

# Feminism (PHIL10022)

2020/2021 Semester 1

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## Times

Lecture	Monday	11:10 -13:00	Released Online
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Further information about class timing and format will be available on the LEARN page for the course.

## Course Description

What is feminism about? Feminist philosophy attempts to conceptualize and investigate the very problem that feminist movements address. *What does it mean to say that women are oppressed? What is at the root of gender-based oppression? What other parts of our social world are inextricably linked to gender-based inequality? And what would it mean to achieve feminist liberation?* This course provides an overview of some influential 20<sup>th</sup> century currents in feminist thinking, from a philosophical perspective. We will explore a range of diverse - and often divergent - traditions, including liberal, existentialist, marxist and post-structuralist feminisms. The course will touch on themes such as sexuality and reproduction; work and family; racism; and heterosexuality and patriarchy.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be better able to:

- Explain key ideas and debates in 20<sup>th</sup> century Feminist Philosophy.
- Relate, compare, and contrast the positions of various authors studied in the course.
- Think critically about questions central to contemporary Feminism.
- Articulate arguments succinctly and clearly in an essay format.

## Accessing Lectures & Readings

All lectures will be made available on the course's Learn page.

All readings will be available on the [course's Resource List](#). Read more information on using Resource Lists [HERE](#).

## Topics and Readings

*Week 1*     **Introduction:** What makes women 'oppressed'? Some philosophical questions.

- Marilyn Frye

"Oppression" in *The Politics of Reality* (1983)

### I - Diagnoses & Frameworks

#### Liberal Feminisms

*Week 2*

- Harriet Taylor Mill

*Enfranchisement of Women* (1851) p. 95-101

- Betty Friedan

"The Problem that Has No Name" in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)

- bell hooks

"Black Women Shaping Feminist Theory" in *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (1984)

#### Radical Feminisms

*Week 3*

- Catharine A. MacKinnon

"Sexuality" in *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (1989)

- John Stoltenberg

"How Men Have (a) Sex", "What is 'Good Sex'" in *Refusing to be a Man* (1989)

Optional:

Catharine A. Mackinnon: "Sex Equality: On Difference and Dominance" in *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (1989) [Available on Learn]

#### Existentialist Feminisms

*Week 4*

- Simone de Beauvoir

"Volume I - Introduction" in *The Second Sex* (1949)

- Nancy Bauer

"Beauvoir on the Allure of Self-Objectification" in *How to do Things with Pornography* (2015)

Optional:

Nancy Bauer: "Lady Power" in *How to do Things with Pornography* (2015)

## **Marxist Feminisms**

Week 5

- Heidi Hartmann

*The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (1981)

- Silvia Federici

“Why Sexuality is Work” in *Revolution at Point Zero* (1975)

Optional:

Christine Delphy: “The Main Enemy” in *Close to Home* (1984)

## **Week 6 Lesbian & Heterosexual Feminisms**

- Monique Wittig

“The Category of Sex”, “One is Not Born a Woman” in *The Straight Mind* (1992)

- Ryan, Barbara

*Beyond Embarrassment: Feminism and Adult Heterosexual Love* (1993)

Optional:

Frye, Marilyn: *Do you have to be a lesbian to be a feminist?* (1990)

bell hooks: “Ending Female Sexual Oppression” in *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (1984)

## **Post-Structuralist Feminisms**

Week 7

- Judith Butler

*Gender Trouble* (1990) Chapter 1, sections I-V pp. 1-34

- Linda Martín Alcoff

“The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory” in *Visible Identities* (2006)

## **Black Feminisms & Transnational Feminisms**

Week 8

- Patricia Hill Collins

*Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought* (1986)

- Uma Narayan

*Contesting Cultures: “Westernization”, Respect for Culture and Third-World Feminists in Dislocating Cultures* (1997)

Optional:

The Combahee River Collective: *A Black Feminist Statement* (1979)

## **II - Feminist Liberation**

### **Existentialist Liberation**

Week 9

- Simone de Beauvoir

“The Independent Woman”, “Conclusion” in *The Second Sex* (1949)

### Trans\* Feminisms & Posthuman Feminisms

Week 10

- Sandy Stone

*The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto* (1992)

- Rosi Braidotti

*Four Theses on Posthuman Feminism in Anthropocene Feminism* (2017)

### Future Genders?

Week 11

- R.W. (Raewyn) Connell

“Present and Future” in *Gender and Power* (1987)

- Riki Wilchins

“The Limits of Transgender?” In *Burn the Binary!* (2017)

- Judith Lorber

“Paradoxes of Gender Redux” in *Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research* (2018)

## Assessment

- **Midterm Essay** (1500 words) 40 %

DUE: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, by 12 noon

- **Final Essay** (2500 words) 55 %

DUE: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December, by 12 noon

- **Participation** 5%

Weekly Critical Responses on Learn Discussion Boards

## Weekly Responses

There will be an **open discussion forum for every week** on our Learn page. Everyone is free to post and reply. This a peer-discussion space for this class. As part of this assignment, some students will have to create ‘conversation-starter’ posts and others will have to reply to a starter, on assigned dates. Every student will have to post *at least 2* conversation-starters during the semester. Every student will have to post *at least 3* replies to existing threads during the semester. You will receive a mark on each post and reply, from 0 to 1. You can find the requirements, deadlines, rubric, your assigned dates, and advice about what to write on our Learn page for ‘assessment’

## Questions?

For all **general questions about the course** please use the GENERAL COURSE QUESTIONS discussion forum. This includes questions about the Learn page, availability of lectures and readings and general academic matters. Before you post, look in the forum to see if someone already posted the same question. Questions will be answered regularly, throughout the week.

For **administrative questions** (e.g. about submission of assignments), you should contact the Course Secretary.

If you have a question regarding **specific lecture content** you should ask it

- in the lecture Q&A discussion (on Mentimeter)
- in your tutorial group
- during (online) office hours

If you have a question about specifically academic matters **that pertains *only to you*** (e.g. special circumstances) contact the Course Organiser via email.