Critical Psychologies FRAN 6200

FRAN 6200, 2014-2015
Critical Psychologies

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Office Hours: Thursday 11:30 to 1:30 pm, by appointment
Course Time: Thursday 4:20PM -7:20PM
Course Location: MACS, Room
Mobile Fax: 1 (416) 628-1667

Course Overview
This is a graduate level course exploring principles and practices of critical and feminist psychologies, theories of difference and identity development, and poststructuralist and postcolonial accounts of subjectivity and self-other relations. Focus of seminars is on constructivist, post colonial, and feminist critiques of psychology and contributions to psychology. Topics related to the psychology of gender, race, disability, class and other categories of identity and difference across the life span will be highlighted. Application of relational, critical, post colonial, and narrative approaches to diverse problems and social groups is emphasized throughout course readings and requirements.

Course Themes and Topics
Topics examined in the course include: histories and methods of feminist and critical psychologies; theories of difference and self-other relations; difference attribution and identity development across the life span; theoretical approaches to emotion; theorizing selves from experiences of injury, adversity, and capacity; and genealogies of harmful practices and problems in families, institutions, communities, and nations. Throughout classroom discussions, we consider how social relations and symbolic systems constitute the subjectivities and identities of diverse people.

The course is organized into four parts:

Part 1: Histories and Methods
Short History of Otherness and Madness
Critical Race and Post/colonial Psychology
Feminist Theories of Therapy and Development
Constructivist and Narrative Psychologies

Part 2: Theories of Identity and Difference
Difference and Identity I: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality
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Difference and Identity II: Race, Class, and Disability

**Part 3: Theorizing From Experiences of Trauma and Adversity**
Feminist Approaches to Feeling: Stress, Sadness, Love, & Loss
The Experiences and Effects of Violence
Migration and Marginalisation

**Part 4: Genealogies of Problems**
Substance Use, Self-Injury, Suicidality, & Sanctuary
Body Projects / Body Politics

**Course Objectives**

This course has eight objectives:

1. For students to become familiar with a range of critical perspectives on pathologizing constructions of people and problems;
2. For students to engage with feminist relational, post-colonial, and constructivist theoretical approaches to understanding subjectivities, identities, and differences across the life span;
3. For students to examine important questions and concerns related to gender, race, disability, and other difference in contemporary psychology and therapy praxis;
4. For students to examine critical theories for understanding injury and adversity, and principles for facilitating agency, creativity, and community of diverse people and populations;
5. For students and instructor to contribute to a community of learners engaged in critical and respectful dialogue on issues of suffering, diagnosis, response and intervention, and mental difference;
6. For students and instructor to practice ethical commitment to privileging the perspectives and self-representations of marginalized individuals, groups, and communities in question;
7. For students and instructor to practice critical self-reflectivity in order to uncover some of the ways that issues of power, identity, and difference shape how they think, feel, act, and interact in their professional roles and daily lives; and
8. For students to develop critical reading, writing, communication, presentation, facilitation, and self-evaluation skills.

**Required Texts**

We will work with four texts and course readings. The following course readings will be available for purchase from the Bookstore and/or accessed through the library:


**CHANGE ALL DATES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1(^{st}) Reflection Due</td>
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<td>Oct 9 (in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2(^{nd}) Reflection Due</td>
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<td>Nov 13 (in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation (self evaluation)</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Self Designed Project or</td>
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<td>Presentation Write-Up</td>
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**Explanation of Assignments**

Students are expected to do assignments using interdisciplinary and intersectional approaches to critical and feminist scholarship in undertaking course work. These involve:

- Understanding of differences among people in their constitution of subjectivity and identity, in their experiences of and responses to adversity, as well as in their diagnoses, treatment, and positioning within systems. Ability to use variables such as gender, sex, class, race, ethnicity, age, place, culture, nation, ability, aboriginality, and sexuality in analyses of psychological problems.
- Emphasis on complexity in analyzing topics, demonstrating proficiency in applying varied theories and practices introduced in the course.
- Considering agency, capacity, and creativity of individuals and groups in responding to social privilege / suffering / exclusions and in constituting alternative accounts of themselves.

**Class Presentation (Self Evaluation)**

**Topics assigned in week 2**

This assignment is mandatory. As part of the assignment, you will be asked to submit a one-page written self-evaluation of your presentation along with a letter grade. Choose a topic that engages you. Develop and facilitate a workshop that includes your reflections on the topic, and selected readings for the week. Your facilitation should include a brief introduction to the topic, an outline of feminist/critical/post colonial critiques of conventional approaches and of alternative approaches to the topic, and a
discussion starter. You can use visual aids short films or film clips, ice breakers, small group exercises, experiential approaches, and/or questions to engage the class. Presentations should be well researched and well organized. The assignment is intended for you to enter into generative conversations and get valuable feedback about key theoretical issues and practice dilemmas in your area of interest.

Self Evaluation: Please submit your one-page written self-evaluation of your presentation along with a letter grade one week after your presentation. Along with this, submit a copy of the visuals, discussion questions, ice breakers, or experiential exercises you use, and copies of handouts given to the class.

Reflection Papers
Write two polished reflection papers of 6 to 8 pages each on the readings you completed during the previous section of the course. Choose themes that interest, engage, move, challenge, puzzle, or bother you or some association and connection a reading has triggered for you. Reflections will be graded on writing quality, originality, synthesis skills, and sensitivity of analyses. I strongly advise that you draft responses when you are immersed in the readings and then edit your reflections before submission. Demonstration of reading comprehension, writing clarity, and consistency of effort is critical to success in this assignment.

Self Designed Project or Presentation Write Up
In this assignment, you are required to design and carry out your own final assignment (annotated bibliography, theoretical paper on a concept related to course content or otherwise) or write a 6 to 8 page report on your presentation that brings at least one of the theoretical frameworks introduced in the course together with your topic. If you choose the presentation option, your write up should summarize and synthesize the content of your presentation (properly cited); outline the critical questions you have about your topic; consider what student and instructor responses have taught you about your subject area; and identify gaps and spaces you may now see in your own thinking and possible directions for further development of this work. Whichever option you choose, in addition to writing quality, originality, synthesis skills, and sensitivity of analyses, you will be graded on your self-reflectivity—your recognition how your position might shape your interest in, and approach to, your topic, and inform your scope of knowledge and areas of not knowing and uncertainty in relation to it.

Participation
Regular attendance is required and students must demonstrate they have done the reading.

Commitment to Class Discussions and Course Materials
The course is structured as a weekly 3-hour seminar, which works best when students are prepared to participate fully in discussions. Course assignments emphasize student engagement with course material. Please note: This course has a substantive reading
list. Readings are NOT all required. The professor and weekly presenters will identify readings that are most relevant to the specific presentations/discussions for that week.

Accessibility

The University of Guelph Accessibility Statement: The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (soon to be re-named Student Accessibility Services) as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website. The standard statements are available on the AVPA website (undergraduate courses) or from the Office of Graduate Studies (Graduate Courses).

Course Accessibility Statement: I expect that students in this class have many different physical, mental, sensorial and emotional ways of being, learning, and engaging in the classroom. I also expect that as a class, we will collectively attend to and respect all of these needs. As such, we will begin this class with a discussion about accessibility and how we can collectively, and perhaps creatively, make the classroom accessible to everyone. If you do not feel comfortable sharing your accessibility needs in class, please talk to me or visit: Centre for Students with Disabilities at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website. If you want to pursue the question of access and accommodation more fully please consider checking out “Beyond Compliance” http://bcccsyracuse.wordpress.com/, which is a more radical accessibility statement.

Note on Difficulty of Course Content

In this class, we explore the difficult emotional and social terrain of child and woman abuse, structural and symbolic violence, experiences of marginalisation and exclusion, effects of histories of colonisation and forced assimilation, institutional abuse, as well as emotions of sadness and shame, and coping strategies of substance use, self-injury, and suicidality. Some of the films we watch over the semester can evoke strong emotions and responses in audiences. You are in the best position to decide whether this is right course at this time. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to me before deciding on this class.

Course Policies on Late Submission of Work
Assignments are accepted before or on the due date. Extensions are provided only if you contact me ahead of time or provide documentation of a medical or life emergency. Otherwise, there is a 2% penalty per day for late assignments.

**Timely Feedback on Work**
Feedback to students on work completed or in progress is an integral part of teaching and learning in that it allows you to measure your understanding of material and your progress on learning objectives. All University of Guelph instructors must provide meaningful and constructive feedback to students prior to the 40th class day.

**Academic Misconduct**
It is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar:
http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/sec_d0e1609.shtml

**Email Contacts**
Every student is expected to have a Guelph email address and to check it regularly. If a class has to be cancelled, or if there is any other matter that you should know about prior to class, you will be sent an email on your Guelph account. It is your responsibility to attend class and if you have missed a class, seek out one of your classmates to inquire about missed course material. Email can be used to set up appointments with me, or to ask practical questions that require brief answers. You are welcome to ask questions requiring detailed responses during class or office hours.

**Feminist- and Social Justice-Informed Classroom Interactions**
This is a feminist and social justice oriented classroom, where we aim to engage with each other in respectful and thoughtful conversations about the relationship between social relations and injustices and social differences/identities including sex, class, race, age, culture, disability, aboriginality, and sexuality, and sense of self. Attendance is mandatory. Because a significant part of the course will be classroom discussion, a major assignment is keeping up with readings, participating in dialogue an informed way, and providing ethical feedback to other students. You should come to class not only having done the assigned reading, but also having thought about it and having
prepared some points/questions for discussion. Please note: This course has a substantive reading list. Readings are NOT all required. The professor and weekly presenters will identify readings that are most relevant to the specific presentations/discussions for that week. Your responses to other students should not be negative. As an engaged learner, your job is to enter into conversations about what was read/heard, and your responses to the ideas presented. You are asked to structure your responses along the following:

• Identifying the ideas that engage you
  * As you read texts or listen to the lectures, presentations, and discussions which ideas caught your attention or captured your imagination? Which ones stuck a chord for you?

• Describing the intentions of the writers or speakers
  * What values and principles regarding people, their identities and selves, and the world more generally do these ideas evoke? What do the ideas suggest to you about the writers’ or speakers’ purposes and commitments?

• Situating your responses
  * What is it about your own life experiences or interests that account for why these ideas caught your attention? Do you have a sense of which aspects of you own experiences resonated with these ideas?

• Identifying gaps and spaces
  * What are some gaps and spaces that you notice in each reading? What areas do you think need further exploration in this topic area? What remains confusing, unclear, or underdeveloped? What suggestions in the form of other authors and ideas can you offer to help the analysis along?

• Recognising your movement
  * How have you been moved on account of engaging with these ideas? Where have these ideas taken you? How have you shifted as a result of listening to and participating in the development of these ideas?

Critical Psychologies FRAN 6200

Critical Psychologies
Schedule of Topics and Readings Fall 2014

Part 1: Histories and Methods

Sept 4: Introductory class
Review of course syllabus, grading system, and major assignments for course;
Assignment of texts and topics for student presentations

September 11: Short History of Otherness and Madness
Feminist and anti-oppression critiques of mainstream medical models, conventional
diagnostic categories, and mental health systems

Vancouver: Ronsdale Press. [BOOK]

Press. [ARES]

In D. Fox, I. Prilleltensky, and S. Austin (Eds.). Critical psychology: An introduction 2nd

P.J. Caplan & L. Cosgrove (Eds.). Bias in psychiatric diagnosis (pp. 9-23). Lanham, MD:
Jason Aronson. [ARES]

“common sense.” In D. Fox, I. Prilleltensky, and S. Austin (Eds.). Critical psychology: An

Optional Film Resources
An Angel at my Table, Part 2 (Dir. Jane Campion, New Line Features, 1989), 50 mins.
The Lobotomist (Dir. Barak Goodman, PBS and Ark Media, 2008), 60 mins.

September 18: Critical Race and Post/colonial Psychology
Practices and possibilities of critical and post-colonial psychologies; Critical
consciousness for self-recovery, community, and social change

South End Press. Interview with bell hooks (xi-xx); Preface: Reflections of light (xxxi-
xxxv); Introduction: Healing darkness (1-9); Chapter 1: Seeking after truth (11-20);
Chapter 10: Sweet communion (113-124). [BOOK]


Optional Film Resources

Qallunaat: Why white people are funny (Dir. Mark Sandiford, National Film Board of Canada and Beachwalker Films, 2006), 50 mins.
Black Skin, White Mask (Dir. Isaac Julien, Mark Nash for the Arts Council of England, 1996), 52 mins
Rabbit-Proof Fence (Dir. Phillip Noyce, Alliance Atlantis, 2004), 40 mins.

September 25: Feminist Theories of Therapy, Recovery and Development

The role of relationships and social context in women’s and men’s identity development


feminist family therapist, *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 20* (1), 1-20. [ARES]


**Optional Film Resources**

**October 2: Constructivist and Narrative Psychologies**
Social construction of selves through language, image, culture, and story


**Optional Film Resources**
Tree of Life: A narrative approach to working with vulnerable children (Developed by Ncazel0 Ncube & David Denborough, Dulwich Centre Institute of Community Practice), 60 mins.
Dialogues with madwomen (Dir. Allie Light, New York: Women Make Movies, 1993), 90 mins.

**Part 2: Theories of Identity and Difference**

**October 9: Difference and Identity I: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality [FIRST WEEKLY REFLECTIONS DUE]**
Creating diverse gender, sex, and sexual identities within dualistic systems; Analyzing discourses of normalcy, ethnicity, nationality, heteronormativity, and compulsory heterosexuality that shape and constrain sexuality.


* Excerpts from the American Psychiatric Association’s DSM-5 are included to give you a sense of conventional categories used in western psychiatry and psychology for distinguishing mental health from illness. They are meant for reference and discussion purposes only.

Optional Film Resources
Ma Vie En Rose (My Life in Pink) (Dir. Alain Berliner, Haut et Court, 1997)
533 Statements: A Road Trip Documentary About Queer Canadian Women (Dir. Tori Foster, 2006), 70 min
Fish Can’t Fly: Conversations about God and Struggling to be Gay (Dir. Tom Murray, T. Joe Murray Productions, 2005), 83 mins.
I Exist: Voices from the Lesbian and Gay Middle Eastern Community in the US (Dir. Peter Barbosa, Arab Film Distribution and Eye Bite, 2004), 90 mins.
5 Girls (Dir. Maria Finitzo, Kartemquin Films, 2001), 120 mins.
Western Eyes. (Dir. Anne Shin, Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 2000), 40 mins.
Transgeneration, Episodes 7 & 8 (Dir. Jeremy Simmons, A World of Wonder Productions, 2006), Episode 7: 25 min; Episode 8: 50 mins
No Cinderella Story: Stories of Sex, Relationships and Sex Image (Brooklyn, New York: Reel Works, 2005), 39 mins.

October 16: Difference and Identity II: Race, Class, and Disability
Theorizing differences and identities within and across bodies, subjectivities, communities, cultures, and nations


Optional Film Resources
Mohawk Girls (Dir. Tracey Deer, Rezolution Pictures International and National Film Board of Canada, 2005), 53 mins.
Between: Living in the Hyphen (Dir. Anne Marie Nakagawa, National Film board of Canada, 2006), 42 mins.
Shameless: The ART of Disability (Directed by Bonnie Sherr Klein, Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 2006), 70 mins.

Part 3: Theorizing From Experiences of Trauma and Adversity

October 23: Feminist Approaches to Feeling: Stress, Sadness, Love, & Loss
Situating emotions in cultural contexts and social relations; Considering the historical genealogies and cultural meanings of love and loss; Pathologization and paradoxes of pain


Optional Film Resources
The Medicated Child, (PBS and Rainmedia, 2008) 60 mins.
Wit (Dir. Mike Nichols, HBO Films and Avenue Pictures Production, 2001), 99 minutes
Refrigerator Mothers (Dir. David Simpson, Kartemquin Educational Films, 2002), [History of Mother Blaming in Psychiatry]

October 30: Experiences and Effects of Violence
Contexts, experiences, and consequences of violence, especially against especially girls and women


44. Doe, J. (2004). The story of Jane Doe. Toronto: Vintage Canada. Background (xv-xvii); Preliminary note from Jane Doe and civil trial journal (2-4, 7-8); Safe at home in bed (9-16); How to survive a rape trial (62-80); How I became Jane Doe (90-94); The ultimate rape victim (118-128). [ARES]


Optional Film Resources:
Let’s Talk About It (Dir. Deepa Mehta, Filmblanc Production and Rogers OMNI Television, 2005), 40 mins.
Cruel and Unusual (Dir. Janet Baus, Dan Hunt and Reid Williams, Alluvial Filmworks,
2006), 60 mins.
Journey to Healing (Indigenous People’s Programs, 1992), 44 mins
Muffins for Granny (Dir. Nadia McLaren, Mongrel Media, 2007), 88 mins.

**November 6: Migration and Marginalisation**
On social suffering shaped by colonial histories and structural violence


**REPLACE WITH NEW SECTIONS**

**Optional Film Resources**
Not Yet Diagnosed. (Dir. Barri Cohen, Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, 1997), 47 minutes.
My American Dream: Stories of Immigration (Brooklyn, New York: Reel Works, 2005), 41 mins.

**Part 4: Genealogies of Problems**

**November 13: Substance Use, Suicidality, & Sanctuary [FINAL WEEKLY REFLECTIONS DUE]**
Context and consequences of problems with addictions, self-injury, and suicidal thoughts and attempts; Search for sanctuary and communion.


**Optional Film Resource**
The New Asylums (PBS, 2005), 60 mins.

**November 20: Body Projects / Body Politics**


Optional Film Resources:
Body Beautiful, (Directed by Ngozi Onwurah, Women Make Movies, 1991), 23 min
Thin: Death By Eating Disorder (Excerpts from Directed by Lauren Greenfield, HBO Documentary Films, 2004), 103 min.
A Girl Like Me (Directed by Kiri Davis, Reel Works Filmmaking, 2005), 10 mins.
This is My Body: A Film by High School Girls, (Directed by Andrea Levy, National Film Board of Canada and TRUE Power Media, 2006), 34 mins.

November 27: Wrap Up [FINAL WRITE UP DUE]