

PS 4410: Seminar in Political Philosophy
Feminist Political Theory
Temple University, AH 606
TR 9:30-10:50
Spring 2010

Instructor: Prof. H. Fogg Davis
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Office Hours: T 2:30-4:30, and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this seminar we shall investigate a wide range of theoretical frameworks that have been employed in the fight for sexual justice in the United States. Two overarching goals will guide our study. We start with the deceptively straightforward task of defining gender, sex, and politics. We then move into an investigation of the theoretical frames invoked to address the political concerns of women at particular historical moments. How have feminists responded to core political theories such as liberalism, Marxism, conservatism, psychoanalysis, and utopianism? How might recent multicultural, postmodern, gay and lesbian, and queer theories be used to explicate and address lingering and new feminist issues? Students will be asked to weigh the merits and deficiencies of both the descriptive and prescriptive arguments offered by a variety of theorists en route to developing their own judgments through discussion and writing.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Strict. You should neither miss a class nor be late. Arrive to class on time, and be prepared and ready to work. Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive and unacceptable; if you anticipate being late or having to leave early on a regular basis, please make other arrangements. In the unlikely event that you arrive late to class, take a seat closest to the door in order to minimize disruption. Please refrain from leaving and returning as it disrupts the classroom atmosphere. More than two absences will negatively affect your participation grade. More than three absences may result in a failing final grade.

Class Engagement

Active course engagement and an attentive presence are essential. Throughout the semester we will engage in a variety of in-class small group exercises aimed not only at elucidating the core themes and arguments of the texts we read, but also at sharpening your analytic and critical thinking skills.

Class Etiquette

This class is designed to encourage discussion and exchanges of ideas in conjunction with the development of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. I expect you to treat your fellow students with respect and courtesy, listening when they speak and

refraining from personal attacks in your own statements. You may disagree with your fellow students, but listen attentively when they are speaking and respond in a courteous manner. Most, if not all, of us can remember how unnerving it can be to give a presentation, ask a question, or even speak up in a classroom setting. Extend to your classmates the same cordiality you would like them to extend to you.

Notes

You are advised to take notes during class. I expect you to pay attention in the classroom and you are responsible for remembering discussions about the texts we read. Please keep in mind that the emphasis on note taking is meant to emphasize the importance of attentiveness and of assimilating information, ideas, and concepts in a thoughtful and intelligent manner. You should keep a weekly account of the course and be able to respond to points raised in previous classes.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Quizzes: There will be several quizzes given at the start of class throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of three short questions from the reading assignment due that day. You are permitted to use your notes to answer these questions, but not your textbook or course reader. The purpose of the quizzes is to reward those who complete the reading assignment, and to encourage good note taking. Each quiz will be graded as follows: 3 correct answers=100; 2 correct answers=85; 1 correct answer=70; 0 correct=50; absent=0. I will drop your lowest score when calculating your final grade.

2. Papers: There will be four 5-page paper assignments. Instructions for each will be distributed. See schedule below for due dates.

FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN

Quizzes	10%
Paper 1	15%
Paper 2	20%
Paper 3	20%
Paper 4	25%
Participation	10%

Letter Grade Equivalencies*

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

*I use these to assign your final grade.

Course Packet

There is a course packet of required readings available for purchase from Replica Copy Shop, located at 35 S. 18th Street in Center City.

Required Textbooks:

Wendy Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski (eds.). *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. *If you obtain the textbook elsewhere, be sure to get the **third edition**.*

Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* (third edition)

Deadlines

No late assignments, no excuses. An absence from class does not excuse a late paper. Your syllabus clearly indicates due dates so plan accordingly. Late papers will drop a letter grade per day.

Disability Disclosure Statement

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Please contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for your coursework and participation.

Statement on Academic Freedom

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The university has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_non=03.70.02

Plagiarism

This instructor and the University take plagiarism extremely seriously. Personal pride should be sufficient deterrent, but there are also severe academic penalties for academic dishonesty. Please consult the University Bulletin concerning Temple's policy on plagiarism. Any kind of plagiarism for this class will result in failure of the course. The infraction will also be reported to university authorities.

Finally

Please remember that I hold everyone accountable to these course policies. They are here to provide a framework for the class, without which we would not get much accomplished. This course should be a fun time, as well as a challenging period of intellectual growth, and I look forward to working with you.

Course Schedule

Reading assignments are to be completed for the day listed. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignment.

Key

[K&B]= Kolmar and Bartkowski, *Feminist Theory*

1/19

Introduction. No reading assignment.

The First Wave**1/21**

Mary Wollstonecraft, from "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" [K&B]
Tong, pp. 1-23.

1/26

Harriet Taylor, "Enfranchisement of Women" [K&B]
John Stuart Mill, "The Subjection of Women" [K&B]

1/28

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments" [K&B]
Sojourner Truth, "Keeping the Thing Going While Things are Stirring" [K&B]
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Solitude of Self" [K&B]

2/2

Film Screening: "Not for Ourselves Alone"

The Second Wave**2/4**

Tong, pp. 23-34
Betty Friedan, from *The Feminine Mystique* [K&B]
Simone de Beauvoir, from *The Second Sex* [K&B]

2/9

Susan Moller Okin, "Vulnerability by Marriage," from *Justice, Gender and the Family*
National Organization for Women, "Statement of Purpose" [K&B]

2/11 Paper #1 due in class

Film screening

2/16

Tong, pp. 34-45
Allison Jaggar, "On Sexual Equality."
Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Against Androgyny."

Radical Feminism**2/18**

Tong, begin ch.3, "Marxist and Socialist Feminism."
Heidi Hartmann, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Toward a More Progressive Union." [K&B]

Angela Davis, “Women and Capitalism: Dialectics of Oppression and Liberation”

2/23

Tong, begin ch.2, “Radical Feminism: Libertarian and Cultural Perspectives.”

Catharine MacKinnon, “Sexuality.” [K&B]

2/25

Debra Satz, “Markets in Women’s Sexual Labor.”

3/2

revised schedule below

3/4

Shulamith Firestone, from *The Dialectic of Sex* [K&B]

Marilyn Frye, from *The Politics of Reality* [K&B]

3/9 Spring Break—no class.

3/11 Spring Break—no class.

3/16

Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” [K&B]

Psychoanalytic and Gender Feminism

***3/18 Paper 2 Due at the beginning of class.**

Tong, begin ch.4, “Care-focused Feminism.”

Nancy Chodorow, from *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* [K&B]

3/23

Intersecting Social Identities

Carol Gilligan, from *In A Different Voice* [K&B]

Joan Tronto, excerpt from *Moral Boundaries*.

3/25

Tong, ch.6, “Multicultural, Global and Postcolonial Feminism.”

Kimberle Williams Crenshaw, “Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence against Women of Color” [K&B]

3/30

Iris Marion Young, “Gender as Seriality: Thinking About Women as a Social Collective.”

***4/1 No class ***

4/6

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" [K&B]

Postructuralism and Postmodernism

4/8 Paper #3 due in class.

Tong, ch.8, "Postmodern and Third Wave Feminism."

Linda Alcoff, "Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory" [K&B]

Joan Scott, "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, the Uses of Postructural Theory for Feminism" [K&B]

4/13

Nancy Fraser, "Politics, Culture and the Public Sphere: Toward a Postmodern Conception."

4/15

Judith Butler, from *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* [K&B]

The Third Wave

4/20

Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant, "Sex in Public."

Michael Warner, "Something Queer About the Nation State."

4/22

Anne Fausto Sterling, "Should There Be Only Two Sexes?" from *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* [K&B]

4/27

Judith Halberstam, "An Introduction to Female Masculinity" from *Female Masculinity* [K&B]

4/29 Paper #4 due in class.

Conclusion-no reading assignment