Women's Studies 4050: Research Methodologies
Updated: August 10, 2015

Course Semester: Monday, August 31 - Friday, December 11, 2015

Finals Week: Monday, December 8 - Thursday, December 11, 2015
Graduation: Friday, December 18, 2015
Room/Building: Elizabeth Hall Rooms 265 & EH Classroom (T.B.A.).

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Elizabeth Hall Room 265
Office Hours: M,W,F 11:30am-12:20pm, F 7-8:30am; and always by appointment.
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DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to introduce students to a variety of approaches to research in Women's Studies. We will consider such issues as: What counts as knowledge? What are the assumptions of common approaches to "knowing" and how do they work for the study of women? What are feminist research methodologies? How are "objectivity," "scientific" and "universality" defined? What difference does it make to account for the gender of the researcher and research subjects? This course will take us from important theoretical issues raised in the "Introduction to Feminist Theories" course to actual praxis, to the conceptual framing of projects involving field work, service learning, and/or research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will: a) consider feminist critiques of science as the model of knowledge in Western traditions; b) evaluate various methods of knowing and gathering information; c) estimate and judge the impact of feminisms on various disciplines, and d) plan distinct phases of a small, independent research project that involves an element of community service (e.g., creating links between WSU and the local YWCA, or YCC [Your Community Connection]).

The course is also designed to hone critical thinking skills in several ways by:
1) identifying and challenging the assumptions that underlie the ideas, beliefs, values, and actions taken for granted in dominant research design and implementation;
2) demonstrating the importance of context in shaping our habitual perceptions, understandings, and interpretations of the world. This course will also promote critical consciousness of the practices, structures, and actions that organize the manner in which dominant research is practiced;
3) uncovering ways of imagining and exploring alternatives to prevailing ways of conducting research, and more broadly, science;
4) developing a reflective skepticism about claims made by science and research.

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will: a) consider feminist critiques of science as the model of knowledge in Western traditions; b) evaluate various methods of knowing and gathering information; c) estimate and judge the impact of feminisms on various disciplines, and d) plan distinct phases of a relatively small, independent research project that should, where applicable, involve an element of community service (e.g., creating links between WSU and the local YWCA, or YCC [Your Community Connection]).

LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of foundational and contemporary research and theoretical literature in the field of Women and Gender Studies.
2. Students will apply their knowledge of women and gender studies

a. Apply their knowledge of women and gender studies by analyzing current social and political situations from those perspectives.

b. Articulate the ways in which systems of power, privilege, and oppression shape our experiences as individuals and members of communities.

**TEXTS (All course texts, materials [incl. excerpts] will be provided by the instructor of record for this course)**

**Texts & Text excerpts include:**


Additional readings on research methods to be made available whenever it is helpful to your learning process. The majority of texts are available in partial or, in some cases, in their entire form on the internet; brief excerpts of key texts may also be made available, in some instances by means of the Stewart Library Electronic Reserve.

**KEY TERMS**

**Method:** Techniques for gathering evidence. Listening to or interrogating informants and subjects of study. Observing behavior and actions. Examining historical traces and records.

**Methodology:** The theory and analysis of how research proceeds.

**Epistemology:** The theory of knowledge. Epistemology involves questions about who can be a "knower"; what kinds of tests must beliefs and values pass in order to be legitimated as "knowledge (e.g., only those tests measured by hegemonic experiences and observations?)

**Ontology:** A way of being in the world; the conditions of human (female) existence.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**
Readings: (as assigned; see “Course Plan” below).

**Class Participation:** Students are responsible for coming to class prepared, actively engaging in class discussions, raising thought-provoking questions, and consistently answering questions to demonstrate mastery of the material. Participation also involves work in small group projects, and it is important that students use the in-class tasks to expand upon material communicated in the lecture format. Highly consistent
class attendance is expected and required.
More information on the Grading and Attendance Policy and on Services for Students with Disabilities is available at:
Course Policies and Services.htm.

Research Proposal: Students are required to complete a research proposal project related to Women's Studies issues, addressing their own particular areas of interest. Topics must be cleared with Professor Szalay prior to initiating any work. For assistance, see course syllabus and, most importantly, meet with Course Prof. to receive clarification and individual guidance.

Due Week 8: Monday, October 19 - Friday, October 23, 2015: Writing Assignment: 1) Descriptive Statement of Research Topic; 2) Biographical Sketch relating your interests in a particular research topic. Consider your relationship to this particular topic.

Due Week 11: Monday, November 9 - Friday, November 13, 2015: First draft of research proposal is due. Individual tutorials with instructor as needed are scheduled.
See also the sites that have proven useful to Research Methodologies students: Research Methodologies -- Useful Websites. Assessment of the Research Proposal will be based on the Research Proposal Assessment Profile.

NOTE: The proposal project must be completed in order for a grade to be assigned in this course.
1) Statement of Problem;
2) Biographical Sketch, addressing what you as researcher bring to this question;
3) Literature Review, including the complete citations and annotations of cited references.
4) Description of Materials Required and the Methods to be Employed. The final form of the "Description" is an essay which: a) demonstrates an understanding of the concerns and critiques of feminist methodologies, and b) includes rationalizations for the methods selected for the project; and
5) Hypothesis/Projected Results. This essay demonstrates your understanding of how concerns about gender and gender issues inform your interpretation (of the data).

Sources must be cited according to the: American Sociological Association (APA), or the Modern Language Association (MLA), or according to the American Psychological Association (APA) Bibliographical Styles.

If any part or parts of the proposal are missing on the final due date, the proposal will be considered incomplete and graded "I."

WSU Academic Standards
All courses in the Women's Studies Program adhere to the Weber State University Policy on Academic Standards. In cases of alleged violations, the procedures outlined in the policy will be followed. A complete description of the WSU Policy on Academic Standards is available in the WSU Student Code, Section IV, titled "Student Responsibilities."

Assessment Summary
Course Preparation
Readings, leading discussions..........................75%
Individual Participation..........................25%
Individual to Group Presentations/Handouts..............50%
[5 presentations @ 10% each]
Final Research Proposal/Paper..........................25%

COURSE PLAN
Readings must be completed prior to the class for which the assignment has been made.
Weeks 1 & 2 (August 31 - September 4; September 7 [LABOR DAY HOLIDAY] - September 11, 2015): Overview: Methodology and Science
Issues: "gender" as substitute and synonym for "women"; gender ideology as reflective of socioeconomic
structures, as well as of psychic configurations; pro- and contra-positioning with respect to the deployment of experience as a basis for knowledge; (Enlightenment, Post-Enlightenment) assumptions undermining scientific projects; negotiating central tensions between Enlightenment and postmodernism in feminist projects.

**Terms to define:** Stanley Milgram's studies of "obedience," quantitative and qualitative analysis, objectivity, androcentrism, "Problem of Difference," epistemic community, epistemology, postmodernism, descriptive vs. prescriptive patterns, ideology, resistance, conflation, paradigm, (Sandra) Harding: Enlightenment assumptions; modernism/postmodernism, modernity, epistemologies as justificatory strategies, objectivism, interpretationism, "principled ambivalence," value-neutrality, standpoint theory.

**Readings: Required & Optional (t.b.a. and noted in class):**

**Optional:**
* Chapter 1: Methods, Practice, and Epistemology: The Debate about Feminism and Research," pp. 10-26, Researching Women's Lives.

**Weeks 3 & 4 (September 14 - September 18; September 21 - September 25, 2015)**

**Language, Constructionism, and Essentialism**
Issues: social constructionism vs. essentialism/nature; the "objective" or instituted stances; normative or reified stance; exploring the meaning of "truth," "knowledge," and "reality" for feminist projects and examining claims that reality is socially constructed; assessing the intervening variables between gender and language use; the importance of ideological perspectives in effecting linguistic change (see Ehrlich and King).

**Terms to Define:** Teays: functions of language: expressive, evocative, poetic, ceremonial, logical; denotation, connotation; euphemism, hedging, ambiguity (linguistic fallacies); metaphors, images and analogies (and their critical role in the sciences; Haslanger: ontology, power, metaphysical issues, agency, normative expectations and evaluations, generic social construction, discursive constructions, (weak vs. strong) pragmatic constructionism, conflation; Spender: linguistic determinism; Lakoff: female deficit theory; Ehrlich and King: ideology; Cameron et al.: modal, affective and interactional functions of tag questions; facilitative tag questions.

**Readings: Required:**

**Web Article:**
California Debates Sexual Assault Law


**Readings: Optional:**
* Deborah Cameron, Fiona McAlinden, Kathy O'Leary, "Lakoff in Context: The Social and Linguistic Functions
Weeks 5 - 7 (September 28 - October 2; October 5 - October 9; October 12 - October 16, 2015)
The Power and the Fabrication of Contemporary Femininity

Issues: the naturalization of gender through the construction of an inner psychic or physical necessity; body as "political field" in the Foucauldian sense; decisions about methods; dynamics of power; manipulation and control; regularities into "laws"; relationships of knower :: known; social construction of knowledge.

Terms to Define: Bordo and Bartky: power as repressive/constitutive; overdetermined symptoms; axes of power: the dualist, control, and gender/power axes; body fetishism; psychic authenticity; body cathexis; collusion; self-surveillance; docile bodies; panopticonism.

Readings: Select Texts Required:

Readings: Optional:

Weeks 8 - 10 (October 19 - October 23; October 26 - October 30; November 2 - November 6, 2015)
Beyond Male/Female and Masculine/Feminine: The Construction of "Sex"/Gender and its Discursive Limits

Issues: the production of gender; discourse as instrument and effect of power; repeated play of sexuality constitutes and reconstitutes gender-identity, and, paradoxically, the repetition of that play; gender as performative in the sense that it constitutes an effect of the very subject it appears to express; the logic of "inversion" with respect to gendering; examination of the ways in which filmic media control images, reflecting dominant, socially established interpretations of gender difference.

Terms to Define: Butler: regulatory regimes; catachrestic operations, performance/performativity, citationality, the constitution of the "abject," foreclosure, compulsory performativity; Mulvey: phallocentrism, scopophilia, diegesis, fetishistic scopophobia.

Readings: Required:

Readings: Optional
*Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" Feminisms, pp. 432-42.

Writing Assignment: 1) Descriptive Statement of Research Topic; 2) Biographical Sketch relating your interests in a particular research topic. Consider your relationship to this particular topic (NOTE: due on Monday, October 22, 2012). Activities: Group discussions of and reporting on the implications of power (relationships and configurations) on the methodologies employed in research; importantly, integration of the knowledge of these methodological implications for individual research projects.
NOTE: Writing Assignment Due:
Monday, October 26, 2015 (Week 9 of 15): First draft of research proposal due. Individual tutorials with instructor as scheduled.

Weeks 11-12 (Monday, November 9 - Friday, November 13; Monday, November 16 - Friday, November 20, 2015):
Issues: what are femininity and masculinity in terms of subjectivity?; how are women in Western cultures, as compared and contrasted with women of Eastern cultures, still distinct through psychic processes of individuation from men in the East and West in general?

Terms to define: Freud’s instinct and civilization; Simone de Beauvoir: woman as other; the Oedipus complex; the first bond; repudiation; shift from oedipal to preoedipal; differentiation; intersubjectivity; recognition and repudiation; the “attachment theorists” (e.g., John Bowlby); Margaret Mahler: separation - individuation and three subphases: differentiation, practicing, and rapprochement; authenticity; D.W. Winnicott: use, destroy and creation of a shared reality; intrapsychic life; Stern's intersubjectivity; Hegel's central paradox: self and other; internalization; internalization theory and intersubjective theory: some comparisons.

Readings:
* Jessica Benjamin, Excerpt from The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and the Problem of Domination (Impromptu Presentations)

Weeks 13-15 (Monday, November 23 -- Friday, November 27; Monday, November 30 - Friday, December 4; Monday, December 7 - Friday, December 11, 2015 [Friday December 11: End of Fall 2015 Semester]):
NOTE: NO CLASS ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2015: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY!!!
Issues: drawing tentative, yet useful conclusions about feminist science and feminist research; the implications of essentialist arguments for issues of determinism and responsibility (subjective agency); the materialist analysis of human subjectivity.

Terms to Define: constitutive scientific values and contextual scientific values; information as theory and data; hypothesis ==> data===> theory; anti-Cartesian; oppositional self-aspect(s); material or structural gender, symbolic gender, and personal gender identity; bridge affinities; constitutive scientific values and contextual scientific values; information as theory and data; hypothesis ==> data===> theory.

Readings:

Fall 2015 15-week Semester Ends: Friday, December 11, 2015

Week 15 FINAL EXAM WEEK:
Monday, December 14 - Friday, December 18, 2015: Review of Research Projects
Week 15: GRADUATION: Friday, December 18, 2015

Research Proposal Final Version & Reflective Journals Due Monday, December 7, 2015, by 12:00pm (NOON)

Research Proposal
Documenting Sources According to APA, ASA, or MLA Guidelines:
Virtually all the research you read for this course builds on previous research, and this is particularly true for the materials you are using to define your research project. In presenting your work, it is essential you acknowledge your debt to (feminist) predecessors by carefully documenting each source, so that earlier contributions receive appropriate credit. According to MLA Guidelines (Fifth Edition), for example, you acknowledge your sources by keying brief parenthetical citations in your text to an alphabetical list of works that appears at the end of your paper. The parenthetical citation that concludes the following sentence is typical of MLA style:
A theory of ideology makes it possible to explain the complex ways social reality is shaped--through the overdetermined relations among mechanisms for making sense, distributing resources, dividing labor, and
sharing or wielding power (Hennessy xvi).

The citation "(Hennessy xvi)" indicates to your readers that the information in the sentence was taken from page xvi (part of an introduction or preface) of a work by an author named Hennessy. If readers should want to check this information or need further information about this source, they can turn to your "Annotated Bibliography" or "Annotated List of Works Consulted" list, where, under the name "Hennessy," they would find the following information:


This source elucidates a vital connection between postmodernism and materialism, aspiring to account for a feminist theory that appropriates the best of both. This discussion of how to strengthen feminist standpoint epistemology as a critical practice is particularly useful because Hennessy's trenchant analysis demonstrates how "tried and tested" conceptual frameworks still manage to subvert the aims of feminism's political agenda. In the contexts of a research project on violence and the media, this source is particularly invaluable because it articulates.....

This entry indicates that the work's author is Rosemary Hennessy and its title is Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse, and further, that the text was published in New York City by Routledge Press in 1993. The annotation contains descriptive, and often evaluative, comments on the source listed. A citation according to MLA guidelines contains only enough information to enable readers to find the source in the "Annotated Bibliography" or "Annotated List of Works Consulted" list. If the author's name is mentioned in the text, only the page number appears in the citation: "(197)." If more than one work by the author is included in the list of works cited, then a shortened version of the title needs to be provided to clarify for the reader which text is being cited: (Hennessy, Materialist Feminism xvi).

USEFUL WEBSITES AND LINKS FOR RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

www.nwhp.org - The National Women's History Project
The site is known for the saying: "History sure looks different when the contributions of women are included."

www.socialstudies.com/mar/women.html
Essays on women in history, internet exercises, classroom discussion topics and questions, web links, and more.

The U.S. Census Bureau's Women's Statistics Press Releases
crux.astra.ua.edu//4000ws/4000ws.html
4000 Years of Women in Science and Mathematics
Biographies, photos, and reference lists

lib.utsa.edu/Archives/links.htm
A guide to uncovering women's history in archival collections /
A state-by-state listing of links to archives, libraries, and other repositories that have primary source material by or about women.

www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/wise/wise.html
Archives of Women in Science and Engineering
This site documents the history of women in these fields, individually and collectively, with excellent links to related sites.

www.legacy98.org
150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement
1848 - 1998

www.unicef.org/voy
Voices of Youth from UNICEF
www.feminist.org
The Feminist Majority On-line - many superb resources, including links to: Breast Cancer Center; Student Activism, Feminist Research Center; Global Feminism; Feminist Arts, Literature, and Entertainment.

www.feminist.org/news.newsbyte/newsnow.html
The Feminist Majority Foundation online - constructed by others.

www.go-girl.com
Site on women, sports, and health issues.

www.amazonfembks.com
Excellent source of texts from all disciplines

Professor Szalay invites comments and suggestions for this sites list; contact: eszalay@weber.edu

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