

## Intersectionality

WS 620  
Office: 640e Saunders Hall  
Fall 2014  
Hours: 10-11 am T & Th

Kathy Ferguson  
phone: 956-6933  
Class: Tuesday noon-2:30  
Room: Sakamaki D 103

This class explores the concept of intersectionality within feminist thinking. Briefly, intersectionality is a way of thinking about the interconnections of different flows of ideas, events, identities, and interactions. Originally directed at bringing gender-thinking and race-thinking together, the idea has expanded to include other salient vectors of power and identity, including class, sexuality, colonialism, disability, and others. The idea has also roamed beyond the practices of identity to include material and institutional dimensions of politics.

We will stage a variety of encounters in class between/among different ways of thinking about power, resistance, and liberation. The purpose of these interdisciplinary encounters is to creatively explore ideas by putting them into conversation with other ideas, allowing each to engage, enhance, and put pressure on one another.

1. Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (it will be published in September 2014: <http://www.naomiklein.org/main>)
2. Mishuana Goeman, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping our Nation* (Minnesota: 2013).
3. Lila Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (Harvard: 2013).
4. Helma Lutz, Maria Teresa Herrera and Linda Supik, eds., *Framing Intersectionality: Debates on a Multifaceted Concept in Gender Studies* (Ashgate: 2011).
5. Nancy Mairs, *Waist-High in the World: Life Among the Nondisabled* (Beacon: 2001).
6. Audre Lorde, *Sister/Outsider* (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007).

### Schedule:

**Aug 26** – introduction and guest speaker: Giti Nasreen  
Reading: the Wikipedia article on intersectionality

**Sept 2** – What kind of thinking are we doing when we think intersectionally?  
Reading: *Framing Intersectionality*, introduction and ch 1 and 2  
(NOTE: if the book has not arrived in the bookstore in time for you to read this assignment, you can get these chapters on our Lulima page)

**Sept 9** - What kind of thinking (continued)  
Reading: Lorde, *Sister/Outsider*, pp. 1 – 72  
*Framing Intersectionality*, ch 3

**Sept 16** – intersectionality and masculinity

Reading: Lorde, *Sister/Outsider*, pp. 72-70  
*Framing Intersectionality*, ch 4 and 5

**Sept 23**- indigeneity and intersectionality

Reading: Goeman, *Mark My Words*, Introduction, ch 1 and 2  
 Selected writings of E. Pauline Johnson (Mohawk), Esther Belin (Diné)(TBA)

**Sept 30** – indigeneity and intersectionality (continued)

Reading: Goeman, *Mark My Words*, ch 3 and 4, conclusion  
 Selected writings of Joy Harjo (Muscogee), Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo) and Haunani-Kay Trask (Native Hawaiian)(TBA)

**Oct 7** - Processes of embodiment

Reading: *Framing Intersectionality*, ch 10  
 Mairs, *Waist-High in the World*, the whole book  
 Video: “Examined Life - Judith Butler and Sunaura Taylor Go For a Walk,” <http://www.critical-theory.com/watch-judith-butler-the-examined-life/> (in class)

**Oct 14** – Association for Political Theory conference – no class - make up later**Oct 21** – capitalism and ecology

Reading: Klein, *This Changes Everything*, first half

**Oct 28** – capitalism and ecology (continued)

Reading: Klein, *This Changes Everything*, second half

**Nov 4** – election day – no class**Nov 11** – veterans day – no class

**NOTE:** we will make up the Oct 14 class during these two weeks; date TBA

Reading: *Framing Intersectionality*, ch 7, 8 and 9  
 Kerber, “Toward a History of Statelessness in America” (on Laulima)

**Nov 18** – Guest Speaker: Suzanne Tiapula, Human Rights Attorney

Topic: Pacific Island women’s networks  
 Reading: TBA

**Nov 25** – war and orientalism

Reading: Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* introduction and chapters 1, 2, and 3  
*Framing Intersectionality*, ch 6

**Dec 2** – war and orientalism (continued)

Reading: Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* chapters 4, 5, and 6 and conclusion

Selected blogs by Arab women (TBA)

**Dec 9** – *Framing Intersectionality*, ch 11, 12 and postscript**Requirements:**

1. Do the reading ahead of time, come to class prepared to raise questions and discuss ideas, and be prepared to do the reading a second or third time as needed.
2. Select one or two (depending on size of the class) readings for which you will take responsibility to launch the conversation. Your launch should be about 10-15 minutes long, no longer than 15 minutes. You can assume everyone has read the assignment. Your job is to launch the conversation, which you can do by
  - a. reminding us of the most essential points of the reading
  - b. connect this reading to other readings or discussions in the class
  - c. raise question you find interesting, troublesome, confusing, etc.
3. Select one of these writers: Johnson, Belin, Harjo, Silko, or Trask, and work in a small group to select short readings for the class to supplement Goeman's discussion in *Mark My Words*.
4. Write a 20-25 page seminar paper on a topic of your choosing, making substantial use of at least 2 or 3 of the readings we discussed in class;  
OR
5. Write 4 short papers (about 5-6 pages each) in which you bring together two of the class readings, explore their convergences and divergences, and think about how the readings have helped you develop your own ideas.