

PHIL 43318
Philosophy, Gender, and Feminism
Professors: Sara Bernstein and Michael Rea

This class will survey some of the more important issues that have been the focus of this recent surge of interest. Topics we expect to cover include the metaphysics of gender (e.g., the sex-gender distinction, the nature of masculinity and femininity, gender essentialism vs. gender constructivism); implicit bias and hermeneutic injustice; sexual harassment, violence, and the nature of consent; gender, feminism, and religion; and intersectionality.

Textbooks: Octavia E. Butler, *Wild Seed*
Charlotte Witt, *The Metaphysics of Gender*

All other course texts will be posted on Sakai.

Assessment:

- 15% class participation
- 20% medium paper, due Feb 19
- 20% medium paper, due Mar 7
- 20% first draft of long paper, due Apr 9
- 25% final long paper, due May 6

Grading will be anonymized to decrease implicit bias. Professors Bernstein and Rea will give instructions on how to anonymize papers ahead of time.

Tentative Schedule

Jan 17: Introduction.

Jan 22: No Class - MLK events

Readings for background: Plato, *Phaedrus* (246a–254e); Aristotle, various excerpts from *On the Generation of Animals* and *Politics*; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (excerpts on women)

Jan 24: No Class - Instructors out of town

Readings for background: Rousseau, "Marriage"; Spelman, "Woman as Body"; Tax, "Woman and Her Mind: The Story of Daily Life"

Gender & Biological Sex

Jan 29: Woman as Other

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (excerpts)

Jan 31: Sex as Socially Constructed (I)

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (excerpts)

Iris Marion Young, "Throwing like a Girl"

Feb 5: Sex as Socially Constructed (II)
Martha Nussbaum, "The Professor of Parody"

The Metaphysics of Gender

Feb 7: Gender Essentialism (I)
Talia Mae Bettcher, "Trans Women and the Meaning of "Woman""
C.L. Moore, "No Woman Born" (short story)

Feb 12: Gender Essentialism (II)
Charlotte Witt, *The Metaphysics of Gender* (excerpts)

Feb 14: Gender as Socially Constructed
Sally Haslanger, "Race and Gender: (What) Are they? (What) Do we Want Them to be?"

Feb 19: Gender Fictionalism
Heather Logue, "Gender Fictionalism"

Gender, Feminism, & Theology

Feb 21: Divine Gender (I)
Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is* (excerpts)

Feb 26: Divine Gender (II)
Michael Rea, "Is God a Man?"

Feb 28: Gender & Religious Practice
Saba Fatima, "Striving for God's Attention: Gendered Spaces and Piety"

Mar 5: Gender Roles - Dystopia vs. Reality
Fiction: *The Handmaid's Tale* (excerpts)
Elisabeth Elliot, "The Essence of Femininity: A Personal Perspective"

Mar 7: Recap / Open discussion

SPRING BREAK

Misogyny, Objectification & Bias Against Women

Mar 19: Misogyny
Kate Manne, "Threatening Women" (from *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*)
Lindy West, "What Happened When I Confronted My Cruellest Troll"

Mar 21: Objectification (I)
Nancy Bauer, "What Philosophy Can't Teach us About Sexual Objectification"
(from *How to do Things with Pornography*)

Mar 26: Objectification (II)

Martha Nussbaum, "Objectification"

Mar 28: Implicit Bias

Jules Holroyd & Joseph Sweetman, "The Heterogeneity of Implicit Bias"

Meredith Meyer, Andrei Cimpian, & Leslie, Sarah-Jane, "Women are underrepresented in fields where success is thought to require brilliance"

Apr 2: Epistemic Harm (I)

Miranda Fricker, "Testimonial Injustice"

Apr 4: Epistemic Harm (II)

Kirstie Dotson, "Tracking Epistemic Violence, Tracking Practices of Silencing"

Fiction: Charlotte Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"

Sexual Harassment, Violence, and the Nature of Consent

Apr 9: Sexual Violence

Kate Manne, "Suspecting the Victim" (from *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*)

Apr 11: Consent (I)

Hallie Liberto, "The Problem with Sexual Promising"

Apr 16: Consent (II)

Tom Dougherty, "Sex, Lies, and Consent"

Apr 18: Sexual Harassment

Jennifer Saul, "Stop Thinking So Much about Sexual Harassment"

Intersectionality

Apr 23: What is intersectionality?

bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everyone* (excerpt)

Kirstie Dotson, "Introducing Black Feminist Philosophy"

Optional: Sara Bernstein, "The Metaphysics of Intersectionality"

Apr 25: Intersectionality and Applied Ethics

Serene Khader, "Intersectionality and the Ethics of Transnational Commercial Surrogacy"

Apr 30: The Metaphysics of Race

Quayshawn Spencer, "Racial Realism II: Are Folk Races Real?"

Americanah, Chimandah Ngozi Adichie (excerpt)

Feminism and Speech

May 2: Speech and Power

Rachel Mckinney, "Extracted Speech"

Robin Dembroff and Daniel Wodak, "He/ She/ Ze/ They"

May 4: Language and Gender Differences

Ishani Maitra, "Language, writing, and gender differences"

Some notes concerning...

Course content: Some of the texts in this class contain content that people might find uncomfortable, offensive, or triggering. Some of the fictional stories are sexually explicit; many include descriptions, more or less graphic, of various kinds of abuse (both physical and psychological), incest, or rape and other forms of sexual assault, harassment, or degradation. These issues also come up topically in some of the philosophical readings. If you have concerns about this that you would like to discuss with one or both of us, please feel free to do so.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is representing another person's work as one's own. Outside works must be clearly cited or placed in quotes. Any cheating will be handled according to the university's policy on academic dishonesty. Please see the Honor Code for more information.

Extra Credit: There will be a few extra credit opportunities.

Syllabus Changes: It is possible that topics will be added, removed, or changed on the syllabus. If this happens, it will be announced in class and over email. Please check your email before every class.

Ways to Reach the Instructors:

Sara Bernstein

Email: sbernste@nd.edu

Office Hours: 202 Malloy Hall, by appointment.

Michael Rea

Email: michael.rea2@gmail.com

Office Hours: 207 Malloy Hall, by appointment

(You can schedule appointments via the "Contact" tab at www.michael.rea.org)