

1 **Topics in feminist philosophy - Spring 2013 - Aron Edidin**



GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

ACE 237, Tuesdays and Fridays 1:00 - 2:20

My office is at the Humanities Division Office in ACE (on the first floor, near the elbow).

Office hours: 2:30 - 3:30 Tuesdays and Fridays, or by appointment

edidin@ncf.edu

x4361 (or call me at home, 11AM - 11PM only, please)

Texts:

Ann Garry and Marilyn Pearsall, eds. *Women, Knowledge, and Reality* (2nd edition) (WKR)

Miranda Fricker and Jennifer Hornsby, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy* (CC)

Readings from outside of these two anthologies are linked-to in the syllabus below. Links to articles and other documents should work anywhere just by clicking, though they'll require that you log into Newdle. Links to e-journals will work just by clicking on campus; from off campus you'll need first to go through the library's "connect from home" procedure (following links on the library web and portal pages) in another tab or window.

Written assignments for the course are described in Sec. 8, below.

Here's a link to [the New College booklet on plagiarism](#), which explains the concept and has a variety of advice about ways of citing sources.

The **attendance policy** for the course is described in Sec. 9, below.

Here's a link to the [\(many\) entries on feminist philosophy in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

Here's a link to the [Feminist Philosophers](#) blog: items of interest to feminist philosophers, with discussion in Comments

Here's a link to the blog ["What Is It Like To Be A Woman In Philosophy"](#), which compiles accounts of women's experiences in the field and profession

Here's a link to the blog ["What We're Doing About What It's Like"](#), which chronicles steps taken to improve the atmosphere for women in academic philosophy

Here's a link to the New York Times philosophy series "[The Stone](#)"

Here's a link to the [Florida Student Philosophy Blog](#).

Here are three links to philosophical glossaries, one a real glossary and the other two full of philosophical inside jokes:

[A Philosophical Glossary for Beginners](#) (A real glossary. Good to look at for paper-writing; warns against several common mistakes of usage)

[The Philosophical Lexicon](#) (Puns on philosophers' names)

[A Non-Philosopher's Guide to Philosophical Terms](#) (Jokes that contrast non-philosophers' and philosophers' use of terms)

2 GENERAL INTRODUCTION



Tuesday, February 5 -- *General Introduction*

3 CONTESTED IDEALS: REASON



Friday, February 8 -- *Reason and Gender*

Genevieve Lloyd, "The Man of Reason" (#9 in WKR)

[Phyllis Rooney, "Gendered Reason"](#) (link to article)

Tuesday, February 12 -- *Masculinity, Objectivity, and Scepticism*

[Naomi Scheman, "Othello's Doubt/Desdemona's Death: The Engendering of Scepticism"](#)

(link to article)

Friday, February 15 -- *Evidence and Emotion*

Alison Jaggar, "Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology" (#10 in WKR)

Tuesday, February 19 -- *Evidence and Community*

[Lynn Hankinson Nelson, "Epistemological Communities"](#) (link to article)

Friday, February 22 -- *Another Perspective*

[Louise Antony, "Sisters, Please, I'd Rather Do It Myself: A Defense of Individualism in Feminist Epistemology"](#) (link to e-journal)

Tuesday, February 26 -- *Epistemology and Oppression*

Rae Langton, "Feminism in Epistemology: Exclusion and Objectification" (#7 in CC)

Friday, March 1 -- *Knowledge, Gender, and Race*

Patricia Hill Collins, "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought" (#12 in WKR)

4 INTERLUDE: BACKGROUND ISSUES - METHODOLOGY, CONCEPTUAL RESOURCES, GENDER IN THE WORLD OF ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY



Tuesday, March 5 -- *Making Gender Salient*

[Ann Garry, "Why Care About Gender"](#) (link to e-journal)

Marilyn Frye, "The Possibility of Feminist Theory" (#3 in WKR)

Friday, March 8 -- *Negotiating the Categories of Natural and Social*

Sally Haslanger, "Feminism in Metaphysics: Negotiating the Natural" (#6 in CC)

Tuesday, March 12 -- *Gender in the World of Academic Philosophy*

Janice Moulton, "A Paradigm of Philosophy: The Adversary Method" (#1 in WKR)

[Sally Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy: Not by Reason \(Alone\)"](#) (link to e-journal)

[Robin Wilson, "Women Challenge Male Philosophers to Make Room in Unfriendly Field"](#) (link to article)

[Comments on Wilson article in Feminist Philosophers blog](#)

(For this class and the next, you might also want to browse around in [What Is It Like To Be A Woman In Philosophy?](#))

Friday, March 15 -- *Gender and Race in the World of Academic Philosophy (II)*

[Louise Antony, "Different Voices or Perfect Storm: Why Are There So Few Women in Philosophy"](#) (link to e-journal)

[Interview with NC alum Anita Allen on black women in philosophy](#)

Here's a link to the [homepage of the Implicit Bias and Philosophy Project](#)

Tuesday, March 19 -- *bell hooks class visit* Reading TBA

5 **CONTESTED IDEALS: AUTONOMY**



Friday, March 22: *Framing the Issue*

[Rachel Tohn, *Recognition in Relational Autonomy*, Ch. 1](#) (link to thesis)

Marilyn Friedman, "Feminism in Ethics: Conceptions of Autonomy" (#11 in CC)

Tuesday, March 26 and Friday, March 29: *Spring Break; no classes*

Tuesday, April 2: *The Value of Autonomy*

[Marina Oshana, "How Much Should We Value Autonomy"](#) (link to e-journal)

Friday, April 5: *The Selves To Which We Might Be True*

Naomi Scheman, "Feminism in Philosophy of Mind: Against Physicalism" (#3 in CC)

Sarah Richmond, "Feminism and Psychoanalysis: Using Melanie Klein" (#4 in CC)

Tuesday, April 9: *The Selves To Which We Might Be True (II)*

Maria Lugones, "Playfulness, "World"-Traveling, and Loving Perception" (#22 in WKR)

6 **CONTESTED IDEALS: JUSTICE**



Friday, April 12: *Justice, Care, and Gender*

[Owen Flanigan and Kathryn Jackson, "Justice, Care, and Gender: The Kohlberg-Gilligan Debate Revisited"](#) (link to e-journal)

Tuesday, April 16: *Varieties of Feminist Ethics*

[Rosemary Tong and Nancy Wilson, "Feminist Ethics"](#) (link to online article)

Friday, April 19: *Reason, Evidence, and Moral Knowledge*

Alison Jaggar, "Feminism in Ethics: Moral Justification" (#12 in CC)

Tuesday, April 23: *Back to Method*

Diemut Bubeck, "Feminism in Political Philosophy: Women's Difference" (#10 in CC)

7 **TOPICS AND READINGS CHOSEN BY CLASS**



Friday, April 26:

Tuesday, April 30: *Baccalaureate Exam Days; no classes, attend baccs!*

Friday, May 3:

First part of final projects due! Remember to include a completed [writer review form](#).

Tuesday, May 7:

Friday, May 10:

Term paper drafts due! Remember to include a completed [writer review form](#).

Second part of final projects due!

Bring two extra copies of your term paper draft or final project part 1 for the other members of your group (for discussion next time)!

Tuesday, May 14: Discussion of first parts and term paper drafts. Bring ***two copies*** (*one for me and one for the author*) of completed [peer review forms](#).

Monday, May 20 (Monday of Exam Week):

Third part of final projects due! Term papers due! Remember to include a completed [writer review form for Part 3](#) (if you're doing a three-part project) or [writer review form for revisions](#) (if you're doing a term paper).

Written work for Topics in Feminist Philosophy



The following written work is required for this course:

(1) Three typed discussion questions submitted each day on that day's reading,

(2) Five two- to four-page response/reaction papers (double-spaced, with normal margins),

(3) Two Perfect Paragraphs,

and

(4) A three-part final project (for less experienced philosophy students) or term paper (for more experienced philosophy students).

Discussion Questions: Three short questions (one sentence each) **on each day's reading, turned in that day.**

Five Response/Reaction Papers: Each response/reaction paper must be submitted on the day we discuss the relevant selection in class, and only one paper may be submitted for each class meeting. At least **two must be submitted by March 1, four by the end of Mod 1, and all five by April 23.** The assignment of response/reaction papers is borrowed from Professor Catherine Elliott; the following description is taken from the syllabus for her Seminar on Rationality:

"A response/reaction paper is not a description or summary, and in particular, it is not a "book report". As the name suggests, each paper should represent your response/reaction to some aspect of the reading which interests/intrigues/concerns/engages you. But: analyze; make a point; express an argument or dispute one. Consider these response/reaction papers as opportunities for intellectual creativity and thoughtful experimentation, rather than as exercises to be produced according to some formula for "right" thought or analysis. Think about what you are reading, attempt to explore new implications and connections to previously held beliefs. If you find yourself "stuck", one technique is to grapple with parts of the readings which you find disagreeable or irritating. However, do not simply identify these parts -- if you challenge an idea, propose a counter and defend it. Ideally, each paper should have only one primary focus. The maximum page limit is four -- thus, you should work hardest to provide depth for your response/reaction -- as opposed to free-association of a myriad of things."

Two Perfect Paragraphs: Each perfect paragraph must be submitted on the day we discuss the relevant reading. At least **one must be submitted by the end of Mod 1**, and **both by April 23**. The assignment of perfect paragraphs is borrowed from Professor Robert Zamsky; the following description is taken from his courses:

"Paragraphing is a fundamental component of successful writing, and learning how to consistently write good paragraphs, even when dealing with material that is complex or simply voluminous, also helps to develop focus and organization. You all know the basic fundamentals of a paragraph: a topic sentence, support and evidence, and a conclusion. The trick is to consistently work with this structure, while, at the same time, not turning into a robot.

I will evaluate your paragraphs based upon the following criteria:

Content: does the paragraph make a clear, relevant, and convincing point about the reading?

Structure: do the topic sentence, support, and conclusion cohere? Could any of them be usefully expanded, or, alternately, be trimmed down?

Clarity: Style and mechanics count. You should shoot for content rich sentences that do not include extraneous words. Be both precise and economical with your language.

The paragraph must not exceed 275 words."

Final Project (for less experienced philosophy students): This project will involve writing and then further reflecting (in writing) on what you have written. The project consists of three short (ca. 6 page, double-spaced with normal margins) papers:

(1) A paper on a topic of your choice. Explain and defend a philosophical conclusion of your own, on an issue discussed in or suggested by course readings or class discussions. The purpose of the paper is to develop your thinking about the issue, though you should also show that you are aware of relevant discussions in the readings. You may, if you so choose, proceed by describing and criticizing, extending, or developing the approach of an author we've read. But you are not required to do so. The focus should be on your own reasoned evaluation of the issue. **This part is due at the start of class on May 3, and should be accompanied by a completed [Writer Review Form](#).**

(2) A paper on the same topic, but taking a position contrary to the one you take in Part 1. You may address Part I directly, or just defend a contrary conclusion in an independent paper. Stick with arguments and positions that you think are plausible, but don't be afraid to adopt for the sake of argument views you don't actually hold. **This part is due at the start of class on May 10.**

(3) A final (for the time being) discussion of the issue you've chosen, in light of Parts 1 and 2. This paper should, like (1), reflect your own actual view of the issue at the time you're writing. It may involve defending the view you developed in (1) against the criticism contained in (2). It may involve further explanation or development of your initial view. Or it may involve modifying or even abandoning your initial view. **This part is due on May 20 (Monday of exam week), and should be accompanied by a completed [Writer Review Form for Part 3](#).**

Term Paper (for more experienced philosophy students): A long (ca. 15-20 page, double-spaced with normal margins) paper on a topic of your choice. Discuss critically some issue discussed in or suggested by course readings or class discussions. The purpose of the paper is to develop your thinking about the issue, though you should also show that you are aware of relevant discussions in the readings. Although you will almost certainly be discussing other authors in the course of the paper, the focus should be on your own reasoned evaluation of the issue. **A complete draft of the paper is due on May 10 (accompanied by a completed [Writer Review Form](#)), and the final version is due on Monday of exam week (May 20), accompanied by a completed [Writer Review Form for Revisions](#).**

9

Attendance Policy

To complete this course satisfactorily, you may miss no more than 3 class meetings. Very rarely, additional absences may be permitted in cases of genuine emergency.