

Course Outline
Phil 242 Introduction to Feminist Theory

Fall Term 2020 *Remote Delivery*

Monday and Wednesday lectures: will be uploaded at 9am *via Recordings on MyCourses*
Optional conferences led by TAs: 11.25am – 11.55am or 12pm – 12.30pm on Fridays
Delivered via Zoom [these sessions will not be recorded]. These will start from the second week of term.

Optional Q&A Session with instructor: every fortnight at 11.25am - 12.30pm on Wednesdays
Delivered via Zoom [these sessions will not be recorded]. These will start from the second week of term.

Instructor: Em Walsh
Contact Email: emily.walsh@mail.mcgill.ca (she/her)
Office Hours: Mondays 3pm – 5pm via Zoom

Teaching Assistants: Sarah Clairmont and Dallas Jokic
Sarah Clairmont – sarah.clairmont@mail.mcgill.ca
Dallas Jokic - dallas.jokic@mail.mcgill.ca
Office Hours for TAs: TBC

Course Outline

This course is an introduction to feminist theory. Women around the world, as it stands, do not have equality with men. This course begins on the assumption that this is morally problematic and should concern all of us. We'll begin the course by unpacking the liberal roots of the feminist movement and addressing some important criticisms made against liberal feminism. We will then critically examine the oppression of women, as well as the social construction of both sex and gender. The second half of the course will explore applied aspects of feminist theory, uncovering the ways in which women are currently policed in our societies. In this section of the course, we will explore topics such as: violence against women, the harms of heteronormativity, beauty norms, and spirituality. The course will end by discussing lessons drawn from Indigenous feminism and exploring the ways in which feminist theory ought to adapt to make room for cultural and spiritual differences between women.

Readings

All readings for the course will be accessible via MyCourses.

Expectations and Assignments

- (i) **Reading;** As an introductory level course, this course requires you to read a substantial amount and engage critically with the philosophical work assigned. Reading philosophy is challenging, so do not be concerned if you do not understand the material the first time you read it. Simply jot down which concepts/ideas seem unclear to you and ask either your TA in the discussion period or the instructor in the Q&A session.

- (ii) **Participation in Discussions;** Attending weekly discussions with your assigned TA is *optional* for this course but strongly encouraged so that you can gain a better understanding of the material and the philosophical questions raised by the material.
- (iii) **Annotating a philosophical text (15%);** You will be asked to annotate an assigned philosophical text to show that you are engaging with the texts presented in a critical way. *Assignment Due Date: September 30th 2020*
- (iv) **Objection and Response Exercise (2**

Content Warning

Many of the readings in this course touch on and speak to issues of violence against women [both psychological and physical], racism, transphobia, and homophobia. Lectures will include discussions of this material. We must engage in these discussions with respect for others.

If you have concerns/worries about this side of the material email the instructor. If you find the material triggers past trauma, please seek guidance from the following services at McGill who can offer full support to you: the Virtual Hub, Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support, and Education (OSVRSE), Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Students' Society (SACCOMS), or drop by at the Brown Student Services Building.

Note: In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the and/or evaluation methods stipulated are subject to change.

Tentative Reading Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Course

September 2nd: Audible: Youtube – *We Should All Be Feminists* Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

September 4th: *Toward a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness* – Sandra Lee Bartky

Week 2: Liberal Feminism

September 7th: *The Subjection of Women Ch.1* John Stuart Mill

September 9th: *The Second Sex Intro* Simone de Beauvoir

September 11th: Conference Discussion theme– Motivating Forces Behind Liberal Feminism

Week 3: Criticisms of Liberal Feminism

September 14th: The Audre Lorde

September 16th: *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women* - Kimberlé Crenshaw

Audible: Youtube – *The Urgency of Intersectionality* Kimberlé Crenshaw

September 18th and Conference Discussion theme - Who Has Feminism NYT deat devdrswF4(dindQq0.0000088

September 30th: *Feeding Egos and Tending to Male Wounds: Deference and Disaffection in*
- Sandra Bartky

October 2nd: Conference Discussion Theme – The Oppression of Women

Week 5: Sex, Gender, Oppression

October 5th: *Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory* – bell hooks

October 7th: *The Problem of Speaking for Others* Linda Alcoff

October 9th: Conference Discussion Theme – Intersectionality and Oppression

Week 6: Sex, Gender, Oppression

October 12th: *The Traffic in Women* - Gayle Rubin

October 14th: *Neurosexism and Neurofeminism* – Ginger Hoffman and Robyn Bluhm

October 16th: Conference Discussion Theme – The Social Construction of Sex

Week 7: Sex, Gender, Oppression

October 19th: *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution* Judith Butler

October 21st: *Whipping Girl Ch. 8* – Julia Serano

October 23rd: Conference Discussion Theme – The Social Construction of Gender

Week 8:

