

Feminist Theory Tutorials (Michaelmas 2021)

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General Instructions: Essays should not exceed 2000 words and must be emailed to me in .doc format to no later than 24 hours before the tutorial. Weekly essay questions are included. Where there are multiple questions, choose *one*. Note that your essays do not necessarily need to discuss of all the readings for that week. Please feel free to email me if you have any questions.

Materials: Most readings should be available through the Bodleian system or on the internet somewhere. If you can't find something, try scihub or libgen.¹ If you still can't find something, email me and I'll send it to you.

Other Stuff: Here are some very useful links about writing philosophy essays:

1. <https://tinyurl.com/retc4>
2. <https://tinyurl.com/y2p7qrq7>
3. <https://tinyurl.com/y45bmf4b>
4. <https://tinyurl.com/y3h3h5ha>

Here's an example of a first-class exam answer:

- <https://tinyurl.com/yhtm8b7x>

Note: This syllabus is provisional; we may decide to modify it as the term progresses.

WEEK 1: WHAT IS A WOMAN? GENDER AND SEX

Essay Question: In what sense if any are women socially constructed?

Readings:

- Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 'Introduction' and 'Childhood' (Corde and Malovany-Chevallier translation, 2010)
- Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" *Theatre Journal*
- Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, Chapter One: "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire" section II
- Lorna Finlayson, *Introduction to Feminism*, Chapter Four: "(De-)constructing coat-racks: feminism, sex, and gender"
- Sally Haslanger, "Social Construction: Gender and Other Social Categories"

¹ If you're not familiar with these two sites, I suggest looking them up, as they're really useful. scihub gets around academic journal paywalls. libgen is a massive online repository of PDFs of books. Sometimes they have to change domains (e.g. from libgen.rs to libgen.li) due to lawsuits etc., so it can take a bit of googling to track them down, but it's worth it.

- Mari Mikkola, *Dehumanisation as the wrong of injustice*, Part 1 (Oxford University Press, 2016)
- Elizabeth Barnes, "Gender and Gender Terms"

WEEK 2: WHAT IS A WOMAN? INTERSECTIONALITY

Essay Question: Does a commitment to intersectional feminism rule out the possibility of feminist solidarity on the basis of a shared womanhood?

Readings:

- Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement"
- bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, Chapter 1: "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory"
- Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalising the Intersection of Race and Sex"
- Anna Carathathis, "The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory" *Philosophy Compass* 9/5: 304-314 (2014)
- Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, Chapter One "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire" sections I and IV
- Naomi Zack, *Inclusive Feminism*, Chapter One: "Beyond Intersectionality" (Rowman Littlefield 2005)
- Jennifer Nash, "Re-Thinking Intersectionality" *Feminist Review* 89 (1) 2008

WEEK 3: WHAT IS A WOMAN? TRANS

Essay Question: What account of gender do we need in order to be trans-inclusive?

Readings:

- Talia Mae Bettcher, "Trapped in the Wrong Theory: Rethinking Trans Oppression and Resistance" *Signs* 39:2 (Winter 2014)
- Talia Mae Bettcher, "Trans Identities and First-Person Authority" in Shrage, L. (ed.) *You've Changed* (Oxford University Press 2014)
- Talia Mae Bettcher, "Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- Rachel McKinnon, "Stereotype Threat and Attributional Ambiguity for Trans Women"
- Jay Prosser, "Judith Butler: Queer Feminism, Transgender, and the Transubstantiation of Sex"
- Judith Butler and Cristan Williams, "Gender Performance: The TransAdvocate interviews Judith Butler"
- Stephen Whittle, "Where Did We Go Wrong? Feminism and Trans Theory – Two Teams on the Same Side?"
- Katherine Jenkins, "Amelioration and Inclusion: Gender Identity and the Concept of Woman" *Ethics*, Vol. 126 (2): 394-421
- Matthew Sallett Andler, "Gender Identity and Exclusion: A Reply to Jenkins"
- Andrea Long Chu, "On Liking Women" *n+1*
- B.R. George and R.A. Briggs, "Science Fiction Double Feature: Trans Liberation on Twin Earth"

WEEK 4: SEX WORK

Essay Question: Is sex work 'just work'?

Readings:

- Catharine MacKinnon, "Prostitution and Civil Rights" *Michigan Journal of Gender Law*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (1993)
- Christine Overall: "What's Wrong with Prostitution?", *Signs*, Vol. 17, No. 4: 705-724 (Summer 1992)
- Juno Mac & Molly Smith *Revolting Prostitutes*, Verso (2018)
- Susan Brison, "Contentious Freedom: Sex Work and Social Construction" *Hypatia*, 2009
- Ann Cahill, "The Difference Sameness Makes: Objectification, Sex Work, and Queerness" *Hypatia*, 2014
- Jessica Flanigan and Lori Watson, *Debating Sex Work*. Oxford University Press 2019
- Sonya Aragon, "Whores at the end of the world" *n+1* (April 2020)
- Jill Nagle, "Introduction" in Nagel, J. (ed.) *Whores and other feminists*. Routledge 1997
- Eva Pendleton, "Love for sale: queering heterosexuality, in Nagle, J. (ed.) *Whores and other feminists*
- Carol Queen, "Sex Radical Politics: Sex positive thought and whore stigma" in Nagle, J. (ed.) *Whores and other feminists*
- Melissa Gira Grant, *Playing the Whore*, Chapters 7-8. Verso 2014

WEEK 5: PORNOGRAPHY

Essay Question: Does pornography silence and subordinate women?

Readings:

- Catharine Mackinnon, *Only Words* (Harvard University Press 1993)
- Rae Langton, "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts" *Philosophy and Public Affairs* Vol. 22 (4): 293-330
- Mari Mikkola, *Pornography: A Philosophical Introduction*, Chapters 2-3 (Oxford University Press 2019)
- Louise Antony, "Against Langton's Illocutionary Treatment of Pornography" *Jurisprudence* 2 (2), 2011
- Lorna Finlayson, "How to Screw Things With Words" *Hypatia* Vol. 29 (4), 2014
- Ann Eaton, "Feminist Pornography" in Mikkola, M. (ed.) *Beyond Speech* (Oxford University Press, 2017)
- Petra van Brabandt, "In/Egalitarian Pornography" in Mikkola, M. (ed.) *Beyond Speech* (Oxford University Press, 2017)
- Laurie Shrage, "Exposing the fallacies of anti-porn feminism" *Feminist Theory* 2005

- Gayle Rubin, "Misguided, Dangerous, and Wrong: an analysis of anti-pornography politics" in Assiter, A. & Avedon, C. (eds.) *Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures* (Pluto Press)
- Leslie Green, "Pornographies" *Journal of Political Philosophy* 8: 27-52
- Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*. Chapter 6.

WEEK 6: FEMINISM, WORK, AND CAPITALISM

Essay Question: Does capitalism require patriarchy?

Readings:

- Mariarosa Dalla Costa, "A General Strike", in Edmond, W. & Fleming, S. (eds.) *All Work and No Pay: Women, Housework, and the Wages Due*, 1974
- Mariarosa Dalla Costa & Selma James, "The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community"
- Angela Davis, "The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework" in *Woman, Race, and Class*
- Silvia Federici, "Wages Against Housework" (Falling Wall Press 1975)
- Nancy Fraser, "Behind Marx's Hidden Abode" *New Left Review* 86 (March-April 2014)
- Zillah Eisenstein, "Developing a Theory of Capitalist Patriarchy and Socialist Feminism" in Eisenstein, Z. (ed.) *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*
- Kathi Weeks, *The Problem With Work*, Introduction & Chapter 3. Duke University Press
- bell hooks, *Feminism is for everybody*, Chapter 9
- bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre*, Chapter 7

WEEK 7: GLOBAL FEMINISM

Essay Question: Is it a mistake to aspire to a global feminism?

Readings:

- Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Nelson, C. & Grossberg, L. (eds.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* 1988 [also in various other collections]
- Chandra Mohanty, "Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience" in Nicholson & Seldman (eds.) *Social Postmodernism* [also in various other collections]
- Serene Khader, *Decolonizing Universalism: A Transnational Ethics* (Oxford University Press 2018)
- Susan Watkins, "Which Feminisms?" *New Left Review* 109 (2018)
- Maria Lugones & Elizabeth Spelman, "Have we got a theory for you! Feminist theory, cultural imperialism, and the demand for 'the woman's voice', *Women's Studies International Forum* 6
- Maria Lugones, "Towards a Decolonial Feminism" *Hypatia* 25 (4): 742-775
- Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, Chapter 10.

WEEK 8: QUEER FEMINISM

Essay Question: Must queer theory be feminist?

Readings:

- Monique Wittig, *The Straight Mind and Other Essays* (Beacon Press 1992)
- Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, Chapters 2-3
- Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality*, Essays 5 and 7
- Audre Lorde, *The Uses of the Erotic*
- Mimi Marinucci, *Feminism is Queer*, Chapters 8-9
- Cheshire Calhoun, *Feminism, the Family, and the Politics of the Closet: Lesbian and Gay Displacement*, Chapters 1-2