

Theoretical Issues in Women's Studies

Women's Studies 405

Section: D100

Term: 2009 Fall

Instructor: Alessandra Capperdoni

Discussion Topics: In this course, we will examine questions of gender and sexuality central to feminist critiques of knowledge and power structures, and resituate them within the context of post-colonial conditions, globalization, and racialization.

Broadly conceived as the field of postcolonial studies, the critical investigation of questions of race and ethnicity, identity and alterity, hybridity and origins, class and capitalism, nationalism and cultural imperialism has been at the forefront of postcolonial theoretical work. Yet less attention has been paid to the specificity of sexuality and gender relations, as well as varied feminist interventions, or feminist longings, within colonial and postcolonial conditions.

The first objective of the course is therefore to address and intervene in this containment, which is also a sign of the dominant position of male critics in the making of theory at large.

The second objective is to respond to the challenges to Western feminist theories on the part of women of colour and, especially, the Global South. The axis of our investigations will, therefore, be re-shifted from East/West to South/North, but will also gesture toward recent interrogations on questions of gendered identification from transgender perspectives.

Our readings will help us develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of different, yet interrelated, areas of inquiry (voice, subjectivity, the gaze, representation, Orientalist and colonial legacies, the gendered body and nationalism, the veil, reproduction, sexuality, diaspora, war and violence, transnational migrations, and labour conditions) and particular attention will be paid to questions of methodology and ethical relations. Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel, *Persepolis*, will also allow us to explore these issues further and provide the platform to imagine future possibilities for feminist critical and creative work.

Grading: Attendance and active participation
(includes Blog and presentation response)\x09\x0920%

Presentation\x09\x09\x09\x09\x0910%

Midterm Essay (6-8 pages) \x09\x09\x09\x0920%

Critical responses (2 x 2-3pages each)\x09\x09\x0920%

Final Research Essay (10 pages)\x09\x09\x0930%

Required Texts: Reina Lewis and Sara Mills (eds) *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2003

Theoretical Issues in Women's Studies

Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis I and II. New York: Pantheon, 2003

Adrien Katherine Wing (ed.). Global Critical Race Feminism: An International Reader (GCRF, online)

Additional readings available on WebCt.

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies:

Prerequisite/Corequisite: : 60 units including two Womens Studies courses, one of which must be WS 101 or 102.

Notes: In-class screenings:

Wedding in Galilee (1987), dir. Michel Khleifi

The Battle of Algiers (1966), dir. Gillo Pontecorvo

Under One Sky: Arab Women in North America Talk about The Hijab (1999)

This outline is derived from a course outline repository database that was maintained by SFU Student Services and the University's IT Services Department. The database was retired in 2014 and the data migrated to SFU Archives in 2015.