



Course No.: 4040258

Course Title: Feminist Theory Across Disciplines

Course title in Hebrew: תאוריות בפמיניזם

Year: 2022-2023 Fall (תשפ"ג)

Name of Lecturer: Professor Shira Wolosky

Program: Interdisciplinary Program in Jewish Thought and Philosophy

Duration: Semester I / 2 academic hours / once a week

Type: Class/Seminar (שו"ס)

Credits: 2

Pre-Requisites: Introduction to the Hebrew Bible; Western Literature I
Advanced English: All readings must be done in English

Office Hours: After Class

Lecturer's Contact Information: Shira.wolosky@gmail.com

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Purpose of Course: Beginning with Feminist Philosophy to investigate different feminist approaches that have been foundational in feminist discourses, including anthropology, psychology, religion and postmodernism. How do these approaches differ? are there common issues and concerns? how has feminism redefined fields and social questions?

About the Course: The last decades of the twentieth century witnessed a revolution in the status of women and ways of thinking about it. The questions thus opened about social roles, social construction, social justice, values and norms, gender definitions, remain pressing and urgent today. This course does not take any specific political position, but sets out to examine the way feminism – meaning the recognition of gender as a major historical category –

has been pursued in several fields, and how doing so has altered those fields. We will also consider the implications of this revolution in paradigm for both theoretical study and concrete debates. We will read feminist philosophers including Jean Bethke Elshtain and Susan Okin; anthropologists Shirley and Edwin Ardener; psychologists beginning with Freud, then Nancy Chodorow.

Requirements and Grades:

Written work: 1 final paper 5 pages/1500 words (English) – 100%

Papers will be submitted directly to MOODLE AND **emailed to me:**
shira.wolosky@gmail.com

NOTE: I may request short statements on the reading to be brought to class. These will NOT BE GRADED, and will be two or three sentences on what was interesting, what was troubling or problematic to understand, or something in the reading the student wishes to discuss in class.

All readings will be available to you in a Reader (מקראה) and digitally through moodle or sent by email.

THE READER (מקראה) MUST BE BROUGHT TO EVERY CLASS

Passing Grade: 60

I. Politics

Class 1: The implication of gender in philosophical tradition

Required Reading:

Aristotle's Politics Book 1, selections from chapters 1, 2, 3 (in the Reader).

Class 2: Critique of Aristotle, reinterpreting gender

Required Reading:

Jean Bethke Elshtain, From *Public Man, Private Woman*, (Princeton UP, 1981); pp. 11-16, 41-54.

Class 3: Gender in liberal theory

Required Reading:

Susan Okin, "Gender, the Public and the Private," *Political Theory Today*. Ed. David Held Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, pp. 67- 90.

Class 4: Comparing Elsthtein and Okin – critique of liberal theory

II. Psychology

Class 5: Freud's model of development and its implications for gender

Required Reading:

Sigmund Freud, "Family Romance,". The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume IX (1906-1908), pp. 235-242.

https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/eng2850jmafall2016/files/2016/08/Freud_FamilyRomance.pdf

Recommended Reading:

Sigmund Freud, "Female Sexuality," The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXI (1927-1931), pp. 221-244.

http://www.aquestionofexistence.com/Aquestionofexistence/Problems_of_Gender/Entries/2011/8/28_Sigmund_Freud_files/Freud%20Female%20Sexuality.pdf

Class 6: Critique of Freud from a gendered position. Revolution in developmental theory in its implications for ethics

Required Reading:

Carole Gilligan *In a Different Voice*, Harvard University Press, 1993, chapter 1, pp. 5-22.

<https://seminariolecturasfeministas.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/nancy-chodorow-family-structure-and-femenine-personality.pdf>

Class 7: Women's anthropological situation

Required Reading:

Ardener, Edwin "Belief and the Problem of Women," Ardener, Shirley. "Introduction," *Perceiving Women*. Ed. Shirley Ardener. London: Dent & Sons, 1975, pp. vii-xxiii, 1-8

III. Religion

Class 8: Gendered reading of the Bible

Required Reading:

Phyllis Trible. "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (March 1973), pp. 30-48.

Class 9: Theology from the viewpoint of Gender

Required Reading:

Rosemary Ruether, "The Liberation of Christology from Patriarchy," *New Blackfriars*, July / August 1985, Vol. 66, No. 781/782 (July / August 1985), pp. 324-335.

IV. Postmodernism

Class 10: Politics of women's bodies

Required Reading:

Susan Bordo, "Anorexia Nervosa" from *Unbearable Weight*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, pp. 226-244.

Class 11: Gender in legal discourses

Required Reading:

Catherine MacKinnon "Difference and Domination," *Theorizing Feminisms* Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger eds, Oxford UP, 2006, pp. 244- 251.

Class 12: Challenging gender

Required Reading:

Judith Butler, "Gender Trouble," Routledge NY, 1990, pp 139-140,

Class 13: Challenging gender – continued

Judith Butler, "Gender Trouble," Routledge NY, 1990, pp. 184-190.