Often referred to as a period of ‘second wave feminism’ in North America, the period of time between the late 1950s and the early 1980s was one of rich, diverse, and dynamic conversations about gender, equality, liberation, and sexuality. Feminist activists and theorists grappled with the meanings of gender, sexual and gender expression, equality, social justice, and the intersections amongst gender, race, class, and sexuality.

This course will largely focus on this particular period of time, giving us the opportunity to explore a wide theoretical terrain of North American feminist theory, placing these theoretical developments within a rich historical context. We will: examine the relationship of feminism to the left, particularly the civil rights and student movements of the 60s and 70s; the relationship of feminist theory and women/feminism to the New Left; conflict and internal debates within feminist theory; the changing relationship between theory and activism; the intersection of theories about gender oppression with oppressions of race and sexuality.

After tracing the historical development of North American feminist theory from the mid 20th century forward, we end the course with a few examples of the ways in which current feminist theory is taking up, criticizing, challenging, and expanding the multiple theoretical strands of second wave North American feminism.

This course has a very heavy reading list and a great deal of complex, theoretical readings. It won’t be easy, but we will all work together and help each other examine and analyze the texts to the best of our abilities. Remember, this course will give you a solid historical background in feminist theory, which will help you to further develop your scholarly interests. Some weeks we will read an entire book in full; other weeks, we will read selections from larger works, shorter articles, manifestos, or briefs. This will help vary the style of reading and lighten the reading load, but it is also a reflection of the differing styles of second wave feminist theorizing, and a reflection of the out of print status of several of the books we are studying.

Each week, groups of two will do brief presentations on:

a) any biographical and historical aspect of the readings/authors
b) an overview of the main text/s, and the main arguments of the author/s
c) develop a list of at least four questions to help guide the class discussion
d) help guide the class discussion of the readings

**Grading:**
Attendance and Participation: 25%
Seminar Presentation: 15%
Essay Proposal / Annotated Bibliography: 20% (due midterm)
Final Paper: 40% (due the last week of class)

**Books on Order (some will also be on library reserve):**
Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*
Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*
bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman* (a few secondhand copies available)
Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (also available as an e-book)
Susan Wendell, *The Rejected Body*

Please note: you may use any edition of the above books.

**All other Weekly Readings:**
Available on the GSWS 822, WebCT site.
You will have access to this site once registered in the class.

**Essay:**
Choose one major feminist theorist we have studied in class, and write a critical biography of her/his work in theoretical and historical context. You may focus on the author’s larger work by considering several books/articles or one seminal work. For example: you might look at Betty Friedan in the context of Cold War politics and baby-boom demographics, analyzing both her liberal feminist underpinnings and the limitation of her ideas; or you might read the collected works of Audre Lorde, placing her work in context of feminist theory; black feminism; and lesbian feminism, noting how her ideas intersected with major theoretical traditions, and perhaps changed over time and place. You might also frame your essay as a sustained critique of an influential author. For example, Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will* has been an extremely influential book in terms of understanding sexual violence as an expression of power, but it has been roundly criticized by third wave feminists and by black socialist feminists such as Angela Davis.

**Week 1: 5 September**
*Introductions*

**Week 2: 12 September**
*Postwar Liberal Feminism*

**Reading:**
Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, all chapters except for 5, 6, & 7.
**Historical Precedents:**

**Modern Interventions:** Martha Nussbaum, film clip, *The Examined Life* (8 minutes)

**Document:**

**Critique (skim, if time):**

### Week 3: 19 September
**Existentialism and the Human Condition**

**Reading:**
Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Introduction; Book 1, Part 1; and all of Book II)

**Historical Precedents:**
Jean-Paul Sartre, Others, from Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings, *Being and Nothingness*, p.224-

**Modern Interventions:**

### Week 4: 26 September
**Thinking About Class and Gender: Socialist and Marxist Feminism**

**Readings:**

**Historical Precedents:**
Documents:

**Week 5: 3 October**
Radical Feminism I: The Oppression of Women, and the Relationship between feminism and the New Left

Reading:
Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex (all chapters except 2 & 3)*

Historical Documents:
- New York Radical Women, “Principles,” in *Dear Sisters*, p.34
- Robin Morgan, “Goodbye to All That,” in *Dear Sisters*, 53-57.

**Week 6: 10 October**
Radical Feminism II: Sexuality and Its Discontents

Readings:
- Susan Brownmiller, *Against our Will* (read: Personal statement; chapters 1, 7,8, 10, & 11)
- Charlotte Bunch, “Lesbians in Revolt” *The Furies* (1972, online)

Critique:

Documents:
- Dana Densmore, “On Celibacy,” in *Voices from Women’s Liberation*, 264-68.
- Radicalesbians, “Woman-Identified Woman,” *Notes from the Third Year (1971)*, 81-84.
Modern Interventions:

**Week 7: 17 October**
Feminists in Conflict: The Story of the ‘Sex Wars’

Readings:
- Carole Vance, “Pleasure and Danger: Toward a Politics of Sexuality” (1-24); “Epilogue” (431-36); “Call for Papers,” (443-46) in Vance, ed., Pleasure and Danger

**Week 8: 24 October**
Thinking Through Race I: Black and ‘Third World Feminism’

Reading:
- bell hooks, Ain’t I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism Boston: South End Press, 1981 (chapters 1; 3; 5).

Documents:
- Third World Women’s Alliance, “Statement,” in Dear Sisters, p.65

Historical Precedents:
Modern Interventions:
Enakshi Dua, “Canadian Anti-Racist Thought: Scratching the Surface,” in Open Boundaries, 60-67.

Week 9: 31 October
Multiethnic, Multiracial, and Indigenous Feminism

Reading:

Documents:
- Maracle, Lee. Bobbi lee: Indian Rebel (selections, ebook through SFU library, 1977)
- Jo Carrillo, “And When You Leave, Take Your Pictures With you,” in Anzaldua, This Bridge Called my Back

Modern Interpretations:
- Joyce Green, ed. Making Space for Indigenous Feminism (read: Joyce Green, “taking Account of Aboriginal Feminism, 20-32; Emma LaRocque, “Métis and Feminist: Ethical Reflections on Feminism, Human Rights, and Decolonization, 53-71.”)

Week 10: 7 November
What is Feminist Epistemology? The Emergence of Standpoint Theory

Readings:
- Dorothy E. Smith, Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology,” in Harding, Feminism and Methodology, 84-96.

Week 11: 14 November
Current Issues in Feminist Theory I: Intersections with Disability Studies

**Week 12: 21 November**

**Current Issues in Feminist Theory II: The Future of Gender and Feminism**


**Week 13: 28 November**

Week off

**General Further Readings**


**Theory**


Bannerji, Himabi. *Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Racism* (Canadian Scholars Press)

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.*


Daly, Mary. *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women’s Liberation* (1973)


Eisenstein, Zillah. *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism* (1979)


Hartmann, Heidi. “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Toward a More Progressive Union,” Capital & Class (Summer 1979), vol. 3 no. 2 1-33.


Millett, Kate. Sexual Politics. (1970)


Rowbotham, Sheila. Woman’s Consciousness, Man’s World (1973)