

WGSS 205: Feminist Health Politics | Spring 2023 | University of Massachusetts Amherst

Class Time

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m., South College Rm. E241

Instructor

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Office Hours

In-Person: TBD
Virtual: TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course serves as a broad introduction to feminist health politics. We will interrogate the concept of health from various perspectives and think about why and how health is a crucial issue for feminists. Our course will cover a range of topics including: theories of health; the political economy of health; medicine, gender, and sexuality; health and disability; health, knowledge, and activism; and reproductive health and justice. We will consider how we define health, why health matters, and how politics, economics, social conditions, culture, and historical factors shape health. Our discussions will be enriched through numerous guest speakers from around the Valley who will share their expertise over the course of the term.

- Critically examine health, and the politics of health, from historical and current perspectives
- Explore and expand our understanding of what constitutes feminist health politics
- Consider the role of institutions, technologies, social forces, political economy, and activism in defining health and shaping health outcomes
- Hone our research skills, our ability to discern between kinds of sources, and our presentation skills

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Massachusetts Amherst acknowledges that it was founded and built on the unceded homelands of the Pocumtuc Nation on the land of the Norrwutuck community. We begin with gratitude for nearby waters and lands, including the Kwinitekw -- the southern portion of what's now called the Connecticut River. We recognize these lands and waters as important Relations with which we are all interconnected and depend on to sustain life and wellbeing. The Norrwutuck community was one of many Pocumtuc Indian towns, including the Tribal seat at Pocumtuc (in present day Deerfield), Agawam (Springfield), and Woronoco (Westfield) to name just a few. The Pocumtuc, who had connections with these lands for millennia, are part of a vast expanse of Algonquian relations. Over 400 years of colonization, Pocumtuc Peoples were displaced. Many joined their Algonquian relatives to the east, south, west and north—

extant communities of Wampanoag, including Aquinnah, Herring Pond, and Mashpee, Massachusetts; the Nipmuc with a reservation at Grafton/Hassanamisco, Massachusetts; the Narragansett in Kingstown, Rhode Island; Schaghticoke, Mohegan and Pequot Peoples in Connecticut; the Abenaki and other Nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy extending northward into Canada; and the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican of New York and Massachusetts, who were removed to Wisconsin in the 19th century. Over hundreds of years of removal, members of Southern New England Tribes would make the journey home to tend important places and renew their connections to their ancestral lands. Such care and connection to land and waters continues to the present day. Today, Indigenous Nations in southern New England continue to employ diverse strategies to resist ongoing colonization, genocide, and erasure begun by the English, French, Dutch, Portuguese and other European Nations, and that continued when Tribal homelands became part of the United States. Native Americans from Tribal Nations across the U.S. and Indigenous peoples from around the world also travel into these Pocumtuc homelands to live and work. This land has always been and always will be, Native Land. We also acknowledge that the University of Massachusetts Amherst is a Land Grant University. As part of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, Tribal lands from 82 Native Nations west of the Mississippi were sold to provide the resources to found and build this university. This Land Acknowledgement is the first step in the university's commitment to practice intellectual humility whilst working with Tribal Nations toward a better shared future on Turtle Island. We aim to foster understanding, deep respect, and honor for sovereign Tribal Nations; to develop relationships of reciprocity; and to be inclusive of Native perspectives and thriving Native Nations far into the future. Members of Massachusetts-based Tribal Nations who are kin to the historic Pocumtuc contributed their insights in composing this acknowledgement -- namely Tribal representatives from Mashpee, Aquinnah, and Stockbridge Munsee. As an active first step toward decolonization, we encourage you to learn more about the Indigenous peoples on whose homelands UMass Amherst now resides on and the Indigenous homelands on which you live and work.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable

academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements. For further information, please visit Disability Services (<https://www.umass.edu/disability/>)

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/)

USING MOODLE

Students should ensure that they are receiving emails and update their preferences through the University's Moodle LMS Services. Moodle will be used for the following:

- All class-related communications including changes in class-related reading, class cancelation and/or room change, and other time-sensitive information will be sent via Moodle's email and announcement interfaces.
- All course readings are uploaded as PDF files under "Course Documents."
- I do not accept assignments via email unless agreed to upon prior communication. All course assignments will have an appropriate upload module under "Assignments and Exams." You will need access to Moodle to upload and/or type your responses to journal assignments and upload your final exam

or final written project.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS, GRADES

A Note on Class Participation: You are expected to come to class with the reading done. For this class to work well, everyone needs to talk and think out loud. In order to facilitate this, we need to have the highest level of respect for each other. Your class participation grade will rest on how successfully you exhibit engagement with the material and with your classmates. This course is not a competition over who has "good" or "bad" politics (whatever we may consider those to be), it is an honest exploration of various kinds of political and intellectual positions, and the ways these have been historically constituted. Students are encouraged to bring questions, change their minds, make counter-arguments, and voice politically unpopular positions in class. While intellectual and moral passion, as well as lively disagreement (including with the instructor) are valued, *ad hominem* and *ad feminam* attacks will not be tolerated, nor will harassment, slurs, or disparagement of any group.

A Note on Reproductive Justice: In this class, we center reproductive justice (RJ). Leading RJ organization SisterSong “defines Reproductive Justice as the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.” RJ is a human-rights-based framework, analysis, and movement rooted in Black feminism and Black women’s and peoples’ struggles for reproductive freedom; it names a struggle long waged by Indigenous women, women of color, and trans people; and it calls for coalition across issues and identities. We also look to Indigenous feminist, trans feminist, abolitionist, disability justice, environmental justice, and other justice-centered analyses and movements in their many interconnections with RJ, and in their work to create a livable future. SisterSong writes that “To achieve Reproductive Justice, we must...

- Analyze power systems. Reproductive politics in the US is based on gendered, sexualized, and racialized acts of dominance that occur on a daily basis. RJ works to understand and eradicate these nuanced dynamics.
- Address intersecting oppressions. Audre Lorde said, “There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.” Marginalized women face multiple oppressions and we can only win freedom by addressing how they impact one another.

- Center the most marginalized. Our society will not be free until the most vulnerable people are able to access the resources and full human rights to live self-determined lives without fear, discrimination, or retaliation.
 - Join together across issues and identities...RJ is both an opportunity and a call to come together as one movement with the power to win freedom for all oppressed people.
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Attendance and Shared Notes (5%): Attendance and preparedness are expected. The course is designed around both lecture and in-class discussion. There will be a shared notes document coordinated through Moodle's LMS software.

Weekly Journals (25%): Students are expected to write weekly (250-300 word minimum) journal entries answering the following questions:

- What was the key theme of the week's reading?
- What were the main takeaways of the text and/or in-class discussion?
- Did this reading provide a different perspective on the issue?

Monthly Written Quizzes (25%): Each quiz will cover only the content for its preceding month, e.g., quizzes are not cumulative. These should be completed by their deadlines via the appropriate modules on Moodle.

Option for the Final | Traditional Exam or Research Project (45%): There will be two options for a "final." Students may take a traditional exam. Access to the final will be similar to the method of accessing monthly quizzes. Students will complete the written exam (essay-based and short answer) online in a time-monitored format. Students will have the option of saving their exam and returning to it at a later point. Alternatively, students may choose to write an in-depth research paper. The expectations and rubric for both options are located at the end of the syllabus.

Grade Distribution (Weighted): 97-99 A+ | 93-96 A | 90-92 A- | 87-89 B+ | 83-86 B | 80-82 B- | 77-79 C+ | 73-77 C | 70- 72 C- | 67-69 D+ | 63-66 D | 60-62 D- | 0-59 F

COURSE AND READING SCHEDULE

Date	Reading/Assignment	Theme/Discussion Questions
Tuesday, Feb. 7	Syllabus and General Overview	Course Expectations, Graded Assignments, Important Deadlines, Constructing an Interactive Glossary Question: What brought you to this course?
Thursday, Feb. 9	Petchesky RP. “From population control to reproductive rights: Feminist fault lines.” <i>Reproductive Health Matters</i> 1995;3(6): 152-161	Reproductive Justice and Feminist Politics of Care
Tuesday, Feb. 14	Ross, Loretta & SisterSong. “What is reproductive justice? Reproductive Justice Briefing Book: A Primer on Reproductive Justice & Social Change” (n.d.): 4-5. Crear-Perry et al. “Social and structural determinants of health inequities in maternal health,” <i>Journal of Women’s Health</i> 2021;30(2): 230-235. Johnson, Alexis McGill. “I’m the Head of Planned Parenthood. We’re Done Making Excuses for Our Founder.” <i>New York Times</i> . April 17, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/17/opinion/planned-parenthood-margaret-sanger.html	Reproductive Justice and Feminist Ethics of Care
Thursday, Feb. 16	Sandfort TGM, & Ehrhardt AA. “Sexual health: A useful public health paradigm or a moral imperative?” <i>Archives of Sexual Behavior</i> 2004;33(3): 181-187.	Health Care Finance and Policy Alternatives
Tuesday, Feb. 21	Norsigian, J. “The Women's Health Movement in the United States.” Newsletter Womens Global Network for Reproductive Rights, 39, 1992, pp. 9-12.	Histories of the Feminist Health Movement
Thursday, Feb. 23	Desai, Sonalde. “Maternal education and child health: A	Histories of the Feminist Health Movement

Date	Reading/Assignment	Theme/Discussion Questions
Tuesday, Feb. 28	<p>feminist dilemma." <i>Feminist Studies</i> 26.2 (2000): 425-446.</p> <p>Hunt P, Bueno de Mesquita J, UNFPA. "Reducing maternal mortality: The contribution of the right to the attainable standard of health," London: United Nations Population Fund; 2010. Rosenfield, Allan, and Deborah Maine. "Maternal mortality- a neglected tragedy: Where is the M in MCH?." <i>The Lancet</i> 326.8446 (1985): 83-85.</p>	Maternal Morbidity and Problems of "Biology"
Thursday, March 2	<p>Wendland, Claire. "Who counts? What counts? Place and the limits of perinatal mortality measures." <i>AMA journal of ethics</i> 20.3 (2018): 278-287.</p> <p>Owens, Deirdre Cooper, and Sharla M. Fett. "Black maternal and infant health: historical legacies of slavery." <i>American journal of public health</i> 109.10 (2019): 1342-1345.</p>	Maternal Morbidity and Problems of "Biology"
Tuesday, March 7	<p>Centers for Disease Control. HIV/AIDS in the United States https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/overview/ataglance.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fhiv%2Fstatistics%2Fbasics%2Fataglance.html. Centers for Disease Control. 2013. Incidence, Prevalence, and Cost of Sexually Transmitted Infections in the United States. https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats/STI-Estimates-Fact-Sheet-Feb-2013.pdf. UNAIDS. Global HIV Fact Sheet. 2021. https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_FactSheet_en.pdf. Martin SL, Curtis, S. Gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS: Recognizing links and acting on evidence. <i>Lancet</i> 2004;363:1410-1411. Sobo EJ. Inner-City Women and Aids</p>	On Pandemics Past and Present

Date	Reading/Assignment	Theme/Discussion Questions
Thursday, March 9	- the Psychosocial Benefits of Unsafe Sex. Culture Medicine and Psychiatry 1993;17(4):455-485.	On Pandemics Past and Present
Thursday, March 9	<p>Quinn, Katherine, Lisa Bowleg, and Julia Dickson-Gomez. "“The fear of being Black plus the fear of being gay”: The effects of intersectional stigma on PrEP use among young Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men." Social science & medicine 232 (2019): 86-93.</p> <p>Munro, Jenny. "Global HIV interventions and technocratic racism in a West Papuan NGO." Medical anthropology 39.8 (2020): 704-719.</p> <p>Ortblad, Katrina F., et al. "The arc of HIV epidemics in sub-Saharan Africa: new challenges with concentrating epidemics in the era of 90-90-90." Current Opinion in HIV and AIDS 14.5 (2019): 354.</p>	On Pandemics Past and Present
T/Th, March 14 – 16	NO CLASSES	SPRING RECESS
Tuesday, March 21	<p>Manzer, Jamie L., and Ann V. Bell. "“We’re a Little Biased”: Medicine and the Management of Bias through the Case of Contraception." Journal of health and social behavior (2021): 00221465211003232.</p>	Misogyny and "The Political"
Thursday, March 23	<p>Higgins JA, Hirsch JS. Pleasure, power, and inequality: Incorporating sexuality into research on contraceptive use. American Journal of Public Health 2008;98(10):1803-1813.</p> <p>Littlejohn, Krystale. “It’s those Pills that are Ruining Me”: Gender and the Social Meanings of Hormonal Contraceptive Side Effects. Gender and Society 2013;27(6): 843-863</p>	Misogyny and "The Political"
Tuesday, March 28	<p>Agénor, Madina, et al. "Exploring the cervical cancer screening experiences of black lesbian, bisexual, and queer women: The role of patient-provider</p>	Black Feminist Movements for Reproductive Justice Pt. 1

Date	Reading/Assignment	Theme/Discussion Questions
Thursday, March 30	communication." <i>Women & health</i> 55.6 (2015): 717-736.	Black Feminist Movements for Reproductive Justice Pt. 2
Tuesday, April 4	Carpenter, Emma, et. al. (2020) Pregnancy (im)possibilities: identifying factors that influence sexual minority women's pregnancy desires, <i>Social Work in Health Care</i> , 59:3, 180-198.	Structural Antagonisms in Reproductive Justice
Thursday, April 6	Fine M, McClelland SI. Sexuality education and desire: Still missing after all these years. <i>Harvard Educational Review</i> 2006;76(3):297-338. Gomez, Anu Manchikanti, and Mikaela Wapman. "Under (implicit) pressure: young Black and Latina women's perceptions of contraceptive care." <i>Contraception</i> 96.4 (2017): 221-226.	The Afterlife of Settler Colonialism
Tuesday, April 11	Moseson, Heidi, et al. "Abortion experiences and preferences of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-expansive people in the United States." <i>American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology</i> 224.4 (2021): 376-e1.	Trans Health Access and Misrepresentations of Intersex People
Thursday, April 13	Karkazis, Katrina. "Looking at and Talking about Genitalia: Understanding Where Physicians and Patients Get their Ideas about What's Normal and What Isn't." <i>Journal of Medical Ethics: Medical Humanities</i> , vol. 36, no. 2, 2010, pp. 68-69.	Trans Health Access and Misrepresentations of Intersex People
Tuesday, April 18	Lorde, Audre. <i>The Cancer Journals</i> . Penguin, 1980, part 3: Power vs. Prosthesis, pp. 55-77. Garland-	Disability Discourse as Critique and Liberation Pt. 1

Date	Reading/Assignment	Theme/Discussion Questions
	Thomson, Rosemarie. "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory." <i>NWSA Journal</i> , 2002, pp. 1-32.	
Thursday, April 20	Schalk, Sami and Jina B. Kim. "Integrating Race, Transforming Feminist Disability studies." <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> , vol. 46, no. 1, 2020, pp. 31-55	Disability Discourse as Critique and Liberation Pt. 2
Tuesday, April 25	Chen, M. "Following Mercurial Affect," in <i>Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect</i> Duke UP: 2012, 189-223	Ecologies of Life: "Post-Human" Feminisms Pt. 1
Thursday, April 27	Amagnast, AS. "Strange Circulations," in <i>Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death</i> Duke UP: 2011, 223-237	Ecologies of Life: "Post-Human" Feminisms Pt. 2
Tuesday, May 2	Freeman, Andrea. "Fast Food: Oppression through Poor Nutrition." <i>California Law Review</i> , vol. 95, no. 6, 2007, pp. 2221-2259.	Food, Diet, and Nutrition as Feminist Concerns
Thursday, May 4	Hartman, S. "In the Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women's Labors," <i>Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society</i> 18(1), 2016: 166-173.	Neoliberalism and Structural Longevity
Tuesday, May 9	Maternowska, M. Catherine, Mellissa Withers, and Claire Brindis. "Gender, masculinity and migration: Mexican men and reproductive health in the Californian context." <i>Culture, health & sexuality</i> 16.8 (2014): 989-1002. Jennifer Nash, "Introduction: The Afterlives of Malaysia Goodson, or Black Mothering in Crisis," <i>Birthing Black Mothers</i> (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), pp. 1-33.	Whiteness as Anti-Black Racism
Thursday, May 11	Freeman, Emily, Ernestina Coast, and Susan F. Murray. "Men's roles in women's abortion trajectories in urban	Racialized Masculinities

Date	Reading/Assignment	Theme/Discussion Questions
Tuesday, May 16	<p>Zambia." International perspectives on sexual and reproductive health 43.2 (2017): 89-98.</p> <p>Law, Caroline. "Men on the margins? Reflections on recruiting and engaging men in reproduction research." Methodological Innovations 12.1 (2019): 2059799119829425. Lohan, Maria. "How might we understand men's health better? Integrating explanations from critical studies on men and inequalities in health." Social science & medicine 65.3 (2007): 493-504.</p>	Cisness and Racialized Masculinities

DEADLINE: OPTION
FOR THE FINAL TBD

GLOSSARY OF FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

Affect: The state or condition of being affected. Usually indicates sensation before emotional intelligibility.

Alienation: Refers to a psychic condition first advanced by Karl Marx in his *1844 Manuscripts* whereby human beings are stripped of their otherwise natural relationship with either: (1) the biological and metabolic conditions assigned to labor (*see* Embodiment); or (2) the products thereof.

Binary Logic: The ordering of reality (or ontology) into two essentially diametrically opposite groups. The binary itself is often loosely held together by historical consolidation and social taboo. The first term is often understood to be the “normative” term that conditions the second, or subordinate, term. The most notable binaries discussed in this class include:

Male/Female: Refers to the (biological) sexual differentiation of the human body usually assigned at birth and is dependent upon the intelligible presence of genitalia. Males typically have the visible signs of reproductive organs such as the penis, testes, and scrotum. Females typically have the visible signs of reproductive organs associated with the vulva: the clitoris, labia, and vaginal canal.

Man/Woman: Refers to the social functions assigned to the sexual differentiations accorded to a person birth-assigned sex. Social functions tend to follow a logic according primacy of the phallus: assertive/passive; penetrative/receptive; dominant/subservient; subject/object.

Marked/Unmarked: Refers to the conditional states associated with privileged or unprivileged status. The marked category is understood within a cultural imaginary as difference, is always seen or implied, and carries stigma. The unmarked category is understood as the very reproduction of the cultural imaginary itself. Hence man/woman follows the logic of marked/unmarked, so too does Black/white.

Masculinity/Femininity: Refers to the various expressions of gender’s social functionality that follow a similar logic assigned to the man/woman binary. Masculine traits are usually ascribed to male bodies and used to identify normative manly behaviors such as activity, productivity, and aggressivity. Feminine traits are usually ascribed to female bodies and are used to identify normative womanly behaviors such as passivity, reproductivity, and caregiving.

Public/Private: Refers to the general difference accorded to everyday life associated with Aristotle's *Politics* that accord public life a primacy of relations (political in nature) assumed by property holders. The private is the domain of individual property holders whose ownership extended, for Aristotle, over the entirety of the domain. As property holders were limited to men this relation of dominance subsumed wives, children, concubines, and slaves.

Sameness/Difference: Refers to the philosophical relations of identity associated with John Locke and the European Enlightenment. Sameness is the basis for the consolidation of the self-identity of a subject, a human being accorded with rational faculties and civility. Difference is the basis for constructing the other or non-identity of an object, a (sometimes) human being denied rational faculties and civility. It should be noted that sameness as well as identity are founded on the presence of its binary opposite, difference.

Subject/Object: Refers to the European Enlightenment's elaboration of the status of an agent or self-sufficient being (subject) and its passive non-agentic being (object) upon which the former exercises control over the latter. Subjects tend to reflect the privileges accorded to their relation within a cultural system or symbolic economy that has consolidated subjectivity (manhood or selfhood) and objectivity (womanhood or otherness). *See* Subjectivity or Object Relations.

Blackness: The ante-ontological movement of a (what is before the bodies, flesh, or pigmentation) cultural whole associated Black American lifeworlds. Associated with the Radical Black Tradition and the works of Fred Moten, Cedric Robinson, and Hortense Spillers.

Body, the: The ontological (what is assigned real or existent) entity consisting of a whole organism with visible enclosures of flesh, internal structures that may include skeleton and muscle.

Chattel Slavery: Refers to the institutional designs of human servitude lasting between the 16th and 19th centuries as a global and, more particularly, an American economy. Characterized by the total abjection and objectification of the human-in-servitude (hence chattel) and the total loss of legal and social standing as a human being.

Cis, see Trans: Refers to a normativity that defines the so-called coherence between a subject's gender and their birth-assigned sex. Recent criticisms have shown that cis (gender, sexual) tends to naturalize this "coherence" and normalize transness as pathologically "incoherent."

Color Line, the: Refers to W. E. B. DuBois's term first elaborated in *The Souls of Black Folks* wherein he named racial difference a matter of socially constructed and historically consolidated value placed on the color of the flesh. Usually denotes a racial difference in binary distinction between Black and white.

Commodity Fetish: Refers to the theory first advanced by Karl Marx most famously in the first volume of *Das Kapital* holding that capitalism and its free markets alienate human labor from the products of that labor (commodity) to such an extent that the commodity's meaningfulness outstrips its actual worth.

Community: Community is a singular-plural noun referring to a group of individual members possessing a similar psychic, historical, or affective bond. May also refer to an "imaginal bond" such as the nation.

Communities, of Color: Refers to the multiple and sometimes overlapping groups consisting of a singular community-plural characterized by non-whiteness (*see* Racialization). Criticized for its lumping together of otherwise disparate communities, such as Black American communities, whose histories and contemporary social relations are radically divergent.

Disability: A term coined in during the late-20th century activists to describe the conditional (long-term or short-term, chronic or episodic) incapacity to interact with so-called normalized standards of society/culture. The terms is often criticized for its reduction of a person to a single or series of difference of embodiments that mark them redundantly as not able-bodied. A more capacious definition refers the ways that normative accounts of the so-called able body (bipedally mobile, heterosexually reproductive, economically productive) have become coherent thereby rendering the constructed world's normativity invisible. Visible and non-visible disabilities are typically included with the latter having only recently been added.

Discourse: The term typically refers to the exchange of communication between two or more people. Its importance to critical theory changed when Michel Foucault contended that discourse consists of a domain of knowledge affirming or disaffirming conditional statements consolidated into a field or branch of science. Importantly, the term links the production of both nature and culture, holding that nature is as much a product of domains of knowability within the frameworks historically defined within culture.

Discursive: The adjectival form of discourse. Refers to the way that an object or subject is formed under the conditions particular to a discourse (e.g., biology historically produced racial differences that have been largely criticized as discursive and, therefore, not part of any natural order).

Embodiment, *see* Body: The condition or phenomenological sensation assigned to having or living within a body.

Enfleshment: A term associated with Hortense Spillers in “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” referring to the way that the body is first visualized and understood through the interface of the flesh; it is, in her argument, the first body with which slavers and colonists came in contact.

Essentialism: The philosophical or moral belief associated with medieval Christian humanists like St. Augustine who argued that God created a fixed core that is universal and prior to any constituent part of a larger whole. Essentialism holds that an essence of a thing is the eternal cause of actions, behaviors, and the production or destruction of lifeworlds. It is summed up by the Latin motto *essentia prior ad actio*.

Existentialism: The philosophy or moral belief most associated with Jean-Paul Sartre who argued that human life is an ongoing product (an accumulation of action and agency) that cannot be ascribed to an essential feature. Human life is therefore open to radical free will which is only constrained by social conditions (such as class, race, gender, ableism). Often associated with later “anti-humanist” schools of thought arguing that the term “human” is corrupted by its history with humanism. It is summed up by the Latin motto *actio prior ad essentia*.

Feminism: A heterogenous (or pluralized) collection of philosophical and social beliefs, programs, and (sometimes) political identities. Feminist theory holds that most Western models of democracy (indeed its very history) is based on a male-sex dominated social arrangement privileging the status of men as a social group. Criticism of this arrangement, or patriarchy, has been recently revised to include heteronormative reproduction, cisnormative (or nontrans) ableism, and racial exclusivity. Criticisms internal to the most recent iterations of feminism include the cisnormativity and racially exclusivity of feminism itself, including its Euro-American (or Western) centrism.

Fugitivity: A term associated with decolonial thinker Edouard Glissant that has been recently been taken up within Black Studies and Critical Race Theory. Glissant refers to fugitivity as meaningfulness particular to a historical or cultural community or set of communities which remains outside the capacity of Western thought to conceptualize. *See* Blackness and its ante-ontological status.

Gender: One part of an often tripartite description of the reproductive body (sex/gender/gender identity) that refers to the social function associated with a person’s birth-assigned sex. *See* Sex, Gender Identity.

Gender Identity: One part of an often tripartite description of the reproductive body (sex/gender/gender identity) that refers to the internal relation between (or identity of) a person’s gender and their birth-assigned sex. *See* Gender, Sex.

Historical Materialism: A philosophical model associated with the collected works of Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels in their co-authored *Communist Manifesto*. This model

elaborates the development and subsequent identity of a given social, political, and economic totality through a rigorous focus on the productive means and modes particular to moments within an historically conditioned time. Materialism is the underlying theoretical component positing the indispensable need to understand the actually existing modes of everyday life through focus on technologies, media, and human sensoria.

Intersectionality: A mode of analysis coined in the early 1990s by Kimberlé Crenshaw. Crenshaw developed the approach to illustrate and address how socio-economic inequalities affect Black women at disproportionately higher rates and under the specific circumstances these rates emerge. Crenshaw has described the origination of intersectionality as a prism through which feminism and other kinds of social justice advocacy can identify the situated antagonisms that race and gender coincide and condition life chances. It is part of the anti-racism labor that feminist approaches to social justice must incorporate.

Intersex: Refers to the often medicalized histories and narratives that mark “ambiguities” in newborn infants’ genitalia as pathological in condition and, often, argued to require medical intervention. These medicalized standards have been heavily criticized through decades of activism. Intersex is often discussed as a birth-attributable condition; but, as many have with the Intersex Society of North America have pointed out, intersex traits may not emerge until well after infancy.

Nonbinary, or Genderqueer: A social kind formed out of a relation of non-identity between a person’s birth-assigned sex and socially elaborated genders. Nonbinary communities may identify between the binary poles of man/woman or entirely outside, invoking a different set of cultural and historical markers that are claimed over and beyond Western notions of gender.

Normativity: Refers to the interlocking set of social and historical imaginaries setting the framework for what constitutes regular, ordinary, or “normal” kinds or genres of being, behavior, and action.

Object Relations, *see* Subjectivity: Refers to the imaginary (but not fictional) relationships formed out of the integration of normative subjects and subjectivities within a larger cultural totality.

Ontological, or Ontology: Refers to a theory or conventional belief underwriting what constitutes reality and real objects. Often referred to by the philosophical branch of Metaphysics.

Phenomenology: Refers to the philosophical study of experience as a process through which the experience and phenomena are registered *as experience*. This philosophy breaks with existentialism’s emphasis on the primacy of human consciousness. Phenomenology emphasizes a de-centered or non-centrality of consciousness as such and opens the field of

thought to the importance of affect and the unconscious. The motto most often associated with phenomenology is “to the things themselves.”

Power, or Relations: Typically refers to the capacity of one subject to exercise their will over another. Usually one agent can possess power and another cannot. This concept is attributed to the sociological vernacular of Max Weber. More recent scholarship has tended to adopt Michel Foucault’s concept of power as being dispersed, non-possessable, and a product of a series of interlocking relations that produce different forms of coercion in the guise of non-oppressive “knowledge.” Thus, power and knowledge become mutual expressions of one another when knowledge about the body enables prison wardens more exacting disciplinary measures to restrict movement and bodily mobility for punishment.

Productive Labor: Attributed to the work and industry of a person or class of persons whose metabolic energies (or labor) produce economically viable (or profitably) goods/commodities.

Property Relations: Refers to the kinds of relationships that emerge as a result of legal and social restrictions on who and how property (defined loosely as both land and material object) is distributed within civil society.

Race/Racialization, see Color Line: Refers to the socially assignation of value placed upon the human condition based on physiological differences. These racial divisions, or analytic as Denise Ferreira da Silva names it, took place over the course of centuries (racialization) and consolidated what is contemporarily the “vision” as color difference as racial difference. No scientific evidence exists that hasn’t been summarily discarded proving the existence of biologically significant differences for “race” as a human distinction. Its continued influence over contemporary politics and social sciences (and some natural sciences) reproduces the power-as-knowledge relation. *See Power.*

Reproductive Labor: Attributed to the work and industry of those social subjects usually restricted to the private domain and excluded from the productive labor of market economies. These include, historically, women (wives) and domestic workers (hired outside the protections of the state), or slaves and indentured servants (the former lacking the conditional status of “human” granted to the latter). Each participated under relations that favored men (husbands) as workers. Wives, domestic workers, daughters, or other-mothers were responsible for the reproduction of and well-being of children and therefore the growth of the economy’s labor force; the reproduction of everyday tasks that allowed men to enter the labor force; or the upkeep of the household so as to reduce the stress that enabled the daily operations of otherwise laboring men.

Sex, or Sexual Difference: Refers to the primary reproductive characteristics assigned to a newborn infant on the basis of male or female genitalia. Sex has become the site of ongoing criticism as the standards for what constitutes adult sex in a meaningful or universal way has been adopted. For example, some U.S. states regard sex as genital-based

while others refer to the chromosomal differences at the genetic level. Each elaboration of sex merely reaffirms the social functionality of a gender to which the latter is eventually assigned.

Sexuality: Refers to the erotic desires of a social subject that has too often been reduced to a heteronormative trope of sex-opposite attraction often presupposing a monogamous intention. Reproductive heterosexuality is generally used to ascribe what is socially understood as the “drive” or “instinct” to procreate. This has had direct effects on non-heterosexual sexualities that include dismissing same-gender eroticism (homophobia) to the legitimation of only the two-person monogamous couple (homonormative).

Social Construction: Refers to the theory that reality and its objects are constituted as “real” by and through the interdependencies of shared knowledge among peoples across history, culture, and material production. Social constructionists hold that everything is constructed to the extent that knowledge about a thing (as in *everything*) requires moving through the processes of historical and cultural meaning.

Social Reproduction, see Reproductive Labor: Refers to the labor required to keep the infrastructure of a civil society and its constituent parts (social subjects) alive and productive.

Subjectivity, see Subject/Object under Binary Logic: Refers to the capacity of a person to possess an interior psychic life in and through which feeling is expressed, explored, and enjoyed.

Trans, see Cis: Refers to the umbrella term that describes a variety of subjectivities. Some experience their normatively ascribed gender and birth-assigned sex at odds. Others describe their them in completely different vernaculars. Recent criticism among trans theorists hold that there is rarely “match” between any gender and sex and therefore push back against the “normalizing” form of dysphoria.

Whiteness: Refers to a cultural ontology that ascribes privilege to light-skin and otherwise visually “Euro-American” white social subjects. Whiteness does not depend on white populations or individual white people. It refers to the discursive and material system of rewards and punishments that includes an anti-Black racism (and classism) immanent to it which diminishes the life chances of Black and non-white people while enhancing those of ascribed as white.

EXAMPLES OF ASSIGNMENTS AWARDED FULL POINTS

The following examples were taken from recent semesters and demonstrate the following for Journals: (1) A review of the material; (2) a regularity of reference to the material; (3) critical themes of import for the student. For Quizzes: (1), (2), and (3) elaboration of particular theme for which the question asked. Answers were edited “[...]”

Journal Entries [Simone de Beauvoir and becoming “woman”]:

This idea that one isn't born a woman yet becomes one rings true to me and my own understanding of gender in itself personally I believe that gender isn't a real thing but rather a social construct that is taught and we learn through being socialized. Femininity is not inherent but rather constructed. De Beauvoir states in the second sex that women have been treated as inferior and as “secondary ” due to the fact of society programming women to fulfill the needs of men and exist only in relation to men thus not being whole or developed but rather existing to please or serve, constantly seek validation from men inherently teaching women that their worth is connected to the way men perceive them enforcing the beliefs that being “pretty” or “desirable” is the utmost achievement of a woman, and, the historic imbalance of rights and political power or public influence. [...] De Beauvoir argues that a woman is taught from childhood to merely be an accessory rather than a full fledged person.

Quiz Answer [Hortense Spillers, the “flesh,” and motherhood denied]:

The meaning of assigning a "female" form to the social position of "gender" is another nod to Black women being marked that label female to Black women speaks to how black women are gatekept from a lot of traditional "womanly" things reserved only for white women. [...] The figure of the Black woman, while she is valued for being able to procreate the status of mother is stripped away from her due to her not being able to care for, protect, or even claim her children because of the legal condition *partus sequitur ventrum*, or that which is born follows the womb. The Flesh stands before the body because the Black woman's gender is undone. The theft of the body becomes a displacement from social identities and the undoing of the Black female gender as a symbolically dense power. It is not the same as her white counterpart because it is complicated and subverted by her race. The body is stolen or disposed of. Spillers argues that the Black female gender, that of female subjectivity, because it is written out of cultural power, gives the woman-subject a unique position to name herself, to be insurgent.

FINAL OPTION 1: EXAMINATION QUESTION EXAMPLE/INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions: You must provide answers as indicated for each part. Please read the instructions carefully. You may choose to answer any 3 of the 5 “short answer” questions in PART ONE, but you must additionally answer 2 of the 4 “essay answers” from PART TWO.

Part One | Short Answers (30pts): Answer ONLY three in any order. You should answer any three as distinct questions. A 200-250 word paragraph for each answer should suffice. Please double space your answers in 12 pt. font. Reference the reading material if given the chance/prompt. Each answer is worth 10 points.

Part Two | Essay Answers (70pts): Answer two, and no more than two, from the following. Please provide your answers in essay format, i.e., 500 -750 words, double-spaced, and in 12 pt. font. These answers are not unlike your quiz responses. Again, each question should be treated separately. You should have two distinct answers that address their respective questions. For these answers, reference the reading material when and where you can. Each question is stand alone. They SHOULD NOT relate to one another. Each answer is worth 35 points.

FINAL OPTION 2: RESEARCH PAPER

Overview: The research paper is intended to provide you with the opportunity to explore with more depth and examine with greater empirical vigor a topic of your choice. My advice would be to extend your archival topic—which should make your decision less complicated. If you do expand your archival topic, you should consider the critical object of your archival trips to be your primary source.

Research-Related Requirements: Your papers should include a minimum of the following types of sources: your primary source as a citation; between seven and ten secondary research articles; and/or one or more book chapters. Whether primary or secondary, articles should appear in reputable feminist, gender, women's, or sexuality journals (acceptable journals include: *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society*; *representations*; *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*; *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*; *Wagadu: A Journal of Transnational Women's and Gender Studies*; *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*; *Gender & History*; *Feminist Legal Studies*; *Differences: a Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*; *Camera Obscura*; *Journal of Lesbian Studies*; *Women Studies Quarterly*; *Gender, Technology, and Development*). Although you may include articles from popular culture sources and Blogs they will not count toward the article requirement. I would urge you to locate scholarship that appears within the last decade, if possible.

Format-Related Requirements: The paper should be approximately 15 pages in length (excluding cover page and/or bibliography). The paper will be written in Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition) with shortened footnotes. Please adhere to the “crib sheet” that is attached to this syllabus. Quick reference: Title page: Name, title, class, section, date. Body of paper consists of paragraph format with headings and subheadings for organizational clarity. Citations: appear as footnotes (superscript numbers that direct readers to a “note” located beneath an automatically generated horizontal line); each footnote should use the “Short Title” and/or Author-Last, Pagination structure. Reference page: end of paper with centered title “Bibliography” that only include references to works you have cited within the paper. Margins: must be one inch on every side. Spacing: double. Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt. Page numbers: footer, bottom right-hand of page.

Grading Rubric: The following are weighted criteria. These are minimum requirements.

Content (40pts): Contains the following aspects of a traditional research paper: “Title Page,” “Introduction,” “Background/Body,” “Method [Possibly],” and “Conclusion/Discussion of Findings.” Sections have tailored explanations and are written in paragraph form.

Each paragraph contains a topic sentence and completes a thought or extends into a transitional new area of thought.

Research (30pts): Provided original conclusions and critical analysis of existing research. Provide future directions for research.

Clarity (20pts): Written in clear and understandable language
Logical order Provides connections among papers Succinct language

Citation and Grammatical Consistency (10pts): Includes section headings and subheadings consistently. Utilizes footnotes with minimal discursive or explanatory notation added.

Helpful Note on Scaffolding Your work: Try to find review articles and other basic information to use for background (outside of what is provided in a textbook). Find about three articles and locate their methods/discussion of findings section. A good place to start would be Google Scholar. Make sure to look at any footnotes and/or each paper's own bibliography for possible research to use for your own writing.

Scaffolding Checklist

- A Clearly Stated Research Question / Hypothesis?
- Background Information for Research Topic Present?
- Secondary Literature?
- Descriptions and Summaries of Empirical Findings?
- Summaries of Findings?
- Critical Discussion of Topic in Main Body of Paper?
- Findings from Previous Research are Synthesized into Current Paper?
- A Conclusion Section with Clear Restatement of Thesis and Findings?
- Proposed Directions for Future Research and/or Gaps in Present Research?