

**University of North Carolina - Fall Semester 2008
Department of Political Science & Women's Studies**

**Feminism and Political Theory (# 265)
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 10:00 to 10:50 am - Room Gardner 210**

Inés Valdez (inesv@unc.edu - HM 300)
Office Hours: Th 10 am to 12 pm (or by appointment)

This course provides an introduction to contemporary feminist political theories. Throughout the semester, we will examine interdisciplinary as well as controversial concepts/issues in relation to feminist theory. As part of this assessment, we will consider, (1) the ways in which feminism is and can be articulated, (2) who the subjects of feminist theory are, (3) how we might challenge the centrality of gender in feminist analyses by scrutinizing the way in which race, class, and sexuality affect our gender experiences, and (4) reconstituting feminism in order to create a feminist praxis (practice informed by theory) and transform traditional conceptions of social justice. With the purpose of understanding and appreciating the material covered in this course, students are expected to fully participate in the teaching process not only as active learners, but also as peer educators and public scholars.

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, students will be required to both think and write critically, imaginatively and reflectively about the material dealt with in class. Respectful participation, which is not strictly limited to verbal contribution, thus becomes a clear component of the learning process. Daily writing tasks as well as frequent group work will be used to facilitate high levels and varied types of class involvement. Additionally, students will be asked to write two larger papers in which you will further develop and sharpen your analytic as well as your writing skills.

Reading assignments

You are expected to have prepared the readings by the day for which they are assigned. By "prepared," I mean read them carefully, thought about them, and applied whatever note-taking system works for you. I will sometimes pass out "reading questions" designed to help you think about the text, and you are to work through these questions before class as part of your preparation. Remember that these readings are not like textbooks; they will probably take you longer than usual to read, and you may need to re-read sections, so plan accordingly.

Class participation

This class may differ from some of your other courses in that it requires a considerable amount of active and sustained participation and engagement. Come to class ready to work actively on your understanding of feminist political theory, and on your ability to analyze texts and examine complex issues. Your work for this class will involve both autonomous and collaborative learning. The idea of autonomy stresses your responsibility for your own learning, while collaborative learning stresses your responsibility for teaching and learning from one another.

My responsibility as a teacher is to set up the conditions that encourage this learning and to engage in analytic thinking with you. So this class is not like a theater, where you come and watch me perform. It is more like a lab, where you come in to work with, examine, and enhance the knowledge gained from the readings and from your own experiences.

You will work in participatory learning groups for much of the semester, and you will remain in a particular group for several class periods in a row. (Please study the instructions for learning group interaction in APPENDIX A). In addition to small group work, the class as a whole will work together to discuss and analyze issues. I expect everyone to participate in the larger discussions as well, in order to practice and develop your communicative abilities.

I have a very broad notion of participation; it includes attentive listening, asking questions of one another (including "what do you mean?"), reading relevant passages aloud, helping another person find the right page, explaining why you agree or disagree with what someone else has said, taking detailed notes, and engaging in and facilitating discussion. Everyone must experiment with a variety of forms of participation, rather than always playing the same role.

I understand that some people are nervous about speaking in public, but I still expect you to challenge yourself to do so. For inspiration, let me offer you the words of feminist writer and poet Audre Lorde:

"We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired. For we have been socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition, and while we wait in silence for the final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us."¹

Your participation grade will rely on both subjective and objective measures. Subjective measures include my evaluation of your labor in the classroom, including group work and other inclass activities. Objective measures include attendance, possession of readings, and the quality of group reports (see APPENDIX A).

Attendance

Your attendance at each class session is required. You are responsible for contributing to our learning in this class, and you can't do this if you're not here.

A sign-in sheet will be passed around at each class session, and I will use this to keep the official attendance record. It is **your responsibility to make sure that you sign this sheet **each** day.**

However, I understand that life is not fully in our control and thus you will have two "free" absences. You will receive one attendance credit for each class you attend (we have 43 scheduled class meetings this semester, including the final examination day). Regardless of the quality of

¹Audre Lorde, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action," in *Sister Outsider* (The Crossing Press, 1984), p. 44.

your other participatory activities, attendance credits will operate as a **floor** for receiving a particular participation grade.

A	To receive this grade you must at least have 41 attendance credits.
A-	To receive this grade you must have at least 40 attendance credits.
B	To receive this grade you must have at least 39 attendance credits.
C	To receive this grade you must have at least 38 attendance credits.

Absences will be excused only if: **(a)** you have a medical or family emergency, AND **(b)** you meet with another student in the class to replicate the participation that you missed, and affirm to me that you have done so. Excused absences will not count against your attendance credit total.

Microthemes

Instead of having quizzes, you will write several microthemes over the course of the semester (microthemes are described in APPENDIX C).

Syllabus Statement / Reflective learning exercise

Review this syllabus and course books carefully -- especially the course policies, procedures, assignments, and expectations – and also reflect on your impressions after our first class meeting. Drawing on these sources of evidence, write one or two paragraphs about how you expect to do in this course. What assignments or activities do you think you will do well on and why? What assignments or activities do you think will be difficult for you and why? What parts of your reading and writing history make you confident about some parts of the course and hesitant about others?

The point of this exercise is for you to reflect on your own intellectual practice, to assess what you do well and what you need to work on. It is also good initial practice at interpreting texts (the syllabus!) and examining evidence from your own life, both of which are important to our work in this class. Finally, this exercise provides useful information for me, so I can think about how best to support your intellectual development.

The reflective learning exercise is due at the beginning of class on **Monday, August 25**. They will not be graded.

Autobiography/feminism paper

In a brief essay (1 to 1 ½ pages, single-spaced, with a blank line between paragraphs, standard margins and fonts) write a short autobiography of yourself. Trace, if you can, events in your past that have influenced your views of “feminism” and “feminists.” What about your life may have led you to this class? Do you consider yourself a feminist? Why or why not?

This essay is due on **Wednesday, August 27**. Bring a hard copy to class, and also e-mail a copy to me. These will not be graded. We will compile anonymous excerpts for distribution to the class.

Essay assignments

Another key ability I want you to work on in this course is the ability to write in a way that is both analytic and imaginative -- in other words, to perform clear, thoughtful, and creative analyses of challenging problems and complex thinkers. During the semester, you will write two 5-page essay assignments; I will hand out questions/topics several days before the essays are due. Since these essays will constitute a large part of your final grade, I urge you to consider very carefully the instructions and expectations I outline in APPENDIX B. We will structure in time for revision by having formal peer review in class.

All your written work in this course must represent original work not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course, unless this is done with the prior approval of all instructors involved.)

Your course grade will be based on the following weights for each of the assignments:

Microthemes, autobiography paper, other writing assignments	20%
Class participation (including group projects)	20%
First essay assignment	30%
Final Essay assignment	30%

Your course grade will be based on the following definitions and approximate numerical breakdown:

Letter grade	Numerical equivalence	Definition (University Registrar)
A	A 93-100 A- 90-92	Highest level of attainment. The A grade states clearly that the student has shown outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.
B	B+ 87-89 B 83-86 B- 80-82	Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment. The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.
C	C+ 77-79 C 73-76 C- 70-72	A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment. The C grade states that, while not yet showing unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.
D	D+ 67-69 D 60-66	A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment.
F	0-59	Failed, unacceptable performance.

Required Reading:

(1) Two course books available at Student Stores (identified as “cb” on this syllabus):

Patricia Hill Collins. 2000. Black Feminist Thought. Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment. New York: Routledge².

Catherine MacKinnon. 1991. Toward a Feminist Theory of the State. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

(2) Readings available on Blackboard, in *alphabetical* order (identified as “✓” on this syllabus):

I suggest you set up a habit of printing out the Blackboard readings one week before the day they are due. This way you can avoid getting in a jam because of printer or downloading problems.

Always bring readings to class; you will need to have them for reference during class sessions. Bring hard copies – no laptops in class.

(3) Feminist Blogs (recommended reading)

Feminist theory touches on issues that are the focus of contemporary political discussion. These topics are covered daily by the news media, with or without a feminist perspective. One way to get a condensed and editorialized summary of the coverage of these topics is through feminist blogs. Following these debates as the semester goes contributes to our class in several ways: (1) by giving you more information to critically evaluate claims made in the articles that we read and in the class discussions, (2) by illustrating that the subject of feminist theories is relevant for political argumentation. (3) by making more salient the fact that there is a gender angle in most contemporary political discussions.

Below I include a list of blogs (also in Blackboard), but you will find that as you navigate them you’ll quickly get introduced to others, which you may find more interesting:

- . Feministing <<http://www.feministing.com/>>
- . Feministe <<http://www.feministe.us/blog/>>
- . The Angry Black Woman <<http://theangryblackwoman.wordpress.com/>>
- . Womanist Musings <<http://www.womanist-musings.com/>>
- . Muslimah Media Watch <<http://muslimahmediawatch.blogspot.com/>>
- . Economic Woman <<http://economicwoman.com/>>
- . Elle PhD <<http://elleabd.blogspot.com/>>
- . Mom’s rising <<http://www.momsrising.org/>>

² Please note that this book is also available as an e-book through UNC <http://site.ebrary.com/libproxy.lib.unc.edu/lib/uncch/Top?id=10054558&layout=document>, you are welcome to use this resource, just remember that you need to print, take notes, and bring it to class just as you would with the book and any other reading.

SECTION I. DOING THEORY: Feminist politics and feminist education

In this section we will explore what exactly “theory” is, as well as its relationship to ordinary thinking. What do we mean when we talk about something being “abstract”? The authors consider the issue of who decides what counts as theory, and where and by whom can it be legitimately produced. Why is it important to contest narrow definitions of theory and why is this fundamentally the work of feminist theorists? What is theory good for, and, more importantly, why is it necessary for feminism? Finally, we will analyze these readings to help us think about how theory helps us make connections between individual experience and broad social structures.

1. **Wed Aug 20** Introduction. Course requirements, procedures, and expectations will be reviewed. *All students are responsible for having the information given during the first day of class.*
2. **Fri Aug 22** Charlotte Bunch. 1987. “Not By Degrees.” In Passionate Politics: Feminist Theory in Action. New York: St. Martin’s Press. pp. 240-253. ✓
3. **Mon Aug 25** ****Syllabus statement due Today****
bell hooks. 1989. “feminist theory: a radical agenda.” In Talking Back, thinking feminist, thinking black. Boston: South End Press. pp. 35-41. ✓
4. **Wed Aug 27** **** Autobiography/feminism papers due Today****
Lynet Uttal. 1990. “Nods that Silence.” In Gloria Anzaldúa (ed.) Making Face: Making Soul: Haciendo Caras. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Foundation. pp. 317-320. ✓
- Fri Aug 29** **No class (American Political Science Association Meeting – Boston)**
- Mon Sep 1** **No class (Labor day)**

Recommended Reading: There are two different overviews of feminist theory that I’ve made available on Blackboard, Valerie Bryson’s “Feminist Theories Today” and Rachel Fudge’s “Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Feminism but were Afraid to Ask”. We will not discuss these readings in class directly, but you may find them useful to help you think about the variety of forms that feminist theorizing takes. I encourage you to read one or both of them sometime during the first week or two of class. This would also be a good time for you to read the Writing Center handout “Reading Toward Writing”, available at www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts.

SECTION II. THE “MALENESS” OF POLITICAL THEORY: Feminist revisions, and revisions of feminism.

Feminist political theory is comprised of several related intellectual projects. One focus has been on critiquing and expanding mainstream political thought. Feminists working in this area began by analyzing the misogyny and sexism in the traditional historical texts of political theory. Now they also focus on examining concepts and thinkers not generally part of mainstream political theory, and on rethinking important political concepts in light of feminist perspectives (concepts like justice, power, knowledge, and so on); essentially, they help us to rethink the “political”.

In this section of the course, we will examine three central feminist revisions of political thought. The first focuses on knowledge, the second on public and private, and the third on multiplicity of identity.

Knowledge and experience

When we ask how we “know” things, we’re asking how we comprehend reality, how we decide what counts as true, or what something really means. Such discussions are central to doing theory since part of what theory does is redescribe, analyze, and explain “the real world.” Feminist theories have often challenged male accounts of that world by arguing for a different way of knowing, one that places “experience” in a central role. We will learn about feminist theories of knowledge and how they differ from traditional theories of knowledge, and evaluate what problems and possibilities arise from using these feminist theories.

- 5. Wed Sep 3** Deborah L. Rhode. 1997. “The No Problem Problem” and “The Ideology and Biology of Gender Difference.” In Speaking of Sex: The Denial of Gender Inequality. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. pp. 1-42. ✓
- 6. Fri Sep 5** ****Microtheme #1 due Today****
Catharine MacKinnon, Ch. 5 pp. 83-105. **cb**
Kathie Sarachild. 1978. “Consciousness-Raising: A Radical Weapon.” In Feminist Revolution. New York: Random House. pp. 144-149. ✓
- 7. Mon Sep 8** MacKinnon, Ch. 6 pp. 106-125. **cb**
- 8. Wed Sep 10** Patricia Hill Collins, Preface and Ch. 1 pp. vi-ix and 1-19. **cb**
- 9. Fri Sep 12** Collins, pp. 21-39 of Ch. 2 and Ch. 11 pp. 251-271. **cb**

Public and Private

Nonfeminist social and political theory has made a sharp distinction – sometimes implicit, sometimes explicitly – between the private (as a realm of family, home, love relationships) and the public (as a realm of work, politics, the state). We will examine feminist challenges to this distinction and feminist arguments about the significance of recognizing the variety of connections between the public and private.

10. Mon Sep 15 Susan Okin. 1998. "Gender, the Public, and the Private." In Anne Phillips (ed.) Feminism and Politics. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 116-141. ✓

11. Wed Sep 17 MacKinnon, Ch. 10 pp. 184-194. **cb**

Theorizing the Multiple Subject

In addition to revising key concepts in traditional political thought, feminist theories have also sought to revise the subject of political theory, pointing out that the supposedly universal claims about "mankind" are in fact distinctly masculinist, neglecting women's voices and experiences. Feminists have also generated a kind of internal critique of their own practice of theorizing, stressing the need to attend to the multiplicity of voices within the category of women. These readings confront the danger of silencing voices at the margins and consider different methods of bringing those voices to the center, an issue we will return to several times over the course of the semester.

12. Fri Sep 19 ****Microtheme #2 due Today****
****Prompts for first essay distributed Today****
Marilyn Frye. 1992. "The Possibility of Feminist Theory." In Willful Virgin. Trumansburg: The Crossing Press. pp. 59-75. ✓

13. Mon Sep 22 Maria C. Lugones and Elizabeth V. Spelman. 1983. "Have we got a Theory for You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and the Demand for 'The Woman's Voice'". In Women's Studies International Forum. Vol. 6, No. 6: 573-581. ✓

14. Wed Sep 24 Tina Grillo. 1995. "Anti-Essentialism and Intersectionality: Tools to Dismantle the Master's House." In Berkeley Women's L.J. Vol. 10: 16-30. ✓

15. Fri Sep 26 Kimberle Crenshaw. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics." In The University of Chicago Legal Forum. 314-343. ✓

SECTION III. CONCEPTUALIZING THE WORKINGS OF OPPRESSION: Theoretical perspectives and political strategies

In this section, we will use the knowledge we gained in Section I about feminist epistemologies and methodologies to help us as we explore a diverse group of feminist theorists and investigate the way they analyze specific issues and problems (e.g., sexual violence, oppression, identity, and so on). We will take up dominance as a key analytical concept through which we understand women's oppression. At the same time, we will be examining theorists' treatment of difference

among women, and the political/theoretical meanings of these differences. We will also tease out the implicit or explicit strategies of change these theorists offer.

The law and culture of gender domination: rape and sexual violence

These readings will help us to think about struggle and struggle with the particular legal and political structures that serve to perpetuate sexual/gender dominance. They will also ask us to confront how our identity might be shaped by, or implicated in, relations of domination and oppression. Further, how do we distinguish what is “real” when it comes to domination and what is not? What is the difference between sex and rape, for example, and how do we arrive at such a distinction? What is the relationship between consciousness, experience, and law?

- 16. Mon Sep 29** MacKinnon, Ch. 7 pp. 127-154. **cb**
- 17. Wed Oct 1** MacKinnon, Chs. 8 and 9 pp. 157-183. **cb**
- 18. Fri Oct 3** Catharine MacKinnon. 2005. “Unequal Sex: A Sex Equality Approach to Sexual Assault.” In Women’s Lives, Men’s Laws. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. pp. 240-248. ✓
- 19. Mon Oct 6** Catharine MacKinnon, “Reflections on Sex Equality Under Law.” In Women’s Lives, Men’s Laws pp. 116-150. ✓
- 20. Wed Oct 8** Sharon Marcus. 1992. “Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention.” In Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds) Feminists Theorize the Political. New York: Routledge. pp. 385-403. ✓
- 21. Fri Oct 10** MacKinnon, Ch. 12. **cb**
Collins, Ch. 6 pp. 123-148. **cb**
- 22. Mon Oct 13** Marilyn Frye. 1983. “Oppression.” In The Politics of Reality. Trumansburg: The Crossing Press. pp. 1-16. ✓
Audre Lorde. 1993. “Uses of the Erotic. The Erotic as Power.” In Sister Outsider. Trumansburg: The Crossing Press. pp. 53-59. ✓
- 23. Wed Oct 15** **First Essay Due**
Peer Review
Invited Instructor: Allison Vos – Dept. of Political Science
- Fri Oct 17** **No class (Fall break)**
- Mon Oct 20** **No class (revise essay, read, proofread, read out loud!)**

Complicating conceptions of oppression and agency: plural identities and political change

When feminist theorists revised feminist theory to pluralize the political subject, new emphasis was placed on differences between women and the political relevance of such differences. These readings look at what is involved in trying to theorize difference and domination together. Why does identity matter, and in what ways does identity matter for these particular theorists? What are the implications of theoretical and political differences among women for the future of feminist political theory?

- 26. Wed Oct 22** ****Revised essay due in class and by email due Today****
Intensive Group Work
Invited Instructor: Paula Kweskin – UNC Law School
Collins, Chs. 3 and 4 pp. 45-67 and 69-96. **cb**
- 27. Fri Oct 24** **Invited Instructor: Hollie Mann – Dept. of Political Science**
Gloria Anzaldúa. 1987. "La conciencia de la mestiza/Toward a New Consciousness." In Borderlands/La Frontera. San Francisco: Aunt Lute. pp. 77-91. ✓
- 28. Mon Oct 27** Bernice Johnson Reagon. 1983. "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century." In Barbara Smith (ed.) Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology. New York: Kitchen Table/Women of Color Press. pp. 356-368. ✓
Ann Russo. 1991. "We Cannot Live Without Our Lives." In Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp. 297-313. ✓
- 29. Wed Oct 29** Uma Narayan. 1997. "Through the Looking Glass Darkly: Emissaries, Mirrors, and Authentic Insiders as Preoccupations." In Dislocating Cultures. New York: Routledge. pp. 121-157. ✓
- 30. Fri Oct 31** Anne McClintock. 1997. "No Longer in a Future Heaven? Gender, Race and Nationalism." In Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, Ella Shohat (eds.) Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 89-110. ✓

SECTION IV. "WOMEN", SEXUALITY, AND BODIES: Sources of oppression and potential sites of resistance

This section will consider two fundamental issues in feminist political theory: sexuality and the body. We will consider a multiplicity of perspectives on each topic, some of which view sexuality and the body as a source of oppression, while others view them as a potentially positive force in "women's" lives. Most of these theorists, however, do not see sexuality and bodies in

either/or terms, but instead complicate traditional notions of both. Finally, we will read and think about the ways in which sexuality and the body intersect and “act on” one another.

Heterosexuality and Power: (Re)conceptualizing oppression and agency

These readings consider the power and sex and sexuality – each conceived in a variety of ways by this group of authors – as both sources of oppression and agency. What IS sexuality and how is it best conceived, as a choice or as an essential part of one’s identity? Is there a way to maintain both simultaneously? What IS queer theory, or is it many things? What perceived theoretical and political need(s) are “queer theorists” responding to? What opposing perspectives? What sort of politics result from a queer theoretical perspective?

- 31. Mon Nov 3** Iris Marion Young. 1994. “Gender as Seriality: Thinking About Women as a Social Collective.” In Signs Vol 19, no. 3: 713-738. ✓
- 32. Wed Nov 5** Adrienne Rich. 1980. Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence. In Signs, Vol. 5, No. 4: 631-660. ✓
Christine Overall. 1994. “Heterosexuality and Choice.” In Alison Jaggar (ed.) Living with Contradictions : Controversies in Feminist Social Ethics. Boulder : Westview Press: 499-504. ✓
- 33. Fri Nov 7** Jessica Valenti. 2007. Full Frontal Feminism: A Young Woman’s Guide to Why Feminism Matters. Emeryville: Seal Press. pp. 131-150.
Bell Hooks. 2003. Communion. The Female Search for Love. pp. xi-xix and 75-89. ✓
- 34. Mon Nov 10** ** Lock and Key Assignment due today**
Judith Butler. 1999 [1990]. Gender Trouble. New York: Routledge. (see marked excerpts “a”). ✓
- 35. Wed Nov 12** Judith Butler, Gender Trouble. (see marked excerpts “b”). ✓
- 36. Fri Nov 14** Lisa Duggan. 1995. “Queering the State.” In Lisa Duggan and Nan D. Hunter Sex Wars, Sexual Dissent and Political Culture. New York: Routledge. 179-193. ✓

Gendered Bodies and Other Practices: (Re)conceptualizing oppression and agency

These readings frame a diverse yet interrelated set of questions about bodies, oppression, and agency. Feminists view the body in a variety of ways, including conceptualizing it as a natural given that is prior to the social construction of gender, a site of cultural inscriptions acted upon by dominating discourses of power, a potential site of empowerment and resistance, a cultural text, and the site of particular practices we engage in. What forces act upon the body to shape our identity? How can we understand the body as a site of resistance? What are the theoretical and political implications of

viewing the (sexed) body as artificiality? As a (sometimes playful) choice? What are the potential theoretical and political advantages/disadvantages of taking seriously the locatedness and limitations of embodied experience?

- 37. Mon Nov 17** ****Prompts for final essay distributed Today****
Susan Bordo. 2003 [1993]. Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body. pp. 1-29. ✓
- 38. Wed Nov 19** ****Microtheme #3 due either Today or Friday November 21st****
Sandra Bartky. 1990. "Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power." In Sandra Bartky Femininity and Domination. New York: Routledge. 63-82. ✓
- 39. Fri Nov 21** ****Microtheme #3 due Today (if not submitted on Wednesday)****
Kathy Davis. 1993. "Cultural Dopes and She-Devils: Cosmetic Surgery as Ideological Dilemma." In Sue Fisher and Kathy Davis (eds.) Negotiating at the Margins. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 23-47. ✓
- 40. Mon Nov 24** Anne Kingston. 2004. The Meaning of Wife. New York: FSG. pp. 27-64. ✓
- Wed Nov 26** **No class (Thanksgiving holidays)**
- Fri Nov 28** **No class (Thanksgiving holidays)**
- 41. Mon Dec 1** Ariel Levy. 2005. Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture. New York: Free Press. pp 1-45 and 170-196. ✓
Shira Tarrant. 2008. "The Great Cover-Up. Can High Necklines Cure Low Morals?" In Bitch Magazine Winter, Issue No. 38. ✓
- 42. Wed Dec 3** **Second Essay Due**
Peer Review
- 43. Sat Dec 6** Meeting time according to the final examination schedule
****Final papers are due at 12 pm (For official university purposes, this essay is a "take-home exam," and must be due at the time of our scheduled final exam.)****
****No late papers will be accepted****

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPATORY LEARNING GROUPS³

The following instructions may seem a bit formal, but in fact these practices contribute to having a lively and engaged class, in which everyone is learning, thinking, and making complex intellectual judgments.

Participatory learning is the classroom use of structured small group interaction so that students work together to solve problems. There is considerable research that demonstrates that participatory learning works better than traditional lecturing for developing students' higher-level reasoning capacities, increasing comprehension of the material, and fostering positive relationships among students. Explaining answers, restating information, and formulating questions in your own words engage critical thinking faculties and embed information and insights in memory.

Participatory learning rests on two main principles: **(1) Group interdependence**, which means organizing tasks so that members must work together to succeed. We will achieve this by having role differentiation within the group (see below) and by having the "class participation" portion of the final grade include group work. **(2) Individual accountability**, which is achieved through individualized measures of participation and achievement (such as essays, quizzes, and individual participation in class discussion).

There are two kinds of participating learning strategies that we will employ in this class. The first is **paired note-taking**. When I lecture, we will break periodically for you to explain to each other the main points of the lecture thus far. During these short breaks (5 minutes or so) you will work in pairs to identify significant elements of the lecture, share insights, and clarify any confusion you might have.

The second kind of participatory learning strategy we will use quite frequently is **structured learning groups**. These are not the same as small discussion groups. Learning groups will consist of 4-5 students, and for several class periods. At the beginning of a class period, each group will decide which member will be primarily responsible for playing a particular role. The required roles consist of the following. **(1) Reader**: This person will be responsible for reading aloud the question/project, and for helping the group stay on task (watching the time, etc.). **(2) Encourager**: This person is responsible for encouraging all members to participate, and making sure all participation is shared among all members. **(3) Checker**: This responsibility involves checking to make sure that all members of the group can explain the group's analysis, or how the group arrived at a particular conclusion. Periodically asking members of the group to summarize or articulate the group's analysis or conclusion will lead to higher levels of comprehension for everyone. It also provides a pause in which those who don't understand can ask further questions. **(4) Recorder**: This person is responsible for writing down the group's analysis in a clear and detailed manner, and for turning this report into me at

³ The following principles and procedures were adapted from *Active Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom* (1991), David W. Johnson, Roger T. Johnson, and Karl A. Smith. (Edina, MN: Interaction Book Co.).

the end of the class period. Once I return the report, the recorder should share it with the other group members.

The point of having these explicit roles is to ensure that all group members are contributing to the group's work. Each day that we meet in learning groups, you should think about helping with all of these roles. However, you will be primarily responsible for one particular role. You must take a different primary role in each class meeting. You will feel silly and artificial at first, but I want you to make a sincere and consistent effort to perform these roles. When we have larger class discussions, I will call randomly on group members to explain their group's analysis, share their group's insights, and respond to the reports of other groups. This practice is designed to encourage both group interdependence (you are responsible for one another's learning) and individual accountability.

APPENDIX B: Grading Policy for Papers

One of the biggest challenges you will face as a writer is uncertainty about the criteria and measures that will be used to judge the overall quality of your work. With that in mind, I want to give you as much information as possible about what I'm looking for in your essays. I typically grade essays along five dimensions:

(1) Argument:

- After reading the first paragraph, is the argument clear?
- Is the thesis coherent and precise? Does it make an argument, or mostly summarize?
- Does the thesis suggest an organization of the paper? Is the paper organized according to the thesis?
- Is each paragraph relevant to the argument?
- How much evidence is provided in support of the argument? How good is the evidence?
- Does the argument offer a convincing reading of the texts? Is there a consideration of a counter-argument in the paper? Does the argument ultimately convince the reader?

(2) Comprehension:

- Is each theorist's position presented accurately?
- Are all relevant examples used? Do they need to be?
- Are quotations clearly linked to the argument?
- How well are quotations explained? Are quotations unpacked?
- Does the use of the quotation demonstrate understanding of the text?
- Are complexities within the theorist's arguments addressed? Are they mentioned?

(3) Coherence:

- Does each paragraph develop a single point?
- Does each sentence communicate a complete thought?
- Are thoughts fully explained, or do they sit alone?
- How well is each quotation introduced? Is it placed in relevant context? Is it unpacked for the reader? (Note: If it is in two domains of the rubric, it's important!)tur
- Does each paragraph logically follow the preceding one? How well does each paragraph transition between one another?
- Is the writing choppy? That is, do sentences make sense next to one another?

(4) Writing:

- Has spellchecker been used?
- How many sentences use active voice?
- Does each sentence follow relevant grammatical rules?
- Are there any run-ons or fragments?
- Are words missing from sentences? Does it look like the paper was proofread?
- Do indefinite articles and pronouns have clear antecedents?

(5) Miscellaneous/Technical:

- Did the writer obviously try to fill space (large font, excessive space between lines, unnecessary headers, etc.)?
- Are the margins 1" on each side?
- Was the paper turned in on time? How many days late was the paper?
- Is the paper the appropriate length?

While I always strive for objectivity in my grading process and certainly take measures to ensure that my reading of your work is as objective as possible, there are no “right” or “wrong” answers when writing an essay. I am not, however, likely to be swayed by your personal position on a topic or the degree to which you “agree” with me, so do not waste time trying to figure out my own opinion or position on a topic. I look for *convincing arguments*, which may rely on a number of different strategies and kinds of evidence. This all means that grading essays is both an objective and a subjective process.

My experience of grading essays has left me with the following impressions of what each letter grade of an essay typically looks like:

Table B1: Scoring for Essays	
A	Excellent work, usually characterized by analytically rich and/or subtle, well-developed, thoughtful, engaging, argument. Typically, this level of work demonstrates a high level of familiarity with and reflection on the course readings, an effort to incorporate insights from the readings into the argument, and in many cases provides provocative and challenging ideas about the topic. A papers also exemplify imaginative writing. This means analyzing a text or material through a new lens, and telling the reader something new and provocative. Very well written, A papers are coherently organized and carefully composed, contain few spelling and grammatical errors, and embody a clarity and precision of expression appropriate for an analytically compelling argument.
B	Good work. Shows some evidence of having seriously considered the topic themes, and some effort to try to engage the topic in an analytically rigorous way. B papers may be less analytically developed than an A paper, demonstrating less comprehension and familiarity with the text. They may also be somewhat structurally problematic. Nevertheless a good effort has been made.
C	Average work. Typically, this level of work does not show evidence of striving for excellence. It meets minimal standards: Arguments stated without adequate development, insufficient use of supporting texts and evidence, inflated or structurally problematic prose, poor spelling, and weak organization.
D	Poor work. Very minimal work beyond the submission of your paper by the deadline. One-liners, non-sequiturs, assertions without arguments, little or no evidence of having done or considered the readings, often off-topic, badly disjointed, structurally defective, and inadequate citations. Does not meet minimal average standards.
F	No effort beyond handing in a paper has been made. Shows no evidence of even the slightest familiarity with the texts, no citations, often handed in past the deadline, and fails to address the paper topic in any way.

APPENDIX C: MICROTHERMES

Microthemes have a dual purpose. Like quizzes, they provide a way for me to give credit for careful class preparation. But in addition (and unlike quizzes) they give you the opportunity to clarify your thinking by practicing analytic writing.

Microthemes must be turned in on a HALF SHEET of paper, using standard margins and a font size of 11 or larger. I will give you the assignment for each microtheme the class period before they are due. There are two kinds of microthemes, summary-writing and thesis-support microthemes. Be sure to read carefully the directions and the criteria of evaluation that follow.

A. Summary-writing microthemes

A summary-writing microtheme has two objectives. One is for you to build analytic reading skills by concisely re-stating the argument of part of the readings. To do this successfully, you must be able to differentiate between the main ideas and less important points of a section of the argument. Then you must condense the argument by linking the main points and omitting the secondary ideas that you can leave behind without losing the sense of the argument. (In other words, make clear the relationship between the points.) The second objective is for you to learn how to follow and accurately give an account of arguments that you may not necessarily agree with. In effect, you have to "listen" to the authors you read and explain their arguments in your own words but without misrepresenting their points.

Write your summary as if it were for a reader who has not read the text, although she has heard of it. She has a pretty good vocabulary but will not understand overly technical terms. Make sure to provide page numbers in parentheses for all quotes and paraphrases.

The **criteria** for a summary are **(1)** accuracy of content, **(2)** comprehensiveness and balance (i.e., do you include the central points and omit secondary claims?) **(3)** clear sentence structure with good transitions, **(4)** adherence to usual rules of grammar, punctuation, and page citation.

**Although this is not an essay, it should sound polished and the points should flow smoothly if read aloud (in fact, it is always a good idea to read this kind of assignment aloud to yourself as a way of checking your work).

Table C1: Scoring for Summary-writing Microthemes	
Outstanding (10)	Meets criteria of accuracy, comprehensiveness and balance, clear sentence structure and grammar. It is clear that you understand the text and can explain its main points to a reader who has not read it.

Table C1: Scoring for Summary-writing Microthemes (cont.)	
Excellent (9)	Meets all criteria of above but is weaker than a 10 in one area. E.g., it may have excellent accuracy, comprehensiveness and balance but show occasional problems in sentence structure. Or it may be well written but have some difficulty balancing main points with secondary ones.
Above Average (8)	It reveals a generally accurate understanding of the reading with a clear sense of the main points but is either noticeably weaker on one criterion than a "9" or 10 (did not provide page number citations, for example) or somewhat weaker on two criteria .
Meets Basic Requirements (7)	Must have strength on at least two of the criteria and it should still be good enough to give a reader a fairly clear and accurate overview of the reading. A summary rates a 7 because it overemphasizes secondary points at the expense of the main argument, is unclear and has problems with sentence structure.
Worthy of Credit (6)	A summary rates 6 because it is weak in all criteria . It would not serve to explain the text to an unfamiliar reader, it may be inaccurate, and is disorganized.
No Credit (0)	Fails to meet any of the criteria for an effective summary.

B. Thesis-support Microthemes

In a "thesis-support" microtheme, I will ask you a question about the assigned reading and you will write a short composition that supports your answer to the question. To do this successfully, you must be able to support your answer with textual evidence, and guard against the tendency to ignore textual evidence that might undermine your thesis.

The main objectives of this assignment are to develop your skills at a) thinking through complex texts that do not always provide simple answers, and b) writing a focused argument.

Criteria: There will often be more than one persuasive answer to the question I ask. Thus the **criteria** for a thesis-support microtheme are (1) clarity: do you make your supporting points clear? (2) precision and accuracy: do you draw your supporting points from specific places in the text, using quotation marks and page numbers appropriately, and do you make correct assertions about the text? (3) comprehensiveness and balance: have you identified the textual passages important to this question? (4) organization: do you present your arguments in a coherent order with smooth transitions and grammatical sentences?

Table C2: Scoring for Thesis-support Microthemes	
Outstanding (10)	Outstanding. Meets criteria of clarity, precision and accuracy, comprehensiveness and balance, and organization. You have considered the texts carefully and creatively and made a persuasive argument in support of your thesis.
Excellent (9)	Meets all criteria of above but is weaker than a 10 in one area. E.g., it may have excellent clarity, comprehensiveness, and precision and accuracy but show occasional problems in organization or may ignore a passage that needs to be explained.
Above Average (8)	It is generally persuasive and offers fairly specific evidence to support the argument but is either noticeably weaker on one criterion than a 10 or an 9 or somewhat weaker on two criteria.
Meets Basic Requirements (7)	Must have strength on at least two of the criteria and it should still be good enough to put forward a clear line of argument. It rates a 7 because it does not use specific examples from the text, or does not anticipate the objections of a rival view, and has problems with sentence structure.
Worthy of Credit (6)	A thesis-support theme rates a 6 because it is weak in all criteria and would not serve to persuade an audience familiar with the text. It may also be inaccurate or disorganized.
No Credit (0)	Fails to meet any of the criteria for effective support of an interpretive thesis.