

THEORETICAL ISSUES IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

Women's Studies 481 Spring 2017 [M]

TTh 1:25-2:40, Wilson-Short 6

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Required texts: The bolded abbreviations on the left will be used throughout the syllabus.

FTR ***Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives***, Carole R. McCann & Seung-Kyung Kim, Eds. Fourth Edition. New York: Routledge, 2017.

TB ***This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color***, Cherrie Moraga & Gloria Anzaldúa, Eds. Fourth Edition. Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 2015.

UBI ***Undoing Border Imperialism***, Harsha Walia et.al. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2013.

Course Description:

WST 481 is a seminar-style course primarily designed for upper-level women's studies majors and women's studies & queer studies minors who have either taken WST 101 previously or its equivalent. It is an introduction to the rich and growing field of feminist theorizing, local and global. The first half of the course will familiarize you with some of the foundational feminist theories and important theoretical concepts (primarily mid-to-late twentieth century) that have emerged out of social movements and diverse academic disciplines (i.e., anthropology, cultural studies, ethnic studies, economics, history, literature, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology, & women's studies). We will examine these theories critically through an intersectional lens, analyzing their usefulness to our lives and ongoing struggles for solidarity in a new era of border imperialism. During the second half of the course you will have an opportunity to take a more active role in facilitating class discussion on selected dialogues and debates emerging from women of color feminisms, transnational feminisms, indigenous feminisms, queer and trans-feminisms, among many others, which have posed serious challenges to neoliberal and neo-imperialist feminist theory and practice.

Learning Goals:

- To learn key terms, concepts, and definitions of feminist theory in context
- To analyze major approaches in contemporary feminist theories, discerning differences among explanations for inequality and strategies for social change
- To recognize the investigation of gendered experience in feminist theorizing as historically dynamic and ongoing, interdisciplinary and wide-ranging, or a project that takes many forms and reaches across different arenas (economic, political, cultural) of social life, rather than confined to philosophical inquiry
- To identify themes, assumptions, claims and various forms of evidence in primary debates emerging from feminist theorizing and activist movements
- To develop oral communication skills, reading expertise, and writing skills for critically analyzing theoretical arguments in current scholarship & research

Course Requirements:

Reading and Discussion

Since the core of this class is the reading, it will be focused on your understanding and responses to them. Your participation is crucial. During the second half of the course I will ask you to take a more active role in creating questions and leading discussion on the readings. Because of the nature of the reading, I **strongly recommend** that you plan to allow more time to do the reading than the usual. Please bring them to class on the day we are discussing them.

Quizzes

Throughout the course I will be asking you to do approximately 10 quizzes based on the assigned readings. I expect well-thought out responses that reflect not only your understanding (or mere summary) of selected issues and debates, but which strive toward critical engagement with them. These will be used as a springboard for discussion. There are 10 points possible on each quiz, for a total of 100 points possible for all 10 quizzes. The quizzes are worth 20% of your grade.

Paper #1: Autobiography of a Critical Thinker/Intellectual/Activist

The first paper will be a brief autobiography focusing on your own development as a critical thinker/intellectual, student, and writer, including some reflection on how your social location (i.e., gender, race, class etc.) has influenced your personal history in these areas. It should be 3-4, typed, double-spaced pages. There 100 points possible on Paper #1 and it represents 10% of your grade. **Paper Due Thursday, January 26th**. I will handout a Rubric for Paper #1.

Paper #2: Critical Journal Article Review

The journal article review will run between 4-5 pages long, typed, double-spaced and will be a critical review of the article and its ideas. Select a current scholarly journal article (published in the last 3 years) that relates to the class readings, to issues raised in class, or a topic that you have cleared with me ahead of time. You could choose an article in the FTR that was not assigned or discussed much in class. You might also expand one of your quiz responses into a more in-depth critique of specific positions in one or more of the readings. If you are a graduate student, you have the option of a scholarly journal article or a book chapter. **Critical Analysis of a Scholarly Journal Article Due Thursday, February 23rd**. There are 100 points possible and the paper is worth 25% of grade. There will be a Rubric handout for Paper #2. Please either e-mail me or come see me during office hours on TuTh from 3-5 if you have any questions regarding this assignment or challenges finding a scholarly journal article.

Paper #3: Final Paper and Class Presentation

For the third & final paper, you are required to write 8-10 pages typed and double-spaced, if an undergraduate, and 10-15 pages if you are a graduate student. I will expect you to draw on one or more of the contemporary theoretical frameworks discussed in the required texts (exceptions may include material from your journal article). No other exceptions will be made unless you clear it with me first. Drawing extensively on material that was not assigned in this course or without my approval could result in a lower grade for the entire paper. You may choose any of the theoretical frameworks which strikes your interest and that you would like to explore more fully in your final paper. There will be a Rubric handout for Paper #3. During the last two weeks of the course, you will be asked to give a short 10-minute presentation of your final paper/project to the class. **Final Paper is due either on the day of your presentation or by the last day of class on Thursday, April 27th**. Your paper will be penalized 5 points for every day it is late. If you need extra time on the final paper, you must request an extension. There are 100 points possible and it'll be worth 35%. Short Class Presentation will be worth 10%.

Course Policies:

Attendance & Absences

Because this is an upper-level women's studies course, informed, thoughtful, and engaged discussion about the reading and the issues of the class is crucial. Obviously, in order to be engaged, you must attend the class. If you know in advance that you will have to miss class for a legitimate reason, contact me before class. Even if you haven't finished the reading, attend class anyway to avoid missing class discussions. **You may miss 2 classes without any consequences to your grade. If you have more than 2 unexcused absences, it will be lowered at my discretion.**

Academic Etiquette

Class will begin promptly at 1:25 and end at 2:40. Arriving late and leaving early on a habitual basis is unacceptable; if you find that you have class, lab, work, childcare, or other conflicts, please make arrangements early in the semester. Most importantly, recognizing that diverse beliefs and positions will be voiced in this class is essential. Everyone should treat all members of this class and the instructor with respect. If needed, we can develop ground rules for discussion and respectful participation. **Please make sure your cell phones are turned off before class starts.** ***WSU Access Center, Campus Safety Protocols, & Academic Integrity Standards***

Access Center

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability (i.e., intellectual, learning, behavioral, physical, visual, and hearing). If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building, Room 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor at the beginning of the semester. All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the Access Center. Visit: <http://accesscenter.wsu.edu/> to learn more about what services are available.

Classroom and Campus Safety

Classroom and campus safety are of paramount importance at WSU, and are the shared responsibility of the entire campus population. WSU urges students to follow the “**Alert, Assess, Act**” protocol for all types of emergencies and the “**Run, Hide, Fight**” response for an active shooter incident. Remain **ALERT** (through direct observation or emergency notification), **ASSESS** your specific situation, and **ACT** in the most appropriate way to assure your own safety (and the safety of others if you are able). **Please sign up for emergency alerts on your account at MyWSU.** For more information on this subject, campus safety, and related topics, please view the FBI’s [Run, Hide, Fight video](#) and visit the [WSU safety portal](#).

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, Cheating, or Double-Submissions of the same paper, presentation, or project (not cleared with your instructors) will result in a failing grade for the assignment and possibly a failing grade for the course (see your Student Handbook on Academic Dishonesty, WAC 504-26-010). In nearly all instances, you must do your own work and arrive at your own independent thought. Exceptions to this--a collaborative presentation or a co-written assignment--**must be approved by the instructor before the assignment is due or it will not be graded.** Should there be any suspicion of plagiarism or violations of academic integrity, I will contact you before any penalties are enforced and reported to the Office of Student Standards and Accountability (see <http://conduct.wsu.edu> for definitions, resources, and procedures). **Important note on any electronic submissions:** Any assignment submitted via e-mail must be followed up with **a hard copy**. It will be your responsibility to make sure that I have received your assignment and have been able to access your work. Note that if your work has not been received *or the file is not accessible*, your grade will be based only on the work that I have received. No incompletes will be automatically given without a formal request and explanation on why you could not complete the work during the semester.

Keeping Track of Your Grade

Quizzes (100 points possible): _____ x .20= _____
Paper #1 (100 points): _____ x .15= _____
Paper #2 (100 points): _____ x .25= _____
Paper #3 (100 points): _____ x .30= _____

Class Presentation (100 points): _____ x .10= _____
 Subtract 1 point for every unexcused absence over 2 _____

<i>Letter Grade Equivalencies</i>		
95-100 points = A	76-79 points = C+	60-63 points = D-
90-94 points = A-	74-75 points = C	59>points = F
86-89 points = B+	73-70 points = C-	
84-85 points = B	66-69 points = D+	
80-83 points = B-	64-65 points = D	

Instructor: Marian Sciachitano
 W ST 481: Theoretical Issues in Women’s Studies
 Meeting Place: Wilson-Short Hall Rm 6, TTH 1:25-2:40

Spring 2017 Syllabus: (Subject to Changes)

Week 1

T JAN 10: Review Course Requirements & Policies
 View: TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche

TH JAN 12: What’s Critical Thinking? What’s Feminist Critical Thinking?
Quiz #1 – over TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche
 Handout Paper #1 assigned (see Rubric)

Week 2

T JAN 17: Why Feminist Theory? Who Gets to Do It? On Whose Terms?
FTR Read McCann & Kim, Introduction: Feminist Theory, Local & Global (1-8);
 Reading 29 Minnie Bruce Pratt, “Identity: Skin, Blood, Heart” (313-319); and
 Handout bell hooks, “Theory as Liberatory Practice” – from *Teaching to Transgress*

TH JAN 19: Developing a Critical Lens & Vocabulary: What is Intersectionality?
Quiz #2-will cover today’s assigned readings
FTR Read Box 6 – Kimberlé Crenshaw – Intersectionality (164)
FTR Reading 17 Thornton Dill and Zambrana, “Critical Thinking about
 Inequality: An Emerging Lens” (182-193); Reading 18 Jennifer Nash,
 “Re-Thinking Intersectionality” (194-203); Reading 19 Vrushali Patil, “From
 Patriarchy to Intersectionality: A Transnational Feminist Assessment of How
 Far We’ve Really Come” (204-212)

Week 3

T JAN 24: Legacies of U.S. Women’s Liberation Movement: “A Slogan is Born”
FTR Read Section I Intro excerpts on “Women’s Experiences” & “The Personal is
 the Political” – Introduction: Theorizing Feminist Times and Spaces (25-27)
Online Read excerpt from Betty Friedan’s *Feminine Mystique* (1963) online document
<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/ows/seminars/tcentury/FeminineMstique.pdf>

TH JAN 26: Sex/Gender, Culture, and Power: Essentialisms vs Social Constructionisms
FTR Read Box 2 – Simone de Beauvoir – The Other (16-17); Box 3 – Gayle Rubin’s
 Sex/Gender System (17); Box 4 – Joan Scott – Dimensions of Gender” (20)

Reading 13 Shulamith Firestone, "The Culture of Romance" (122-127)
**Paper #1 Due Today: Autobiography of a Critical Thinker/Intellectual/
Activist Paper**

Week 4

T JAN 31:

FTR

Local Identities & Politics

Reading 1 Yosano Akiko, "The Day the Mountains Move";

Reading 8 Muriel Rukeyser, "The Poem as Mask" (88);

Reading 9 T.V. Reed, "The Poetical is Political: Feminist Poetry and the Poetics of Women's Rights" (89-102)

TH FEB 2:

FTR

Reading 10-Deniz Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy" (103-111)

FTR

Reading 11 Elizabeth Martinez, "La Chicana" (113-114)

TB

Read Cherríe Moraga's "La Güera" (22-29); Mitsuye Yamada, "Asian Pacific American Women and Feminism" (68-72); Barbara Cameron, "Gee, You Don't Seem Like an Indian from the Reservation" (41-47)

Quiz #3-covers all of this week's readings

Week 5

T FEB 7:

FTR

Identity Politics and Politics of Identity: Redefining Sexualities and Genders

Read Box 1 – Bernice Johnson Reagon – Coalition Politics (14)

FTR or TB

Reading 12 The Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement" (115-121)

Week 5 Cont'd

TH FEB 9:

TB

Read "Across the Kitchen Table – A Sister-to-Sister Dialogue" (111-125)

FTR

Reading 14 Cheryl Clarke, "Lesbianism: An Act of Resistance" (128-135)

FTR

Reading 30 Audre Lorde, "I Am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities" (320-324)

Quiz #4 – over all readings assigned for week

Week 6

T FEB 14:

Online

Reading 16 Emi Koyama, "The Transfeminist Manifesto" (150-160)

Read Julia Serrano, "Trans Feminism: No Conundrum About It"

<http://msmagazine.com/blog/2012/04/18/trans-feminism-theres-no-conundrum-about-it/>

TH FEB 16:

FTR

Rethinking Histories of U.S. Feminist Movements, Local and Global

Reading 3 Linda Nicholson, "Feminism in 'Waves'": Useful Metaphor? (43-50); Reading 4 Becky Thompson, "Multiracial Feminism: Recasting the Chronology of Second Wave Feminism" (51-62)

Quiz #5 – over readings 4 & 5

FTR

Optional Reading 2 Hewitt, "Re-Rooting American Women's Activism: Global Perspectives on 1848" (33-42). *Optional* Reading 5 Amrita Basu, "Globalization of the Local/Localization of the Global: Mapping Transnational Women's Movements" (63-71)

Week 7

T FEB 21:

FTR

Cisgender Supremacy, Compulsory Heterosexuality, Heteronormativity

Read Box 3 – Gayle Rubin's Sex/Gender System (17);

Read Box 5 – Antonio Gramsci – Hegemony (23-24)

Reading 25 Monique Wittig, "One is Not Born a Woman" (282-287);

Reading 37 Cathy J. Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics" (419- 435)

Quiz #6—covers just today's readings

TH FEB 23:
FTR Theorizing Intersecting Identities: Social Processes, Differences, Standpoints
Read Box 11—Patricia Hill Collins—Matrix of Domination (355-356);
Read Box 7—Karl Marx—Historical Materialism (167);
Reading 20 Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union” (214-228);
Reading 34 Nancy Hartsock, “The Feminist Standpoint: Toward a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism” (368-383); Reading 35 Patricia Hill Collins, “Defining Black Feminist Thought” (384-400)
Paper #2 Due—Critical Scholarly Journal Article Analysis Paper

Week 8

T FEB 28:
FTR Femininities, Feelings, and other Bodily Concerns
Read Box 14—Michel Foucault—Normalizing Judgment (362);
Reading 41 Sandra Lee Bartky, “Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power” (466-480)

TH MAR 2:
FTR Performing, Policing, and Parodying Gender Normativity
Read Box 15—Judith Butler—The Gender Binary (363)
Reading 42 Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory” (481-492)

Week 9

T MAR 7:
FTR Towards a New Mestiza Consciousness and Feminist Epistemology
Read Box 9—Gloria Anzaldúa's Mestiza Consciousness (170);
Read Box 17—Chela Sandoval—Oppositional Consciousness (501)
Reading 27 Gloria Anzaldúa, “The New Mestiza Nation: A Multicultural Movement” (277-291)

Week 9 Cont'd

TH MAR 9:
FTR Read Box 16—Gilles Deleuze—Bodies and Affects (497);
Reading 46 Bettina Judd, “In 2006 I HAD AN ORDEAL WITH MEDICINE”
Reading 42 Alison M. Jaggar, “Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology” (510-524); Reading 45 Sara Ahmed, “Multiculturalism and the Promise of Happiness” (539-554)
Quiz #7—just over readings 27, 42, & 45

Week 10 MAR 13-17 No Class. Have a Great Spring Break!

Week 11

T MAR 21:
FTR Building Feminist Solidarity in an Era of Neoliberalism & Post-Feminism
Read Box 12—Chandra Mohanty—“Under Western Eyes” (357);
Read Box 19—David Harvey on Neo-Liberalism (504)
Reading 36 Chandra Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes Revisited: Feminist Solidarity Through Anticapitalist Struggles” (401-418)
Reading 52 Angela McRobbie, “Beyond Post-Feminism” (622-626)
Quiz #8 Reminder: Class selection & facilitation of readings for next week

TH MAR 23: No Class. Begin reading *This Bridge Called My Back (TB)*

Week 12

T MAR 28: *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*

TB Read Cherríe Moraga, "Catching Fire: Preface to the Fourth Edition"
 TB Facilitated Readings TBA

TH MAR 30: Facilitated Readings TBA

Week 13
 T APR 4: A Case Study in Intersectional Feminist Theory & Praxis
 UBI Read Smith's *Foreword*, Walia's *Introduction* and pages (1-32)
Quiz #9

TH APR 6: Read "*What is Border Imperialism?*" (37-78)
Week 14
 T APR 11: Read "*Defiant Voices*" (81-93)

TH APR 13: Read "*Cartography of NOII*" (97-156) & "*Overgrowing Hegemony: Grassroots Theory*" (173-201)
Last Quiz #10 – just over today's readings

Week 15
 T APR 18: Read "*Journey Toward Decolonization*" (249-293)

TH APR 20: Begin Class Presentations
Final Paper #3 due either on day of presentation or by the last day of class

Week 16
 T APR 25: Class Presentations Cont'd

TH APR 27: Final Class Presentations
Final Paper Due in class today or by 4:30 in my Department of CCGRS mailbox located in Wilson-Short Hall, Room 101. Any electronic versions of your paper should be followed up with a hard copy. If you need a paper extension, you must request it. No incompletes will be automatically given. You will need to meet with me or e-mail me your reasons for requesting incomplete.

MAY 1-5: Final Exam Week. No W St 481 Final. All your work must be submitted.