

The University of British Columbia
Sociology 414 Section 205/206
Feminist Theory: Theorizing Gendered and Sexualized Subjects
Course Syllabus

Class: January 12 - April 13, Tuesdays, 6-9 pm

Location: SYNCHRONOUS class ONLINE LIVE via Zoom on Canvas

Instructor: Dr. Brandy Wiebe (they/she)

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Office: Online via Zoom

Office Hours: Half hour BEFORE class or by appointment via Zoom

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Simply put, feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.
- bell hooks, 2000

If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come
because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together

-Aboriginal Activist Group, Queensland (AUS), 1970s, via Lilla Watson

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

My home, from where I will be teaching this course, is located on traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the səliłwətaʔt̚ təməxʷ (Tsleil-Waututh) people. I am grateful I work and play on this land.

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0> for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus,

we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/supportresources/freedom-expression>

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to engage students in an exploration of foundational feminist texts. We will examine these texts in relation to sociological theory exploring the ways that feminist-informed theoretical works have productively mined historical silences around gendered, racialized and sexualized ways of being. Gender in this course is never assumed to be something that is ‘natural’ or essential to a person, rather we will explore gender as something that is socially and historically constructed within a colonial and racialized context, a range of practices and identities that are differently privileged and excluded in various power relations and discourses. We will familiarize ourselves with ‘the cannon’ of feminist works but will not remain uncritical of it. Through its lectures and readings this course serves as an introduction to a range of feminist perspectives. Our aim is to critically engage with and use the texts read in this class to motivate our own interrogations of our everyday social worlds because feminism is most importantly not simply a range of theoretical perspectives but also a political commitment.

Course Format:

The course materials will indeed be challenging and you will be expected to stretch your theoretical and critical engagement with the topics we cover. Assigned readings will not be summarized in a lecture. The goal of the lecture is to explicate and elaborate on key issues in the assigned readings. Thus student facilitated seminars, class participation and discussion, all with the support of the lectures, will be central to this course. Student lead seminars are meant to critically engage the readings rather than summarize them. Students will explore what the readings accomplish, how they do this, how they are problematic, and within what discursive fields the works position themselves. Certainly differences of opinion are encouraged through debate. Detailed guidelines for the seminars are available on Canvas as well as below. Seminars will not replace individual students’ independent reading but will deepen their understanding of the works and their applicability to our everyday lives. I encourage you to make the most of this valuable learning experience! I strive to encourage a space where everyone’s input can be respectfully heard and actively encouraged. Paramount in this classroom is the respect and dignity of all people involved. You will have multiple opportunities and ways to contribute to class discussion.

In most classes we will begin with approximately an hour lecture period followed by approximately 40 minutes of student presentation/facilitation on two of the day’s class readings then we will have a break followed by another 40 minute student presentation/facilitation.

Course Readings:

Some readings are available through 'Library Online Course Reserves' on Canvas

In addition there is a:

Custom Course Pack: *Sociology 414: Feminist Theory*

Sold at the UBC Bookstore (Can be ordered and picked up or mailed)

Course Evaluation, Due Dates and Description:

Two Seminar Presentations: each one = **15%**, **Total = 30%**

In class **beginning in Class Three, January 26**

Theory Paper Proposal: **10%**

Due via Canvas **Tuesday, March 2 by 6 pm**

Theory Paper: **40%**

Due via Canvas **Tuesday, March 23 by 6 pm**

Weekly Concept Papers and Participation: **20%**

Due via Canvas **beginning in Class Three, January 26 by 6pm**

Weekly Concept Papers, 20%

Starting in **Class Three, January 26**, students will be responsible to submit a 1 page, double-spaced, 12 pt font engagement with any one concept or theoretical tool (ex: patriarchy, intersectionality, abjection) used in your assigned readings. **Choose one concept and provide a working definition based on the authors work and explain how they use it to better understand and theorize the gendered and sexualized social world.**

Students presenting on that day do NOT hand in a Concept paper. These papers will primarily be graded on completeness and then on quality of engagement.

Concept Papers will ONLY be collected before class via Canvas and will not be accepted after this time. Emailed papers will not be accepted. There is one 'vacation/sick' day that each student is given wherein not getting a Concept Paper in will have no negative impact. Saving this for the day your paper is due may help! Also, on ONE day you may hand your Concept Paper in by 5pm rather than 2pm. After that first time additional late Concept Papers will not be accepted.

Seminar Presentation, 15% x 2 = 30%

Classes 3-13,

The first day of class you will have the opportunity to sign up for **two** seminar presentations on the assigned readings. You will be working with 2 or 3 other people in preparing a presentation including the following:

NOTE *Focus on the theoretical reading assigned (reading 'a') and use the 'applied' reading (reading 'b') to supplement your presentation*****

Part One: A brief **5 minute** engagement with any one concept (ex: patriarchy, intersectionality, abjection) used in your assigned readings. Choose one concept and

provide a working definition based on the author(s) work and explain how they use it to better understand and theorize the gendered and sexualized social world.

Part Two: The next **5 minute portion** seminar will allow the facilitators to present on a hypothetical **future research project** that was motivated by the theoretical work you are interrogating. Think of an everyday social experience that you are inspired to explore based on your theoretical readings. Share about your research question, methodology, etc.

Part Three: In the remaining **30 minutes** your group will provide questions that can foster the class' interrogation of the reading and *facilitate* class discussion and debate. Thoughtful questions will engage the key theoretical ideas directly.

You will be evaluated on the clarity of your overview of the concept you chose, the depth of your critical engagement with the readings, proposed research, presentation quality, *collaboration* with your group, and most importantly your group's ability to facilitate class discussion.

Theory Paper Proposal, 10%, Due in class on Tuesday, March 2 by 6 pm

Proposal length: **No more** than 1 page double spaced plus bibliography. 12 pt Times New Roman font.

Your **proposal** should describe your intended paper will address all of the assignment's requirements below, and it should include a bibliography of at least 6 references (excluding articles from the course package). The more detail you can provide on your outline, the more useful my feedback!

Theory Paper, 40%, Due in class on Tuesday, Mar 23 by 6 pm

Paper Length: **No more** than 7 pages double spaced plus bibliography. 12 pt Times New Roman font.

One goal of this course is for you to practice your ability to create critically engaged papers. Your final paper may address any theoretical feminist perspective, concept, issue or debate you choose. For example, you might explore a specific theoretical concept in depth, differences in various feminist perspectives, the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches, class biases in theorizing sexuality, etc. You are free to write on a theoretical issue related to your seminar presentations but must rely primarily on texts not assigned in the course package. **This paper is an exploration of feminist theory.**

Conclude your paper with a **1-ish page** discussion of a hypothetical research project that was inspired by your research, like you did in the seminar presentations. Here is an overview of the considerations I will make when grading your papers:

Introduction (5 marks)

- Why is your theoretical exploration important?
- Clarify why you personally choose this topic
- Provide a clear thesis statement ('This paper will explore...feminist theory...')

Synthesis and critique of relevant theoretical material (20 marks)

- Discuss the relevant theoretical/theoretical background
- Include *at least* 6 articles (excluding articles from the course package).

-You MUST include *at least* one source from one of the following journals:
Feminist Theory, Gender and Society, Sexualities, Hypatia, Signs, Camera
Obscura or a similarly feminist theory focused journal you've run by me
first.

-Provide an *integrated* discussion of the texts you cover (try to not just summarize). How
are these texts in conversation with one another?

Conclusions (10 marks)

-Discuss a hypothetical future research project that uses the texts you have
engaged to shed light on an everyday social experience

-How do these texts offer new perspectives and questions about our everyday
lives?

Style (5 marks)

-Reference in any style you are comfortable with but you must be CONSISTENT and
thorough in its usage and include **year and page** references within the text for
both direct quotes and paraphrased ideas.

-Writing skills (spelling, grammar, readability, etc.)

-Presented in a professional manner

Be sure to proofread your paper before handing it in!

Take notes to keep track of the information you gather so as not to plagiarize.

Course Policies:

Plagiarism is a serious, punishable offense and will not be tolerated.

Submission of assignments, except Weekly Concept Papers SEE ABOVE,; all due dates
are firmly set and can only be negotiated in the case of unforeseen events (illness,
funerals, etc). Documentation is required in the case of a late assignment. With
documentation alternative arraignments will be discussed with the student. Without
documentation late assignments will receive a deduction of **10% per day late (Saturday
and Sunday 10% each)**.

Late submission will not allow time for comprehensive feedback to be given.

Late assignments will not be accepted more than 7 days after their due date.

'Early Alert': During the term, I will do my best to reach out and offer support If I am
concerned about your academic performance or wellbeing. I also encourage you to come
and speak with me if you need assistance. In addition, I may identify my concerns using
Early Alert. The program allows academic, financial, or mental health concerns to be
identified sooner and responded to in a more coordinated way. This provides you with the
earliest possible connection to resources like academic advising, financial advising,
counselling, or other resources and support to help you get back on track. The
information is treated confidentially and is sent because I care about your academic
success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit earlyalert.ubc.ca.

Student Needs:

This course welcomes folks with physical and learning disabilities. If you require any assistance please speak with Dr. Wiebe early in the semester, so that efforts can be made. The Disability Resource Centre in Brock Hall is available for further consultation and resource provision.

Course Overview and Readings:

Class One

Jan 12 – Introduction and Community Creation

Class Two

Jan 19 – Theorizing Gendered and Sexualized Subjects

Required Readings:

bell hooks, “Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression” in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 2nd Edition. New York and London: Routledge. 2010. p 51-57. (Original publication date: 2000)

Sigmund Freud, “Anatomical Differences between the Sexes” in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strachey. New York: Basic Books.1962. p331-343. (Original publication date: 1925).

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*. New York: Vintage Books. 1980. p17-49.

Class Three

Jan 26 – Talking Back in Feminist Theory

Seminars and Concept Papers Begin

Required Readings:

Luce Irigaray, “The Sex Which is Not One” in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 2nd Edition. New York and London: Routledge. 2010. p384-389. (Original publication date: 1985 builds on ‘Speculum of the other women’ 1974)

Sandra Lee Bartkey, “Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power” in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 2nd Edition. New York and London: Routledge. 2010. p404-418. (Original publication date: 1988)

Yen Le Espiritu, “We Don’t Sleep Around Like White Girls Do: Family, Culture and Gender in Filipina American Lives,” *Signs* 26:2 (2001): 415-440.

Class Four

Feb 2 - Further Foundations in Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

Kimberle Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43:6 (1991): 1241-1299.

Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” in Sandra Kemp and Judith Squires (eds.) *Feminisms*. Oxford: Oxford university Press. 1998. p320-325. (Original publication date: 1980)

Mary Louise Fellows and Sherene Razack, "The Race to Innocence: Confronting Hierarchical Relations among Women," *Journal of Gender, Race & Justice* 335 (1998): 335-352.

Class Five

Feb 9 - Abjection in Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

Judith Butler. Selected Readings from:

1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. New York: Routledge. p1-16.

1999. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. 10th Anniversary Edition. New York: Routledge. p163-180.

Brandy Wiebe, "Beyond Slut Shaming: Abjection and Female Heterosexual Subjectivity" Currently under review for publication.

Susan Wendell, "Feminism, Disability, and Transcendence of the Body" in Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick (eds.) *Feminist Theory and the Body*. New York: Routledge. 1999. p324-333. (Original publication date: 1993)

Class Six

Feb 23 - Pro Sex Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

Anne Koedt, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm" in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. New York and London: Routledge. 2003. p242-248. (Original publication date: 1970)

Carole S. Vance, "Pleasure and Danger: Towards a Politics of Sexuality" in Carole S. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1984. p1-27.

Fahs, Breanne, "'Freedom to' and 'freedom from': A new vision for sex positive politics," *Sexualities* 17(3), (2014): 267-290.

Class Seven

Theory Paper Proposal Due IN CLASS

Mar 2 – Anti-Racist Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" *Feminist Review* 30(1), (1988): 61-88.

Jennifer A Yee, "Ways of Knowing, Feeling, Being, and Doing: Towards an Asian American and Pacific Islander Feminist Epistemology" *Amerasia Journal* 35(2), (2009): 49-64.

McIntosh, Peggy, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to see Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies (1988)" in *Privilege, Fraudulence, and Teaching as Learning: Pluralizing Frameworks*. New York: Routledge. 2019. p17-27. (Original publication date: 1988)

Class Eight

Mar 9 - Paper Workshop (no Concept paper)

Class Nine

Mar 16 - Indigenous Feminist Theory

and Paper Workshop II- Option to discuss paper progress.

Required Readings:

Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck and Angie Morrill, "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy," *Feminist Formations* 25(1), 2013: 8-34.

Scott Lauria Morgenson, "Settler Homonationalism: Theorizing Settler Colonialism within Queer Modernities," *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies* 16(1-2), 2010: 105-131.

Andrea Smith, "Rape and the War Against Native Women" in Abby L. Ferber, Kimberly Holcomb and Tre Wentling (eds) *Sex, Gender & Sexuality: The New Basics – An Anthology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. p363-371.

Class Ten

Theory Paper Due IN CLASS

Mar 23 – Trans and Queer Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

Bunch, Mary, "The unbecoming subject of sex: Performativity, interpellation, and the politics of queer theory," *Feminist Theory* 14(1), (2013): 39-55.

Leslie Feinberg, "Transgendered Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come" in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 2nd Edition. New York and London: Routledge. 2010. p133-143. (Original publication date: 1999)

Class Eleven

Mar 30 - Poststructuralist Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

Chris Weedon (1987). *Feminist Practice and Poststructural Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers. p12-42.

Sharon Marcus, "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention" in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 2nd Edition. New York and London: Routledge. 2010. p431-444. (Original publication date: 2002)

Zine Magubane, "Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Poststructuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the 'Hottentot Venus'," *Gender & Society* 15:6 (December 2001): 816-834.

Class Twelve

Apr 6 – Masculinities in Feminist Theory

Required Readings:

- R.W. Connell, “The Social Organization of Masculinity” in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 2nd Edition. New York and London: Routledge. 2010. p232-243. (Original publication date: 1995)
- C.J. Pascoe, “‘Dude, You’re a Fag’: Adolescent Male Homophobia,” in *Dude, You’re a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. NJ: University of California Press, 2007. p52-83.
- Robert G. Lee, “The Third Sex: Asian-American Men in Popular Culture” in Abby L. Ferber, Kimberly Holcomb and Tre Wentling (eds) *Sex, Gender & Sexuality: The New Basics – An Anthology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. p322-343.

Class Thirteen

Apr 13 – Wrap Up (no Concept paper)

Lastly, students are encouraged to submit work to the Journal of Political Studies (JPS) and Sojourners: Undergraduate Journal of Sociology. The JPS and Sojourners are student-led, blind peer-reviewed journals that publish undergraduate work. Students can submit up to two papers that have not yet been published elsewhere. Submissions are due on December 23, 2020 (JPS) and December 19, 2020 (Sojourners), and can be sent to ubcjps@gmail.com and sojourners.eic@gmail.com, respectively. When in doubt, submit your work.