Scotland Summer 2019
Dr. Lisa Comparini
Psychology 4390: Feminism and Science

I. Abstract/Summary/Program History:
This class will combine a set of field trips to nearby museums, libraries, university archives, castles, gardens and other site specific locales with regular seminar format discussions around a set of primary source readings. Discussion and written assignments will be designed to help students make connections between readings and relevant geographical, historical, cultural, and artistic sites in and around Edinburgh. The course topics range from early empiricism/realism (a philosophical tradition partly developed by Scottish philosophers) to a feminist critique of such positions, culminating in a more comprehensive feminist critique of scientific theory and methods that have largely been built upon post-enlightenment paradigms. Early Scottish philosophers, artists and women intellectuals (before the use of the word “feminist” was used) provide the backdrop against which we will explore how more recent feminist critiques of science have continued to shift concepts of “objectivity” and “evidence” in the service of improving upon what feminists see as incomplete scientific theories and methods.

II. Recommendations from Past Programs:
Though this course has not been offered before as part of this program, one of the recommendations from the group that went last year was to carefully plan relevant field trips to nearby locales that would help students engage more fully with course material. Dr Sorensen and I have been in consultation with Dr. Santos who suggested that we tailor our outings to the course topics. Following such advice, we will, for example, make use of some of the permanent exhibits at the Scottish National Gallery to explore how Scottish realists in the visual arts illuminate some of the related issues in the philosophy of science (who also were called Scottish Realists), explore one of the early groups of women in Scotland who created their own intellectual society (“The Fair Intellectuals”), and take advantage of the unique geographical location that served as inspiration for some of the early naturalists, some of whom were women.

III. Purpose for this program and location:
As part of our exploration of early scientific thinking and methodology and its critiques, we will explore some of the very early (pre-enlightenment and enlightenment) work of women (e.g. the Fair Intellectual Club, Women of Enlightenment Science), largely from Europe, but some specifically from Scotland, whose work has generally not been included in the cannon, but which is noteworthy as a more complete record of scientific history.

IV. Program Preparation of faculty/leaders:
The preparation of this course as part of the catalog offerings in Psychology and Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, was the foundation for a feminist critique of scientific theory & methods, largely based in the thinking of American feminists. Further research into the European roots of canonical philosophical/scientific approaches as well as European, and
specifically Scottish, critiques of this general paradigm from outside of the scientific community, supports the extension of the on-campus version of this course to the extended exploration of feminist critiques of science to be done through the proposed course.

V. Course syllabus (See Attachment)
COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Are feminist approaches reconcilable with scientific methods? Is science possible within a feminist framework? By many, science has been and continues to be thought of as the objective empirical pursuit of natural facts. Feminist approaches to science encourage us to question such fundamental tenets, to understand how such an approach is biased and ironically, quite far from objective in its overreliance on masculine, and in many cases patriarchal frameworks. In this course, we will begin with an examination of early Scottish realist philosophers who set the stage for much of the early empiricism that has led feminists and other cultural critics to argue instead that knowledge is produced, situated/constructed rather than a universally discovered collection of material facts. We will expand our understanding of this early approach to science through an interdisciplinary exploration of Scottish realism that will include visits to museums and castles to see paintings, sculpture, photography, architecture, etc. and to better understand how this approach was itself a critique of earlier rationalist approaches. Such an interdisciplinary exploration will help us to see the common concerns and approaches taken by a wide variety of scientific and creative thinkers. Another important part of our understanding of science through a feminist lens will include studying past and current women thinkers who have made important contributions to science. We will take time to explore how many of these early women scientists have not only struggled to simply get a seat at the table, thereby challenging the very social and cultural structures that sustain and perpetuate masculine and patriarchal forms of thinking, but how their hard won contributions have served to reshape the field in ways that may not have been possible had their voices not become part of the historical dialogue. Throughout the course, you will become better able to:

1. Explain what it means to place women at the center of knowledge-making and of discourse across disciplinary boundaries.
2. Describe and critically evaluate the argument that there is a masculine bias at the heart of most academic disciplines, methodologies, and theories.
3. Describe and account for ways that science is embedded in society and culture, incorporating critiques of early empiricism from disciplines outside of science (e.g. art, architecture, literature).
4. Critically analyze and evaluate some of the myths regarding women and science that improperly dichotomize the social and the natural worlds.


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1 This topics course counts towards the minor in Women and Gender studies.
this is not required - as it is an important and pivotal collection of works, including those we
won’t cover in class. I’ve noted “Also in F&S” where appropriate.

- Also, consider using the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
  (http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology/) for concise and cogent entries on
  many important concepts. It’s also a handy way to look up keywords and confusing
  concepts (beyond Wikipedia, of course 😊).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Reading and Homework Assignments: The schedule of reading assignments is listed at the end
of this syllabus. Assigned readings must be read prior to the class meeting under which they are
listed as they will provide you with a foundation for class discussion. They will also prepare you
for any in-class work and exercises. I urge you to take notes, perhaps outline the articles prior to
class, particularly when you are not part of the group that is presenting that day, who will do a
more detailed kind of preparation.

Attendance and Participation (40 points): Attendance is required at all class meetings for several
reasons. First, this course will be, in part, discussion based. Therefore, your interpretations,
insights, experiences, and point of view will be an integral and necessary part of the
class. Because of this, it is expected that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings in
great detail. Second, we will occasionally do written assignments in class or go on field trips that
will have written assignments associated with them. These assignments cannot be made up if
you are absent on the day they are assigned, therefore, missed in-class work will be reflected in
your participation grade.

In-class Group Presentations (15 points each X 4 = 60 points): Throughout the course of the
semester, you (as part of a small group of students in the class) will prepare a short presentation
(about 15 minutes) that will serve as a starting point for leading class discussions on the assigned
readings. You will be assigned to four groups who will be scheduled to lead discussion on 4
separate occasions throughout the course.

Critical précis (35 points each X 4 = 140 points): In connection with your group presentations,
group members will prepare a “critical précis” of the readings for the discussion you will lead
(specific instructions on how to do a précis will be provided).

Field Trip Reflection Paper (15 points X 2 = 30 points): Each student will write two short papers
(around 3-4 pages) reflecting on two of the field trips in such a way that connects the experience
with material from the course. Specific instructions will be given in a separate handout.

Final Presentation for Student Symposium (30 points): The last day of the course will be devoted
to final presentations based on the group excursion we will take.
**GRADING:**

1. In-class Participation 40 points (13.3%)
2. Group Presentations, 15 points each (X4) 60 points total (20%)
3. Critical Précis, 35 points each (X4) 140 points total (47%)
4. Field Trip reflection papers, 15 points each (X2) 30 points (10%)
5. Final Excursion Presentation 30 points (10%)

**TOTAL** 300 points

Course Letter Grades will be determined as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>270 – 300</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>240 – 269</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>210 – 239</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>180 – 209</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>Pass but unsatisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 180</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
<td>Failure</td>
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SCHEDULE of READINGS, WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, & OUTINGS

Weeks 1&2: General introduction to the course, to each other, background to feminist science studies.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Materiality, Empiricism, Objectivity</th>
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<tr>
<td>M, 7/1</td>
<td>Introductions, brief lecture and discussion on Scottish Realist philosophers</td>
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Field Trip #1 (3:00 p.m. – 7:00p.m.)– Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh to explore Scottish Realist art, representations of gender in art, (paintings, sculptures, and photographs)

*Optional: Join Dr. Sorensen's class at Writer's Museum to explore printing and famous Scottish writers*

F, 7/5 no class, Long weekend July 5-7

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Situated Knowledges, Feminist Epistemologies, Agnatology</th>
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<tr>
<td>M, 7/8</td>
<td>Reflection paper #1 on Scottish Realists due in class</td>
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F, 7/12  **Field Trip #2 (all day)** – Palace of Holyroodhouse (morning, Mary Queen of Scots, garden tour) and Arthur’s Seat (afternoon, picnic lunch)
Optional visit to Print Museum w/Dr. Sorensen’s class

Weeks 3 & 4: At this point in the course, we’ll turn to topics that have received in-depth feminist science studies treatment. The conceptual case studies are informed by and exemplify the general principles discussed in previous weeks, and also provide new and important concepts and insights.

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**Biobodies (Cells, Genes, the Brain), Evolution and Female Sexuality**

M, 7/15  **Reflection Paper #2 on Situated Knowledge or Agnatology due in class**

T, 7/16  **Field Trip #3 (all day)** – National Library of Scotland (focus on researching the “Fair Intellectual Club” pamphlet and related documents) and National Museum of Scotland


F, 7/19  **Excursion – Loch Ness, Isle of Skye, Ft. William**

– S, 7/21

**Gender, Sex, Sexuality**


T, 7/23  **Field Trip #4 (9:00 – 1:00)** – Edinburgh Castle


Afternoon prep for final presentations (Interdisciplinary Collaborative Student Symposium)

Th, 7/25  Final Presentations for Interdisciplinary Collaborative Student Symposium
ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a member of the professional community here at TAMUCC, I expect you to fulfill your academic obligations through honest and independent effort. In a community of scholars committed to truth, honesty in our academic efforts supports the code of ethics by which we live and is considered the standard by which all students and faculty are held accountable. Dishonesty in academic work is grounds for being dropped from the course with a failing grade. Don’t hesitate to ask me if you have questions about what is right and what is wrong.

Make sure you are familiar with all the information on TAMUCC’s Academic Honesty Policy at http://www.tamucc.edu/catalog/archives/Catalog03/Undergraduate/general/generali/general.html and if you have any questions or are unclear about anything, by all means please talk with me or contact someone at the Tutoring and Learning center http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~tlcweb/si.htm before engaging in any questionable behavior. We will make use of APA style for all citations, references, etc. so I encourage you familiarize yourself with how this is done (check here http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/apa/introduction.html for a nice summary and introduction to using APA style in your writing).

ACADEMIC ADVISING

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

DISABILITY SERVICES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

GRADE APPEALS PROCESS

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available
For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.