

WGSST 2300 APPROACHES TO FEMINIST INQUIRY FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON CONFLICT

Class meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:55-5:15pm Caldwell Lab 135
Spring Semester 2014
(January 6-April 21, 2014)

University Documented Disabilities

Students with a university-documented disability certified by the Office of Disability Services should discuss with me any special accommodations needed for the course. Please make me aware of your needs as soon as possible. The Office of Disability Services, located at 150 Pomerene Hall, offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Instructor: Dr. Debra Burrington, Senior Lecturer in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies
Office: TBA

Email: burrington.6@osu.edu or debraburrington@me.com

Office Hours: By appointment in office or more flexibly via email or phone (310) 592-0854

Course Description

This course is an introduction to feminist analysis designed to engage students in learning about and applying feminist frameworks and methods of inquiry. Our topic for this semester is conflict. What does this term contain? How do feminists theorize the causes of conflict and approach its mitigation? Are there distinctive feminist lenses to help us analyze conflict and propose ways of addressing it in our various social and political relations? Are there feminist models for working with conflict? As we explore these and related questions we will travel terrain that ranges from the interpersonal to the international, exploring along the way analytical frames that are sensitive to the intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and culture. Our investigations will draw from a number of fields of study, including but not limited to sociology, psychology, political science, law, and organizational behavior.

Course Objectives

- Consider a variety of approaches to feminist inquiry and analysis.
- Discuss feminist critiques of traditional methods of inquiry and analysis.
- Analyze assumptions and methods of inquiry in specific feminist projects.
- Develop critical thinking skills through the application of feminist perspectives on addressing difference and conflict.
- Develop goals and an action plan for improving your conflict engagement skills.

Texts and Resources

Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (editor), *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer* (2014), SAGE Publications, Inc. ISBN: 978-1-4129-9497-2 (pbk)

Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* (2009), TalentSmart. ISBN: 978-0-9743206-2-5 (hrdbk) [Note: also available in a Kindle edition; purchase a copy that provides you with the passcode to take the EQ test]

Peggy L. Chinn, *Peace and Power: New Directions for Building Community* (8th Edition) (2013). Jones & Bartlett Learning. ISBN: 978-1-4496-4555-7 (pbk)

Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Killman, *Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument* [Note: to acquire your copy you must order it yourself at their website for a cost of \$16.50:

<https://www.cpp.com/en/tkiitems.aspx?ic=4813>]

Note: a number of copies of the Ness-Biber *Feminist Research Practice*, the Chin *Peace and Power* and the Bradberry & Greaves *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* texts have been ordered through SBX. If you order copies of these texts elsewhere please make sure that you order the editions and publication years specified in the list above. This is VERY important, as the newer editions are, in most cases, significantly revised over earlier versions. *To reiterate, you will have to order your personal copy of the TKI yourself at the URL provided in the list above.*

A note about required media: At various points noted in the syllabus students will be expected to view several popular films outside of class. Films assigned for viewing outside of class will be available via the OSU Secured Media Library at: <https://ocio.osu.edu/elearning/services/tools> (Note: From the URL shown above, find the Table of Contents and click on the Online Repositories. The Online Media Library is the first item listed. Click on this and then scroll down to and click on “Go to Media Services Online Library.” You will be asked to log in to the site with your OSU username and password.) There will also be additional media clips assigned as resources prior to the various class meetings where they appear on the syllabus. In all cases the media should be viewed on your own prior to the class meeting where the film or clip is listed in the syllabus.

Assignments and Responsibilities

Participation (20%): Attendance will not be taken for the course, but it must be stressed that “one must be present in order to win,” and you should keep your own record of missed class meetings because this will factor into your participation self-assessments. In this case “winning” is not just getting the best grade you can on this specific course dimension but also is about making a difference in the class as part of our combined efforts to create a learning community that matters. Twice during the semester you will complete a participation self-assessment. It includes: (1) a rubric against which you can judge your efforts along several dimensions related to participation, (2) guidelines (e.g., attendance is one) about what to do – and not do – to improve your efforts, and (3) a space for you to suggest the letter grade you feel you deserve and to provide a narrative that supports this self-assessment. On the first, mid-semester,

assessment you will be invited to suggest some goals you want to try to meet in order to improve your participation efforts, and then on the final, end of course, assessment you can comment on whether you met these goals. You will have a number of opportunities to “exceed expectations” on participation by doing some advance work and bringing ideas to class to include in discussions on specific topics. **Assessment #1 is due February 19 (via Carmen) and #2 is due April 9 (via Carmen).**

‘Midterm’ Take-Home Quiz (20%): Upon completion of our initial discussions of various modes of feminist analysis/inquiry using the Ness-Biber text and additional related readings, students will complete a short take-home ‘quiz’ to: (1) demonstrate understanding of *at least one* major area of feminist inquiry of interest to you (e.g., feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint, feminist ethnography, feminist action research, feminist literary criticism, feminist interviewing, feminist focus groups) and (2) apply the chosen area(s) to suggest how feminists would use this mode of inquiry/analysis to better understand a difference, dispute or conflict of your choosing. **This quiz will be available via Carmen on Tuesday February 4 at 5:00pm and is due Sunday February 16 by 11:59:59pm.**

Action Plan for Your Conflict Engagement Skill Building (30%): This is a practical component that has been built into the course. Your action plan must be rooted in one or more self-assessments that have been assigned as part of what the course covers. There are two self-assessment areas all students should complete: (1) one related to conflict styles, and (2) one related to emotional intelligence. Two of the “texts and resources” in the syllabus are the *Thomas-Killmann Conflict Mode Instrument* (the TKI) and the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal (accessible through the *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* text). [Note that each of these self-assessment instruments must be purchased – the TKI on its own for about \$17 at their website: <https://www.cpp.com/en/tkiitems.aspx?ic=481>, and the EI Appraisal included as part of the cost of the text *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*.] In order to “exceed expectations” on the self-assessment portion of this assignment you must complete both of these two specific instruments on conflict and EI. In order to “meet expectations” on the self-assessment portion of this assignment you must complete either the TKI or the EI Appraisal and one free online self-assessment on the other area. Your personal results on your chosen self-assessments are to be used as baselines that provide you with a skill building starting point for areas you have decided to work on as part of your learning in this course and beyond. Additional details about the requirements will be provided with the assignment instructions, and resources that will be of help to you on this course requirement are available in Carmen in a section called Action Plan Resources. **Your documentation of work completed on your action plan throughout the semester is due Sunday April 6 at 11:59:59pm (via Carmen).**

Final Project (30%): For the final project in the course you will be provided with a case study designed to enable you to utilize one or more methods of feminist analysis/inquiry and apply it/them to a conflict scenario that is loosely based on actual events. Your primary task is to suggest, in your paper, how you would utilize new discoveries you’ve made during the course to address and mitigate the conflicts that you ascertain lie at the heart of the given scenario. It is perfectly acceptable and even recommended that you link the research you do for this

project and the work you did on the midterm quiz. The case study and additional details about the requirements will be provided with the assignment instructions. **This project is due Sunday April 27 by 5:00pm (via Carmen).**

Course Grading

Grading

A = 93-100%	B- = 80-82%	D+ = 67-69%
A- = 90-92%	C+ = 77-79%	D = 63-66%
B+ = 87-89%	C = 73-76%	D- = 60-62%
B = 83-86%	C- = 70-72%	F = below 60%

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

Students are expected to maintain complete academic integrity. Please become familiar with the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Department's statement on plagiarism:

As defined by University Rule 3335-31-02, plagiarism is "the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas." Plagiarism is one of the most serious offenses that can be committed in an academic community; as such it is the obligation of this department and its instructors to report all cases of suspected plagiarism to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. After the report is filed a hearing takes place and if the student is found guilty, the possible punishment ranges from failing the class to suspension or expulsion from the university. Although the existence of the Internet makes it relatively easy to plagiarize, it also makes it even easier for instructors to find evidence of plagiarism. It is obvious to most teachers when a student turns in work that is not his or her own and plagiarism search engines make documenting the offense very simple. You should always cite your sources (I can help you with this if you are unfamiliar with proper styles of documentation). Always ask questions **before** you turn in an assignment if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism. Always see your TA or professor if you are having difficulty with an assignment. To preserve the integrity of OSU as an institution of higher learning, to maintain your own integrity, and to avoid jeopardizing your future, **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!** As you are probably aware OSU is now utilizing Turnitin and it is available for instructors to utilize on any assignments submitted via the Carmen dropbox feature.

Writing Center

The Writing Center allows you to make appointments to get assistance from trained writing tutors. To utilize this university-sponsored service, contact the Writing Center at (614) 680-4291 or visit their website at <http://cstw.osu.edu/writingcenter>. Please also note that the Resources section of the Writing Center website contains a variety of extremely helpful materials on topics such as source citation, drafting and style, editing and grammar.

Assignment Submission Formats

Note that all of your assignments must be submitted either in Microsoft Word or as a PDF file.

Course Topic Outline and Reading Schedule

First, some cogent thoughts as we depart on our travels...

“Whilst thought and reason are identified with the masculine and Western subject, emotions and bodies are associated with femininity and racial others. This projection of ‘emotion’ onto the bodies of others not only works to exclude others from the realms of thought and rationality, but also works to conceal the emotional and embodied aspects of thought and reason....The ‘truths’ of this world are dependent on emotions, on how they move subjects, and stick them together....Knowledge cannot be separated from the bodily world of feeling and sensation; knowledge is bound up with what makes us sweat, shudder, tremble, all those feelings that are crucially felt on the bodily surface, the skin surface where we touch and are touched by the world.” (Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*)

Part I: Basic Concepts in Feminist Analysis

Introduction: Feminist Understandings of Oppression

Tuesday January 7

Discussion, no readings due

First, let’s consider what we mean by conflict, dispute and difference. Of what concern are these terms and concepts to feminists?

Second, let’s informally (re)visit the long history of feminist contention with systems of domination to see what we know, as a group, about the various approaches feminists take to analyzing the causes of oppression and the remedies for it.

Feminist Analytical Frameworks and Epistemologies: Refusing the Mind/Body Split

Thursday January 9

Hesse-Biber, Ch. 1, “A Re-Invitation to Feminist Research,” in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Naples & Gurr, Ch. 2, “Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory,” in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Tuesday January 14

Frost & Elichaooff, “Ch. 3, “Feminist Postmodernism, Poststructuralism and Critical Theory,” in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Thursday January 16

Buch & Staller, "What is Feminist Ethnography," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Tuesday January 21

Lykes & Crosby, "Feminist Practice of Action and Community Research," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Thursday January 23

Hesse-Biber, "Feminist Approaches to In-Depth Interviewing," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Tuesday January 28

Munday, "The Practice of Feminist Focus Groups," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Thursday January 30

Mertens & Stewart, "The Feminist Practice of Program Evaluation," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*

Tuesday February 4

McIntosh & Cuklanz, "Feminist Media Research"

Media due:

Film (OSU Secured Media Library): *The Heat*

Analytical Approaches Applied to Conflict and Difference

Thursday February 6

How would lessons we've learned from examining different feminist analytical frameworks be of use to us in studying and/or working with conflict and difference?

Lutz, "Feminism and Emotion" (Carmen)

Schultz, "The Cook, the Mediator, the Feminist, and the Hero" (Carmen)

Tuesday February 11

Travis Bradberry & Jean Greaves, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*

Note: Please also complete your TKI conflict style and EI assessments by this class meeting. Our discussion will include what you are comfortable sharing about your own self-assessments and questions you have about what all this "means."

Thursday February 13

Interlude: The Bases of Difference, or Nature versus Nurture/Nature and Nurture

"He could turn on its head the whole language." (Mary Jane West-Eberhard)

Our genes and our environment: To what extent are we driven by our genetic make-up versus the circumstances and environments in which we develop? What are the implications of 'nature vs. nurture' for how we become who we are, and how we deal with issues of difference and conflict? How is research in neuroscience problematizing simplistic notions of both biological determinism and radical social constructionism?

David Dobbs, "Die, Selfish Gene, Die," *Aeon*, December 3, 2013 [PDF in Carmen, or available digitally at: <http://aeon.co/magazine/nature-and-cosmos/why-its-time-to-lay-the-selfish-gene-to-rest/>]

Michael Sandel, "The Moral Side of Murder," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBdfcR-8hEY> [Note: the pertinent segment on "the trolley car problem" is approximately the first 13:35 minutes]

Radiolab, "Morality," at: <http://www.radiolab.org/story/91508-morality/> [Note: the pertinent segment is the first story, about 28 minutes long]

Simon Baron-Cohen, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aq_nCTGSfWE his Tedx London talk about "Zero Degrees of Empathy" [approximately 27 minutes in length]

Part II. Feminists and Conflict

"[F]eminist inquiry is about understanding how things work, who is in the action, what might be possible, and how worldly actors might be accountable to and love each other less violently."
(Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*)

Feminist Approaches to Social Protest

Tuesday February 18

Faludi, "How Shulamith Firestone Shaped Feminism" (Carmen)

Mueller, "The Organizational Basis of Conflict in Contemporary Feminism" (Carmen)

Thursday February 20

Schwartz-Shea & Burrington, "Free Riding, Alternative Organization and Cultural Feminism: The Case of Seneca Women's Peace Camp" (Carmen)

Krasniewicz, "The Bridge: A Drama" (Carmen)

Conflict within Feminism

Tuesday February 25

Comella, "Looking Backwards: Barnard and Its Legacies" (Carmen)

Gilmore & Kaminski, "A Part and Apart: Lesbian and Straight Feminist Activists Negotiate Identity in a Second-Wave Organization" (Carmen)

Thursday February 27

Breines, "What's Love Got to Do with It? White Women, Black Women, and Feminism in the Movement Years" (Carmen)

Sholock, "Methodology of the Privileged: White Anti-Racist Feminism, Systematic Ignorance, and Epistemic Uncertainty" (Carmen)

Part III. Conflict Resolution Structures, Strategies and Processes

Dealing with Conflict: The Adversarial Model

Tuesday March 4

Menkel-Meadow, "The Trouble with the Adversarial System in a Postmodern, Multicultural World" (Carmen)

Roberts, "The Social and Moral Costs of Mass Incarceration in African American Communities" (Carmen)

Media due:

Film (OSU Secured Media Library): *Twelve Angry Men*

Thursday March 6 – no class – research day

*****Spring Break Monday March 10 – Friday March 14*****

Your Conflict Styles

Tuesday March 18

Discussion

Dealing with Conflict: Collaborative Approaches

Thursday March 20

Melamed, "What is Mediation?" (Carmen)

Glaser, "Getting to Yes Without Giving In" a summary of the classic text by Fisher & Ury (Carmen)

Folger & Bush, "Transformative Mediation" (Carmen)

US Postal Service REDRESS Program, "Transformative Mediation" (Carmen)

Cloke, "Mediators Without Borders: A Proposal to Resolve Political Conflicts" (Carmen)

Tuesday March 25

Sturm & Guinier, "Learning from Conflict: Reflections on Teaching About Race and Gender" (Carmen)

Peruse this website, established by the authors: <http://www.racetalks.org/indexhtml.html>

Coker, "Restorative Justice, Navajo Peacemaking and Domestic Violence" (Carmen)

Thursday March 27

Baruch Bush, "Handling Workplace Conflict: Why Transformative Mediation?" (Carmen)

McCabe, "A Forum for Women's Voices: Mediation Through a Feminist Jurisprudential Lens" (Carmen)

Newberger, "The Importance of the Reconciliation Model of Peacemaking" (Carmen)

Media due:

Film (OSU Secured Media Library): *Gran Torino*

Part IV. Feminist Models of Conflict Resolution?

"Feminists who speak out against established 'truths' are often constructed as emotional, as failing the very standards of reason and impartiality that are assumed to form the basis of 'good judgment.'" (Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*)

Tuesday April 1

The Ascendancy of Emotional Intelligence

Ahmed, "Affective Economies" (Carmen)

Sanford, "Hard and Soft Emotion During Conflict: Investigating Married Couples and Other Relationships" (Carmen)

Van Kleef, "Emotion in Conflict and Negotiation" (Carmen)

Thursday April 3

Weber, "Feminist Peace and Conflict Theory" (Carmen)

And discussion of progress on and learning from your action plans

*****Action plan documentation due (via Carmen) on April 6 at 5:00pm*****

Conflict Resolution: Application of Feminist Lenses and Perspectives

Tuesday April 8

Peggy L. Chinn, *Peace and Power: New Directions for Building Community* (8th Edition) (2013)

Thursday April 10

How might feminists address family conflict?

Benjamin & Irving, "Toward a Feminist-Informed Model of Therapeutic Family Mediation" (Carmen)

Noel Semple, "Mandatory Family Mediation and the Settlement Mission: A Feminist Critique" (Carmen)

Larsen, "Tipping Points: Reasons Why Mediation Works in Complex Family Disputes" (Carmen)

Tuesday April 15

How might feminists address institutional and international conflict?

Jordan, "Women and Conflict Transformation: Influences, Roles and Experiences" (Carmen)

Afshar, "Women and Wars: Some Trajectories Toward a Feminist Peace" (Carmen)

Pankhurst, "The 'Sex War' and Other Wars: Towards a Feminist Approach to Peace Building" (Carmen)

Bickford, "Truth and Reconciliation" (Carmen)

Media due:

Film (OSU Secured Media Library): *Invictus*

Thursday April 17

Wrap-up and evaluations

Discussion of how things are going on final projects and your experience with your action plans

*****FINAL PROJECT DUE APRIL 27 VIA CARMEN DROPBOX BY 5:00PM*****