Syllabus

PHIL 607/CRN 16844
Feminist Philosophy: Proseminar
T/Th 10:00-11:50 pm
353 PLC

Dr. Bonnie Mann
234 or 211 Susan Campbell Hall
Office Hrs: Tues 12:00-2:00 pm or by appt.
bmann@uoregon.edu

Purpose
The purpose of this course is twofold: 1) to give students an opportunity to reflect on what it means to study and practice philosophy as a woman, i.e. from a position of alterity in relation to the dominant traditions in Western philosophy and 2) to introduce students to basic texts and basic topics in feminist philosophy. By the end of the term students should be able to speak competently about important themes in feminist philosophy, such as identity, the self-other relation, sexuality, gendered embodiment, agency and freedom; and about the contributions of a number of important thinkers in feminist philosophy. Students will gain exposure to feminist appropriations and criticisms of the Western philosophical tradition as well as debates within feminist thinking.

Description
Feminist philosophy is philosophical thought that emerges out of and in relation to social movements for women’s emancipation. It works toward the recuperation of women’s and feminist thought in the history of philosophy, an understanding of the human condition as it is lived by women, an articulation of women’s ways of knowing in relation to epistemologies that have implicitly or explicitly excluded women, and interrogating political and ethical practices from a feminist perspective. Though we commonly think of “feminist philosophy” as a recent development, scholars agree that philosophical work that exhibits a feminist sensibility has been a critical counter-voice to the mainstream Western tradition since its inception. Nevertheless, philosophy today is often referred to as “the physics of the humanities” since it remains the most male dominated field in the humanities. Yet feminist philosophers have been passionate in their claims that the discipline of philosophy prepares us to ask the questions we need to ask and address the problems that we confront—even as philosophy is transformed in the process. These are some of the questions we will explore in the course: How does feminist thinking both appropriate and change the practice of philosophy? What questions are opened up by feminist philosophical inquiry that are not opened by more traditional approaches? How does feminist philosophy invite us to challenge some of our most deeply held assumptions about knowledge, human nature, and political and ethical practices?

I employ a variety of strategies to engage students in classroom discussions and reflection about the topics for the course. In addition to listening to lectures, you can expect to participate in small group discussions in class, to be called on to explain key concepts to a group of your peers, to do short, in-class writings as a kick-off for discussion, and to actively respond to lectures. This term we will start each class with a student led discussion (the first ½ hour), this will generally be followed by a lecture, with more discussion at the end of the class period.
**Course Requirements**

*Discussion Leadership:* Each graduate student taking the course for credit will take responsibility for leading a ½ hour discussion of the materials for one day’s class. When more than one essay is assigned, discussions should be introduced in such a way that the themes of the essays are linked, and students are invited to respond to and discuss any of the readings for the day.

Paper Proposal: Due week 8. Guidelines will be handed out in class.

Final Paper: Due Wednesday of finals week.

**Texts**

Course Reader
The Course reader is on reserve at the copy shop on 13th. Ask for the reader by course number. Readings will be available electronically on the Blackboard Site for the course.

**Students with Disabilities**
If you have a documented disability please let me know right away what accommodations are needed.
Women and Philosophy

Week 1
1.1(9/30) Opening Class: Lecture: Xanthippe and The Apology of Socrates

1.2(10/2) Tuana, “Reading Philosophy as a Woman” (11 pp)
Le Doeuff, selections from “First Notebook” (31 pp)
Alcoff “Of Philosophy and Guerilla Wars” (9 pp)

Discussion Leadership

Knowing: Women and the Life of the Mind

Week 2
2.1(10/7) Rousseau Selections from “Sophie,” in Emile (19 pp)
Wollstonecraft, “Introduction,” “Dedication” “Chapters 1,2” (47 pp)

Discussion Leadership

2.2(10/9) Woolf A Room of One’s Own (Ch. 1-2) (35 pp)
Frye “To Be and Be Seen: The Politics of Reality” (15 pp)

Discussion Leadership

Week 3
3.1(10/14) Lloyd “The Man of Reason” (16 pp)
Fox Keller “Feminism and Science” (11 pp)
Bordo Selections from Flight to Objectivity (20 pp)

Discussion Leadership

3.2(10/16) Harding “Strong Objectivity’ and Socially Situated Knowledge” (18 pp)
Code “Taking Subjectivity into Account” (20 pp)
Haraway “Situated Knowledges” (21 pp)

Discussion Leadership

Week 4
Ruddick “Maternal Thinking” (14 pp)
Wittig “The Straight Mind” (12 pp)

Discussion Leadership
4.2(10/23)
I will be away at SPEP, this session will be held on Wednesday, October 29th from 2-3:50pm in conjunction with Scott Pratt’s Feminist Pragmatism Seminar in Room 250C Susan Campbell Hall:

Alcoff “Epistemologies of Ignorance” (18pp)
Fricker “Testimonial Injustice,” “Hermeneutical Injustice” (47pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________

Being: What is a Woman?

Week 5
5.1(10/28) Gilman “As to Humanness” (17pp)
Bederman “Not to Sex—But to Race!” Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Civilized Anglo-Saxon Womanhood, and the Return of the Primitive Rapist” (48pp)
Beauvoir “Introduction” to The Second Sex (15 pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________

4.2 Make-Up Session(10/29) Make-Up Session for 10/23  2-3:50pm in conjunction with Scott Pratt’s Feminist Pragmatism Seminar in Room 250C Susan Campbell Hall

Alcoff “Epistemologies of Ignorance” (18pp)
Fricker “Testimonial Injustice,” “Hermeneutical Injustice” (47pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________

5.2(10/30)Rubin, “The Traffic in Women” (26 pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________

Week 6
6.1(11/4)Irigaray Excerpts from “The Question of the Other” (12 pp)
Irigaray “Human Nature is Two” (6pp)
Irigaray “Sexual Difference is Universal” (6pp)
Wittig “The Category of Sex” (8 pp)
Wittig “One is Not Born a Woman” (12 pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________

6.2(11/6) Mohanty “Under Western Eyes” (24 pp)
Hooks “Reconstructing Black Masculinity” (16pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________

Week 7
Butler “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution” (10 pp)

Discussion Leadership ________________________________________
7.2(11/13) Extended Session (Session will meet for 3 hours)
Heinämaa “Woman: Nature, Product, Style” (15 pp)
Young “Throwing Like a Girl” (18 pp)
Scott, “Experience” (16 pp)
Alcoff “Phenomenology, Poststructuralism and Feminist Theory on the Concept of Experience” (17 pp)

Discussion Leadership

Doing: Feminist Politics and Ethics

Week 8
8.1(11/18) Addams “Women’s Conscience and Social Amelioration” (12pp)
Kittay “Introduction” to Love’s Labor (18pp)

PRAGUE CONFERENCE: GUEST LECTURE BY SCOTT PRATT

Discussion Leadership

8.2(11/19) Bartky “Feeding Egos and Tending Wounds” (20 pp)
Pateman “Contracting In” (18 pp)

PRAGUE/DUBLIN CONFERENCES: GUEST LECTURE BY MEGAN BURKE

Discussion Leadership

Week 9
Crenshaw “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity…etc.” (22pp)

Discussion Leadership

9.2(11/27) THANKSGIVING

Week 10
10.1(12/2) MacKinnon “Genocide’s Sexuality” (24 pp)
Smith “Sexual Violence as a Tool of Genocide” (15 pp)

Discussion Leadership

10.2(12/4) Fraser, “Multiculturalism, Antiessentialism, and Radical Democracy” from TF (9 pp)
Nussbaum, “Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings” from TF (17 pp)

Discussion Leadership