

GWS 880: Graduate Proseminar in Gender and Women's Studies

Fall 2021

Wednesdays 3:00-5:30PM

STERLING 3306

(3 credits)

Professor: Pernille Ipsen

pipsen@wisc.edu

(608) 770-9843

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-12 or by appointment

You can either visit me in Sterling 3307 or in my [zoom room](#)

Class e-mail list: genws880-1-f21@g-groups.wisc.edu

This seminar is designed to offer a graduate introduction to the inter- and multi-disciplinary field(s) of gender, women's, feminist, sexuality, disability, trans and queer studies. Through shared readings, we will explore key areas of inquiry for the field(s) of GWS as well as reflect on its past, present, and future. Readings and assignments are designed to invite the practice of connecting theory and practice in as well as out of the classroom.

The seminar is divided into two sections: six weeks of broad introduction to GWS, followed by five weeks where we read scholarship produced by faculty from our own department and campus and put this work in conversation with the key topics and concepts discussed in the first section. In December we will have a mock conference session, where you each give a short presentation on a topic of your choice followed by brief questions and comments from your peers.

You will need to acquire or borrow two books (by Keisha Lindsay and Sami Schalk) for weeks 9 and 10 – see full titles below. All other readings are available in a folder with the appropriate week number on Canvas. In addition, I encourage you to share suggestions for further readings from other classes or your areas of interest in your weekly discussion posts. This will help us build a sense of the breadth and relevance of feminist studies.

Modality: After one asynchronous week we will meet in person. Per UW guidelines for in-person instruction during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we are required to wear masks, sanitize our hands, and keep some distance. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Accessibility: Everyone is welcome in this seminar and I am happy to make accommodations, adjustments, alternatives, or whatever I can do to support your engagement. The McBurney Center provides useful documentation and support related to disabilities, but I do not require McBurney documentation to make the course more accessible to you.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Wednesday Sept 8 – Introductions (asynchronous)

Due to the Jewish Holiday Rosh Hashanah, we will not meet this week, but begin the seminar with written introductions and discussion online. Please see the discussion forum on Canvas for more

details. Note that this week I would like you to participate in both the ungraded “Introductions” discussion and the regular “Week 1 Discussion and Writing Prompt”.

During the first two weeks of the semester, I would also like to set up brief one-on-one meetings with you on zoom to start getting to know you and to hear about your interests in GWS. Please sign up for a meeting time on [this google doc](#).

Readings:

- hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress. Education as the Practice of Freedom*, 1-22. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Lorde, Audre. “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action” in *Sister Outsider*, 40-44. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.
- Rich, Adrienne. Claiming an Education. In J. Selzer, ed., *Conversations: Reading for Writing*, 2nd edition, 88-93. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991. Speech originally given in 1977.
- Shrewsbury, Carolyn M. “What is Feminist Pedagogy?” *Women Studies Quarterly* vol. 3-4 (1993): 8-16.

Key Topics and Discussions in GWS

Week 2: Wednesday Sept 15 Gender and Women’s Studies

Readings:

- Guy-Sheftall, Beverly and Evelyn M. Hammonds. (2005). “Whither Black Women’s Studies: An Interview, 1997 and 2004,” in *Women’s Studies for the Future*, pp. 61-71. New York: Rutgers.
- Ryttilahti, Stephanie. “Making this House a Home: Belonging, Home, and Community-Building During the Founding of the Women’s Studies Program in Madison, WI.” Chapter One of Unpublished MA thesis. Dept. of Gender and Women’s Studies, UW-Madison, 2010.
- Scott, Joan Wallace. “Introduction: Feminism’s Critical Edge” in *Women’s Studies on the Edge*, 1-13. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Trebilcot, Joyce. (1980). “Women's studies ten years later.” *Off Our Backs* 10, no. 2, (1980): 16, 33.

Week 3: Wednesday Sept 22 Women & Gender

Readings:

- Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex* (orig. French 1949, English 1952). Introduction and beginning of part IV: The Formative Years. (2 documents)
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble. The Subversion of Identity* (1990). 1999 Preface, Original preface, chapter 1. (2 documents)
- Enke, Finn. “Introduction,” in *Transfeminist Perspectives in and beyond Transgender and Gender Studies*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2012.

Documentaries to watch:

- [Judith Butler: Philosophical Encounters of the Third Kind](#) (2007) (Youtube)
- [Examined Life - Judith Butler & Sunaura Taylor](#) (Youtube)

Week 4: Wednesday Sept 29 Queer Theory

- Boyd, Nan Alamilla. "What Does Queer Studies Offer Women's Studies? The Problem and the Promise of Instability," in *Women's Studies for the Future*, 97-108. New York: Rutgers, 2005.
- Eng, Halberstam and Munoz, "What's Queer about Queer Studies Now?" *Social Text* vol. 84-85, no. 3-4 (2005): 1-17.
- Jennifer Purvis. "Queer" in *Rethinking Women's and Gender Studies*, edited by Cathrine M. Orr, Ann Braithwaite and Diane Lichtenstein, 34-64 (2012): 189-205.

Week 5: Wednesday Oct 6 Difference, Solidarity, and Identity Politics

- The Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement" in *Feminist Theory Reader. Local and Global Perspectives*, 64-70. Edited by Carole R. McCann, Seung-kyung Kim, and Emek Ergun. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. "Toward a New Vision: Race, Class and Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection" Reprinted in Tracy E. Ore, *The Social Construction of Difference and Inequality. Race, Gender, and Sexuality*. Boston: McGraw Hill, original from 1993.
- Jacobs, Jane M. "Earth Honoring: Western Desires and Indigenous Knowledges" in *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, 169-96. Edited by A. Blunt and G. Rose. London: Routledge, 1994.

First longer writing assignment due no later than Monday Oct. 11 @ noon

Week 6: Wednesday Oct 13 Care and Feminism

- Tronto, Joan C. *Moral Boundaries. A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*. New York: Routledge, 1993. Chapter 4.
- Ahmed, Sarah. *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017. Introduction and chapter 5.

Week 7: Wednesday Oct 20 Colonialism, Diaspora, Borderlands

- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *boundary 2* 13, no. 1 (1984): 333-358.
- Arvin, Maile, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy." *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 8-34
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands, La Frontera. The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books. 1987. Preface and chapter 1-2.

Documentary to watch:

Link to [this](#) 2003 educational documentary *Exploring Borderlands*, Episode 2 of American Passages: A Literary Survey (Annenberg Learner, 2003), 28 minutes – or, if you only have ten minutes, start at minute 18:30.

UW Faculty and the field of GWS

Week 8: Wednesday Oct 27 Articles by GWS faculty, see folder on Canvas

- Week 9: Wednesday Nov 3** Catch up / reading & writing break
- Week 10: Wednesday Nov 10** Sami Schalk, *Bodyminds ReImagined* (2018) – on zoom
- Second longer writing assignment due no later than Monday Nov. 1 @ noon
- Week 11: Wednesday Nov 17** Keisha Lindsay, *In a Classroom of their Own: The Intersection of Race and Feminist Politics* (2018)
- Week 12: Wednesday Nov 24** Thanksgiving
- Week 13: Wednesday Dec 1** Articles by faculty in GWS, see folder on Canvas
- Week 14: Wednesday Dec 8** Mock conference presentations
- Week 15: Wednesday Dec 15** Closing, evaluation and goodbyes
- Third and last longer writing piece due no later than Dec. 14 @ noon

REQUIREMENTS

Participation in seminar

I expect you to read the assigned material and attend our weekly seminars prepared to actively engage with the readings. I recognize that not everyone speaks equally much or readily in groups, and I am more than happy to work with you on finding ways that I can support or help you engage more with the material we work on. In my teaching, I hope to facilitate your knowledge-seeking process rather than make you fit a specific mold or type of engagement. Besides the regular participation in seminar, I expect that you:

Open discussion:

In pairs of two you will each have one week when you are responsible for opening discussion in seminar, pulling questions from the Canvas discussion, and coming up with a couple of larger themes for us to discuss.

Deliver brief reports on scholars:

Over the course of the semester, please investigate and report on three scholars that you would argue are relevant for the field of Gender and Women's Studies: one scholar from our own GWS department (current or emerita; preferably someone you have not already met with), one from somewhere else on campus, and one scholar from anywhere (off campus or at a different university). Find and read at least one article (or book chapter or book) written by the scholar, then write 5-10 sentences addressing what you find interesting about their work to post on Canvas in the appropriate discussion and tell us about them in seminar.

Give a mock conference presentation

In the last weeks of the semester, we will have a conference-style panel, where you each get to do an oral presentation on a topic developed from one of your seminar papers or from research you have done or are doing for a different seminar.

Writing

... is an important part of the work we do in academia. In this seminar you will get to practice your writing skills in 10 weekly 250-word assignments as well as in 3 papers (750-1000). The weekly discussion-prompt writing will take place in the discussion tab on Canvas. The posts are **always due by 10PM the evening before our seminar** (Tuesday evening). The longer writing is to be posted in the appropriate assignment on Canvas (see deadlines on syllabus).

You can use the shorter weekly pieces as beginnings to more developed longer pieces, or you can write about something completely different. For the longer pieces I ask you to 1. try out different genres, and 2. engage substantially with at least two readings we have done together.

Pick 3 of the 5 following genres (guidelines to follow):

- Book review
- Project proposal
- Personal reflection essay
- Argument-driven paper
- Poetry

Good Things to Know

Help: This seminar is writing intensive and 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, please inform me as soon as you can.

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.

Grade breakdown:

- Weekly discussion posts = 20
- Opening discussion = 5%
- Reports on scholars, each 5% = 15%
- Papers, each 10% = 30%
- Mock conference presentation = 5%
- Participation in seminar = 25%

Academic Misconduct (plagiarism and cheating):

This class will strictly follow and enforce the rules defined in UWS 14 through our own "Student Academic Misconduct Campus Procedures." (UWS 14.03) Examples include but are not limited to: cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation; paraphrasing from the web without crediting the source; using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own by not properly crediting the originator; signing another person's name to an attendance sheet; hiding a book knowing that another student needs it to prepare an assignment.