

Feminist Methods SOC 6219H

Professor Judith Taylor
Monday 4-6 Sociology 240
Spring 2018

Sociological training often privileges questions of legitimacy over questions of urgency. Why we have chosen this life of inquiry and investigation can become quickly supplanted by technocratic rules about what can be studied, about how it can be studied, and how to convey the dispassionate ends of our hard work.

This class resists such a paradigm, making it useful for students in their 1st year of their MA or the last year of their PhD or post doc. Feminist sociology can resist the separation of mind and heart, political motivation and academic rigor, identity and the scholarly lens, reintegrating what farcically is displaced in the quest for scientific contribution.

The kind of feminist sociology introduced in this class does not encourage fiction, relativism, or rejection of the concept of truth (truthfully, all scholars imagine they are forwarding truth, and hope to be found truthful!). Rather, it encourages students to reintegrate their scholarly and personal selves, and reignite their passions, developing a maturity and groundedness about their academic priorities. The course also uses journaling, reading responses, and interviews to build an epistemological and useful toolkit of mentors, lenses, and practices.

This course can be thought of as a journey, and your writings a travelogue. Feminist Studies grants us passage into interdisciplinarity so that we might stay sociological approaches enough to imagine new ways of representation and analysis that seem vital to us. Artists, film makers, poets, essayists, can help us think about the questions that preoccupy us, the relationship of our selves to our work, the academy, listening, writing, and interpretation in refreshingly new ways. We will take time to think about writing, about defending, and what it means to define the sociological project and the feminist project, for ourselves and others.

This course will give you food for thought to build your personal approach, and then enable you to introduce something you are working on – it can be an article in progress or a piece of one, a dissertation proposal, a methods section, a reflection or segment of writing, an op-ed, really anything you are working on and want to share.

Coursework: 4 reading responses, 1-3 pages single-spaced. 1 admiration exposition, one interview. Final project: draft of something you're working on with an appendix. Sky's the limit. Each week different students will introduce what they are working on, their priorities or interests.

1. January 7. The Imperative of Feminist Studies

- Linda Tuhiwai Smith. 2007. Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. Chapters 1-4
- Dorothy Smith. 1999. "Contradictions for Feminist Social Scientists." *Writing the Social. Critique, Theory and Investigations*. Toronto: UTP.
- Cep, Casey. 2018. Zora Neale Hurston's Story of a Former Slave Finally Comes to Print. *The New Yorker*. May 14.
- Answers. Mary Oliver.

2. January 14. No Maps

- Yiyun Li. 2017. To Speak is to Blunder. *The New Yorker*.
 - <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/02/to-speak-is-to-blunder>
- Roxanne Gay. 2014. Typical First Year Professor. *Bad Feminist*. NY: Harper.
- Adrienne Rich. 1973. *Diving into the Wreck*. Diving into the Wreck; Poems 1971-2. NY: Norton and Company.
 - <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/diving-wreck>
- Jill Lepore. 2018. The Right Way to Remember Rachel Carson. *The New Yorker*. March 26.
- Roderick A Ferguson. 2012. Chapter 1. *The Reorder of Things: The University and its Pedagogies of Minority Difference*.

3. January 21 How it Starts

- Howard Becker. Telling About Society. Chapter 1.
- Ruth Behar. 2015. Read More, Write Less.
 - <http://savageminds.org/2015/02/02/read-more-write-less/>
- Joan Didion. 1966. Slouching Towards Bethlehem. London: Andre Deutch.
 - <https://www.penusa.org/sites/default/files/didion.pdf>
- Anne Lamott. 1994. Introduction, Getting Started, Short Assignments, Shitty First Drafts, Perfectionism. *Bird by Bird*. Pp. 3-31. NY: Random House.

4. Jan. 28. Theoretical Complexity and Curiosity

- Mukherjee, Siddhartha. 2018. The Texture of Suffering. On Medicine. *The New York Times Magazine*. 12-15.
- Rebecca Solnit. 2014. On the Dirtiness of Laundry, and the Strength of Sisters Or, Mysteries of Henry David Thoreau, Unsolved. *The Encyclopaedia of Trouble and Spaciousness*. Trinity University Press.
- Maggie Nelson. 2015. The Argonauts. 1-49

5. Feb 4. Listening

- Back, Les. 2007. *The Art of Listening*. Introduction. *Sociology as a Listener's Art*. London: Bloomsbury.
- <https://discardstudies.com/2016/03/21/refusal-as-research-method-in-discard-studies/>
- <http://condor.depaul.edu/mwilson/multicult/patparker.htm>
- Anna Devere Smith. Four American Characters, Ted Talk
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/anna_devere_smith_s_american_character
- Masha Gessen. *The Memory Keeper*. Svetlana Alexavich. *The New Yorker*.
 - <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/10/26/the-memory-keeper>
- Andrea Doucet and Natasha Mouthner. 2008. What can be Known, and How? Narrated Subjects and the Listening Guide. *Qualitative Research*. 2008. 8: 399-409.
- Pamela Sugiman. 2009. Life is Sweet: Vulnerability and Composure in the Wartime Narratives of Japanese Canadians. *Journal of Canadian Studies*. 43: 186-218.

6. Feb 11. Rendering Visible and Staring

- Too Poor to Retire, Too Young to Die. *L.A. Times*.
<http://graphics.latimes.com/retirement-nomads/>
- <http://the-editorialmagazine.com/a-conversation-with-jeff-bierk/>
- Daniella Rossell.
 - http://www.slate.com/blogs/ behold/2012/12/11/daniela_rossell_documenting_the_rich_and_famous_mexican_youth_photos.html
- Catherine Opie.
 - <http://www.npr.org/2016/02/03/464882995/i-do-like-to-stare-catherine-opie-on-her-portraits-of-modern-america>;
 - <http://www.regenprojects.com/artists/catherine-opie/selected-works?view= multiple-sliders#12>
- France Winddance Twine. 2016. Visual Sociology in a Discipline of Words. Racial Literacy, Visual Literacy, and Qualitative Research Methods. *Sociology*. 50: 967-974.

7. Feb 25. Ethics

- Grappling with “The Feminist Ethnographer’s Dilemma” special issue, *JCE*.
- Ethics Beyond the IRB. 2011. Special issue of *Qualitative Sociology*. 2011.
- Boellstorff, Tom. 2012. *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds*. Chapter 8 Ethics. Princeton: Princeton UP.

- Mingwei Huang. 2016. Vulnerable Observers: Notes on Fieldwork and Rape. *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
 - <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Vulnerable-Observers-Notes-on/238042>

8. March 4

Scheper-Hughes. 1989. *Death without Weeping*. Berkeley: UC Press.

Queen for a Day

Ochoa. *Queen for a Day: Transformistas, Beauty Queens and the Performance of Femininity in Venezuela*. Duke UP.

9. March 11.

Wool. 2015. *After War: The Weight of Life at Walter Reed*. Duke UP

Dean. 2015. *Remembering Vancouver's Disappeared Women: Settler Colonialism and the Difficulty of Inheritance*. UofT Press.

10. March 18. Gender, Interviewing, Masculine Sociology

- Swidler. Talk of Love. Part one and Methodological Appendix
- Lamont and Swidler. Methodological Pluralism and the Possibilities and Limits of Interviewing. *Qualitative Sociology* 37, 2: 173-188.
- Alison Pugh. 2013. What Good are Interviews for Thinking about Culture? Demystifying Interpretive Analysis. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*. 1: 42-68.

11. March 25. Collaboration

- Playing with Fire: Feminist Thought and Activism through Seven Lives in India. Intro, 123 postscript
- <http://beyondbullyingproject.com>
 - Fields, Jessica, Laura Mamo, Jen Gilbert and Nancy Lesko. 2014. "Beyond Bullying?" *Contexts* 13(4):80-83.
 - Lageson, Sarah. 2014. "Beyond Bullying: An Interview with Jessica Fields and Laura Mamo." *Contexts Podcast*, Episode 21. November 21. Available online at <http://contexts.org/episodes/beyond-bullying/>
- Feminist Consumerism and Fat Activists: A Comparative Study of Grassroots Activism and the Dove Real Beauty Campaign. Josée Johnston and Judith Taylor *Signs* Vol. 33, No. 4 (Summer 2008), pp. 941-966
- Taylor, Johnston, Whitehead. 2014. A Corporation in Feminist Clothing?

12. April 1. Traitorous Research

- Mabs Segrest. *Memoir of a Race Traitor*.
 - http://collectiveliberation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Segrest_On_Being_White_and_Other_Lies.pdf
- Naheed Islam. Racing Research, Researching Race.
- Judith Stacey. 2001. How Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter? *ASR*.

Future reading:

- Stewart, Lal and McGuire. 2011. Expanding the Archives of Global Feminisms. *SIGNS*.