

PT160 TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY

Seminar Leader: Agata Lisiak

Course Times: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 – 10:30 am

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Office Hours: Thursdays, 11 am – 1 pm and 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 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 to focus on political projects that seek out solidarity-yielding connections. Among other topics, we will discuss the demands of socialist women's rights activists, queer feminist formations in the Global South, theories and practices of reproductive justice, feminist responses to occupation, war, and land grabbing, sex workers' struggles across borders, decolonial feminist interventions, 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 influential thinkers such as Sara Ahmed, Angela Davis, Silvia Federici, Verónica Gago, Lorraine Hansberry, Audre Lorde, Rosa Luxemburg, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí, Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, and Françoise Vergès, among many others. The assignments for this course are designed to acknowledge the importance of process as much as the final outcome, and to carefully probe the opportunities and challenges of collaborative thinking.

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.

BCB Attendance Policy

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 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.

Assignments and Assignment Deadlines

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

Gender autobiography: a reflection. This is a five-stage assignment that centers the importance of 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 peers' statements, comment on each other's posts, and consider them in relation to their own. In the fourth 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. Students will present and workshop their gender autobiography drafts in class on **24 September**. In the fifth and final stage, students will revise their gender autobiography and submit the completed versions by **27 September**.

Manifesto. In this collaborative midterm assignment students will work in small groups 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, every student will write a 1000-word reflection paper on the collaborative experience of the writing or translating process, in which they will engage with at least two texts assigned for this course. Detailed prompts and deadlines for the individual stages of the assignment will be announced on Google Classroom. Deadlines: for the manifesto outline – **9 October**; the finished manifesto – **4 November**; the reflection paper – **11 November**.

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. Regardless of the format they choose, students will engage carefully with at least two texts assigned for this course. Students will have the opportunity to workshop their drafts in class and discuss them with me in individual meetings. If you opt for a 'creative component', you will be required to present it in class on **12 December**. The final written version of this assignment is due latest by **19 December**.

BCB 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% (15% for weeks 1-7 + 15% for weeks 8-14)

Gender autobiography – 15%

Manifesto – 25%

Final project/paper – 30%

A note on the grading process and rubrics

Most assignments for this course center the importance of process as much as the final outcome. In the first two weeks of the semester, we will discuss expectations and challenges related to grading, and will jointly develop rubrics for each graded assignment.

***** STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE A COURSE READER FROM THE LIBRARY *****
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WILL BE POSTED ON GOOGLE CLASSROOM

Schedule

Week 1

Feminist Education and Politics

Class 1 // 3 September

Introductory session, opening exercises.

Class 2 // 5 September

- Ahmed, Sara. Feminism Is Sensational. *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke UP, 2017. 21-42.
- hooks, bell. Consciousness-Raising: Feminist Education for Critical Consciousness. *Feminism Is for Everybody*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2000. 7-12.

Assignment 1a (in class): intro to gender autobiographies

Week 2

Feminism and Internationalist Politics, Part 1

Class 3 // 10 September (on zoom)

- Luxemburg, Rosa. The Proletarian Woman. 1914.
- Hansberry, Lorraine. "Illegal" Conference Shows Peace Is Key to Freedom. 1952.

Assignment 1b: upload a 300-word gender autobiography on the padlet by midnight, 10 September

Class 4 // 12 September – no class

Instead, we will have an off-campus excursion (date announced in consultation with students once individual schedules have been finalized)

Assignment 1c: read all the gender autobiographies on the padlet and comment on at least two different ones by 6 pm, 16 September

Week 3

Feminism and Internationalist Politics, Part 2

Class 5 // 17 September

- Ghodsee, Kristen. *Second World, Second Sex: Socialist Women's Activism and Global Solidarity during the Cold War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. An excerpt.
- Gago, Verónica. *Feminist International*. London: Verso, 2020. An excerpt.

Class 6 // 19 September

- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. Under Western Eyes. *boundary 2* 12.3 (1984): 333-358.
- hooks, bell. Global Feminism. *Feminism Is for Everybody*. Cambridge: South End, 2000. 44-47.

Assignment 1d: submit your 1000-word gender autobiography draft via google classroom by midnight 23 September

Week 4

Gender Autobiographies & Feminist Manifestos

Class 7 // 24 September

- In-class workshop (assignment 1e): peer reviewing gender autobiographies

Class 8 // 26 September

- He-Yin Zhen. The Feminist Manifesto. 1907.
- The Combahee River Collective Statement. 1977.
- Leonard, Zoe. I Want a President. 1992. (Also watch it performed by Mykki Blanco, 2016 – link in google classroom)
- The Manukan Declaration of the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network. 2004.
- Lastesis. *Set Fear on Fire*. 2023. An excerpt.
- Feminist Resistance Against War: A Manifesto. 2022. <https://spectrejournal.com/feminist-resistance-against-war/> (read online)
- The Right to Resist: A Feminist Manifesto from Ukraine. 2022: <https://commons.com.ua/en/right-resist-feminist-manifesto/> (read online in the language of your choice)

Assignment 1f: revise your gender autobiography and submit the final version via google classroom by midnight 27 September.

Week 5

Social Reproduction, Part 1

Class 9 // 1 October

- Federici, Silvia. Wages Against Housework. 1975.
- Davis, Angela. The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective. 1981.

Assignment 2a: fill out the form to assemble feminist manifesto groups

NO CLASS ON 3 OCTOBER (public holiday)

Week 6

Social Reproduction, Part 2

Class 10 // 8 October

- Vergès, Françoise. Capitalocene, Waste, Race, and Gender. *e-flux*. 2019.

Class 11 / 10 October

Assignment 2b: feminist manifestos, a workshop (in class)

Week 7

Anti- and Decolonial Feminisms, Part 1

Class 12 / 15 October (on zoom)

- Nzegwu, Nkiru. Sisterhood. 1990.
- Oyěwùmí, Oyèrónkẹ́. Introduction: Feminism, Sisterhood, and *Other* Foreign Relations. In: *African Women & Feminism: Reflecting on the Politics of Sisterhood*. Ed. Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí. Trenton: Africa World Press, 2003. 1-24.

Class 13 / 17 October (on zoom)

- Guest session with Professor Srila Roy, University of Witwatersrand. Readings TBA.

***** FALL BREAK *****

Week 8

Anti- and Decolonial Feminisms, Part 2

Class 14 / 29 October

- Davis, Angela. Women in Egypt: A Personal View. *Women, Culture & Politics*. 1989.
- Salem, Sara. On Transnational Feminist Solidarity: The Case of Angela Davis in Egypt. *Signs* 43.2 (2018): 245-266.

Class 15 / 31 October

- Vergès, Françoise. *A Decolonial Feminism*. London: Pluto, 2021. An excerpt.

Assignment 2c: Submit your final manifesto via google classroom.

Week 9

Anti- and Decolonial Feminisms, Part 3

Class 16 / 5 November

Manifesto presentations (assignment 2d)

Class 17 / 7 November

- Ihmoud, Sarah. Palestinian feminism: Analytics, praxes and decolonial futures. *Feminist Anthropology* 3 (2022): 284-298.
- Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Nadera and Suhad Daher-Nashif. Femicide and Colonization: Between the Politics of Exclusion and the Culture of Control. *Violence Against Women* 19.3 (2013): 295–315.

Assignment 2e: submit your manifesto reflection paper via google classroom by midnight 11 November.

Week 10

Anti- and Decolonial Feminisms, Part 4

Class 18 / 12 November

- Minai, Naveen 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.
- Lady Gya. The Hystory of My Vagina: A Manifesto. *Kohl: A Journal for Body and Gender Research*. 1.2 (2015).

Class 19 / 14 November

- Dirik, Dilar. Jineolojî: A Science of Woman and Life (Chapter 12) & Ecology (Chapter 22). *The Kurdish Women's Movement*. London: Pluto, 2022.

Week 11

Bodies and States

Class 20 / 19 November

- B Camminga. Categories and Queues: The Structural Realities of Gender and the South African Asylum System. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 4.1 (2017). 61-77.
- Zanele Muholi catalog excerpts. Tate Modern, 2021. (not in the reader, I will bring them to class)

Class 21 / 21 November

- Smith, Molly and Juno Mac. *Revolting Prostitutes: The Fight for Sex Workers' Rights*. London: Verso, 2018. 22-39.
- Juno Mac. The Laws That Sex Workers Really Want: [a ted talk](#). 2016.

Week 12

Politics of Interdependence

Class 22 / 26 November

- Taylor, Astra and Sunaura Taylor. Our Animals, Ourselves: The Socialist Case for Animal Liberation. *Lux* 2021.

Class 23 / 28 November

- Kimmerer, Robin Wall. *Braiding Sweetgrass*. 2013. Excerpt.
- Arsanios, Marwa. Micro-Resistances: An interview with Samanta Arango Orozco. *Kohl: A Journal for Body and Gender Research* 8.2 (2022): <https://kohljournal.press/micro-resistances-interview-samanta-arango-orozco> (read online).
- Vivien Sansour on her heirloom seed library in Palestine. Al Jazeera 2019: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoexxUOeZak> (watch online).

Week 13

Workshops

Class 24 / 5 December

Workshop: peer review of final project drafts

Class 25 / 7 December

Re-reading: we will re-read and jointly annotate two texts discussed earlier in the semester. The texts will be selected via a poll by 25 November.

Week 14

Reflections

Class 26 / 12 December

Presentation of final projects

Class 27 / 14 December

Wrap-up session, closing exercises.

- Lorde, Audre. Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference. *Sister Outsider*. Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007. 114-123.