

Philosophy of Gender¹

Gender seems to fundamentally shape our engagement with the world: how we dress, how we behave, who we date and befriend, and perhaps even the careers we choose and the opportunities that are available to us. But what *is* gender—are genders determined by social facts or biological facts? Can you change your gender? How does gender relate to other social identities like race and class? And are there ways our gender concepts can be improved upon (i.e., how *should* we think about concepts like femininity and masculinity)?

This course will survey major topics in philosophy of gender and will cover three main units: (1) metaphysics of gender, (2) epistemology of gender, and (3) gender and society.

After completing this course students should:

- Understand the contemporary debates in philosophy of gender—in particular, the diversity of viewpoints, the controversies, and the areas of emerging consensus.
- Be able to define and discuss foundational concepts in philosophy of gender (e.g., gender vs. sex, intersectionality, feminist epistemology, transnational feminism, etc.).
- Appreciate the relationship between gender as an individualistic construct (e.g., how someone defines and embodies their *own* gender) and gender as a social and/or political construct (e.g., institutions—companies, governments, whole societies—define and enforce gender norms).
- Feel comfortable reading and engaging with scholarly articles.
- Be capable of planning out and executing research papers, which advance your own views.

Readings

Week 1: What is gender?

Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) are They? (What) do We Want Them to Be?”

Florence Ashley “What’s it Like to Have a Gender Identity?”

Ray Briggs and B. R. George, Excerpts from “What Even Is Gender?”

Week 2: The distinction between gender and sex

Ásta Sveinsdóttir, “The Metaphysics of Sex and Gender”

Judith Butler, excerpts from “Gender Trouble”

Mari Mikkola, “Ontological Commitments, Sex, and Gender”

Week 3: Is gender binary?

Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough”

Robin Dembroff, “Genderqueer As A Critical Gender Kind”

¹ Optional readings in italics

E. M. Hernandez “Gender Affirmation and Loving Attention”

Week 4: Transgender identity

Talia Mae Bettcher, “Trans Women and the Meaning of “Woman””

Austin A. Baker & J. Remy Green “The Right to Transgender Identity”

Emi Koyama, “The Transfeminist Manifesto”

Week 5: Masculinity

Matthew Andler, “What is Masculinity?”

Tommy Curry, “Killing Boogeymen: Phallicism and the Misandric Mischaracterizations of Black Males in Theory”

Ben Almassi, “Feminist Reclamations of Normative Masculinity”

Week 6: Feminist epistemology & logic

Linda Martín Alcoff, “On Judging Epistemic Credibility: Is Social Identity Relevant”

Cat Saint-Croix, “Privilege and Position: Formal Tools for Standpoint Epistemology”

José Medina, “The Will Not to Believe: Pragmaticism, Oppression, and Standpoint Theory”

Week 7: Epistemic injustice

Excerpts from Miranda Fricker’s “Epistemic Injustice”

Aidan McGlynn, “Testimonial Injustice, Pornography, and Silencing”

Leonie Smith & Alfred Archer “Epistemic Injustice and the Attention Economy”

Week 8: Silencing

Rae Langton, “Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts”

Kristie Dotson, “Tracking Epistemic Violence, Tracking Practices of Silencing”

Martina Ferrari, “Questions of Silence: On the Emancipatory Limits of Voice and the Coloniality of Silence”

Week 9: Gender and scientific knowledge

Alison Wylie, “Feminist Philosophy of Science: Standpoint Matters”

Alison Jagger, “Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology”

Sarah Richardson, “Feminist Philosophy of Science: History, Contributions, and Challenges”

Week 10: Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color”

Katherine Gasdaglis & Alex Madva “Intersectionality as a Regulative Ideal”

Brudget Byrne, “Rethinking Intersectionality and Whiteness at the Borders of Citizenship”

Week 11: Gender and race part 1

Mariana Ortega, "Being Lovingly, Knowingly Ignorant: White Feminism and Women of Color."

Excerpts from Charles Mills' *White Ignorance*

Patricia Hill Collins, "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation"

Week 12: Gender and race part 2

Elena Ruíz, "Woman of Color Structural Feminisms"

Audre Lorde, "The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism"

Natalie Cisernos "Critical Race Theory, Intersectionality, and Feminist Philosophy"

Week 13: Decolonial and Post-Colonial Conceptions of Gender

María Lugones, "Toward a Decolonial Feminism."

Celia Bardwell-Jones and Margaret McLaren, "Introduction to Indigenizing and Decolonizing Feminist Philosophy"

Week 14: Misogyny and Patriarchy

Excerpts from Kate Manne's "Down Girl"

Quill Kukla "Misogyny and Ideological Logic"

Filipa Melo Lopes, "Perpetuating the Patriarchy: Misogyny and (Post-)Feminist Backlash"