

Carleton University
Winter 2020
School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies/Dept. of English Language and Literature

CDNS 5201/ ENGL 5804: *Critical Perspectives on Canadian Feminism*

Tuesdays 2:35 – 5:25, DT1216



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Office Hours: Fridays 1:15 – 2:15 or by appointment

This course takes a materialist historical approach to 20th century feminisms in Canada, looking at the ways current scholarship is revising views of women’s experience, organizing, and expression in the “women’s liberation” movement of the late 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s. Rejecting a progressivist view of history that would assume our own relative advancement, in this course we ask what was explosive as well as heterogenous and contingent about the feminism in this period. Without an agenda to recover or rehabilitate, our objective is to return to archival materials to think about their rhetorics and strategies, and the distances across which we are reading them today. In the first weeks, we orient ourselves spatially--to ‘Canada’ as a settler-colonial and racialized national space, as well as temporally--to the 1960s and 1970s as the period of the welfare state. We’ll look at how feminisms in the period framed the topics of abortion, work, violence, settler-colonialism and racial capitalism. We’ll encounter these topics through theory, film, historiography, literature, and archives, both digital and hands-on, as we visit the Canadian Women’s Movement Archives at the University of Ottawa to look at feminist ephemera--including flyers, magazines, posters, buttons—and experiment with ways of analyzing these materials, especially for what they may say about feeling feminist in these decades. We’ll be interested throughout the course in the ways feminist discourse and organizing responds to and is inflected by regimes of race, heteronormativity, binary gender, state governance, and capitalism. The course will be an inclusive, trans-positive space.

Course texts

Please purchase a copy of Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* (any edition). All other readings will be available through ARES (see attached Reading Schedule). Please bring assigned readings to class every week.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. Presentation on mainstream media coverage, Jan. 21	10%
2. Presentation and short paper on feminist media	
a. presentation Feb. 4 th	10%
b. written due Feb. 14 th	15%
3. Presentation on section of <i>Reclaiming Power and Place</i> , Mar. 24 th	5%
4. Summative paper (10-12 pages)	
a. outline & presentation, Apr. 7 th	10%
b. paper due Apr. 14 th	35%
5. Participation	15%

Further information on each assignment will be posted on CULearn.

Course Rules and Expectations

Preparation and participation: Attendance is of course mandatory. Come to class with the assigned readings done *in advance*. Give yourself enough time to read attentively and to think about connections to other texts or to issues we have been discussing in class. Bring questions. Participation in discussion should be informed by the assigned readings.

Classroom etiquette: All cell phones must be put away. Laptops, if brought, are to be used for note-taking *only*. Listen respectfully and attentively. Contribute to discussions with generosity. Please have a sense of taking turns. Do not always rely on others to carry the conversation; on the other hand, if you enjoy contributing, great and thank you! but do be careful not to dominate.

Email: The best way to speak with me is in person during my office hours in DT1911. Email may be used for brief messages. It may be possible to arrange an appointment if you are unavailable during the office hours.

Submission of assignments and penalties for late assignments: Assignments should be submitted electronically on CULearn. Late assignments will be deducted 2% per day (including weekend days). Please keep a backup copy of all your assignments.

Grades: Grades for written work will be based on insightfulness, quality of research and argumentation, effective organization of ideas, tenable interpretation of primary materials and good understanding of secondary sources, clarity, consistent use of a citation method, spelling and grammar. The following percentage equivalents will be used when calculating your grades for this class:

A+=90; A/A+=88; A=85;A-/A=83; A-=80
 B+/A-=79; B+=77; B/B+=75; B=73; B-/B=72; B-=70
 C+/B-=69; C+=67; C/C+=65; C=63; C-/C=62; C-=60
 D+/C-=59; D+=57; D/D+=55; D=53; D-/D=52; D-=50
 F=0-49 (a numerical grade will be assigned for any paper receiving an F)

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means passing off someone else's words or ideas as your own or submitting the same work in two different academic contexts. The most common forms of plagiarism include unacknowledged copying from secondary sources (including sections as short as sentences and paragraphs, even when you have changed a word), purchasing papers online or from essay-writing services, or having another person write a paper for you. Do not take these risks. The consequences of plagiarism are severe and are issue by the Dean and the University Senate. In order to avoid plagiarism, you must clearly and correctly provide the specific source of any quotation, borrowed phrasing, or idea you pick up from the internet, from a published source, or from other people.

Help with your writing: The Centre for Student Academic Support provides one-on-one, assignment-specific writing advice, through drop-in or scheduled appointments of 40 minutes. Bring the assignment sheet and your outline or draft. For drop-in hours or to book an appointment, see <https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

Learning support: For workshops on academic reading, writing, note-taking, proofreading, exam preparation and other topics see <https://carleton.ca/csas/learning-support-workshops/>

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before our in-class scheduled exam on Oct 16th if you require accommodation. Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website

(www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the end of term formally-scheduled exam.

READING SCHEDULE

Jan 7 Introduction

Please read these articles before class:

- Nancy Fraser, “How feminism became capitalism’s handmaiden - and how to reclaim it” (2013) *Guardian*, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/oct/14/feminism-capitalist-handmaiden-neoliberal>
- Brenna Bhandar & Denise Ferreira da Silva, “White Feminist Fatigue Syndrome” (2013) *Critical Legal Thinking*, available at: <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/10/21/white-feminist-fatigue-syndrome/>
- Janine Brodie, “We Are All Equal Now: Contemporary Gender Politics in Canada,” *Feminist Theory*, 9.2, 2008, 145-164

film to be screened in class:

- *Status Quo: The Unfinished Business of Feminism in Canada* (dir. Karen Cho, NFB 2012) 1 hr 30 min

Jan 14 Fiery Hauntings: Watching *Born in Flames* Today

- Victoria Hesford, “Around 1970: The Feminist-as-Lesbian and a Movement in the Making,” *Feeling Women’s Liberation*, 1-24
- Allyson Mitchell and Cait McKinney, “Lesbian Rule: Welcome to the Hell House,” from *Inside Killjoy’s Kastle: Dykey Ghosts, Feminist Monsters, and Other Lesbian Hauntings*, edited by Cait McKinney and Allyson Mitchell, 2019, pages 1-20 + look at the 20 pages of photographs which follow
- Allyson Mitchell, Deidre Logue, and Scott Miller Berry, “Are you burning? Lizzie Borden’s *Born in Flames*, circa 2012,” *Women and Performance*, 23.1, 2013, 52-65

film to be screened in class:

- *Born in Flames* (dir. Lizzie Borden, 1983), 1 hr 30 min

Jan 21 Mainstream Media Representation of Women's Liberation

- Victoria Hesford, "From Lady Protestors to Urban Guerrillas: Media Representations of the Women's Liberation Movement in 1970," *Feeling Women's Liberation*, 25-80
- Robert Fulford, "The Second Revolt of 'Modern' Women," *Macleans*, 1964
- **ASSIGNMENT 1 on mainstream media coverage:** short presentation on a piece of media coverage of "women's liberation" in a Canadian publication during the 1970s. Use Canadian Newstream database. You may wish to refer to the following timeline for a sense of "moments of intensification" (Hesford) <https://www2.unb.ca/parl/milestones2.htm>

Jan 28 Producing Women's Liberation: Rhetorics and Discursive Contexts

- Victoria Hesford, "Goodbye to All That': Killing Daddy's Girls and the Revolt against Proper Femininity," *Feeling Women's Liberation*, 81-113
- Christabelle Laura Sethna and Steve Hewitt, "A Revolution Hidden in Plain Sight," *Just Watch Us*, 48-75
- Jovette Marchessault, "The Angel Makers," from *Lesbian Triptych*

Feb 4 RiseUp! Archive: Reading the Women's Liberation Print Archive

- Judy Bernstein et. al, "Sisters, Brothers, Lovers... Listen... Fall 1967," from *Women Unite! An Anthology of the Canadian Women's Movement*
- **ASSIGNMENT 2 on feminist media:** short presentation on first five issues of a publication in RiseUp! archive <http://riseupfeministarchive.ca/> Choose from: *Broadside*, *Cayenne*, *International Women's Day Committee*, *Our Lives*, *Rebel Girls' Rag*, *The Other Woman*. Review the first five issues available. How are some of the following issues and positions being framed: violence, work, abortion rights, marriage, femininity, lesbianism, women of colour?

film to be screened in class:

- *People for Tomorrow - Selma James: Our Time is Coming* (1972)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3R-aWDb0g>

Feb 11 Social Reproduction Feminism and CUAG exhibit, "They Forgot That We Were Seeds"

- Valerie Bryson, "Production and Reproduction," from *Marx and Other Four-Letter Words*, 2005, 127-140

- Margaret Benston, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation" (originally published in 1969 in the *Monthly Review*, reprinted in *Monthly Review* 71.4, September 2019) <https://monthlyreview.org/2019/09/01/the-political-economy-of-womens-liberation/>
- Dian Million, "(Un)Making the Biopolitical Citizen," *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights*, 150-180

Optional further reading:

- Silvia Federici, "On Margaret Benston," *Monthly Review* 71.4 <https://monthlyreview.org/author/silviafederici/>
- Selma James and Ron Augustin, "Beyond Boundaries," *Monthly Review* 71.4 <https://monthlyreview.org/2019/09/01/beyond-boundaries/>

Feb 18

READING WEEK

Feb 25

Indigenous Women's Writing, Belated Readings

- Maria Campbell, *Halfbreed* (1973)
- Deanna Reder and Alix Shield, "I do this all for you': Recovering the Unpublished RCMP 'Incident' in Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*," <https://canlit.ca/article/i-write-this-for-all-of-you-recovering-the-unpublished-rcmp-incident-in-maria-campbells-halfbreed-19731/>
- Vera Manuel, "That Grey Building," "Theresa," "The Letter," "The Abyss," *Honouring the Strength of Indian Women: Vera Manuel Kulilu Patki*, 199-247
- Deanna Reder, "Embedded Teaching: Vera Manuel's Recovered Short Stories," *Honouring the Strength of Indian Women*, 344-355, 386-87

Optional further reading:

- Gina Starblanket, "Complex Accountabilities: Deconstructing 'the Community' and Engaging Indigenous Feminist Research Methodologies," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 42.4, 2018, 1-20.

Mar 3

Indigenous Women's Work and Activism

- Mary Jane Logan McCallum, from *Indigenous Women, Work, and History, 1940-1980* read pages: 21-28, 39-43, 53-57, 66-67, 88-93, 97-101, 109-116, 169-185, 218-224

- Amanda Ricci, “Contesting the Nation(s): Haitian and Mohawk Women’s Activism in Montreal,” in *Women’s Activism and ‘Second Wave’ Feminism: Transnational Histories*, edited by Barbara Molony and Jennifer Nelson, 273-294

Optional background reading:

- Bonita Lawrence, “Regulating Native Identity by Gender” and “Reconfiguring Colonial Gender Relations under Bill C-31” chapters 2 and 3 of *‘Real’ Indians and Others*

Mar 10 Social Reproduced Reprised: Racialized Women and Work

- Angela Davis, “The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective,” from *Women, Race and Class* (1981) <https://lit-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/blww/view/1003074004>
- Makeda Silvera, “Speaking of Women’s Lives and Imperialist Economics: Two Introductions from *Silenced*,” from *Returning the Gaze*, edited by Himani Bannerji, 197-219
- Linda Carty and Dionne Brand, “‘Visible Minority Women’: A Creation of the Canadian State,” from *Returning the Gaze*, edited by Himani Bannerji, 169-181

Optional further reading:

- Sue Ferguson, “Intersectionality and Social-Reproduction Feminisms,” *Historical Materialism* 24.2, 2016, 38-60

Mar 17 Visit to Canadian Women’s Movement Archives at the University of Ottawa

- Karen M. Mason and Tanya Zanish-Belcher, “Raising the Archival Consciousness: How Women’s Archives Challenge Traditional Approaches to Collecting and Use, Or, What’s in a Name?” from *Perspectives on Women’s Archives*, edited by Tanya Zanish-Belcher and Anke Voss, 283-303
- Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*, read 1-12 and 239-254.

Mar 24 Revisiting Themes: Abortion, Violence, Feminisms and the State

- Jane Jenson, “Competing Representations: The Politics of Abortion in Canada,” *Women and the Canadian State*, edited by Caroline Andrew and Sandra Rodgers, 291-305

- Kirstin Bumiller, "The Sexual Violence Agenda: Feminists and the State," *In an Abusive State: How Neoliberalism Appropriated the Feminist Movement against Sexual Violence*, 1-15.
- **ASSIGNMENT 3:** National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, *Reclaiming Power and Place*, Vol. 1a: students will each present a summary of a chapter, choosing especially from chapters 5, 6, 7, 8
https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf

Optional background reading:

- Wendy Brown and Katie Cruz, "Feminism, Law, and Neoliberalism: An Interview and Discussion with Wendy Brown," *Feminist Legal Studies*, 24.1, 2016, 69-89
- Elizabeth Bernstein, "Carceral Politics as Gender Justice? The 'Traffic in Women' and Neoliberal Circuits of Crime, Sex and Rights," *Theory and Society*, 41.3, 2012, 233-259

Mar 31 Revisiting Themes of Work and Femininity

- Meg Luxton, "Doing Neoliberalism: Perverse Individualism in Personal Life," *Neoliberalism and Everyday Life*, edited by Susan Braedley and Meg Luxton, 163-183
- Sarah Bannet-Weiser, Rosalind Gill, and Catherine Rottenberg, "Postfeminism, popular feminism, and neoliberal feminism," *Feminist Theory*, 2019
- Anna Curcio and Kathy Weeks, "Social Reproduction, Neoliberal Crisis and the Problem with Work: a Conversation with Kathy Weeks," *Viewpoint Magazine*, 2015:
<https://www.viewpointmag.com/2015/10/31/social-reproduction-neoliberal-crisis-and-the-problem-with-work-a-conversation-with-kathi-weeks/>

Optional further reading:

- *Aesthetic Labour: Rethinking Beauty Politics in Neoliberalism*, edited by Ana Sofia Elias, Rosalind Gill, and Christina Scharff, 2017
- Alessandra Mezzadri, "On the Value of Social Reproduction: Informal Labour, the Majority World, and the Need for Inclusive Theories and Politics," *Radical Philosophy* 2.4 (Spring 2019)
<https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/on-the-value-of-social-reproduction>

Apr 7 "Documenting is Activism"

- Alison Piepmeier, "Archives as Activism: A Preface," from *Make Your Own History: Documenting Feminist & Queer Activism in the 21st Century*, edited by Liz Bly and Kelly Wooten, ix-xi

- Alexis Pauline Gumbs, "Eternal Summer of the Black Feminist Mind: A Queer Ecological Approach to the Archive," from *Make Your Own History: Documenting Feminist & Queer Activism in the 21st Century*, 59-68
- **ASSIGNMENT 4:** Presentation of essay plan