3 - 10	4.7 - 4.9	4
A-	8.6 - 9.2	4.3 - 4.6	3.7
B+	7.9 - 8.5	4.0 - 4.2	3.3
B	7.2 - 7.8	3.6 - 3.9	3.0
B-	6.5 - 7.1	3.3 - 3.5	2.7
C+	5.8 - 6.4	3.0 - 3.2	2.3
C	5.1 - 5.7	2.6 - 2.9	2.0
C-	4.4 - 5.0	2.3 - 2.5	1.7
D+	3.7 - 4.3	2.0-2.2	1.7
D	3.0 - 3.6	1.9 - 1.7	1.0
F	2.7 - 2.9		

Academic Honesty Statement: Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at UMass. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/).

Accommodation Statement: Disability Services (DS) on campus keeps documentation on file of physical, psychological, or learning disability and provides services to students with disabilities: <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>. They also act as a liaison between students and professors. If you need accommodations related to disabilities, please contact DS and me within the first two weeks of the term (before the add/drop period ends) so that we can work together to meet your learning needs. *A letter from DS is not sufficient excuse for late or missed work or absences. If, after consulting the syllabus, you anticipate missing classes or think you will need alternative formats and timelines for assignments, please come talk with me in person during office hours well before the assignment deadline to make arrangements.*

If you need to record class lectures as part of ADA accommodations, please check with me first. Recordings and note sharing for ADA accommodations are for your use only and may not be distributed or sold. For other campus resources, see <https://www.umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop>

Pronoun Statement: I will gladly address you by the name you prefer and use the gender pronouns that correspond to your gender identity. Please advise the class and me on your name and pronoun preference, and the proper pronunciation of your name.

Course Schedule: This is a working course schedule and is subject to change. For example, readings may be added or substituted at the professor's discretion. The readings listed under each week are for that week. That is, please read the listed material before coming to class. **Check Moodle for updates**

Week 1/2:

W, Sept 4: **Introductions: Seminar topics, approach and participants**

- What according to you is feminist theory?
 - Do you think feminisms need theory? Why or why not?
 - What is your favorite feminist theory text(s)? What issue or problematic does it engage? How? Please include the full citation(s) at the end of your response.
 - What are your learning goals for this class? What do you expect to get from the seminar? What do you hope to give to it?
 - What are your biggest concerns and/or most radical hopes about it?
- ❖ Post your responses to the above questions on Moodle by 5pm Fri, Sept 6. Read your classmates' responses before class on Monday, Sept 9.

Week 2: Why Theory? What is Theory? Theorizing What?

M, Sept 9: **Theorizing What? How? Since when? According to whom?**

- ❖ Culler, Jonathan. 2011. What is Theory? Pp. 1-18 in *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Moodle)
- ❖ Hemmings, Clare. 2011. Introduction. PP. 1-28 in *Why Stories Matter: The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory*. Duke University Press. (ebook via UMass library) <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uma/reader.action?docID=1172326&ppg=12>
- ❖ Humm, Maggie. 1992. Chronology of Events, and History of Feminism in Britain and America (xv-xx, 1-7), and Second Wave Feminism (53-60) in *Modern Feminisms*. Columbia University Press. (Moodle)

W, Sept 11:

- ❖ FTR: Introduction to the volume, *Feminist Movements* (Selections 1-7)
- ❖ Clare, Eli. 2017. Excerpts from *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (Moodle) Also: <https://read-dukeupress-edu.silk.library.umass.edu/books/book/1939/>

Week 3: Unpacking Feminist Concerns: Women, Gender, Oppression, and Freedom

M, Sept 16:

- ❖ Truth <http://www.sojournertruth.org/Library/Speeches/AintIAWoman.htm>
- ❖ FTR: Intro to Section I, Boxes 1 (Johnson Reagon), 3 (Rubin), 4 (Scott); Selections 12 (Combahee River Collective), 13 (Firestone), 14 (Clarke, Lesbianism), 16 (Koyama,) 30 (Lorde), 37 (Cohen)
- ❖ Hall, Stuart. 1996. The Question of Cultural Identity in Hall, S. et al. eds. *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers. (Moodle)

W, Sept 18: **Incarnations of “Intersectionality”**

- ❖ FTR: Boxes 6 (Crenshaw), 9 (Anzaldúa), 10 (Rich), Selections 10 (Kandiyoti), 17-18 (Dill and Zambrana, Nash). Shaheed (Chapter 3) in *Women’s Movements*, page 105.
- ❖ Weedon, Chris. 1997. Feminism and Theory (Chapter 1, pp. 1-11) and Principles of Poststructuralism, Chpt 2, pp. 12-41) in *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. Blackwell. (Moodle)

Fri Sept 20, 5pm SC 245W: **Guest lecture by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui,**
Elementary forms of cultural resistance in Bolivia.

Week 4: Nationalism, Cultural Politics and Political Economy

M, Sept 23:

- ❖ Spade, Dean. 2009. Trans law and politics on a Neoliberal Landscape. Temple Political and Civil Rights Law Review 18: 353-373. Accessible via <http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/faculty/161> (also first chapter of *Normal Life*)
- ❖ Grewal, Inderpal and Caren Kaplan. 2006. Gendered Identities in Nations and States. Pp. 149-54, in *An Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World*. NY: McGraw-Hill. 2nd Edition. (Moodle)
- ❖ FTR, 23 (Sinha, *Gender and Nation*)
- ❖ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (Verso, 2006), 1-7.
www.nationalismproject.org/what/anderson.htm,
http://www.nationalismproject.org/books/a_b.htm#Anchor-Anderson-23526

W, Sept 25

- ❖ Duggan, Lisa. “Introduction” and “Downsizing Democracy.” *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003. xi- xxii and 1-21. (Moodle)

Week 5: International Political Economy, Race, and Gender

M, Sept 30:

- ❖ <http://www.populareconomics.org/economics-for-the-99-bookletzine/>
- ❖ <http://www.populareconomics.org/resources/field-guide-to-the-us-economy/field-guide-sample-pages/>
- ❖ Black, Maggie. 2015. Introduction and Chpt 1 in *No-Nonsense guide to International Development*. New Internationalist. (Moodle)

W, Oct 2:

- ❖ What the f*ck is social reproduction? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apO3B_o6dz8
- ❖ Wealth inequality in the USA (6.23) Nov 2012:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnijnsM>
- ❖ Global Wealth Inequality (3.50): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWSxzjyMNpU>
- ❖ FTR: Introduction to Section II, Box 5, 7, 13, 19 (Gramsci, Marx, Althusser, Harvey); selections 20 (H. Hartmann), 21 (Salazar Parreñas), 49 (Borris and Salazar Parreñas)

Week 6: Producing and Governing Subjects and Sexualities

M, Oct 7:

- ❖ FTR: intro to Section III, Boxes: 2-5, 13-15, 16 (Beauvoir, Rubin, Scott, Gramsci, Althusser, Foucault, Butler, Deleuze); 24 (Smith), 25 (Wittig), 26 (Connell), 37 (Cohen)

W, Oct 9

- ❖ Reread Weedon, Chpts 1-2; read Chpt 7: Feminism and Postmodernism (pp. 170-180)
- ❖ Butler, J. 1993. Introduction. *Bodies that Matter*. Routledge. (Moodle)
- ❖ FTR: Boxes 14 (Foucault) and 15 (Butler)

Oct 14: Fall Break, No Class

Week 7:

T, Oct 15: Monday schedule

- ❖ Revisit readings from first part of the semester to prepare for the midterm

W, Oct 16: Peer workshop Midterm drafts. BRING 3 HARDCOPIES of your Draft to class. Drafts are worth 2% of your midterm grade

Upload Midterms on Moodle by 5pm, Friday October 18

Week 8: Race, Rights, Sexualities, and Representation: Organizing across Differences

M, Oct 21:

- ❖ FTR: Reread 5 (Basu), 6 (Sue Cobble), intro to Section II, Boxes 8, 9, 11, 12 [in the 4th edition and scanned on Moodle]. Selections 22, 23 (Abu-Lughod, Sinha), 27-33 (Rushin, Jordan, Pratt, Lorde, Cantú Jr, Ahmed, Nnaemka), 36 (Mohanty, *Under Western Eyes*), Introduction to Section IV: especially focus on “Bodies and Affect,” reread 30 (Lorde, *I am your sister*), 37 (Cohen, *Punks, Bulldaggers*).

W, Oct 23

- ❖ Benavente, Gabby and Julian Gill-Peterson, The Promise of Trans Critique: Susan Stryker’s Queer Theory (pp. 23-28); Cohen, Cohen. The Radical Potential of Queer? Twenty Years Later (pp. 140-144); Reddy, Chandan. Neoliberalism Then and Now: Race, Sexuality, and the Black Radical Tradition (pp. 150-155). *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 25 (1) Access via: <https://read-dukeupress-edu.silk.library.umass.edu/glq/issue/25/1>
- ❖ Spade, Dean. 2011. What’s Wrong with Rights. In *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of Law*. South End Press. (Moodle)

Weeks 9 - 11: Student-led discussions on selected chapters. Submit reading review 3 on the day you lead discussions). For each class

- ❖ Everyone **reads all** listed chapters from Basu, *Women’s Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms* and discusses the issues there in relation to the themes outlined in the Introduction. So please revisit the Introduction for each

session. IF other readings from the class come to mind as you read them, make a note of them and perhaps skim them again if you have time.

- ❖ Each student discussant is **particularly** responsible for engaging deeply with one chapter (read in conjunction with the Introduction). Each of you will write your third reading response on the chapter you have chosen or have been assigned. Focus on how it engages with or mobilizes the ideas laid out in the introductory chapters.
- ❖ Your third reading response is due on the day you lead the class session (it makes it easier for me to comment). You may write it earlier if you wish

Week 9: Feminisms and Political Economy in a Global Frame (Submit reading review 3 on the day you lead discussions)

M, Oct 28:

- ❖ FTR: Reread intro to Section III, 49 (Borris and Salazar Parreñas), 39 (Haraway)
- ❖ Basu, *Women's Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms*

W, Oct 30:

- ❖ *Women's Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms* Introduction
- ❖ Select chapters
- ❖

Week 10: Feminisms in a Global Frame (Submit reading review 3 on the day you lead discussions)

M, Nov 4:

- ❖ *Women's Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms* Introduction
- ❖ Select chapters

W, Nov 6

- ❖ *Women's Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms* Introduction
- ❖ Select chapters
- ❖ Svati, Shah. <https://journals.openedition.org/samaj/5163>
- ❖ http://roundtableindia.co.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=8203:caste-and-lgbt&catid=119&Itemid=132

Friday, Nov. 8, 4-6:30 p.m., Du Bois Library Lower Level

Guest Lecture/Event to honor the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots

Legends of Stonewall: Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Marsha P. Johnson

Film screenings of *The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson* and *Happy Birthday, Martha!* Introduced and followed by a discussion led by Jen Manion, Associate Professor of History at Amherst College.

Week 11: Feminisms in a Global Frame

M, Nov 11: No class

W, Nov 13:

- ❖ *Women's Movements in the Global Era: The Power of Local Feminisms*
- ❖ Select chapters

Week 12: Feminist Solidarity, Organizing, Coalitions

M, Nov 18:

- ❖ Discuss Critical Review 2 and final assignment
- ❖ FTR: Solidarity Reconsidered
- ❖ Erevelles, Nirmala. 2011. The "Other" Side of the Dialectic: Toward a Materialist Ethic of Care. Pp. 173-197 in *Disability and difference in global contexts: enabling a transformative body politic*. Palgrave MacMillan. (Moodle)
- ❖ Revisit pending issues/readings from any previous sessions

W, Nov 20:

- ❖ Collectively decide what to do in last two weeks of the semester
- ❖ Revisit pending issues/readings from any previous sessions

Critical Review 2 due by 5pm, Friday Nov 22

Nov 25-29: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13: TBA

M, Dec 2:

W, Dec 4:

Week 14: TBA

M, Dec 9:

W, Dec 11: **LAST CLASS**

- ❖ WRAP UP and Peer workshop final drafts. **BRING 3 HARDCOPIES** of your Draft to class. **Drafts are worth 2% of your final grade.**

First Baseline Assignment (required but ungraded. Post on Moodle by 5pm, Sept 7 and make sure you read your peers posts before class on Sept 9)

- ❖ What according to you is feminist theory?
- ❖ What is your favorite feminist theory text or texts? Why? What problem or problematic does it engage? How?
- ❖ What makes the text feminist? What makes it “theory”?
- ❖ Do you think feminisms need theory? Why or why not?
- ❖ What are your learning goals for this class? What do you expect to get from the seminar? What do you hope to give to it?
- ❖ What are your biggest concerns and/or most radical hopes about it?

Syllabus quiz (2%, complete on Moodle by 5pm Monday, Sept 16)

Reading responses (1-2 double-spaced pages, max 500 words, 13% of total grade).

Beginning the second week of the course, bring to class **hard copies** of brief, focused critical reviews and responses on assigned readings. The goal of these responses is to help you to [read closely](#) to understand the assigned material and animate in-class discussions. With this in mind, each response should

1. Identify the key point or argument of a text and to synthesize it,
2. Contextualize the work(s) within particular debates or concerns of feminisms and feminist theorizing. That is, to make specific connections between the work(s) we read and the broader course themes
3. Learn the different methods and approaches feminists use to support their claims and arguments. Is the approach or method disciplinary or interdisciplinary? Data or evidence-based (qualitative/quantitative)? Rhetorical or persuasive?
4. Evaluate the specific arguments in the assigned texts and articulate if/why/how it deepens your understanding of an issue and feminist theories
5. Have a correct and consistently formatted reference list or bibliography.

These responses should NOT focus on what you liked or didn't, what you agreed with or not, or how you felt about the author or issue. The instructions below (also posted on Moodle) will help you develop critical reading practices. The questions are designed with the express purpose of demonstrating your direct engagement with the assigned texts, preparing for a rich discussion, and laying the groundwork for your midterm and final project. Critically reading the assigned texts is guaranteed to improve your grade and contribute to your success in the course (and in college and in life).

Writing reading responses will help you get comfortable with writing, but they will also help you learn time and task management. So follow the course writing guidelines (e.g. proof read and edit your work, cite correctly) AND make sure you organize your time to PRINT your responses before arriving to class.

Lastly, pay attention to the comments on your graded assignments, especially the reading responses so that you can learn from them to do better on longer papers.

In order to receive credit, you must hand in **hard copies of three responses** as follows
Reading Response 1 (3%): Week 2 or 3 (your choice)
Reading Response 2 (5%): Week 4 or 5 (your choice)
Reading Response 3 (5%): Week 9, 10 or 11 (your choice).

Responses are due at beginning of class (Monday or Wednesday – your choice).
No hard copies, no comments, no exceptions.

Reading Response #

Student Name:

Course number and name: **WGSS 301, Theorizing Race, Gender, Power**

Date:

Each reading response should contain the following five elements. For the first one or two responses, you can answer each prompt below separately. After the first or second, write your response in essay form (1-2 double-spaced pages, max 500-600 words, excluding citation). Don't forget to follow course writing instructions.

1. Identify the key point or argument of one (or more) of the pieces you read for the day.
 - (a) State it your own words in no more than a few short sentences
 - (b) Also identify a short quote (maximum one or two sentences) that illustrates the main point or argument of the piece. Remember to note the page number (if it is a web source, figure out how to address this issue). Hint: the quote should be at the beginning of the text.
2. What is the background or the context for this writing? Is the author explicitly or implicitly engaging with a particular debate, argument or issue of feminism and feminist theorizing? Which ones? How so? Is the author writing about particular events, documents, policies, or data? List them and note their titles and dates.
3. How does the author substantiate her/his claim or argument? That is, what kind of data, methods, and forms of evidence does the author draw on to make her/his main points (the ones you identified in 1 and 2 above)? Does s/he cite particular articles, authors, or ideas to support her/his point? Which ones? Have you read them before?
4. What is the specific relevance of the text for the week and course themes? How is this reading in conversation with others we have read (for today, this week, this semester)? Use the active voice but don't editorialize. The purpose is not to state you liked or didn't, what you agreed with or not, or how you felt about the author. Rather, the goal is to assess how the argument contributes to your learning about feminist theory. You may also practice articulating analytical questions based on your reading.
5. Give the full citation of the reading using the ayp (author-year-page style)
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Prompt for Midterm Review (5-6 double spaced pages or 1500 words maximum, excluding bibliography. 25% total, drafts worth 3%). Bring **three hard copies of your draft review to workshop in class on Wednesday, Oct 16** (drafts are worth 3% of your Midterm grade). **Upload the final on Moodle by 5pm on Saturday, October 19**

1. Drawing on the introductory essay and the introduction to section 1 in the FTR, Claire Hemmings, and Maggie Humm give an overview of some of the “mainstream” or “standard” issues of feminisms and feminist theorizing, and the ways in which they have been addressed. (250-300 words)
2. How have feminist theorists problematized these “standard” ideas of women’s oppression and gender equality? What other categories of analyses and theories have feminists drawn on and how? Discuss by drawing on the specific arguments of ANY three readings from the first half of the semester (you may draw on more but not less, and yes you may draw on your reading review). (1000 words – this is the most substantive part of your midterm review.)
3. How have the readings you discuss above helped you address, modify or rethink your learning goals (the ones you articulated and posted at the beginning of the semester)? Discuss in specific not general terms. (250-300 words max)

You may write your midterm review as an essay (please provide section and subsection headings to guide your reader) or as a letter to a family member, friend or teacher. Irrespective of the form, please follow the writing guidelines for the course (see the last page of the syllabus). You may refer to your class notes and reading responses, discuss it with your peers, and consult the WGSS writing tutor, or go to the Writing Center for help. **Don’t forget to bring 3 hard copies of your Midterm draft (worth 3% of your Midterm grade) to peer workshop in class on Wednesday, Oct 16.**

The drafts should contain

1. The organizing theme(s) of your essay, and a tentative title
2. An outline of the assignment, and short description (or draft) of what each subsection will contain
3. A bibliography of your sources

Critical Review 2 (10% of grade, 3-4 double spaced pages or 1000 words maximum, excluding bibliography) Due 5pm Nov 22, 2019. Respond to one of the following prompts

1. Revisit your reading reviews and **re-engage in close reading of the selections on which you wrote them.** Then put these selections in conversation with each other to discuss how they provide a nuanced analysis of gender, race, and power. That is, discuss how “women” are constituted as raced, gendered, classed and sexed subjects are shaped by and shape structures of power (of capitalism, the state, etc.)
2. Revisit three readings from any three weeks of the semester to discuss how transnational thinking is key to feminist theories of gender, race and power. That is, discuss the complex, contradictory and power laden connections between the “West” and the “Rest” shape feminist theories and politics. You could draw on three different chapters of “Women’s Movements in the Global Era” and two other selections.

Checklist for Written Work for Prof Asher, AKA her 20 COMMANDMENTS!

1. My paper has a title. It tells my reader what my paper is about.
2. I have a central argument or a main point. I state it clearly.
3. I define the key terms on which my argument is based.
4. I have developed my argument systematically and my ideas are well organized. That is, my points follow from each other and speak to my central argument.
5. After stating my claims, I substantiate them with supporting evidence. This includes drawing on relevant course readings, and citing them in a correct and consistent format. Prof Asher prefers the author-date style: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
6. My entire paper is clear and focused with clear transitions between paragraphs and sections.
7. The passive voice has not been used by me. Instead, I use the active voice.
8. My sources are formatted correctly and consistently, as is my Reference List.
9. In my introductory and concluding remarks, I neither over generalize nor make banal claims. Rather, I begin and conclude with insightful remarks about my topic.
10. I have proof read my paper to ensure that it is free from repeated errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and I have used short sentences and made sure that my sentences do not run on like this one does.

Logistical and Mechanical details checklist

1. My name, course name and number, type and number of the assignment, and the date of the paper appear single-spaced in the upper left hand corner of the first page.
2. I have used a legible font, double-spaced my writing, and used 1.25-inch margins.
3. I have numbered all the pages of my assignment
4. I have STAPLED all the pages of my assignment. Paper clips are not staples.
5. I am NOT including a cover page or a report cover with my assignments.
6. I have submitted my paper on time and in the format indicated on the assignment. Rubric for naming electronic documents: Your Last Name_Assignment_Course#_Term, e.g. Asher_Final_301_Fall2019.
7. I know the penalties for submitting assignments late, and acknowledge that Prof Asher does not accept papers via email.
8. I have avoided plagiarism: <https://plagiarism.duke.edu/procedures/table.php>.
9. I have (or will) conferenced my assignment with the WGSS writing tutor or at the Writing Center (<http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/>).
10. I have or will check out Section V of Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* (on Moodle). (PS: The White here is E B White, author of *Charlotte's Web*)

BRING YOUR SYLLABUS TO CLASS AT EACH SESSION

SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES: