

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Philosophy

PHILOSOPHY 2630G: FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY

(Formerly Phil 231F/G)
Winter 2009

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| Instructor: Professor Carolyn McLeod | Office Hours: M 12:30-1:30, TH 2:30-3:30 |
| E-mail: cmcleod2@uwo.ca | Class Times: TU 1:30-2:30, TH 12:30-2:30 |
| Phone: (519) 661-2111 ext. 85877 | Class Location: TC 405 |
| Office Location: TC 410 | Course website: webCT Owl |

Students are responsible for following the Philosophy Department procedures included with this outline. On her office door, the instructor will post information regarding the dates, times and locations of any tests and review sessions.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Feminists are united in believing that women are oppressed and that the oppression of women is profoundly wrong. Feminist philosophers bring their philosophical skills to bear on understanding and critiquing women's oppression and on devising ways to liberate women from oppression. This course introduces students to feminist philosophy, and more specifically to key concepts in feminist philosophy, such as oppression, sexism, difference, privilege, and intersectionality. We will ask the following kinds of questions: What does it mean to be oppressed? Can oppression be psychological and if so, in what sense? Can one be privileged and oppressed at the same time? Insofar as one is privileged, what does one owe to people who are oppressed? How might different forms of oppression (e.g., sexism, racism, heterosexism) intersect and inform one another? We will also look at feminist responses to issues posed by the cultural representation of women's bodies and women's selves, by different forms of sexuality, and by the unequal division of domestic labour in traditional families.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To familiarize students with feminist philosophy generally and with key concepts in feminist philosophy specifically;
- 2) To develop students' ability to think and write critically about topics in feminist philosophy;
- 3) To understand how sexism relates to other forms of oppression, such as racism and heterosexism.

REQUIRED READING:

- 1) Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* (Crossing Press, 1983), available at the UWO bookstore;

- 2) Sandra Lee Bartky, *Femininity and Domination: Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression* (Routledge, 1990), available at the UWO bookstore;
- 3) A coursepack, available at Inprint in the UCC;
- 4) Online readings, posted on our webCT site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Mid-term exam, worth 20%;
- 2) One essay (8-10 pages), worth 35%;
- 3) Final exam, worth 35%;
- 4) Class participation, worth 10%.

Please note that regular attendance throughout the year is expected.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

All written work must be submitted to *turnitin.com*. Late papers will be penalized 3 percentage points per day late, excluding Saturdays and Sundays.

COURSE POLICIES:

On e-mail: please do not e-mail the instructor with substantive questions about course content. Instead, ask your questions in person in her office.

On computers in class: students' ability to use their own computers in class is a privilege that the instructor can take away. Checking e-mail or surfing the web during class is strictly off limits.

THIS OUTLINE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, GIVEN SUFFICIENT PRIOR NOTICE.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no fee adjustment. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Prerequisite: none

Antirequisite: Philosophy 2067E (Brescia)

AUDIT:

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

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| Incompletes are granted at the <i>exclusive</i> discretion of the Undergraduate Program Chair, and only on the basis of documented medical or compassionate grounds. If, during the course, you envisage any difficulty completing all the required work by the completion deadline, consult immediately with the instructor <i>and</i> the Undergraduate Program Chair. |
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READING SCHEDULE

- The readings are from Marilyn Frye's *Politics of Reality* (PR), Sandra Lee Bartky's *Femininity and Domination* (FD), our webCT site (OL, for online readings), and our coursepack (CP)
- All readings are required unless otherwise noted
- Most weeks involve two or more readings, and you should read both for Tuesday's class. While we might focus on the first reading on the Tuesday, we also might discuss the other readings on that day.

| DATE | TOPIC | READINGS | ASSIGNMENTS |
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| Jan. 6/8 | Roots of Western Feminism | Mill, "The Subjection of Women" (CP) Truth, "Ar'n't I a Woman?" (CP) de Beauvoir, "Introduction from <i>The Second Sex</i> " (CP) | |
| Jan. 13/15 | Introduction to Contemporary Western Feminism | Bartky, "Toward a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness" (FD) Sherwin, "Understanding Feminism" (CP) | |
| Jan. 20/22 | Key Concepts: Oppression | Frye, "Oppression" (PR) Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression" (FD) | |
| Jan. 27/29 | Key Concepts: Sexism & Difference | Frye, "Sexism" (PR) Lorde, "Age, Race, Sex and Class: Women Redefining Difference" (CP) Collins, "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images" (CP) Yamada, "Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster: Reflections of an Asian American Woman" (OL) | |

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| Feb. 3/5 | Key Concepts: Intersectionality | Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique ..." (OL) Spelman, "Gender and Race: The Ampersand problem in Feminist Thought" (CP) | |
| Feb. 10/12 | Key Concepts: Privilege & Responsibility | Thomas, "Moral Deference" (CP) McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege" (CP) Frye, "On Being White" (PR) | Mid-term exam —Feb. 10 th |
| Feb. 24/26 | Embodiment & Femininity | Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" (FD) Galler, "The Myth of the Perfect Body" (CP) Morgan, "Women and the Knife: Cosmetic Surgery and the Colonization of Women's Bodies" (OL) | |
| March 3/5 | Sexual Practice & Sexuality Injustice | Bartky, "Feminine Masochism and the Politics of Personal Transformation" (FD) Overall, "Heterosexuality and Feminist Theory" (OL) Calhoun, "Separating Lesbian Theory from Feminist Theory" (OL) | |
| March 10/12 | Women & the Self | Brison, "Outliving Oneself" (CP) Allen, "Forgetting Yourself" (CP) | Essay due —March 12 th |
| March 17/19 | Women & Emotion: shame and self-respect | Bartky, "Shame and Gender" (FD) Dillon, "Self-Respect: Moral, | |

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| | | Emotional, Political” (OL) Moody-Adams, “Race, Class, and the Social Construction of Self-Respect” (CP) | |
| March 24/26 | Feminism & Families: Motherhood & Fatherhood | Ruddick, “Maternal Thinking” (CP) May and Strikwerda, “Fatherhood and Nurturance” (OL) | |
| March 31/April 2 | Feminism & Families: Coercion & Domestic Work | Cudd, “Oppression by Choice” (OL) Frye, “In and Out of Harm’s Way: Arrogance and Love” (PR) Mahony, “A Future World” (CP) | |
| April 7 | Review | None | |

COURSEPACK READINGS

Allen, Anita. “Forgetting Yourself.” In *Feminists Rethink the Self*. Ed. D. T. Meyers. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997. 104-123.

Brison, Susan. “Outliving Oneself.” In Cudd & Andreasen (see Mill). 365-376.

Collins, Patricia Hill. “Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images.” In her *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 2000. 69-96.

de Beauvoir, Simone. “Introduction from *The Second Sex*.” In Cudd & Andreasen (see Mill). 27-36.

Galler, Roberta. “The Myth of the Perfect Body.” In *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*. Ed. C. Vance. London, UK: Pandora, 1992. 165-172.

Lorde, Audrey. “Age, Race, Sex and Class: Women Redefining Difference.” In her *Sister Outsider*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984. 114-123.

Mahony, Rhona. "A Future World." In her *Kidding Ourselves: Breadwinning, Babies, and Bargaining Power*. New York, NY: BasicBooks, 1995. 215-238.

McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege and Male Privilege." In *The Feminist Philosophy Reader*. Ed. A. Bailey & C. Cuomo. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2008. 61-69.

Mill, John Stuart. "The Subjection of Women." In *Feminist Theory: A Philosophical Anthology*. Ed. A. Cudd & R. Andreasen. Malden, MA: Blackwell 2005. 17-26.

Moody-Adams, Michele M. "Race, Class, and the Social Construction of Self-Respect." In *Dignity, Character, and Self-Respect*. Ed. R. Dillon. New York, NY: Routledge, 1995. 271-289.

Ruddick, Sara. "Maternal Thinking." In *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*. Ed. D. T. Meyers. New York: Routledge, 1997. 583-603.

Sherwin, Susan. "Understanding Feminism." In her *No Longer Patient: Feminist Ethics & Health Care*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple, 1992. 13-34.

Spelman, Elizabeth V. "Gender and Race: The Ampersand problem in Feminist Thought." In her *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought*. Boston, MA: Beacon, 1988. 114-132.

Thomas, Laurence. "Moral Deference." In *Moral Issues in Global Perspective*. Ed. C. Koggel. Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 1999. 180-191.

Truth, Sojourner. "Ar'n't I a Woman?" In *Theorizing Feminisms: A Reader*. Ed. E. Hackett & S. Haslanger. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006. 113.