

WS 603

Advanced Feminist Theory

Spring 2004

Professor Anne Donadey

Wednesday, 7:00-9:40 p.m., SS 2660

Office: **308 BA (between SS and College Ave.)** (619/594-0815)

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:15-3:45 and 6:15-7:00 p.m.; Wednesdays 11:45-12:45; and by appointment

Course description: This course provides an in-depth overview of various feminist theoretical debates through the study of contemporary womanist, Anglo-American, Chicana, US Third World, and international feminist theories. We begin by addressing the question of how to define the category “woman.” We then consider different feminist paradigms (gender-only versus intersectional) and their theoretical and pedagogical implications. We seek to answer the following questions: How do we theorize (from) experience? Is this process particular to feminist theory? How do different feminists theorize the links between experience, consciousness, and politics? How do we go beyond the essentialism vs. postmodernism debate in feminist theory? To what extent can modified standpoint epistemology be of use in trying to establish what a non-essentialist identity politics might be like? How do we negotiate complex--sexual and racial--identities and affinities? What is at stake in the politics of representation? Finally, how is feminist theory impacted by colonial and postcolonial contexts?

Required Texts (all available at KB Books):

-Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 2000

-Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, 2000

-Course packet

Evaluation:

1) Class attendance and participation (20%). Class participation is absolutely essential to the success of the course, which will be taught seminar style. If you are theory shy or feel uncomfortable speaking up in class for whatever reason, please come talk to me about it. Coming to class with written notes and questions on the assigned readings may be a helpful springboard to facilitate oral participation. In classes such as these, there are always students who have prior knowledge of the field and students who do not. I expect class discussion to fluctuate between basic concepts and more abstract or obscure issues. If you feel that the discussion is becoming too esoteric, do not hesitate to intervene to bring it back to the questions that are of interest to you. If you have not participated during a class period but would like to increase your participation grade, you may turn in your reading notes for the day to me at the end of class (**DO NOT** turn in the notes you took during class, only the notes you took while reading before coming to class).

2) A 10-15 minute oral presentation on at least 3 of the texts assigned for a class period to open up class discussion (20%). The presentation should not be an in-depth summary of each article one after the other, but should **synthesize** the readings' arguments, comparing individual articles' positions with that of the other essays, possibly providing a critique of them. Each student should sign up for a specific week, and early birds will have first pick. Students may team up to give a joint presentation (you must work on this jointly

rather than have each person do half). **Presentations must be accompanied by a typed up handout distributed to the class, which will include a summary of the major points covered in the presentation as well as a list of 2 or 3 questions for class discussion.** Bear in mind that a concise, well organized presentation takes careful preparation.

3) A writing assignment (10%) (2 double-spaced pages):

Read the assigned readings on becoming allies before answering the following question as they will be helpful in thinking through and articulating your answer.

Is there a type of oppression that does not affect you as a target with which you have become involved? Why is this issue pressing for you, and what have you learned as a result of your engagement?

If this is not your case, with what issue that does not affect you as a target would you be most likely to become involved in the future? Why are you interested in this issue, and what do you think you would need to learn before becoming a useful ally in the fight to end that oppression?

4) An annotated bibliography (20%) on a topic you are interested in researching. This could be research undertaken for a paper for this or another class, or for your thesis. The bibliography should include about 10-12 entries (with a balance of articles and books—at least 5 books). Each entry should be followed by a 10-12 line commentary summarizing the reach of the book or article and critiquing it briefly if appropriate. The bibliography should include texts that are new to you, not items you have read in this or other classes.

5) An oral presentation excerpted from your final paper (10%). The last class period will be organized as a mini conference where students will present their final papers. Each student will have about 5-10 minutes to read a portion of their final paper (about 3-4 double spaced pages). There will be time for questions from the class audience after each reading. Please read it aloud and time yourself before coming to class to ensure you will not speak for longer than 10 minutes.

6) An 8-10 page final paper (20%) in which you outline the contributions of the five thinkers (feminist or otherwise) who have most directly shaped your worldview, using Michael Awkward's article as an organizational model. A list of the five thinkers and which articles and/or book(s) of theirs you will discuss must be turned in by March 24 at the latest. Work on the final paper should be ongoing throughout the last part of the semester. I will be happy to read rough drafts, notes, and discuss your ideas before the paper is due. Papers must be proofread and spell checked or they will not be graded.

All assignments are expected by the deadline, typed up in 12 point font.

The learning environment should be accessible to all. If you have a disability that requires adaptations or accommodations, please register with Disabled Student Services and see me after class or during my office hours so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Noisemakers (ringing cell phones, pagers, watches, etc.) will not be tolerated. Do remember to turn them off or set them to vibrate before entering the classroom.

Syllabus:

1) Wed, Jan 14: *Introduction*

2) Wed, Jan 21: *Who/What are Women?*

Monique Wittig, "One is Not Born a Woman" (packet)

Collins, chapter 1

Bernice Johnson Reagon, "Coalition Politics" (packet)

Judith Butler, excerpt from *Gender Trouble* (packet)

Susan Wendell, "Feminist Theory of Disability" (packet)

Rosemarie Garland Thomson, "Theorizing Disability" (packet)

3) Wed, Jan 28: *What is Feminist Theory? Monist and Intersectional Analyses*

Student presentation

Catharine MacKinnon, "Consciousness Raising" (packet)

Deborah King, "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness" (packet)

Gloria Anzaldúa, "La Conciencia de la Mestiza" (packet)

Sandoval, chapters 2 and 3

4) Wed, Feb 4: *Intersectional approaches in pedagogies and research*

Student presentation on Mohanty and Spivak; Student presentation on last 3

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes" (packet)

Gayatri C. Spivak, "Imperialism and Sexual Difference" (packet)

Uma Narayan, "Working Together Across Differences" (packet)

Beverly Daniel Tatum, "Talking About Race..." (packet)

Lana Rakow, "Gender and Race in the Classroom" (packet)

Writing assignment due at beginning of class (2 double-spaced pages, to be read to the class)

5) Wed, Feb 11: *Becoming Allies*

Student presentation

Adrienne Rich, "Disloyal to Civilization" (packet)

Mab Segrest, "Osceola's Head" (packet)

Ruth Frankenberg, "Introduction" and "Thinking Through Race" (packet)

Michael Awkward, "Reading Across the Lines" (packet)

Eileen O'Brien and Michael P. Armato, "Building Connections" (packet)

6) Wed, Feb 18: *Standpoint Epistemologies*

Student presentation

Nancy Hartsock, "The Feminist Standpoint" (packet)

Collins, chapters 2, 11 and 12

Feb 25: Last day to turn in topic for annotated bibliography

7) Wed, Feb 25: *Constructions of Experience and Theory*

Student presentation

Linda Alcoff, "Cultural Feminism vs. Poststructuralism" (packet)

Joan W. Scott, "Experience" (packet) **MORE ON NEXT PAGE!!!**

Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory" (packet)

Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges" (packet)
Sandoval, chapter 7

8) Wed, Mar 3: *Postmodernism, Postcolonialism, and Feminism*

Student presentation

Sandoval, chapters 1, 4, 5

9) Wed, Mar 10: *Representations, Self-Expression and Resistance*

Student presentation

Collins, chapters 4 and 5

Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (packet)

Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" (packet)

Luce Irigaray, "Power of Discourse" (packet)

Annotated bibliographies due in 301 BA [NOT IN AH] before Friday, March 12 at 4 p.m. at the latest

MARCH 15-21: SPRING BREAK

March 24: Last day to turn in final paper's list of authors and texts

10) Wed, Mar 24: *Sexualities*

Student presentation

Linda Garber, "Introduction," "Social Construction," and "Around 1991" (packet)

Amanda Udis-Kessler, "Present tense" (packet)

Eve Sedgwick, Selections from *Between Men* (packet)

Wed, March 31: NO CLASS—Cesar Chavez Day

11) Wed, Apr 7: *Gender and Transgender Identities*

Kate Bornstein, selections from *Gender Outlaw* (pp. 45-52, 71-78, 132-35, packet)

Sandy Stone, "The *Empire* Strikes Back" (packet)

Judith Shapiro, "Transsexualism" (packet)

12) Wed, Apr 14: *Native Women and Feminism*

Paula Gunn Allen, "Angry Women Are Building" (packet)

Jaimes and Halsey, "American Indian Women" (packet)

Justine Smith, "Native Sovereignty" (packet)

13) Wed, Apr 21: *(Post)Colonialism and Feminism-- Evaluations*

Mies and Shiva, "People or Population" (packet)

Trinh Minh-ha, "Not You/Like You" (packet)

Denyz Kandiyoti, "Identity and Its Discontents" (packet)

14) Wed, Apr 28: Mini conference: Student presentations

**Final papers are due in my mailbox in 301 BA [NOT IN AH]
by Wednesday, May 5 before 4 p.m. at the latest.**