Syllabus: Feminism, Phenomenology and the Political  
Winter, 2016

PHIL 643/CRN 26115  
M/W 10:00-11:50  
250C SCH  

Dr. Bonnie Mann  
346-5549  
Office Hrs: T 2:00-4:00pm  
bmann@uoregon.edu

Course Description
A course on contemporary feminist phenomenology is necessarily taught in relation to the texts of Simone de Beauvoir and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the first having inaugurated the practice and the second having been one of its most significant influences. In this course, you will see that the works of these two thinkers are not assigned, but this is not to say that they aren’t in the background of everything that is assigned, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly. This course takes up where those thinkers leave off, in a sense. Specifically thematizing the possibilities of a phenomenology of the political world for feminism, we will first consider how a phenomenological inquiry into the political proceeds, with a special emphasis on the notions of “world” and the place of the body in phenomenological accounts. Then we will consider five texts in feminist phenomenology, each of them with a specific relation to the political.

Texts
Individual essays and selections from texts will be available on the canvas site for the course, and if there is a request for it, hard copies will be made available to copy.

Learning Outcomes
Students should complete this course having acquired a strong working knowledge of 1) the area of feminist philosophy called feminist phenomenology, what its central commitments and contributions are to feminist philosophy more broadly, and how it challenges some commitments in canonical western philosophy 2) the central questions raised by a phenomenological approach to the political world, and 3) several contemporary feminist phenomenologies of aspects of our political world.

Course Requirements and Grading
Students will be evaluated holistically based on: 1) Several in-class presentations on assigned readings, as well as demonstrated high-level, in-depth preparation for each class session as evidenced in class participation  2) Paper Proposal: All students will submit a 4-6page paper proposal for their final paper project on Thursday of week 8. Guidelines for the paper proposal will be handed out in class, 3) Final Paper: All students will write a 15 page (approximate length) final paper due on Wednesday of final’s week by 5pm.

Accommodations for Disability
If you have a documented disability please see me at the beginning of the term so we can provide appropriate accommodations.
Statement on Academic Honesty
It is my practice to assign a grade of F for the course to students who engage in acts of academic dishonesty.

Course Calendar

Phenomenology of the Political World: Background
Week 1. Class 1  Introduction
Readings:
Eva-Maria Simms and Beata Stawarska, “Concepts and Methods in Interdisciplinary Feminist Phenomenology”
Linda Fisher, “Phenomenology and Feminism: Perspectives on Their Relation”
Debra Bergoffen, “The Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, Feminism, and the Epoché”

1/4  Introductory Lecture and Discussion

Week 1. Class 2 - Week 2. Class 2  World
Readings: (This is too much reading for 3 class periods. Be sure to familiarize yourself with all of it, and do read the Heidegger lectures and Held essay carefully. Do the best you can with the rest.)

Edmund Husserl, Part II, Section 9, h. Part II, Sections 33-38 from The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology
Martin Heidegger, “The Thing” and “The Danger” Bremen and Freiburg Lectures (IUP 2012)
Klaus Held, “Toward a Phenomenology of the Political World”
Hannah Arendt, “Labor” “Work” and “Action” from The Human Condition

1/6  (Bonnie is at the APA) Guest Lecture on Heidegger’s notion of “World” by Dr. Daniela Vallega-Neu (be sure you’ve read the Heidegger lectures for today)

1/11  “World” in Hannah Arendt, and Klaus Held
1/13  Simone de Beauvoir: Founding Figure in Feminist Phenomenology

Week 3. Class 1 - Week 4. Class 1  Body
Readings:
Toril Moi, “What is a Woman: Sex, Gender and the Body in Feminist Theory”
Alia Al-Saji, “Bodies and Sensings: On the Uses of Husserlian Phenomenology for Feminist Theory”
Sarah Heinämaa, “The Living Body,” from Toward a Phenomenology of Sexual Difference

1/18  No Class: MLK Jr. Day
1/20  Mostly Moi
1/25  Mostly Al-Saji and Heinämaa
Feminist Phenomenology: Works
Week 4.Class2-Week5.Class1 Iris Marion Young, On Female Body Experience
Secondary Readings: Sandra Bartky, “Iris Young and the Gendering of Phenomenology”
Bonnie Mann, “Between Phenomenology and Structural Injustice”

1/27 Chapters 1, 2 and 3 + Mann essay
2/1 Chapters 5, 6 + Bartky essay

Week 5.Class2-Week6.Class1 Sandra Bartky: Femininity and Domination
2/3 Introduction – Chapter 4
2/8 Chapters 5 - 7

Week 6.Class2-Week7.Class2 Mariana Ortega, In-Between
2/10 Introduction, Chs. 1 and 2
2/15 Chs. 3 and 4
2/17 Chs. 5-7 Guest Lecture (at JCU) OR Reschedule

Week8.Class1-Week9.Class1 Bonnie Mann, Sovereign Masculinity
2/22 Preface, Introduction, Prologue, Part I
2/24 Parts II and III
2/29 Part IV, Conclusion

Week9.Class2-Week10.Class2 Lisa Guenther, Solitary Confinement
3/2 Intro and Part I
3/7 Part II
3/9 Part III

Required Texts (texts that will be provided for you)
All the individual essays assigned.
Mariana Ortega, In Between (not yet published, we will have access to the manuscript)

Required Texts (texts you should purchase)
Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (we will be concerned with the middle sections of this
text, which should be available everywhere for not too much money…. It is a bit too much to
copy, and it is a really good text to have).
Toril Moi, Sex, Gender and the Body: The Student Edition of What is a Woman? (Oxford,
2001); alternately, get the whole book What is a Woman? You can probably get the whole text
used for about the same price as the student edition, but we will only be reading the first (LONG)
essay, “What is a woman?”
Iris Young, On Female Body Experience
Sandra Bartky, Femininity and Domination
Bonnie Mann, Sovereign Masculinity
Lisa Guenther, Solitary Confinement
Recommended Texts (this list can continue to grow as the term goes on)
Everything by Simone de Beauvoir and Maurice Merleau-Ponty
Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*
Dermot Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology*
David West, *Continental Philosophy: An Introduction*
Sarah Heinämaa, *Toward a Phenomenology of Sexual Difference*
Silvia Stöller and Veronica Vasterling, *Feministische Phänomenologie und Hermeneutik*
Eva Simms and Beata Stawarska, Special Issue of *Janus Head, Feminist Phenomenology*, vol. 13, 1, spring 2014.