

**Feminist Theories (GS- 801)**  
(Instructor: Prof. K. Suneetha Rani)

Credits: 4

The feminist discourse introduced in this course interrogates issues related to gender from an interdisciplinary perspective drawing issues and texts from different contexts and disciplines. It will examine the milestones in the evolution of feminism such as its origins, waves, schools and movements; the crucial concepts such as body, sexualities, politics of identity and representation that are intended to transform the societal perspectives and perceptions; and re-viewing of disciplines and epistemologies such as science, media, law and religion from a feminist perspective. The course includes readings from mainstream feminist writers as well as “other” feminist writers who have endeavored to sensitise the canon, such as the migrant, Indigenous, African American, Egyptian, Vietnamese, Dalit and others.

The course will be taught in seminar mode. Evaluation will be based on assignments and seminars. This course is not limited to the reading list given below. Students are advised and encouraged to explore the sources and bring in texts that will contribute to the deliberations. Extensive reading as well as original and independent thinking will be greatly appreciated.

**UNIT I The Feminist Tradition**

Origins of Feminism-Women’s Rights-A Room of One’s Own and a Tradition of Their Own  
The New Woman

Readings from Mary Wollstonecraft, Alexandra Kollontai, Virginia Woolf and Elaine Showalter

**UNIT II Waves and Schools of Feminism**

- a. First, second and third waves-Contexts and debates-Diverse voices

Readings from Judith Butler, Luce Irigaray, Simone de Beauvoir and Helen Cixou

- b. Liberal Feminism to Global Feminism-Changing ideologies and extending scopes

Readings from Mary Daly, Gloria Steinem, Germaine Greer, Andrea Dworkin

**UNIT III Black and Native Feminisms**

- a. Politics of Identity-Representations-Questions and Introspections-Reproductive Rights

Readings from Sojourner Truth, bell hooks, Audre Lorde and Angela Davis

- b. Histories and Struggles-Miscegeneation-Indigenous Societies, Oral Traditions and Feminist Readings of Religion

Readings from Lee Maracle, Paula Gunn Allen, Jackie Huggins, Nawal El Saadawi

## UNIT IV Third World and Indian Feminisms

- a. Nations-Languages-Migration-Categories and classifications-Stereotypes

Readings from Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Trinh Minha, Amy Tan, and Nira Yuval-Davis

- b. Movements as Theories-Feminist Dilemmas and Contradictions-Dynamics and Reformulations

Readings from Suniti Namjoshi, Vandana Shiva, C.K. Janu, Nalini Jameela, Revathi, Eastern Iralu, Meena Kandasamy

## UNIT V Re-formulations from feminist lens

Psychoanalysis-Visual Cultures-Science and Technology-Law-Disability Studies

Readings from Nancy Chodorow, Laura Mulvey, Donna Haraway, Sandra Harding and Nivedita Menon

### Select Readings:

Cixous, Helen. "Sorties". Cixous, Helen and Catherine Clement. *The Newly Born Woman*. Tr. Betsy wing. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986. 66-79

Mills, Sara. "Language". Eagleton, Mary (ed). *A Concise Companion to Feminist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003. 133-152

Chow, Rey. "Sexuality." Eagleton, Mary (ed). *A Concise Companion to Feminist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003. 93-110

Excerpt from Feinberg, Leslie. *Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come*. New York: World View, 1992.

Marcus, Sharon, "Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention". Butler, Judith and Joan Scott (eds.), *Feminists Theorize the Political*. London: Routledge, 1992. 385-403

Davis, Angela. "Racism, Birth Control and Reproductive Rights". Davis, Angela. *Women, Race and Class*. London: The Women's Press, 1982. 202-71

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson: "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory." *Feminist Disability Studies*. NWSA Journal, Vol. 14, No. 3, Autumn, 2002. 1-32

Trinh T. Minh-ha: "Difference: 'A Special Third World Women Issue'" Jones, Amelia (ed.) *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty: "Cartographies of Struggle: Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism". *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. New Delhi: Zubaan Books, 2003. 43-84

Excerpts from Vandana Shiva: *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*. London: Zed Books, 1989.

Nandita Haksar: "Human Rights Lawyering: A Feminist Perspective". Dhanda, Amita and Archana Parasher (eds.). *Engendering Law: Essays in honour of Lotika Sarkar*. Lucknow: Eastern Book Company, 1999. 71-87

Nawal El Saadawi: Selected Essays <http://www.nawalsaadawi.net/>

bell hooks: "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators". Jones, Amelia (ed.) *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. London: Routledge, 2003. 94-105

Spencer, Judith. *Gender Studies: New Directions in Feminist Criticism*. Wisconsin: Popular Press, 1986.

Jackson, Stevi and Jackie Jones (ed.) *Contemporary Feminist Theories*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1998.

Mccann, Carole and Seung-kyung Kim (ed.) *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Gardiner, Judith Kegan. *Masculinity Studies and Feminist Theory: New Directions*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

Donovan, Josephine. *Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions*, New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. Inc, 1985.

Eagleton, Mary *A Concise Companion to Feminist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2003.

Mills, Sara and Louise Mullany (ed.) *Language, Gender and Feminism: Theory, Methodology and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Lewis, Reina and Sara Mills (ed.) *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

John, Mary E.. *Discrepant Dislocations: Feminism, Theory, and Postcolonial Histories*. California: University of California Press, 1996.

Chaudhuri, Maitreyee, *Feminism in India*. London: Zed Books, 2005.

Moi, Toril. *Sexual/textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. New York, Routledge, 2002.

**Recommended Reading:** Section on Gender and Sexuality Studies of the website Voice of the Shuttle, <http://vos.ucsb.edu/> for extensive material and information on [Women's Studies & Feminist Theory](#), [Queer Studies](#), [Men's Movements & Men's/Masculinity Studies](#), [Cybergender & Techgender](#), [Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Abuse](#)

## **Gender Studies: Concepts and Contexts (GS-802)**

Instructor: Deepa Sreenivas

### **Course Description**

This course will engage with key questions and conceptual mappings in gender studies, both historical and contemporary. It will explore gender as a category of analysis, central to a critical understanding of structures of power in family, society, culture and institutional sites.

Gendered identities, concepts and practices are shaped within specific histories of dominance and resistance. Using a range of texts and debates, this course will focus on the shifting meanings of gender, probing its complex inter-relationships with other societal structures, namely, class, caste, race, religion and so on. Feminist theorizations of patriarchy have connected women's subordination to masculinized worldviews, and thus opened up space for radical politics and struggles for social justice. Concomitantly, there is a move to grapple with plural forms of patriarchy. Patriarchal arrangements vary across time and space and are closely linked to the maintenance of the hierarchies within a particular society. These arrangements regulate the lives, behaviour and self images of women through modes of idealization/exclusion. They also result in local forms of resistance—shaped by specific social relationships, cultural nationalisms, statist priorities, developmental paradigms and so on.

The course will look at dominant patriarchies but also alternative masculinities and sexualities. We will engage with feminist interrogations of the binary of masculinity and femininity, and how this has led to the radical reconceptualization of the categories of sex and gender, and political understanding of sexualities and sexual identities.

In an endeavour to historicize gender studies/women's studies in India, the course will briefly deal with its historical connection with the women's movement of the 1970s and the political atmosphere in which it is imagined and engendered.

Continuous assessment for this course will comprise of term papers, seminars, project reports, book reviews, or discussions based on certain topics or films related to the course. The course comprises of four broad units and a list of texts are prescribed within each unit as classroom reading. Several critical texts on the concepts discussed in the class form part of the recommended reading. The units are by no means watertight, and the themes and concept will overlap and crisscross several readings.

### **Unit I**

#### **Situating Gender/Gender Studies**

This unit highlights some of the framing questions for this course. What does it mean to think about gender as category of analysis (as against a solely descriptive category)? What are the shifting meanings of patriarchy, gendered division of labour and family? The readings explore the interactions between gender, class, caste, race and community. The readings highlight the construction of gender in hegemonic discourses (such as nationalism) as well as the contestations of

these discourses. The unit will briefly touch upon the beginnings of women's studies in the women's movement of the 70s—as a field that inaugurates a fundamental shift from women as subjects to be educated to “‘women’ as new subjects of investigation and study”.

### Readings

V. Geetha 2002. “Introduction.” *Gender*. Calcutta: Stree.

Nivedita Menon. 2012. *Seeing like a Feminist*. Delhi: Zubaan and Penguin Books.

Flavia Agnes. ‘Why India Loves Nirbhaya, Hates Suzette’ *The Asian Age*

Nirmala Bannerjee. 2011. ‘A Note on Women as Workers’. In Nirmala Bannerjee, Samita Sen and Nandita Dhawan (eds). *Mapping the Field: Gender Relations in Contemporary India*. Kolkata: Stree

Partha Chatterjee (1989). ‘The Nationalist Resolution of the Women’s Question’ in Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (eds). *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*. Kali for Women, pp.233-253.

Tarabai Shinde. 2007. From ‘Stripurusha Tulana’. In Sumit Sarkar and Tanika Sarkar (eds). *Women and Social Reform in Modern India*. Delhi: Permanent Black.

Radha Kumar. 1993. ‘The Contemporary Feminist Movement’ in *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women’s Rights and Feminism in India 1800-1990*. Delhi: Kali for Women.

Nivedita Menon, “Is Feminism about ‘Women’? A Critical View on Intersectionality from India”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 25, 2015, 37-44.

Neera Desai , Vina Mazumdar and Kumudini Bhansali, From Women’s Education to Women’s Studies: The long struggle for Legitimacy in Devaki Jain and Pam Rajput, (eds.), *Narratives from the Women’s Studies Family*, Sage, New Delhi, pp 44-77.

## Unit II

### Masculinities/Sexualities

The sustenance of societal hierarchies is greatly dependent on the policing of sexuality. This section deals with the new questions posed to women’s studies and feminist politics by struggles for sexual agency, non-normative sexualities and subaltern masculinities.

Ann Arnett Ferguson. 2000. *Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Nivedita Menon.” The Disappearing Body and Feminist Thought.”  
<http://kafila.org/2011/02/18/the-disappearing-body-and-feminist-thought/>

Gayatri Reddy. “2007. Sexual Difference and Their Discontents: Shifting Contexts of ‘Thirdness’ in Hyderabad”. In Brinda Bose and Subhabrata Bhattacharya (eds). *The Phobic and the Erotic: The Politics of Sexualities in Contemporary India*. London and Calcutta: Seagull Books.

Discussion around Rahul Roy. 2007. *A Little Book on Men*. Delhi: Yoda Press.

Screening: *Firaaq*

### Unit III

#### Nation/State, Globalization, Community

Gender is a site of overlapping and conflicting interests—at the local and state/global level. It is shaped by a range of investments and struggles in different settings. For instance, the statist goals of emancipation and development may not address the specific needs and aspirations of particular groups of women. Similarly, the lives of women (particularly of those belonging to minority groups) are shaped through several intersecting discourses—of rights, law, feminism, religion and so on.

Bina Agarwal. 2008. ‘Why Do Women Need Independent Rights in Land?’ in Mary E. John (ed). *Women’s Studies in India: A Reader* pp. 175-184. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Tanika Sarkar (1995). ‘Heroic Women, Mother Goddesses: Family and Organization in Hindutva Politics’ in Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia (eds). *Women and the Hindu Right: A Collection of Essays*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.

Anupama Rao (2003). Understanding “Sirasgaon”. Notes towards Conceptualizing the Role of Law, Caste and Gender in a Case of “atrocities” in Anupama Rao (ed). *Gender and Caste*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.

### Unit IV

#### Gendered Images: Representation, images, Culture

We are surrounded by gendered images of men and women—in advertisements, films, literature, billboards, television and so on. Such representations naturalize certain experiences and ideals of masculinity/femininity. However, careful analysis uncovers the affiliations between these images/representations and hegemonic social, economic and cultural discourses and power relationships.

#### Readings

Parama Roy. 1998. ‘Figuring Mother India: The Case of Nargis’ in *Indian Traffic Identities in Question in Colonial and Postcolonial India*, pp. 152-176. University of California Press.

Anuradha Ghosh. 2007. "Playing Woman, Playing Power: Performing the Goddess. A Reading of a Documentary on Chapal Bhaduri. In Brinda Bose and Subhabrata Bhattacharya (eds). *The Phobic and the Erotic: The Politics of Sexualities in Contemporary India*. London and Calcutta: Seagull Books.

Anuradha Kapur. 1993. From Deity to Crusader: The Changing Iconography of Ram. In Gyanendra Pandey (ed.). *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*. Delhi: Viking/Penguin: 74-109

Excerpt from John Berger (1973). *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin Books.

### **Recommended Readings**

Flavia Agnes (2005). 'Hypocritical morality: Mumbai's ban on bar dancers'. *Manushi* 149.

V. Geetha 2007. "Patriarchy: A History of the Term". Patriarchy. Calcutta: Stree

Patricia Uberoi (1994). *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*, New Delhi: Oxford.

Sharmila Rege (2006) *Writing Caste/Writing Gender: Reading Dalit Women's Testimonies*. New Delhi: Zubaan.

Susie Tharu and Tejaswini Niranjana (1996). 'Problems for a Contemporary Theory of Gender.' In: Amin S and Chakrabarty D (eds) *Subaltern Studies IX*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 232-60.

Samita Sen and Nandita Dhawan. 2011. "Feminisms and the Politics of Gender". In Nirmala Bannerjee, Samita Sen and Nandita Dhawan (eds). *Mapping the Field: Gender Relations in Contemporary India*. Kolkata: Stree

Kusum Datta. 2011. "Women's Studies in India". In Nirmala Bannerjee, Samita Sen and Nandita Dhawan (eds). *Mapping the Field: Gender Relations in Contemporary India*. Kolkata: Stree

Krishna Kumar (1992). 'Growing up Male' in *What is Worth Teaching*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

Indu Agnihotri and Vina Mazumdar, "Changing Terms of Political Discourse: Women's Movement in India, 1970s-1990s", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30(29), July 22, 1995, 1869-1878.

Patricia J. Williams 1979. *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Uma Chakravarti. 1989. 'Whatever Happened to the Vedic Dasi? Orientalism, Nationalism and a Script for the Past' in Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (eds). *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*. Kali for Women, pp.27-87.

Rekha Pappu. 2002. 'Constituting a Field: Women's Studies in Higher Education', *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 9 pp. 221-34

Radha Kumar. *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India 1800-1900*. New Delhi: Zubaan, 1993.

Veena Das. 2008. 'The Making of a Founding Text.' In Mary E. John (ed). *Women's Studies in India: A Reader* pp. 27-31. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Gabriele Dietrich. 2008. 'Women's Movement and Religion'. In Mary E. John (ed). *Women's Studies in India: A Reader* pp. 508-514. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Gautam Bhan. "The Right to Our Bodies" Times of India, July 9, 2012-08-06

Nivedita Menon. "Body of Proof" Indian Express, July 12, 2012

Judith Butler (1990). 'Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire'. In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge.

Susie Tharu. 'Chuni's Story'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1998:46:2916-2917



## **Ph.D. in Gender Studies- IInd Semester Compulsory Course**

### **Feminist Research Methods (GS-826)**

(Instructors: K. Suneetha Rani, Deepa Sreenivas)

(Credits: 4)

This Course aims to create a feminist pedagogical environment by exploring research methodologies and subjective narratives in dialogue with one another. It will examine feminist epistemologies, critical paradigms and ethics in the context of social construction of difference and similarity.

Continuous assessment for this course will be based on assignments which comprise empirical research assignments as well as reading assignments. Students are advised and encouraged to explore the sources and bring in texts that will contribute to the deliberations. Original and independent thinking and presentation will be greatly appreciated.

#### UNIT I

#### **Feminist Methods: Directions and Strategies**

History of feminist research methodologies-feminist challenges- research ethics-feminist standpoint theory- identification, choice and designing of samples-collection-documentation-data analysis-research tools-coding and decoding-oral traditions-memory-retrieval-speaking for the self/other- conventional and non-conventional issues-subaltern dimensions-movements as theories-feminist dilemmas and contradictions in research and fieldwork-empowering research methodologies-decolonising pedagogy and research

#### **Reading List:**

Harding, Sara G. "Is There a Feminist Method?" *Feminism and Methodology: Social Sciences Issues*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.

Maria Mies. "Towards a Methodology for Feminist Research". *Social research: philosophy, politics and practice* by Martyn Hammersley. Sage, New Delhi, 1993.

Rosalind Edwards, Jane Ribbens McCarthy. *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research: Public Knowledge and Private Lives*. New Delhi: Sage, 1998.

Verta Taylor. "Feminist Methodology in Social Movements". *Qualitative Sociology*. Vol. 21, No. 4, 1998

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999.

## **Suggested Reading:**

Patti Lather, Patricia Ann Lather. *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy with/in the Postmodern*. New York: Routledge, 1991

Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland: *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices* London : Sage, 2002.

Jane Sunderland: *Gendered Discourses* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. New Delhi: Sage, 2005.

Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (ed): *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*. California: Sage Publications, 2006.

Lather P. “Feminist perspectives on empowering research methodologies”. *Women's Studies Int. Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 6, pp. 569-581, 1988 Printed in the USA.

Mary Margaret Fonow, Judith A. Cook. *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research*. Indiana University Press, 1991.

Bernal, D.D. “Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology in Educational Research”  
*Harvard Educational Review* Harvard Education Publishing Group Volume 68, Number 4 / Winter 1998. Pp. 555-583.

Lester-Irabinna Rigney. “Internationalization of an Indigenous Anticolonial Cultural Critique of Research Methodologies: A Guide to Indigenist Research Methodology and Its Principles”  
*Wicazo Sa Review: Emergent Ideas in Native American Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, (Autumn, 1999), pp. 109-121

## **Unit II**

This unit will deal with qualitative and quantitative research methods from a feminist perspective. Feminist epistemology identifies the ways in which dominant conceptions and practices of knowledge production systematically disadvantage women and other subordinated groups. Feminist research strives to foreground the voices and perspectives of marginalized groups through the use of a range of methods: life narratives/autobiographies, interviews, oral history, ethnography, participant observation, discourse analysis etc. This Unit will explore questions such as how interdisciplinary feminist perspectives inform research methods and processes. It also discusses concepts such as measures of central tendency, dispersion, correlation, digression, testing of hypothesis, parametric tests etc.

## **Reading List:**

Abu-Lughod, L. (2008). *Writing women's worlds: Bedouin stories*. U of California Press.

Abu-Lughod, L. (1990). Can there be a feminist ethnography?. *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, 5(1), 7-27.

Lalita, K., & Sanghatana, S. S. (1989). *We were making history: life stories of women in the Telangana people's struggle/Lalita K....[et al.* Zed Books.

Madriz, E. (2000). Focus groups in feminist research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2, 835-850.

Rege, S. (2006). *Writing Caste, Writing Gender: Reading Dalit Women's Testimonios*. Zubaan.

Scott, Joan W. 1992. Experience. In Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds.), *Feminists Theorize the Political*(pp.22-40). New York: Routledge.

Visweswaran, K. (1994). *Fictions of feminist ethnography*. U of Minnesota Press.

E. L. Lehmann, *Testing Statistical Hypotheses*, John Wiley & Sons, New York: 1986

S.P. Gupta, *Statistical Methods*, New Delhi: Sultan Chand & Sons, 2006.

### UNIT III

#### **Dissertation Writing**

This course will provide an overview of the various aspects of academic writing. Some of the topics to be discussed are the Writing Process, Elements of Writing, Writing before dissertation (Proposal, Outline, Notes, Summaries, etc), Research Dissertation (Form, conventions and styles), Sections of a research paper or dissertation (Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, Limitations of This Study)

#### **Suggested Reading**

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. The University of Chicago Press; 1995

Ch.7 "Making Good Arguments: An Overview"

Ch.8 "Claims and Evidence"

Ch.9 "Warrants"

Ch.10 "Qualifications"

Ch.12 "Communicating Evidence Visually"

Thomas S. Kane. *The Oxford Essential Guide to Writing*. Oxford University Press; 1988

Stephen Baily. *Academic Writing - A Practical Guide for Students*. London: RoutledgeFalmer; 2003.

Part II "Elements of Writing"

William Strunk. *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition, Macmillan 2000

William Zinsser, *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*, 8th edition, New York: Quill 2001

Margaret Cargill and Patrick O'Connor, *Writing Scientific Research Articles: Strategy and Steps*, Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell 2009

Ch.4 "Results as 'Story': the Key Driver of an Article"

Ch.5 "Results: Turning Data into Knowledge"

Ch.6 "Writing about Results"

Ch.7 "The Methods Sections"

Ch.8 "The Introduction Section"

Ch.9 "The Discussion Section"

Ch.10 "The Title"

Ch.11 "The Abstract"

Style Guides

MLA Style Guide

American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual of the APA*, 5th edition, Washington DC: APA, 2001