

Philosophy 233 Section 201
Issues in Sex and Gender
Winter 2011
M-W 9:40-11:10
2352 N Clifton Ave. Room 135

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Course Description and Objectives: This class will philosophically investigate the concepts of sex and gender, recognizing from the outset that all aspects of social identity (including sex and gender) bear on each other. We will consider how “sex” and “gender,” as well as “masculine” and “feminine,” “man” and “woman,” function as concepts, and try to understand how these concepts affect the way we are able to live. Are masculine and feminine opposites? Who counts as a woman, and who is not allowed to, and why? How do other aspects of ourselves shape our understanding of sex and of gender? That is, how does race or sexuality or class or disability shape our conceptions of either sex or gender? How does sex or gender shape our conceptions of race or sexuality or class or disability? My contention is that understanding the way these concepts function in order to create and dictate meaning will provide an excellent opportunity for us to further our understanding of what philosophy accomplishes, while enriching the conceptual apparatus with which each of us is able to interpret the world.

This class is concerned with reading, and lots of it: we will be focusing our attention on engaging with a variety of voices, which is to say, you needn’t expect to agree with everything that we read, but are accountable for understanding the terms of each argument presented and situating each piece within the context of the class. Our conversations about the reading will be geared toward allowing you to compose an original philosophy paper that uses the readings to analyze an issue relating to gender that is important to you.

Reading Schedule: Our schedule, as anything else in the syllabus, is subject to change given circumstances that may arise in the course of the quarter. Please check *Desire2Learn* regularly in order to be informed on what is due each day.

- Week 1** Mon, Jan 3: Introduction and Syllabus. Class Discussion on Sex and Gender
Wed, Jan 5: Beauvoir, Introduction to *The Second Sex*
- Week 2** Mon, Jan 10: Beauvoir, cont’d.
Wed, Jan 12: Beauvoir, Class discussion. Paper workshop
- Week 3** Mon, Jan 17: Fausto-Sterling “How to Build a Man” and
Nicholson, “Interpreting Gender” (Presentation #1).
Wed, Jan 19: Spelman, from “Inessential Woman” (Presentation #2).
- Week 4** **Mon, Jan 24: 1st Reflection Paper due in class**
Irigaray, “Question of the Other” (Presentation #3)
Wed, Jan 26: Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s
House” and “Age, Race, Class, and Sex” (Presentation #4)
- Week 5** Mon, Jan 31: Film

- Wed, Feb 2: Film, Class discussion.
- Week 6** Mon, Feb 7: hooks, "Black Women Shaping Feminist Theory" and "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression" (Pres. #5)
 Wed, Feb 9: LaDelle McWhorter, "Sex, Race, and Biopower: A Foucauldian Genealogy" (Presentation #6)
- Week 7** **Mon, Feb 14: 2nd Reflection Paper Due in class.**
 Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology" (Presentation #7)
 Wed, Feb 16: Alcoff "The Problem of Speaking for Others" (Presentation #8)
- Week 8** Mon, Feb 21: McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" and Lorde "The Uses of Anger" (Presentation #9)
 Wed, Feb 23: Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay" (Presentation #10)
- Week 9** Mon, Feb 28: Julia Serrano, "Coming to Terms with Transgenderism and Transsexuality," "Blind Spots," and "Intrinsic Inclinations" (Presentation #11)
Wed, Mar 2: 3rd Reflection Paper Due in class
 Dean Spade, "Resisting Medicine, Re/modeling Gender" (Presentation #12)
- Week 10** Mon, Mar 7: Judith Halberstam, "An Introduction to Female Masculinity: Masculinity Without Men" (Presentation #13)
 Wed, Mar 9: Final Paper Workshop

*******Monday, March 14: Final Paper Due in my mailbox by 12pm*******