

# PT160 TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY

Seminar Leader: **Agata Lisiak**  
**Mondays & Wednesdays, 5:30-7 pm CET**  
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Office Hours: by appointment

## Course Description

Named after bell hooks' 2000 essay collection *Feminism Is for Everybody*, and with an essential transnational focus, this course offers an introduction to feminism as a political movement to end sexist oppression across differences. Students will discuss, try out, and question various feminist theories and methodologies to critically examine a range of cultural, social, and economic issues across geographical and historical contexts. While acknowledging the importance of one's personal experience in finding feminism and committing to it, this course also invites students to look beyond the personal and focus on political projects connected with feminism to seek out solidarity-yielding connections. Among other topics, we will discuss the demands of early socialist women's rights activists, queer feminist formations in the Global South, transfeminist activism in Latin America and beyond, sex workers' struggles across borders, decolonial feminist interventions in Europe, and the connections between gender justice and environmental justice. Bringing together feminist contributions from sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, political science, activism, and more, the course will also serve as an introduction to the work of such influential thinkers as Sara Ahmed, Angela Davis, Silvia Federici, Alexandra Kollontai, Audre Lorde, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Françoise Vergès, and Clara Zetkin, among many others. Students will employ feminist methodologies as a means to question established knowledge paradigms and dominant intellectual traditions derived from the Global North. Designed jointly by scholars and educators from across the Open Society University Network (AlQuds Bard College in Palestine, American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan, Bard College in the United States, and Bard College Berlin in Germany) and scholars affiliated with Off-University, the course is part of OSUN's Transnational Feminism, Solidarity, and Social Justice project. Through a series of shared readings and assignments, students will have a unique opportunity to engage with peers and professors from other OSUN campuses, thereby building local and international alliances, challenging dogma, and experimenting with powerful forms of feminist expression.

## Requirements

### Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2022:** All students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructor will make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

### **How to read this syllabus**

Green – readings and assignments for all campuses participating in the network collaborative course

Blue – Fall 2022 Lecture Series, open to all OSUN students and faculty

Red – joint sessions and assignments within the OSUN campus pairing (BCB – Bard Annandale)

Important notes

### **Assignments**

Students are required to complete the following assignments for this course:

**Gender autobiography: a reflection.** This is a four-stage assignment that centers the importance of thinking process rather than the final outcome. In the first stage, upon reading Sara Ahmed's chapter from *Living a Feminist Life*, students will be asked to reflect in writing on their gender socialization in class and share it with their peers in small groups. In the second stage, students will be asked to post their revised 300-word statements on the padlet. In the third stage, students will read their AQB, AUCA, BCB, and Annandale peers' statements and consider them in relation to their own. Students are invited to comment on their peers' statements via padlet. In the fourth and final stage, students will substantially revise their original statement to a 1000-word paper, with their peers' comments and statements in mind, and engaging with at least one text assigned for this class. Detailed prompts and deadlines for the individual stages of the assignment will be posted on Google Classroom. The deadline for the paper is **26 September**.

**Guest lecture question and reflection.** This three-stage assignment is designed to encourage students to carefully prepare for, attentively listen to, and critically reflect on one of the guest lectures scheduled for this semester. Detailed prompts and deadlines will be announced upon consultation with the guest speaker.

**Manifesto.** In this collaborative midterm assignment students will work in small groups with their peers from BCB and/or other OSUN campuses to 1) develop an original feminist manifesto that centers solidarity across difference or 2) collaboratively translate an existing feminist manifesto into languages in which it is not yet available. In addition to the manifesto, students will write a 1000-word reflection paper on the collaborative cross-cultural experience of the writing and/or translating process, in which they will engage with at least two texts assigned for this course. Detailed prompts and deadlines will be announced once the academic schedules of the participating partner institutions have been finalized.

**Final project/essay.** For their final project, students can choose between a 3000-word academic essay on the topic of their choice related to one of the course's themes or a 'creative component' (video, zine, sound piece, installation, etc.) accompanied by a 1000-word academic essay. Regardless of the format they choose, students will engage carefully with at least two texts assigned for this course (including at least one from the second half of the semester). Students will have the opportunity to workshop their drafts in class and discuss them with me in individual meetings.

### Assignment Deadlines

**Gender autobiography – 26 September 2022**

**Keynote lecture question and reflection – TBA at the start of the semester**

**Manifesto – 2 November 2022 (TBC at the start of the semester)**

**Final project/paper – 5 December 2022**

### Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours. Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Seminar preparation and participation - 30% for the semester (15% for weeks 1-7 + 15% for weeks 8-14)

Gender autobiography – 10%

Keynote lecture question and reflection – 5%

Manifesto – 25%

Final project/paper – 30%

**\*\*\*\*\* ALL THE READINGS FOR THIS COURSE ARE AVAILABLE ON GOOGLE CLASSROOM \*\*\*\*\***

**IF YOU CANNOT ACCESS THE LINKS, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH ME PROMPTLY**

### **Schedule**

Week 1

#### **Feminist Education and Politics**

Class 1 // 29 August

- Sara Ahmed. *Feminism is sensational. Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke UP, 2017.
- bell hooks. *Consciousness-Raising: Feminist Education for Critical Consciousness. Feminism Is for Everybody*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2000. 7-12, 19-24.
- Lola Olufemi. *Feminism, Interrupted*. London: Pluto Press, 2020. [Excerpt](#).

Class 2 // 31 August

- We will continue discussing the readings assigned for Class 1.

Week 2

### Global Feminism?

Class 3 // 5 September

- bell hooks. Global Feminism. *Feminism Is for Everybody*. Cambridge: South End, 2000. 44-47.
- Chandra Mohanty. Under Western Eyes. *Feminist Review*. 1988.

Class 4 // 7 September **via zoom**

- Joint session no. 1 with Bard Annandale to discuss the first assignment and get to know each other (in preparation: e.g., read through the padlet)

Week 3

### Feminism and Internationalist Politics, Part 1

Class 5 // 12 September

- Alexandra Kollontai. [Make Way for Winged Eros](#). 1923.
- Selected podcast episodes from AK47: Episodes 9 & 10: <https://ak47.buzzsprout.com/251881/1004301-9-a-k-47-make-way-for-winged-eros-a-letter-to-working-youth-part-i> and <https://ak47.buzzsprout.com/251881/1012641-10-a-k-47-make-way-for-winged-eros-a-letter-to-working-youth-part-ii>
- Kristen Ghodsee. Introduction to *Second World, Second Sex: Socialist Women's Activism and Global Solidarity during the Cold War*. Duke UP, 2018.

Class 6 // 14 September

- Clara Zetkin. Only in Conjunction with the Proletarian Woman Will Socialism Be Victorious (1896) and Women's Right to Vote (1907).
- Rosa Luxemburg. Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle (1912).
- The Dead Ladies Show Podcast: Rosa Luxemburg (2022): <https://deadladiesshow.com/2022/03/08/podcast-51-rosa-luxemburg/>

Week 4

### Feminism and Internationalist Politics, Part 2

Class 7 // 19 September

- Verónica Gago. *Feminist International*. 2020. Excerpt.
- Virginia Guitzel. Notes from Brazil. In: *Transgender Marxism*. 2021.

Class 8 // 21 September **on zoom**

- **KEYNOTE LECTURE** – Sara Abbas on women protesters in Sudan (TBC)

Week 5

### Manifestos, Part 1

Class 9 // 26 September

- He-Yin Zhen. *The Feminist Manifesto*. 1907.
- Zoe Leonard. I Want a President. 1992 (performed by Mykki Blanco [here](#), 2016)
- Valie Export. Women's Art: A Manifesto. 1973
- Lady Gya. The Hystory of My Vagina: A Manifesto. [2015](#).
- *Zapatista women's revolutionary laws*. [1994](#).
- Cross-Border Feminist Manifesto. [2020](#).

**Class 10 // 28 September on zoom**

- Joint session no. 2 with Bard Annandale – breakout rooms for cross-campus manifesto working groups.

Week 6

**Manifestos, Part 2**

3 October – no class at BCB / public holiday

Class 11 / 5 October

- Wages Against Housework. 1975.
- Angela Davis. The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective. 1977
- Tithi Bhattacharya. What is Social Reproduction Theory? [2017](#).
- Alessandra Mezzardi. On the Value of Social Reproduction. *Radical Philosophy*. 2019.

Week 7

**Reproductive Labor**

Class 12 / 10 October

- Stories of reproductive labor, readings/videos TBA.

Class 13 / 12 October (exact date TBA upon consultation with students)

- Off-campus session at Martin Gropius Bau: On Caring, Repair & Healing + Louise Bourgeois [https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/berliner-festspiele/programm/bfs-gesamtprogramm/programmdetail\\_366501.html](https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/berliner-festspiele/programm/bfs-gesamtprogramm/programmdetail_366501.html).

Week 8

**Learning and Unlearning**

**Class 14 / 17 October on zoom**

- Joint session no. 3: manifesto peer review/workshopping session.

Class 16 / 19 October (Lecture Hall)

- Dr. Galina Yarmanova's guest session (readings to be announced) alongside Transnational Feminism, Solidarity, and Social Justice faculty from American University of Central Asia, Al-Quds Bard, Bard Annandale, BCB, University of Witwatersrand, and Off-University.

\*\*\*\*\* FALL BREAK AT BCB \*\*\*\*\*

Week 9

**Decolonial Feminism**

Class 17 / 31 October

- Audre Lorde. Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference. *Sister Outsider*. Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007. 114-123.
- Françoise Vergès. "Taking Sides: Decolonial Feminism." Trans. Ashley J. Bohrer with the author. In *A Decolonial Feminism*. 2021.

Class 18 / 2 November

- Grada Kilomba. *Plantation Memories: Episodes of Everyday Racism*. Unrast, 2008. Excerpts.
- Kilomba's artworks [here](#).
- May Ayim. *blues in schwarz weiss*. 1996. Selected poems.

Week 10

**Queer Feminist Formations**

Class 19 / 7 November

- Naveen Minai and Sara Shroff. Yaariyan, Baithak, Gupshup: Queer Feminist Formations and the Global South. *Kohl: A Journal for Body and Gender Research* 5.1 (2019): 31-44.
- Zanele Muholi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEgf1XmtWCo>
- Zanele Muholi: <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/zanele-muholi>
- Zanele Muholi: catalogue excerpts

Class 20 / 9 November – no class on campus, exact date TBA upon consultation with students

- Decolonial Berlin city tour – *please bring a beverage and weather-appropriate clothes*

Week 11

**Politics of Interdependence**

Class 21 / 14 November

- Astra Talyor & Sunaura Taylor. *Our Animals, Ourselves: The Socialist Case for Animal Liberation*. Lux 2021.
- Watch Angela Davis in conversation with Grace Lee Boggs [here](#) – full video from 2012 [here](#))

Class 22 / 16 November

- Cara Daggett. Petro-masculinity: Fossil Fuels and Authoritarian Desire. 2018.
- Majandra Rodriguez Acha. Climate Justice Must Be Anti-Patriarchal or It Will Not Be Systemic. In: *Indigenous Women & Climate Change*. Ed. Rocío Silva Santisteban. 2020.
- Care Collective. *The Care Manifesto*. 2021. Excerpt. 85-97.

Week 12

**Bodies and States**

Class 23 / 21 November **on zoom**

- Keynote Lecture – [Changing the Subject: Feminist and Queer Politics in Neoliberal India](#), Srila Roy's book presentation

Class 24 / 23 November

- Molly Smith and Juno Mac. *Revolting Prostitutes: The Fight for Sex Workers' Rights*. London: Verso, 2018. 22-39.
- Svathi Shah. *Street Corner Secrets: Sex, Work, and Migration in the City of Mumbai*. Duke UP, 2017. Excerpt.

Week 13

**Workshops**

Class 25 / 28 November

Workshop: peer review of final project and essay drafts

Class 26 / 30 November **on zoom**

Final joint session BCB-Bard Annandale session

Week 14

**Reflections**

Class 27 / 5 December

Presentation of final projects

Class 28 / 7 December

Wrap-up