

Philosophy or Race and Gender

Shimer College,

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5 credits Social Sciences or Humanities

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Course Description:

In this course we will use significant works in the philosophy of race and gender to guide us in a study of the interplay between power, subjectivity, race, gender, and ethics. We will examine how race and gender are constructed within a complex web of history, power, and intellectual traditions. We will also examine how this socially constructed subject encounters contemporary society and engages in ethical political action.

Learning Objectives – Course Content

1. Demonstrate facility with the concepts and vocabulary of political philosophy.
2. Examine different approaches to the study of race and gender.
3. Demonstrate ability to analyze and apply theories of race and gender to contemporary societal issues.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the ways in which an understanding of race and gender is based upon historical and cultural context.
5. Recognize and identify key figures in the philosophical study of race and gender.

Learning Objectives – Writing:

1. Write competent College-level prose.
2. Formulate clear questions for discussion of course texts.
3. Express ideas with confidence and clarity.
4. Demonstrate command of sentence and paragraph structure.
5. Select, introduce, and analyze quotations.
6. Learn and demonstrate use of inclusive language.

Assessment Methods

1. Class participation
2. Assessments of Writing Assignments

Course Requirements

Discussion: 50% of final grade. Two papers: 50% of final grade (25% each).

Discussion:

Good Discussion happens when careful preparation has taken place—when participants come into the class with respect for the text and for one another. Bring in questions as well as opinions; be ready to modify your opinions if you are offered persuasive contrary evidence. A good discussion is not about defending positions; it is about coming together to explore meaning. Try to identify your own prejudice concerning authors or their positions as you read; a good discussion may either confirm or change your position, and it should certainly clarify it. Empathic listening, thoughtful speaking, thoughtful questions, and openness to the opinions of others will help discussion flow. A good discussion also depends on a group that learns, through the semester, to trust one

another so that real intellectual and emotional risks can be taken. For this reason, discussion must go beyond any individual achievement and develop into a cohesive group activity. The prerequisite of any discussion is prompt **attendance** and **preparation** in carefully reading the text. Good class participation presupposes, and should give evidence of, careful preparation. Students are expected to remain in class and taking breaks may affect the class participation grade.

Written Work:

Papers are on topics of your choosing based on the texts read in class. The first paper must discuss at least one text from the first half of the course, and the second paper must discuss at least one text from the second half of the course. Students are urged to discuss topics with me beforehand, though this is not a requirement. I am available to review drafts if they are submitted at least ten days before the paper is due.

Completed papers that are submitted on time may be rewritten, and the improved grade will be the one recorded for the assignment. Students who turn in a paper after the due date lose the opportunity to rewrite it. If you rewrite/revise you are expected to turn in your original paper along with the rewrite. No work will be accepted after the last day of classes.

All written work must be typed and double-spaced, and quotations and paraphrases must be referenced correctly. Students are expected to use gender neutral language where appropriate. Please refer to *Writing With Sources* for guidance. Papers must be between 7 and 10 pages in length.

Absence Policy: If you miss more than 3 classes you will most likely not pass the course. If you must miss a class, please let me know in advance if at all possible.

Required Course Material:

Material in the Course Pack:

1. Cornel West, "The Ignoble Paradox of Modernity" and "Race and Modernity" in *The Cornel West Reader*. Civitas Books, 1999; pp. 51-86.
2. Kathryn Gines, "Black Feminism and Intersectional Analysis: A Defense of Intersectionality". *Philosophy Today*, SPEP supplement 2011, DePaul University, 2011; pp. 275-284.
3. Sojourner Truth, "When Women Gets Her Rights Man Will be Right" in *Words of Fire*, The New Press, NY, 1995; pp. 35-38.
4. Anna Julia Cooper, "The Status of Woman in America" in *Words of Fire*, The New Press, NY, 1995; pp. 43-49.
5. Kimberle Williams Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" in *Critical Race Theory*, Eds. Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, Thomas. The New Press, NY, 1995; pp. 357-383.
6. Virginia Held, "Feminist Ethical Theory" in *Conduct and Character: Readings in Moral Theory*, 4th Edition, Mark Timmons, Ed. Wadsworth Press: Belmont, CA, 2003; pp.237-243.
7. Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege" in *Privilege: A Reader*, Third Edition. Eds. Michael Kimmel and Abby Ferber. Westview Press, 2014; pp. 15-27.
8. Jewel Woods, "The Black Male Privileges Checklist" in *Privilege: A Reader*, Third Edition. Eds. Michael Kimmel and Abby Ferber. Westview Press, 2014; pp. 28-38.
9. Juan Cole, "The Top 10 Differences Between White Terrorists and Others" in *Privilege: A Reader*, Third Edition. Eds. Michael Kimmel and Abby Ferber. Westview Press, 2014; pp. 251-52.

Books:

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*
Gloria Anzuldúa, *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza* 4th ed.
Gloria Anzuldúa and Analouise Keating, Eds., *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions of Transformations*
Derrick Bell, *Faces At The Bottom Of The Well: The Permanence Of Racism*
Susan J. Brison, *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self*
Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*
Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete*
bell hooks, *Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice*
Audre Lorde, *Sister/Outsider*
Maria Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Pilgrimages: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions*
Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract*
Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*
Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*
Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience*

Reading Schedule: The following reading schedule is approximate and students are responsible for keeping track of the specific reading assignments. This schedule is subject to change.

Wed. January 14	Pateman, <i>The Sexual Contract</i> , Preface, Chs 1 - 3
Fri. January 16	Pateman, <i>The Sexual Contract</i> , Ch 4
Mon. January 19	Martin Luther King Day—No Class
Wed. January 21	Pateman, <i>The Sexual Contract</i> , Chs 5 & 6
Fri. January 23	Pateman, <i>The Sexual Contract</i> , Chs 7 & 8
Mon. January 26	Mills, <i>The Racial Contract</i> , Introduction and Ch 1
Wed. January 28	Mills, <i>The Racial Contract</i> , Ch 2
Fri. January 30	Mills, <i>The Racial Contract</i> , Ch 3
Mon. February 2	Gines, “Black Feminism and Intersectional Analysis: A Defense of Intersectionality”(course pace); Truth, “When Women Gets Her Rights Man Will be Right”(course pack); Cooper, “The Status of Woman in America”(course pack); and Lorde, “Poetry is Not a Luxury” in <i>Sister/Outsider</i>
Wed. February 4	Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence
Against	Women of Color”
Fri. February 6	Lorde, <i>Sister/Outsider</i> , “Scratching the Surface,” “Uses of the Erotic,” “The Masters Tools Will Never Dismantle the Masters House,” “The Uses of Anger”
Mon. February 9	hooks, <i>Writing Beyond Race</i> , Chs 1 - 4
Wed. February 11	hooks, <i>Writing Beyond Race</i> , Chs 15, 16 & 18
Fri. February 13	Mohanty, <i>Feminism without Borders</i> , Chs 3 & 5
Mon. February 16	Mohanty, <i>Feminism without Borders</i> , Chs 6 & 7
Wed. February 18	Mohanty, <i>Feminism without Borders</i> , Ch 8
Fri. February 20	Dean’s Break—No Class

Mon. February 23	Anzuldúa, <i>Borderlands / La Frontera</i> , Introduction to the Fourth Edition, Preface, Introduction to the Second Editoin (pp. 251 -263), Ch 1
Wed. February 25	Anzuldúa, <i>Borderlands / La Frontera</i> , Chs 2 - 4
Fri. February 27	Anzuldúa, <i>Borderlands / La Frontera</i> , Chs 5 - 7
Mon. March 2	Lugones, <i>Pilgrimages/Pilgrimages</i> , Introduction
Wed. March 4	Lugones, <i>Pilgrimages/Pilgrimages</i> , Chs 4 & 5
Fri. March 6	Lugones, <i>Pilgrimages/Pilgrimages</i> , Chs 7 & 10
Mon. March 9	FIRST PAPER DUE
Wed. March 11	Anzuldúa and Keating, Eds., <i>This Bridge We Call Home</i> , Chs 27, 29, 32
Wed, March 13	West, “The Ignoble Paradox of Modernity” and “Race and Modernity”
Mon. March 16	Spring Break
Wed. March 18	Spring Break
Fri. March 20	Spring Break
Mon. March 23	Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Introduction, Chs 1 & 2
Wed. March 25	Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Ch 3
Fri. March 27	Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Ch 5
Mon. March 30	Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete</i> , Chs 1 - 3
Wed. April 1	Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete</i> , Chs 4 - 6
Fri. April 3	Bell, <i>Faces At The Bottom Of The Well</i> , Preface, Introduction, Chs 3 & 5
Mon. April 6	Held, “Feminist Ethical Theory” and Butler, <i>Precarious Life</i> , Preface & Ch 1
Wed. April 8	Butler, <i>Precarious Life</i> , Ch 2
Fri. Apr 10	Butler, <i>Precarious Life</i> , Ch 3
Mon. April 13	Butler, <i>Precarious Life</i> , Chs 4 & 5
Wed. April 15	Young, <i>On Female Body Experience</i> , 2 & 5
Fri. Apr 17	Brison, <i>Aftermath</i> , Preface, Chs 1 & 2
Mon. April 20	Brison, <i>Aftermath</i> , Chs 3&4
Wed. April 22	Brison, <i>Aftermath</i> Chs 5 & 6, Afterward
Fri. April 24	Anzuldúa and Keating, Eds., <i>This Bridge We Call Home</i> , 46, 54 SECOND PAPER AND ALL REWRITES DUE BY 5PM