

GWS 305

Feminist Theories  
Course Syllabus

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Spring 2013  
Mondays & Wednesdays  
3:00 – 4:15 pm  
Social Sciences Building, Room 312

Dr. Adam Geary  
Gender & Women's Studies Department

Gender & Women's Studies Dept.  
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Office Hours: sign up  
online through D2L link

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, we will engage foundational authors and concepts in feminist theory. Emphasis will be placed upon the social experience and regulation of gender in its intersections with race, class, sexuality, economy, and nation. The goal of the course is to “do theory” — rather than “knowing” or “mastering” it — so as to enable you to develop your own, critical relation to contemporary social relations and political movements. Thus, no attempt will be made to survey the entire field of feminist theory, even were such a survey possible in one semester (which it isn't!). Instead, I hope that you will come away from the class with a “tool kit” of concepts, authors, problems, and statements to develop your own feminist theoretical and political analyses.

REQUIRED TEXTS: available at the UA Bookstore

1. Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Crossing Press, 2007/1984.
2. Michael Schwalbe, *Rigging the Game: How Inequality is Reproduced in Everyday Life*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
3. Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, eds., *Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology*, South End Press, 2006.
4. Laura Kipnis, *Against Love: A Polemic*, Pantheon Books, 2003.
5. Additional essays and readings are available through the D2L course site: <http://d2l.arizona.edu>

GRADING:

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Attendance & Participation:	20%
Preparatory Writing Assignments:	20%
3 Midterm Essays:	60%

- A portion of the final grade will be determined by your participation in the class. This will be weighted toward the quality of your participation, including regular and timely attendance, preparation (i.e., doing the reading, bringing the books), respectful and engaged listening to others, and contributions to discussions. Additionally, some of the work of this class will be done in groups, occasionally outside class. Your contributions to these groups will affect your participation grade.
- You will be asked to complete a number of short, preparatory writing exercises (usually one paragraph or less). These assignments will sometimes be given out ahead of time, sometimes done in class. Because these will be the basis of class activities, *they will not be accepted at any other time than the class in which they are due.*
- You are to write three (3) midterm essays dealing with the assigned reading materials, which will be graded. Due dates are listed in the course schedule.
- You must complete a preponderance of the course assignments to receive a passing grade for the course.
- Plagiarism or other academic dishonesty is grounds for failing the course.

COURSE POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Enrollment in this class constitutes your agreement to these and all University student policies.

1. Course Readings: Assigned readings are to be completed on the day they are assigned, and you are expected to *have the assigned text with you in class* on the days that it is being discussed.
2. Attendance: Regular and timely attendance is expected and will be factored into your course grade. *More than 4 absences without an extraordinary reason may be grounds for failing the course.* The University recognizes the following:
  - All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion; and
  - Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be honored.*In order to receive credit for any assignment missed because of a religious holiday or Dean's excuse, you must make appropriate arrangements with the Dr. Geary before the absence.*
3. Late Papers: Midterm essays 1 & 2 will be accepted late, but will not receive comments from me, either written or verbal. Essays later than one week will be

graded down 1/3 grade for each day or partial day that they are late. *The final essay, however, will not be accepted after the posted deadline unless you have made an arrangement with me in advance.* (The late paper policy does not apply to the regular written preparation exercises, which must be submitted in the class in which they are used.)

4. **Email:** In general, email should be restricted to simple, yes-no questions or emergency information. Questions requiring extensive answers should be reserved for the classroom or addressed to me during office hours. It is my policy to respond to email messages *only* if they are addressed and signed properly, with at least passable grammar. Additionally, normal turn-around time for email from me may be as long as 48 hours.
5. **Academic Integrity — Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is using the ideas or words of someone else without acknowledging them as the other person's. Plagiarism on any assignment is grounds for a *failing grade for the course*.
  - This course will following the official academic integrity and plagiarism policies of the UA History Department. You are strongly encourage you to read these policies, and ask questions if you are unclear.  
<http://history.arizona.edu/node/757>
  - You are also encouraged to read the University's policy in the Code of Academic Integrity:  
<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policiesandcodes/codeofacademicintegrity>
  - Additionally, there are a number of plagiarism links available through the University Library's website:  
<http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>.
6. **Classroom Behavior:** The following, normative expectations hold for this class. Dr. Geary reserves the right to ask you to leave the class if you routinely or egregiously flout them.
  - You are bound by the Student Code of Conduct:  
<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policiesandcodes/studentcodeofconduct>
  - **Timeliness:** As a rule, you are expected to arrive and seat yourself in the classroom at or before the official beginning of the class period. Additionally, you are not to depart or prepare to depart prior to the official end of the class period.
  - Cell phones, pagers, instant-messaging programs, and all other communication devices *must be turned off or silenced* during the period of the class. Laptops are *not* to be used during class.
  - **Threatening Behavior:** All forms of threatening behavior are in violation of the Student Code of Conduct and are unwelcome in this class. Threatening behavior will result in your immediate removal from the class, and you will have to petition Dr. Geary to be re-instated. See the University's policy on threatening behavior at [http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/safety\\_related\\_policies](http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/safety_related_policies).
  - **Harassment and Intimidation:** Any form of harassment or intimidation, including but not limited to threatening behavior, is also in violation of the Student Code of Conduct and unwelcome in the class. Harassment or intimidation may result in removal from the class, at which point you would have to petition Dr. Geary to be re-instated. See the University's policy on harassment and intimidation at [http://equity.arizona.edu/non-discrimination\\_anti-harassment](http://equity.arizona.edu/non-discrimination_anti-harassment).

7. Disabilities Accommodations: Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements must register with the Disability Resource Center. If you qualify for services through DRC, bring your letter of accommodations to Dr. Geary as soon as possible.

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**The student is hereby notified that information contained in this course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the Instructor.**

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READING SCHEDULE:

[R] = Essay or article found in the course reader (on D2L)

*Feminist Movement I: Key terms*

- W, Jan 9      • Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider*
- M, Jan 14     • Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*:  
                   • "Poetry is Not a Luxury"  
                   • "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power"  
                   • "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action"
- W, Jan 16     • Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*:  
                   • "Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference"  
                   • "Learning from the 60s"  
                   • "Sexism: An American Disease in Blackface"  
                   • "An Open Letter to Mary Daly"  
                   • "Man Child: A Black Lesbian Feminist's Response"  
                   • "Scratching the Surface: Some Notes on Barriers to Women and Loving"  
                   • "Grenada Revisited: An Interim Report"
- M, Jan 21     Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday — no class meeting
- W, Jan 23     • Angela Davis, "How Does Change Happen?" [online; link on D2L]  
                   • bell hooks, "Theory as Liberatory Practice" [R]
- M, Jan 28     • Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*:  
                   • "The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism"  
                   • "Eye to Eye: Black Women, Hatred, and Anger"
- W, Jan 30     • Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*:  
                   • "An Interview: Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich"  
                   • bell hooks, "Revolutionary Feminism: An Anti-Racist Agenda" [R]

Structuring Inequality & Exclusion

- M, Feb 4 • Evidence of U.S. economic inequality [R]  
 • M. Oliver & T. Shapiro, "Sub-Prime as a Black Catastrophe" [R]
- W, Feb 6 • Michael Schwalbe, *Rigging the Game*, Intro. – chapter 2 (pp. 1-84)
- M, Feb 11 • *Rigging the Game*, chapters 3 – 4 (pp. 85-135)
- W, Feb 13 • Midterm Essay #1 writing workshop: proposal due in class**
- M, Feb 18 • *Rigging the Game*, chapters 5 – 6 (pp. 136-199)
- W, Feb 20 • Manning Marable, "Structural Racism and American Democracy" [R]

**Friday, February 22nd Midterm Essay #1 due to D2L dropbox at 9:00 pm**

- M, Feb 25 • *Rigging the Game*, chapters 7 – 8 (pp. 200-275)
- W, Feb 27 • Lisa Duggan, "Neoliberalism versus Global Feminism" [R]
- M, Mar 4 • Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex" [R]
- W, Mar 6 • Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges" [R]

**March 11-15 Spring Break**

Women, Violence and the State

- M, Mar 18 • Kimberle Crenshaw, "Color-blind dreams and racial nightmares" [R]
- W, Mar 20 • Crenshaw, "Color-blind" (cont.)
- M, Mar 25 • Arizona HB2281, SB1070, and related documents [R]
- W, Mar 27 • Midterm Essay #2 writing workshop: proposal due in class**
- M, Apr 1 • Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, eds., *Color of Violence*, Intro. – chapter 3 (pp. 1 – 41)
- W, Apr 3 • *Color of Violence*, chapters 4 – 7 (pp. 42 – 78)

**Friday, April 5th Midterm Essay #2 due to D2L dropbox at 9:00 pm**

- M, Apr 8 • *Color of Violence*, chapters 8 – 15 (pp. 81 – 134)
- W, Apr 10 • *Color of Violence*, chapters 16 – 21 (pp. 135 – 188)

*Intimate Politics*

- M, Apr 15 • Laura Kipnis, *Against Love*, read the entire book
- W, Apr 17 • *Against Love* (continued)  
• re-read Audre Lorde, “Uses of the Erotic,” in *Sister Outsider*

*Feminist Movement II: Visions/Practice/Politics*

- M, Apr 22 • *Color of Violence*, chapters 22 – 26 (pp. 191-230)  
• beyondmarriage.org, “Beyond same-sex marriage: A new strategic vision for all our families & relationships” [R]
- W, Apr 24 • *Color of Violence*, chapters 27 – 30 (pp. 231-269)
- M, Apr 29 • **Midterm Essay #3 writing workshop: proposal due in class**
- W, May 1 • Judith Butler, “Beside Oneself” [R]

**Tuesday, May 7th                      Midterm Essay #3 due to D2L dropbox by 5:00 pm  
No late papers accepted.**