

Feminist Lives in Social Contexts
GWS 640—Senior Capstone
Fall 2021

Tuesday/Thursday, 11:00-12:15

Professor Christine Garlough
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3406 Sterling Hall
Office hours: Thursday 9-10 and by app.

So I am for keeping things going while they are still stirring; because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again.

- Sojourner Truth, Equal Right Convention, New York, 1867

Seminar Description

This seminar provides Gender and Women’s Studies majors with a “capstone” experience in their last year. To do so, it offers a opportunities to synthesize and deepen understandings of gender-related issues through intensive reading, writing and discussion.

Goal #1 - To help you reflect on your major, how the different parts of your major relate to each other, and where your major may lead you and your thinking in the future.

Goal #2 - To provide you with the opportunity to design a research project/performance/exhibit/curriculum plan suited to your particular interests and knowledge. It should be something that will allow you to draw on content and methodology that you have encountered in GWS, as well as in your other major or area of concentration. It also should help you reflect on your interests and goals as you conclude your college education and get ready for the next chapters of your life.

Throughout the semester, we will engage with theories, conceptual developments, debates, as well as epistemological and methodological issues, which chart the development of feminist thought. In the process, we will critically interrogate the different intellectual traditions that have shaped debates and issues within feminist politics and practices. We will examine these traditions from an explicitly interdisciplinary perspective, highlighting contributions made by feminist scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds that include: media studies, history, arts, humanities, sciences education, health, economics, law, etc.

Course Readings

Books:

Brown, A. M., & Cyril, M. (2020). We Will Not Cancel Us: And Other Dreams of

Transformative Justice.

Fraser, N., Arruzza, C., & Bhattacharya, T. (2019). *Feminism for the 99%*. London: Verso.

Spade, D. (2020). *Mutual aid: Building solidarity during this crisis (and the next)*. Verso Books.

(Available at Room of One's Own Bookstore located on 315 Gorham Street, Madison WI – 608.257.7888).

Canvas: Downloadable course readings, from journal articles to book chapters.

Assignments and Evaluation

Individual Participation: (100 points) Attendance and active participation is mandatory. You may miss seminar twice without it directly affecting your grade (save your absences for illness or emergency). You are expected to respond to course material, lecture content, and general class discussion. Please note that attendance and participation are not equivalent. These points are earned through your active engagement; not simply through perfunctory remarks made each class. To facilitate class discussion, you should read the class material for that lecture with questions in mind and come prepared to discuss them in class. If you are inclined to remain quiet in class discussions, please come to see me early in the semester. Together, we will formulate a plan that will help you to participate at increasing levels of comfort.

Small Group Participation: (100 points) Rather than simply considering theories or methodologies in the abstract, we often will examine their pragmatic value through small group activities held in discussion section. The purpose of these groups is four-fold. First, they provide an immediate means to discuss issues raised in lecture. Second, when groups share their insights with the rest of the class, it will facilitate the exchange of ideas. Third, these groups will provide another means through which students can experience aspects of persuasion, communication, and deliberation.

Each small group will be responsible for leading two class discussions on the weeks of their choice. In the week you lead discussion, you will be required to provide 5-7 discussion questions, a 3-5 slide powerpoint, as well as an activity or video clip to engage conversation. I would strongly urge students to meet with me ahead of class to go over their class plan and organization of the class period for the week they choose to lead the discussion.

Reading Requirements: (50 points) Any changes to the course will be communicated in class and through email notifications. It is your responsibility to check these notices on a

regular basis. I expect students to have read the assigned material and come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

Reading Responses: Seven times over the course of the semester, students will compose a one-page, double spaced reading response that engages with the week's readings. On some occasions, I will post an issue or question and ask you to respond; while on other occasions, I will ask you to engage the readings in any way that you see fit. These exercises are designed to: 1) help focus your thinking about the readings; 2) give you practice in identifying and articulating the thesis of a book or article and describing briefly how that argument is developed; 3) encourage you to examine and analyze different forms of scholarly evidence; 4) ask you to identify and explore the larger conversation that these articles and books contribute to; and 5) enable you to engage and critique feminist scholarship in a variety of fields and disciplines.

These will not be graded but are due at the beginning of the class period.

One 3-4 page paper – choose ONE of the following options: (100 points) due November 4.

- 1) memoir
- 2) auto-ethnography or ethnography
- 3) media analysis (film, TV, newspapers, social media etc.)
- 4) art/performance critique
- 5) historical/psychological analysis
- 6) quantitative analysis
- 7) multi-media time capsule
- 8) archive project

Final Paper/Performance/ Exhibit/Social Media Project/Curriculum guide: (300 points, due during the final exam time)

Interest area and topic statement due checked off)	due November 9 (ungraded and checked off)
Peer-review due	due December 7 (ungraded and checked off)
Oral presentation of project	due last two class sessions
Final product due	due during the scheduled final exam

The “Adopt a Scholar” Program: (50 points)

This semester you will have the opportunity to “adopt” a scholar. Throughout the coming weeks you will read at least two pieces of their work. These could be journal articles, book chapters, or whole books. You also should use your research skills to uncover background information about this scholar's academic, professional, and personal life. During discussion, you will be

responsible for bringing their voice into the classroom, contrasting their ideas against the primary reading. In short, you will become the class expert on that intellectual figure.

It is important to note that you do not have to like or agree with your adopted scholar, but it is wise to choose someone whom you find provocative. Here is a very short list of candidates - please feel free to choose someone who is not on the list. Please discuss your choice with me as soon as possible.

Chandra Mohanty	Audre Lorde
Jaspir Puar	Sara Ahmed
Elizabeth Grosz	Adrienne Rich
Judith Butler	bell hooks
Gloria Anzaldua	Virginia Woolf
Nancy Fraser	Dean Spade
Sidonie Smith	Gayatri Spivak
Patricia Hill Collins	Trinh Minh-ha
Julia Kristeva	Jack Halberstam
Luce Irigaray	Judith Butler
Donna Harway	Drucilla Cornell
Helene Cixous	Kimberle Crenshaw
Lauren Berlant	Talia Mae Bettcher
Hannah Arendt	Eve Sedgwick
Patricia Hill Collins	Angela Davis
Simone de Beauvior	Kumari Jayawardena
Seyla Benhabib	Richa Nagar
Anne Fausto-Sterling	Susan Stryker

Final Grades

Final grades will be determined according to the following official UW grading scale:

A 93-100

AB 88-92

B 83-87^[L]_[SEP]

BC 78-82

C 70-77

D 60-69

F below 60

If you have questions about a discussion section or grade, speak first to your TA. If the question is not resolved, speak to the professor (me). If the question is still not resolved, speak with the Gender & Women's Studies Chair, Judy Houck. She will attempt to resolve the issue informally and inform you of the Appeals Procedures if no resolution is reached informally.

Good Things To Know

Attendance Policy: Attendance matters a great deal.

Lecture: Attendance in lecture is important for success.

One of the skills we will work to develop this semester in sections is respectful and active discussion. To be successful you should the following:

- Bring your readings and notes to section.
- Be ready to engage with the readings and your classmates. This involves being both an active listener and contributor to your section. Make your point succinctly. Allow others an opportunity to add to the discussion.
- Be respectful of the differing perspectives your student colleagues may hold. They will offer you the same respect.
- Ask for clarification of any term or point you do not understand or are unfamiliar with.
- Remember that discussion is meant to expand each other's understandings; but not necessarily to convince others to our own point of view.^[L]_[SEP]
- Be willing to change your mind.
- ^[L]_[SEP] • Acknowledge that one remark may be understood multiple ways.
- ^[L]_[SEP] • When you disagree with others, be specific, support it with evidence and do not be "disagreeable" in ways that diminish the learning environment.

Lecture Etiquette & Electronic Devices: Arrive on time and turn off your cell phone unless directed otherwise. Texting or talking on your phone or other handheld device is a distraction to the students around you, and to me. Do not text or talk on your device in class.

Help: This course may require you to think and write in ways that are unfamiliar to you. I encourage you to utilize my office hours to talk about assignments. Also, I encourage all students to use the Writing Center resources.

Illnesses and Other Personal Emergencies: If you experience an unavoidable personal situation that prevents you from completing work on time, you must take responsibility for informing me prior to the date the work is due. A failure to contact me prior to the due date will result in the application of the late assignment policy described above. Extensions will be granted for substantiated emergencies.

Religious Holidays: If you plan to miss class for religious holidays, state in writing the days you will be absent and submit that information to me by the third week of class.

Incompletes: As per University policy, incompletes are reserved for students who are earning a passing grade, but are unable to complete the course due to illness or conditions beyond the control of the student.

Academic Misconduct: Students sometimes take desperate measures to complete a paper, especially if they feel overwhelmed by the demands of an assignment. Please do not do this. Instances of academic misconduct will be penalized to the fullest extent in all cases. If you find yourself unable to complete an assignment and considering acts such as plagiarism, please seek help with the assignment.

Course Website: I will use Canvas to post Power Point slides from lectures (posted either just before lecture or after the lecture) and handouts distributed in class in case you miss class, including paper writing guidelines and exam review sheets. Power Point slides are posted as an aid to you, but are NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR LECTURE. NOT ALL OF THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION WILL BE ON THESE. ATTENDANCE AT LECTURE IS VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR DOING WELL ON EXAMS. Links of interest are also posted.

Writing Center: For additional help with papers, visit the Writing Center at any stage during the writing process. Stop by 6171 Helen C. White, call for an appointment (263-1992), or consult the Center's resources online at www.wisc.edu/writing/.

Communication: We are here to help you succeed in this course. The best way to reach is by email. In all emails, please be courteous and address me by my name, e.g. Dear "Professor Garlough." ("Hey you" is not polite or appropriate.) Over the weekends, it may be 48 hours until I respond.

Course Schedule

- Week 1 (9/9) **Introductions.** Setting learning-goals & expectations for the semester. What does feminist or queer pedagogy suggest about teaching, learning institutions, and knowledge as democratic concepts? In what ways does feminist or queer pedagogy place the responsibility for learning on the students? What does it mean to construct a learning community?
- Week 2 (9/14 &16) **History of the field of GWS.** Questions to broach: Is GWS a new discipline? What is the relationship between Gender Studies and Women's Studies? What are key topics and questions in GWS? How did GWS at UW Madison develop?
- *Yom Kippur – please let me know if you will celebrating this religious holiday.
- Tuesday Readings:
Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." pp. 49-51.
- Crispin, "Where We Go From Here." pp. 147-151
- Pryse, "Critical Interdisciplinarity: women's Studies and Cross-Cultural Insight." pp. 1-22.
- Thursday Readings:
Beoku-Betts, J., & Njambi, W. N. "African Feminist Scholars in Women's Studies:" Negotiating Spaces of Dislocation and Transformation in the Study of Women." pp. 113-132.
- Dölling, I., & Hark, S. "She who speaks shadow speaks truth: Transdisciplinarity in women's and gender studies." pp. 1195-98.
- Keegan, C. M. "Getting disciplined: What's trans* about queer studies now?" pp. 384-387.
- Week 3 (9/21 & 23) **Can We Speak Together Through and With Difficulty?**
- Brown, A. M., & Cyril, M. *We Will Not Cancel Us: And Other Dreams of Transformative Justice.*
- Tuesday Reading: pp. 1-31
- Thursday Reading: pp. 33-77

Week 4 (9/28 & 30) **Feminist/LGBTQI+ Lives in Social Context: Autobiography, Ethnography and Lifewriting** Questions to broach: What constitutes a feminist/LGBTQI+ life? Life-writing? Autobiographical performance? How are larger social contexts reflected in individual life narratives?

Tuesday Readings:

Hemmings, "Why Stories Matter." pp. 1-31.

Thursday Readings:

Enke, "Translation." pp. 241-244.

Stanley, "Moments of Writing." pp. 58-65.

Biswas and Guin, "An Assertion of Feminist Life-Writing." pp. 81-90.

Week 5 (10/5 & 7) **Rhetoric in the Public Sphere**

What is rhetoric? What tactics and strategies have activists used to communicate with others? What are the obstacles that groups face in their struggle to achieve social change? Must groups achieve social, political, and economic rights in order to achieve equality? Should groups work within the system to create change or work from outside in order to force a desired change? What concepts are currently being interrogated in the public sphere: safe space, care, consent, race, ethnicity, disability, feminist, queer?

Fraser, N., Arruzza, C., & Bhattacharya, T. *Feminism for the 99%*. London: Verso.

Tuesday Reading: pp. 1-33

Thursday Reading: pp 33-57

Week 6 (10/12 & 14) **Feminist and LGBTQ Leadership and Organization** - The ethics of working in communities and community projects, emphasizing understandings of activism, communities, globalization, multiculturalism, and the politics of institutions, agencies, and organizations.

Spade, D. (2020). *Mutual aid: Building solidarity during this crisis (and the next)*. Verso Books.

Tuesday Reading: pp. 1-30

Thursday Reading: pp. 107-141

Week 7 (10/19 & 21) **Violence, Witnessing, Social Justice and Care,**

In what ways might “care” be a valid alternative to the concept of “justice” in liberal human rights theory? What is the relevance of care ethics to global feminist research? What are the benefits and limitations of witnessing/testimony? What are the ethical responsibilities?

Tuesday Readings:

Held, The Ethics of Care, “Care and Justice in a Global Context.” pp. 154-168.

Tronto, “Care.” pp. 101-124.

Tuesday Readings:

Sevenhuijsen, “The Morality of Feminism.” pp. 36-68.

Week 8 (10/26 & 28) **Feminism and Gender in Media** – What is covered? What is not? How is it covered? Why? And how should we address the issue of “fake news” in our current context?

Tuesday Readings:

Beck, “The ‘F’ Word: How the Media Frame Feminism.” pp. 139-153.

Lind and Salo, “The Framing of Feminists and Feminism in News and Public Affairs.” pp. 211-225.

Thursday Reading:

McInroy, Lauren B., and Shelley L. Craig. "Transgender representation in offline and online media: LGBTQ youth perspectives." pp. 606-616.

*Bring your own examples of news articles into class for discussion.

Week 9 (11/2 & 4) **GWS Research -**

What is research? What makes it feminist or queer? Who can do feminist or queer research? Are there feminist or queer ways of doing research? How do these questions relate to issues of responsibility, accountability, activism, stakeholders, intersectionality and interdisciplinarity?

*Diwali – please let me know if you will celebrating this religious holiday.

Tuesday Readings:

Acker and Esseveld, "Objectivity and Truth: Problems in Doing Feminist Research." pp. 423-435.

Bizzell, "Feminist Methods of Research." pp. 5-16.

Thursday Readings:

Adams, Tony E., and Stacy Holman Jones. "Telling stories: Reflexivity, queer theory, and autoethnography." *Cultural Studies? Critical Methodologies* 11.2 (2011): pp. 108-116.

Hammers and Brown, "Toward a Feminist-Queer Alliance: A Paradigmatic Shift in the Research Process."

Week 10 (11/9 & 11) **Education and GWS Pedagogy**

Friere, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Tuesday Reading: pp. 43-70.

Thursday Readings: pp. 167-183.

Week 11 (11/16 & 18) **The Politics of Memory: Archiving Feminist and LGBTQ Issues**

Tuesday Readings:

Caswell, "From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives." pp. 23-43.

Giesecking, "Useful In/stability: The Dialectical Production of the Social and Spatial Lesbian Herstory Archives." pp. 1-14.

Thursday Readings:

Gutterman, "Out.History.org: An Experiment in LGBTQ Community-Making." pp. 96-109,

Wakimoto, Bruce and Partridge, “Archivist as Activist: Lessons from Three Queer Community Archives in California.” pp. 293-316.

Week 12 (11/23) **Archives**

Week 13 (11/30 & 2) **Activism and Our World**

Tuesday: Missing and Murdered Women’s Movement

Thursday:

Part 1 - How have feminist/LGBTQ+ folks and organizations been engaging with the COVID 19 pandemic? This session I will be posting the most up-to-date articles for you to read and respond to.

Part 2 – Rethinking the world post-COVID 19.

Week 14 (12/7 & 9) **Final Presentations**

Week 15 (12/14) **Final Presentations**

*** Final project due December 20**