Issues in Feminist Research  
Mondays 2:30-5  
Bartlett 131 or SCAF W465

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Office hours: Tuesday 3-5 or by appointment

This is a graduate seminar in feminist research, and constitutes a core course for students enrolled in the Graduate Certificate Program in Advance Feminist Research. Feminism has long been interested in a foundational way in questions of epistemology (how we know what we know) and research methodology (how we go about developing original research), because in its most recent incarnations, post-1968, it emerged as an academic formation that asked basic questions about disciplines: how did they invent a world without women? How was systemic bias built into its knowledge systems such that they made women, people of color, working class people, people outside the US and Europe (“the West,” as it came to be called, through an Orientalist bit of geographic folly), peasants, slaves, indigenous people, colonized people, (most) queers, trans folk and a great many others invisible? Obviously, in this endeavor feminists had help from many other fields and activist movements, which worked together across disciplines and movements to transform knowledge. In many ways, they won—no discipline or field of study is unchanged or untouched by these inquiries, although some are obviously more resistant than others.

This course proceeds in the spirit of that ongoing revolution. We will make no assumptions about what “feminism” means or what “feminist research” is (much less “feminist methodology” or “feminist epistemology”), but let that emerge through a reading of recent scholarly work that calls itself feminist (or is written by people who work in WGSS departments, whether they use the “feminist” word or not). It presumes a fairly extensive background in feminist scholarship; this is a “current problems” not a “basic concepts” course. We will read the books in this course less for what they are saying (although of course it’s impossible not to be interested in that, so we will give that some attention), than for how their arguments are constructed. We will read footnotes, assess archives, discuss sources, and look at the epistemology through which the arguments are framed. We will use this work to consider how we are doing our own scholarly writing, and how we can use interdisciplinary feminist scholarship to shake the foundations of the world as it is.

REQUIRED BOOKS
3. Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge, *Intersectionality* (Polity, 2016) [with J Nash and J Puar articles]

**GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS**
There are two grading options for this class, depending on how you are using it. You can either use it to develop a framework for thinking about feminist research problems (option 1) or use it to solve problems in your own scholarly writing (option 2).

**Option 1:** All papers should be dropped in Moodle; all comments will be found there
- class participation: 15%
- papers: Four 2pp reading response 5% each
- Two 5-7pp papers 20% each
- Final paper: 25%

1. Write four 2 pp. reading response papers. These will be frontloaded in the beginning of the semester to help you get quick feedback and help on your reading and writing, and correspondingly less pressure to speak up in class. Due Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, Feb. 19.

2. Write two 5-7 pp reading-response papers bringing together at least two of the readings in the weeks prior to the paper. Due March 19, April 17.

3. Write a 10 pp. conference paper that includes original research on a subject of your choosing developing methodology related to the course material. Subject matter might include historical research (relying on an archive of published or unpublished sources), a reading of a novel or a play, a reading of public policy problem or feminist issue using fresh sources (that is, tell us something new that we did not already know, based on your own research). This list is meant to be suggestive rather than inclusive. DUE May 7

**Option 2:** All papers should be dropped in Moodle; all comments will be found there
30% class participation
70% article-length (~25pp) final paper DUE May 7

ATTENDANCE POLICY
You're expected to come to class with the reading done. If you must miss a class, (1) email the instructor, and (2) submit a 2-3 pp paper on methodology in the missed reading by the following week. Two absences are a cause for concern. If you miss three or more classes, plan on meeting with me to discuss options related to making up the work, taking a grade reduction, or repeating the course.

WEEK-BY-WEEK SCHEDULE

Jan. 22. Week 1— From Pop Culture to Contemporary Politics
Brittany Cooper, Susana Morris, and Robin Boylorn, eds., The Crunk Feminist Collection

Optional Lecture: Brittnay Proctor, Northwestern University
I’m Every Woman: Blackness, Gender, Funk
Thursday, January 25, 5:00 p.m., South College E241

Jan. 29-Week 2— Race, memory, slavery
Option 1—2pp paper due.

For additional reading

Optional Lectures: Fumi Okiji, Northwestern University
Mourning Mother: Listening to Saidiya Hartman’s Deep Song
Monday, January 29, 5:00 p.m., Herter Hall 301

Emily Owens, Harvard University
On Women Who Said 'Yes': Old and New Methodologies in Black Feminist History
Thursday, February 1, 5:00 p.m., South College E241

Feb. 5. Week 3— Trans Studies, Race, Desire
C. Riley Snorton, Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity (Minnesota, 2017)
Option 1—2pp paper due.
Optional Lectures: Cameron Awkward-Rich, Duke University
*Feeling Strange: Toward a Theory of Trans Maladjustment*
Monday, February 5, 5:00 p.m., Herter Hall 601

Jasmine Syedullah, Vassar College
*Moving Harriet Jacobs: Beyond the Slavery of Freedom*
Thursday, February 8, 5:00 p.m., South College E241

Feb. 12. Week 4— Queer/Left Politics

For additional reading

Option 1—2pp paper due.

Optional Lecture: Sam Tenorio, Northwestern University
*Practices of Black Anarchism*
Thursday, February 15, 5:00 p.m., South College E241

Feb. 19 No class, President’s Day


Feb. 26. Week 5— Intersectionality

For additional reading

March 5. Week 6— Call Off Your Tired Old Chronologies

Spring Break (no class 3/12)

March 19. Week 7— Science

For additional reading:

**Option 1—5-7pp paper due**

**March 26. Week 8—War and Imperialism**

**April 2. Week 9—Settler Colonialism and the Problems of Citizenship**

For additional reading
Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*
Mishuana Goeman, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*
Joanne Barker, *Native Acts: Law, Recognition, and Cultural Authenticity*

**April 9. Week 10—Natural Resource Extraction in Decolonial Perspective**

For additional reading

**April 17. Week 11—Capitalism and Unfreedom**

**Option 1—5-7pp paper due**

**April 23. Week 12—Disability, Race, War**

**April 25. Week 13—Prison Studies and Feminism**

**May 7—Final papers due**