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Fall 2001
2:40 - 5:20 W
Eagleton

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PROSEMINAR: WOMEN AND POLITICS

Course Description

This seminar examines a variety of issues and debates within the field of Women's Studies that are important to the study of Women and Politics. Drawing on materials written by scholars from several disciplines, the course provides an introduction to feminist theory, explores the nature of feminist inquiry both in interdisciplinary perspective and within the discipline of political science, examines several of the major areas of feminist scholarship that have relevance for political scientists, and considers the potential for feminist scholarship to transform the discipline of political science.

Course Requirements

Written requirements for the course include two short (6-8 page) papers and a take-home final exam. Class participation is an essential component of this course; all seminar participants are expected to read required readings prior to class and to come to class prepared to discuss them. Each of the two short papers, the take-home final, and class participation will all be weighed about equally in determining final grades.

Required Readings

There are two required books for the course:

Judith Grant, Fundamental Feminism: Contesting the Core Concepts of Feminist Theory (Routledge, 1993)

Shane Phelan, Getting Specific: Postmodern Lesbian Politics (Minnesota, 1994).

Books can be purchased at the Douglass Bookstore. Xerox copies of all other readings are available at Eagleton and Hickman Hall.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Sept. 5 Introductory Session

THE NATURE OF FEMINIST INQUIRY

Sept. 12 An Overview of Feminist Theory

Judith Grant, Fundamental Feminism.

Sept. 19 The Need for Feminist Research in Political Science: Feminist Critiques of Political Science and the Traditional Literature

Susan Moller Okin, Women in Western Political Thought, Chs. 10 & 12, pp. 233-246, 274-304.

Linda M.G. Zerilli, "Machiavelli's Sisters: Women and the 'Conversation' of Political Theory," Political Theory, 19(May 1991), pp. 252-276.

Susan C. Bourque and Jean Grossholtz, "Politics an Unnatural Practice: Political Science Looks at Female Participation," Politics and Society, 4(Winter 1974), pp. 225-266.

Barbara J. Nelson, "Women and Knowledge in Political Science: Texts, Histories, and Epistemologies," Women & Politics, 9(1989), pp. 1-25.

Virginia Sapiro, "Feminist Studies and Political Science—and Vice Versa," in Anne Phillips (ed.), Feminism and Politics, pp. 67-89.

Susan J. Carroll and Linda M.G. Zerilli, "Feminist Challenges to the Discipline of Political Science," in Ada W. Finifter (ed.), Political Science: The State of the Discipline II, pp. 55-76.

Sept. 26 Feminist Epistemology and Methodology - Part I

Sandra Harding, Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?, Chs. 5, 7, 11, and 12, pp. 105-137, 164-187, 268-312.

Helen E. Longino, "Can There Be a Feminist Science?," in Nancy Tuana (ed.), Feminism & Science, pp. 17-32.

Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," Feminist Studies, 14(Fall 1988), pp. 575-599.

Sandra Harding, "Is There a Feminist Method?," in Nancy Tuana (ed.), Feminism & Science, pp. 17-32.

Maria Mies, "Towards a Methodology for Feminist Research," in Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein (eds.), Theories of Women's Studies, pp. 117-139.

Oct. 3 Feminist Epistemology and Methodology - Part II

Nancy C.M. Hartsock, "The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism," in Sandra Harding (ed.), Feminism & Methodology, pp. 157-180.

Patricia Hill Collins, "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought," Signs, 14(Summer 1989), pp. 745-773.

Susan Hekman, "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited" and comments and reply, Signs, 22(1997), pp. 341-402.

Pauline Marie Rosenau, Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences, Chapter 7, "Epistemology and Methodology: Post-Modern Alternatives," pp. 109-137.

Jane Roland Martin, "Methodological Essentialism, False Difference, and Other Dangerous Traps," Signs, 19(Spring 1994), pp. 630-657.

RELEVANT ISSUES AND DEBATES IN FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

Oct. 10 Alternative Conceptions of Sex and Gender

Tina Chanter, "Gender Aporias," Signs, 25(Summer 2000), pp. 1237-1241.

Linda Nicholson, "Interpreting Gender," Signs, 20 (Autumn 1994), pp. 79-105.

Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," in Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History, pp. 28-50.

Judith Butler, "Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of Postmodernism," in Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, Feminists Theorize the Political, pp. 3-21.

Mary Hawkesworth, "Confounding Gender," and comments and reply, Signs, 22(Spring, 1997), pp. 649-713.

Oyeronke Oyewumi, "De-confounding Gender: Feminist Theorizing and Western Culture, a Comment on Hawkesworth's 'Confounding Gender,'" Signs 23(Summer 1998), pp. 1049-1062.

Oct. 17 Gender Difference Theories

Carol Gilligan, "In a Different Voice: Women's Conceptions of Self and of Morality," in Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine (eds.), The Future of Difference, pp. 274-317.

Joan C. Tronto, "Women and Caring: What Can Feminists Learn about Morality from Caring?," in Alison M. Jaggar and Susan R. Bordo (eds.), Gender/Body/Knowledge, pp. 172-187.

Nancy Julia Chodorow, "Gender, Relation, and Difference in Psychoanalytic Perspective," in Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine (eds.), The Future of Difference, pp. 3-19.

- Oct. 17 (cont.) Sara Ruddick, "Maternal Thinking," in Joyce Trebilcot (ed.), Mothering, pp. 213-230.
- Alison M. Jaggar, "Sexual Difference and Sexual Equality," in Deborah L. Rhode (ed.), Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference, pp. 239-254.
- Oct. 24 The Category "Woman" and Dealing with Difference: Postmodern Perspectives
- Nancy Fraser and Linda J. Nicholson, "Social Criticism without Philosophy: An Encounter between Feminism and Postmodernism," in Linda J. Nicholson (ed.), Feminism/Postmodernism, pp. 19-38.
- Linda Alcoff, "Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory," Signs, 13(Spring 1988), pp. 405-436.
- Christine Di Stefano, "Dilemmas of Difference: Feminism, Modernity, and Postmodernism," in Linda J. Nicholson (ed.), Feminism/Postmodernism, pp. 63-82.
- Iris Marion Young, "Gender as Seriality: Thinking about Women as a Social Collective," Signs, 19(Spring 1994), pp. 713-738.
- Joan W. Scott, "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, The Uses of Post-structuralist Theory for Feminism," Feminist Studies, 14 (Spring 1988), pp. 33-50.
- Oct. 31 The Category "Woman" and Dealing with Difference: Perspectives of U.S. Women of Color
- Elizabeth V. Spelman, Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought, pp. 114-159.
- Deborah K. King, "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology," Signs, 14(Autumn 1988), pp. 42-72.
- Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics," in Anne Phillips (ed.), Feminism and Politics, pp. 314-343.
- Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," Signs, 17(Winter 1992), pp. 251-274.
- Gloria Anzaldua, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza, Chapter 7, "La conciencia de la mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness," pp. 99-113.
- Paula M.L. Moya, "Chicana Feminism and Postmodernist Theory," Signs, 26(Winter 2001), pp. 441-483.
- Maivan Clech Lam, "Feeling Foreign in Feminism," Signs, 19(Summer 1994), pp. 865-893.

Nov. 7

The Category "Woman" and Dealing with Difference: International Perspectives

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in Chandra Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres (eds.), Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism, pp. 51-80.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience," in Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips (eds.), Destabilizing Theory, pp. 74-92.

Aili Mari Tripp, "Rethinking Difference: Comparative Perspectives from Africa," Signs, 25(2000), pp. 649-675.

Lata Mani and Ruth Frankenberg, "Cross Current, Cross Talk: Race, Postcoloniality and the Politics of Location"

Gayatri Spivak, "The Politics of Translation," in Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips (eds.), Destabilizing Theory, pp. 177-200.

Nov. 14

Identity Politics in a Postmodern Context

Shane Phelan, Getting Specific.

Nov. 28

Gender and the Welfare State

Linda Gordon, "The New Scholarship on the Welfare State," in Linda Gordon (ed.), Women, the State, and Welfare, pp. 9-35.

Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Antigone's Daughters: Reflections on Female Identity and the State," in Irene Diamond (ed.), Families, Politics, and Public Policy, pp. 300-311.

Frances Fox Piven, "Ideology and the State: Women, Power, and the Welfare State," in Linda Gordon (ed.), Women, the State, and Welfare, pp. 250-264.

Jane Jensen, "Representations of Gender: Policies to 'Protect' Women Workers and Infants in France and the United States before 1914," in Linda Gordon (ed.), Women, The State, and Welfare, pp. 152-177.

Gwendolyn Mink, "The Lady and the Tramp: Gender, Race, and the Origins of the American Welfare State," in Linda Gordon (ed.), Women, The State, and Welfare, pp. 92-122.

Ana Shola Orloff, "Ending the Entitlements of Poor Single Mothers: Changing Social Policies, Women's Employment, and Caregiving in the Contemporary United States," in Nancy J. Hirschmann and Ulrike Liebert (eds.), Women and Welfare: Theory and Practice in the United States and Europe, pp. 133-159.

Joyce Marie Mushaben, "Challenging the Maternalist Presumption: The Gender Politics of Welfare Reform in Germany and the United States," in Nancy J. Hirschmann and Ulrike Liebert (eds.), Women and Welfare: Theory and Practice in the United States and Europe, pp. 193-214.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Dec. 5 The Relationship Between Theory and Practice

Charlotte Bunch, "Not by Degrees: Feminist Theory and Education," in Charlotte Bunch, Passionate Politics, pp. 240-253.

Heidi Hartmann et al., "Bringing Together Feminist Theory and Practice: A Collective Interview," Signs, 21 (Summer 1996), pp. 917-951.

Jane Roland Martin, "Aerial Distance, Esotericism, and Other Closely Related Traps," Signs, 21 (Spring 1996), pp. 584-614.

Ednie Kaeh Garrison, "U.S. Feminism—Grrrl Style! Youth (Sub)Cultures and the Technologies of the Third Wave," Feminist Studies, 26 (Spring 2000), pp. 141-170.

Dec. 12 Equality, Difference, and Women's Bodies in Public Policy and the Law

Wendy Sarvasy, "Beyond the Difference versus Equality Policy Debate: Postsuffrage Feminism, Citizenship, and the Quest for a Feminist Welfare State," Signs, 17 (Winter 1992), pp. 329-362.

Lise Vogel, "Debating Difference: Feminism, Pregnancy, and the Workplace," Feminist Studies 15 (Spring 1990), pp. 9-32.

Martha Minow, "Adjudicating Differences: Conflicts Among Feminist Lawyers," in Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller (eds.), Conflicts in Feminism, pp. 149-163.

Zillah R. Eisenstein, The Female Body and the Law, pp. 79-116, 191-224.

Drucilla Cornell, At the Heart of Freedom, Chapter 3, "Nature, Gender, and Equivalent Evaluation of Sexual Difference," pp. 66-95.

Catharine A. MacKinnon, "Reflections on Sex Equality Under Law," The Yale Law Journal, 100 (1991), pp. 1281-1328.

Sharon Marcus, "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention," in Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds.), Feminists Theorize the Political, pp. 385-403.