

SOC/GENWS 904: Feminist Theory and Practice

Tuesdays 2:30PM - 5:00PM

Sterling Hall 3425

Instructor

Eunsil Oh (8116B Sewell Social Science Building; email: eunsil.oh@wisc.edu)

Office hours (make an appointment using <https://eunsiloh.youcanbook.me> or via email). Please email beforehand if you would like to meet via zoom.

Description and Goal of the Course

This is a graduate seminar that aims to create a space where graduate students can practice feminist theorizing. While being aware of the trans-disciplinary nature of feminist theory, this course will focus on how sociologists have been building and applying feminist theories in their empirical research.

The substantial contents of this course are divided into three parts. I will call these parts and sub-sections *Seasons* and *Episodes* (in this Netflix era). Season 1 focuses on building informative knowledge on feminist theories. This season has episodes that cover several concepts and -isms. In particular, we aim to draw conceptual maps based on contemporary feminist theories and on debates about categorization of sex/gender. Season 2 uses feminist theories to understand the knowledge production, reproduction, and disruptions. Episodes include readings and discussions on standpoint theory, realism, colonialism, intersectionality, and Black feminist thoughts. Season 3 covers new studies – mostly books - conducted by feminist scholars with an aim to learn the art of practicing feminist theories.

In addition to the three-season structure, we will practice feminist theorizing in a four-stage structured workshop format to develop individual projects through peer and instructor support. Throughout the semester, we will use our class time to have workshops that are directly related to developing each student's own project. I encourage students to come with their own field(s) of research interest. This can be a) a field statement for the prelim they would like to develop during the semester; b) the front-end of a dissertation or master's thesis proposal; c) the literature review or theory part of their dissertation that they would like to publish to a review journal. Please use this class to develop your project with the insights that feminist theories offer.

Format of the Course

The general format of each class is as follows: We will have a weekly check-in (10 mins) followed by a student-led presentation and discussion of the assigned readings (60 mins). After a short break, we will have a session that covers students' weekly questions posted online (20 mins) followed by clarification and discussion time facilitated by the student leader of that week (30 mins). The rest of 20 mins of class will be led by the instructor to clarify some of the issues and to provide a brief lecture on the key takeaways. For the classes that we have workshops, we are going to reserve the last 25 or more minutes of the class (thus, shorten the second part of the course) for our individual research projects which will give you a space to write, outline, and do conceptual mapping.

In-person attendance of the class is expected as of now. However, the instructor will be carefully watching the situation related to Corona and will be mindful about the fact that students have been going through a challenging time due to the pandemic in their academic journey.

Announcements, topics, readings, and assignments for the course are detailed on the course Canvas site. Please email the instructor if you have difficulty accessing the site.

Assignments and Grades

1	Weekly assignments: Complete/Incomplete The first weekly assignment is a pre-class question due at noon on the Monday before class. This should be on one issue that emerged after reading the assigned contents. The second weekly assignment is a post-class reflection memo due at noon on the Friday after class.	13*20 260
2	Class discussion leading: Points . Once per term (we will have a discussion on whether we would like to lead twice and pair-up), you will lead the class by giving a lecture on the contents and by leading the discussion.	70*2 140
3	Workshops: Complete/Incomplete There will be four workshops and assignments for each one. Deadlines vary, please refer to the Canvas announcements and emails.	4*100 400
4	Final review paper: Points 15-20 double-spaced pages review paper that is due at 5pm on May 10 th	50+150 200
		1000 pts

Submission Instructions

Written assignments are turned into the Canvas site. Specific guidelines will be outlined and uploaded in Canvas. Most of the time, the instructor will create a space in the Discussion part of Canvas. There will be weeks when the Assignment part of Canvas will be used. Because student work needs to be read by the class before discussions, extensions will not be available, except in extreme circumstances.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

An Overview

W1	Jan23	Introduction
W2	Jan30	Landscaping Feminism (I): Feminist Theory in Sociology
W3	Feb6	Landscaping Feminism (II): Contemporary Feminist Theory
W4	Feb13	The Category Problem (I): Sex, Gender, and Trans
W5	Feb20	The Category Problem (II): Performance and Hegemonic Femininity and Masculinity
W6	Feb27	Standpoint Theory, Realism, and Constructionism
W7	Mar5	Politics and Ethics of Representation

W8	Mar12	Black Feminist Thoughts
W9	Mar19	Multiracial Feminism and Intersectionality
W10	Mar26	SPRING BREAK
W11	Apr2	Demography
W12	Apr9	Work and Family
W13	Apr16	Post-Colonial Theories
W14	Apr23	Trans Theories
W15	Apr30	PRESENTATIONS

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

Readings: *Mandatory Supplementary/optional*

W1: Trailer

Feminist Theory and Practice

hooks, bell. 1991. "Theory as Liberatory Practice," *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 4(1): 1-12.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics." *U. Chi. Legal F.* (1989): 139-167.

McMillan Cottom, Tressie. 2018. "Thick," Pp. 1-31. In *Thick*. The New Press.

Lorde, Audre. 1984. "Transformation of Silence into Language and Action," Pp. 40-44. In *Sister/Outsider*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press.

"I found social theory exciting and endlessly fascinating, because it grappled with big and important questions about freedom, rationality, individuality, inequality, and solidarity." (Chad Goldberg 2009)

Note: Please come to class knowing the 2-3 weeks that you are interested in leading the discussion and class.

SEASON 1_MAPPING THE IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

W2: Episode 1

Landscaping Feminism (I): Feminist Theory in Sociology

DeVault, Marjorie L. "Talking back to sociology: Distinctive contributions of feminist methodology." *Annual review of sociology* 22, no. 1 (1996): 29-50.

Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. "Feminist theory and sociology: Underutilized contributions for mainstream theory." *Annual review of sociology* 23, no. 1 (1997): 97-120

Ferguson, Kathy E. "Feminist theory today." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (2017): 269-286.

Huber, Joan. "Lenski effects on sex stratification theory." *Sociological theory* 22, no. 2 (2004): 258-268.

Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. "The varieties of gender theory in sociology." In *Handbook of the sociology of gender*, pp. 3-23. Springer, Boston, MA, 2006.

W3: Episode 2

Landscaping Feminism (II): Contemporary Feminist Theory

Note: Another way to instruct 'the landscape of contemporary feminist theories' is by dividing (Neo)Liberal, Radical/Care, Material, and Socialist Feminism. Other ways also exist. However, I have decided to focus on contemporary sociologists' and hooks's ways of feminist theory mapping.

hooks, bell. *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto Press, 2000.

W4: Episode 3

The Category Problem (I): Sex, Gender, and Trans

Butler, Judith. 1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. New York: Routledge. p1-16.

Butler, Judith. 1999. *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. 10th Anniversary Edition. New York: Routledge. Chapter 1 and Conclusion

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Integrating disability, transforming feminist theory." *NWSA journal* (2002): 1-32.

Bettcher, Talia Mae and Ann Garry, 2009, *Transgender studies and feminism: Theory, politics, and gender realities* (special issue), *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, 24 (3).

Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" *Theatre Journal* 40(4): 1998, pp. 519-531.

Davis, Heath Fogg. "Sex-classification policies as transgender discrimination: An intersectional critique." *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 1 (2014): 45-60.

(clip) <https://youtu.be/lpzVc7s-e8>

W5: Episode 4

The Category Problem (II): Performance and the Hegemony of Hegemonic Femininity and Masculinity

Connell, Robert W., and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept." *Gender & society* 19, no. 6 (2005): 829-859.

Yang, Yuchen. "What's hegemonic about hegemonic masculinity? Legitimation and beyond." *Sociological Theory* 38, no. 4 (2020): 318-333.

Laura Hamilton, Elizabeth A. Armstrong, J. Lotus Seeley, Elizabeth M. Armstrong. "Hegemonic Femininities and Intersectional Domination," *Sociological Theory*, 2019. Vol. 37(4): 315-341.

Workshop ONE: Syllabus Making —The purpose for this workshop is to create one undergraduate course and one graduate course that focuses on feminism. Explore how sociologists and feminists have been teaching courses on the topic of feminism. Create your own syllabi (two in total). This should be submitted via Canvas by 5pm on Monday (February 19th) in preparation for the in-class workshop.

SEASON_2 FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGISTS

W6: Episode 1

Standpoint Theory, Realism, and Constructionism

Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14: 575-599.

Harding, Sandra. "Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is 'strong objectivity?'" *The Centennial Review* 36.3 (1992): 437-470.

Sweet, Paige L. "Who Knows? Reflexivity in Feminist Standpoint Theory and Bourdieu." *Gender & Society* 34, no. 6 (2020): 922-950.

Sweet, Paige L. "The feminist question in realism." *Sociological Theory* 36, no. 3 (2018): 221-243.

Scott, Joan W. 1991. "The Evidence of Experience," *Critical Inquiry* 17(4): 773-797.

Albert, Katelin, Jonah Stuart Brundage, Paige Sweet, and Frédéric Vandenberghe. "Towards a critical realist epistemology?" *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 50, no. 3 (2020): 357-372.

W7: Episode 2

Politics and Ethics of Representation

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" *Feminist Review* 30(1), (1988): 61-88.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 2003. "Under western eyes" revisited: Feminist solidarity through anticapitalist struggles." *Signs* (2): 499-535.

Fauzia Husain. 2021. "Halal Dating, Purdah, and Postfeminism: What the Sexual Projects of Pakistani Women Can Tell Us About Agency." *Signs* 45(3).

W8: Episode 3

Black Feminist Thoughts

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1986. "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought," *Social Problems* 33 (6): 14-32.

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge, 2002. (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 8, and 11)

Workshop TWO: Engaging the Literature—Choose two journal articles or one book that is the most important to your own research interest and write 1 single-spaced memo about how your project builds upon, extends, or critiques this article theoretically and/or empirically. Submit this short memo by 5pm on Monday, March 11th in preparation for the in-class workshop.

W9: Episode 4

Multiracial Feminism and Intersectionality

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241-1299.

Choo, Hae Yeon and Myra Marx Ferree. 2010. "Practicing Intersectionality in Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis of Inclusions, Interactions and Institutions in the Study of Inequalities," *Sociological Theory* 28 (2): 129-149.

McCall, Leslie. "The complexity of intersectionality." *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society* 30.3 (2005): 1771-1800.

Alexander-Floyd, Nikol G. "Disappearing acts: Reclaiming intersectionality in the social sciences in a post-Black feminist era." *Feminist Formations* 24.1 (2012): 1-25.

W10: Spring Break (No class on March 26th)

SEASON_3 FEMINIST PRACTITIONERS

W11: Episode 1

Demography

Littlejohn, Krystale E. *Just Get on the Pill: The Uneven Burden of Reproductive Politics*. Univ of California Press, 2021.

Homan, Patricia. "Structural sexism and health in the United States: A new perspective on health inequality and the gender system." *American Sociological Review* 84, no. 3 (2019): 486-516.

Nash, Jennifer C. *Birthing Black Mothers*. Duke University Press, 2021.

Dow, Dawn Marie. "Integrated motherhood: Beyond hegemonic ideologies of motherhood." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 78, no. 1 (2016): 180-196.

Workshop THREE: Finding a Model Review Article and Reverse Outlining —This exercise is for you to familiarize yourself with the structure of a journal, review article including its component, style, and length. Examples of journals that publish review pieces are *Annual Review of Sociology* and *Sociology of Compass*. Choose a model article from a journal that reviews the topic of your interest (i.e., gender in East Asia), and bring an outline (write in detail what each paragraph is doing) of the article to class, taking note of the structure and the length of each section of the article.

W12 Episode 2

Gender, Work, and Family

Barnes, R.J.D., 2015. *Raising the race: Black career women redefine marriage, motherhood, and community*. Rutgers University Press.

Dow, D.M., 2016. Integrated motherhood: Beyond hegemonic ideologies of motherhood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 78(1), pp.180-196.

Randles, J., 2021. "Willing to do anything for my kids": Inventive mothering, diapers, and the inequalities of carework. *American Sociological Review*, 86(1), pp.35-59.

Rottenberg, Catherine. "Neoliberal feminism and the future of human capital." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 42, no. 2 (2017): 329-348.

Canaday, M., 2023. *Queer Career: Sexuality and Work in Modern America*. Princeton University Press.

W13: Episode 3

Post-Colonial Theories

Moussawi, Ghassan. *Disruptive Situations: Fractal Orientalism and Queer Strategies in Beirut*, Temple University Press, 2021.

Hoang, Kimberly Kay, *Dealing in Desire: Asian Ascendancy, Western Decline, and the Hidden Currencies of Global Sex Work*. University of California Press. 2015.

Kimberly Hoang, "Competing Technologies of Embodiment: Pan-Asian Modernity and Third World Dependency in Vietnam's Contemporary Sex Industry," *Gender & Society* 28(4):513-536. 2014.

W14: Episode 4

Political Economy of Sexuality: Trans Theories

Meadow, Tey. *Trans kids: Being gendered in the twenty-first century*. University of California Press, 2018.

Mason, Karen Oppenheim. 1986. "The status of women: Conceptual and methodological issues in demographic studies." In *Sociological forum*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 284-300.

Carla A. Pfeffer, Purdue University, "Normative Resistance and Inventive Pragmatism: Negotiating Structure and Agency in Transgender Families," *Gender & Society* 26(4):574-602. 2012.

Laurel Westbrook and Kristen Schilt, "Doing Gender, Determining Gender: Transgender People, Gender Panics, and the Maintenance of the Sex/Gender/Sexuality System," *Gender & Society* 28(1):32-57. 2014.

Course Review Paper Progress Report – Please upload by 5pm on Monday (April 29th) 1) a list of articles and books that you are reviewing and 2) a draft of your review manuscript.

EPILOGUE

W15: Epilogue

Practicing Feminist Theorizing

In class, we will have 1) recap session; 2) group discussion; and 3) peer-reviewing time.

Sweet, Paige L. "The sociology of gaslighting." *American Sociological Review* 84, no. 5 (2019): 851-875.

Students will be grouped based on their specific research interest. Each student will read 2-3 drafts of their peers and write a comment/review memo (4-6 paragraphs).

Final Workshop: Moving Forward Together —This exercise is for you to familiarize yourself with the peer review process and to learn that developing your ideas involves a collective endeavor. By the end of class (or by 5pm May 1st), please upload and share your review.

-----*Final review papers are due at 5pm on May 10th -----

IMPORTANT MATTERS

Number One Rule

We will try our best to be critical about the privileges that we have and have benefited from. Ignoring the existence of systemic racism and sexism will be considered as an intellectual humiliation in this course.

Respect

All are welcome in this course regardless of your age, sex, gender, race, national origin, disability, background, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or other identified or protected status. Class members are expected to respect others' backgrounds and to contribute to a healthy learning environment in all course activities. This course is based on respect; any willful disrespect of the beliefs, opinions, or actions of others will not be tolerated. We are all, including the teaching team, both learners and teachers in this class. Your ideas will be received with the utmost respect even when in conflict with others' opinions. We want you to feel comfortable in sharing your thoughts, comments, and questions, even if they turn out to be misconceptions. If you ever feel you are not being respected by anyone that is part of this class, please contact us via phone, email, letter, or in person. Furthermore, the policy of UW-Madison states: Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background.

General In-class and Online Rule

You are responsible for reading all assigned materials before coming to class, and you should make your best effort to contribute positively to class discussion.

Assignments and Exams

Turn in your own work. There is zero tolerance towards sharing answers (amongst the classmates) or plagiarizing others' work.

Classroom Etiquette

When class begins, please turn off and put away electronic devices (laptops, phones, etc.) and other distractions. Electronics will only be allowed for accessibility reasons or during predetermined activities.

- Respect classmates, instructors, and yourself. Provocative ideas and questions are encouraged; do not be afraid to voice your opinion just because it may be different. However, avoid language whose sole purpose is to provoke or disparage others.
- We are building a conversation. Learn and use your classmates' names. Add to the current conversation. If you contribute frequently, allow others to speak before speaking again.
- Refrain from packing up or leaving until class is over; lecture will end on time.

Department and University-wide Policies

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Through McBurney Connect, students generate a Faculty Notification Letter for each class section in which they are requesting accommodations. The notification letters will replace the laminated student VISAs (Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations plan) and will be sent to course instructors of record via email. Instructors will receive customized information about classroom accommodations that are specific to each course, as students will select just those accommodations that are needed for each class. Students will still be instructed to meet with faculty to discuss their accommodations.

Overview of the Accommodation Process

1. Students approved for disability-related accommodations are entered into McBurney Connect based on individualized review and eligibility process.
2. Students log in to McBurney Connect to select their accommodations and schedule Faculty Notification Letters specific to each class.
3. McBurney Connect will email Faculty Notification Letters to instructors two weeks before classes start, and then on an ongoing basis after that.
4. Students will still be expected to meet with instructors in a timely manner, even though their accommodation plans are delivered via email.
5. Instructors can log into McBurney Connect to see a list of students who have requested accommodations for each of their courses, including their Faculty Notification Letters

Academic Integrity

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. For further information on these policies,

students may consult this website: <https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/> as well as this website: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/#avoid>

Usage of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

Lecture materials are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and nonacademic misconduct.

Support

If you are experiencing personal challenges that are affecting your participation and performance in this class, please seek assistance through the resources below. You may also approach me confidentially if you are comfortable, and I will seek to support you as much as possible.

If you do not feel comfortable sharing your concerns with the instructor and would like to find appropriate resources, please see below:

Mental Health: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/>

Prevention: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/prevention/>

Violence Prevention & Survivor Services: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/vpss/>

Dean of Students Office: <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/student-assistance/>

Office of Student Financial Aid: <https://financialaid.wisc.edu/types-ofaid/institutional-loans/>

Office of Child Care and Family Resources: <https://occfr.wisc.edu>

Hate & Bias Reporting Process: www.students.wisc.edu/repothate