

Philosophy 102: Racism and Sexism

Philosophy 102: Racism and Sexism

Consider this syllabus a contract; you are responsible for the (piles and piles of) information in it. NOTE: there are assignments in here that I may not discuss in class. You are still responsible for handing them in on the due days, even if I never breathe a word about them in class. Feel free to ask any questions you have about information in this syllabus. Reread it regularly during the semester.

Instructor

Lisa Heldke

Old Main 106A, Extension 7029, email heldke@gac.edu

Office Hours: M 10:30-11:30, W 3:30-4:30, F 9-10:30; other times by appointment

Teaching Associate

Bethany Mueller

Phone _____, email bmueller

Designated Writing Center Tutor

Angela Janda

Email ajanda

Texts

The only text for this class is the thick photocopy packet, available in the bookstore.**
[NOTE FROM THE APA: This course packet is now available as a textbook from McGraw-Hill: *Oppression, Privilege, and Resistance: Theoretical Readings on Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism*, by Lisa Heldke (Editor), and Peg O'Connor (Editor)]

Bring the relevant text to class every day; we will be doing a lot of textual work, and it is very difficult if everyone doesn't have access to a copy.

Time Commitment

Plan to spend a minimum of two hours outside of class for each hour in class. That is amount of time you should spend on reading and carefully thinking about the assignments. Weeks in which you are writing formal papers will obviously require more time, as will weeks when you attend outside activities and are writing informal papers. At the least, then, you need ten hours per week to spend on this course. If you don't have that kind of time, this isn't a good course for you.

About The Course

This is a philosophy course, a course in theory. More specifically, this is a course in

theorizing about: 1) systems of oppression, privilege and their interrelationships, and 2) systems of resistance to oppression.

Humans have created complex and pervasive systems for marking, separating and ordering human beings. Two of the most pervasive of these systems are race and gender. Race and gender systems are all encompassing in their application; no one can reach the age of five without already having some (often very clear) sense of themselves as belonging with some people ("the boys," "Asian Americans") and being different from, separate from, others ("the girls," "white people"). And no wonder: induction into one's race and gender category begins at birth. (What's the first question often asked about a new baby?)

Of course these categories have not been constructed for recreational purposes-and individual humans usually have limited power to create, enforce or change them. One central reason why there exists such a thorough and fail-safe system for placing individuals into race and gender categories is that these categories enable the maintenance of a pervasive system of oppression. In plain terms, we live in a society in which it's very important to establish clearly what race and gender you are, because it is largely on these bases that your place in society's hierarchy will be determined.

The point of this course is to try to understand, in theoretical terms, how oppression works. We'll also use theory to try to understand the flip side of oppression-privilege. (Some of us are privileged by virtue of our race and/or gender, just as some of us are penalized.) And finally, we'll examine some theoretical frameworks for engaging in individual and collective resistance to the privilege/oppression system.

Please note: this course will not focus on contemporary issues per se. If you are primarily interested in studying contemporary social phenomena, there are other courses that would be more interesting and useful to take. Our focus will be theory. Nevertheless, my hope is that you will come to see theory as useful for analyzing your own experiences, and I will give you assignments that give you ample opportunity to make connections. Why do I emphasize that this is a theory course? Because every term people leave disappointed that we didn't talk more about contemporary issues. I want to make it clear at the outset that contemporary issues are not the focus in philosophy.

While this is a philosophy course, it is perhaps unique in that many, if not most of the writers we'll read are still alive. This means we won't be reading the canonical works one usually encounters in a philosophy class. That's partly because classical philosophers haven't said much about the issues we'll consider (and partly because they were often examples, rather than analysts of racism and sexism). We'll read a wide variety of contemporary literature, some of which is quite well known, and some of which is very new (for philosophy) and fairly obscure. Most is written by academics (professional philosophers and other kinds of theorists), while some of it is written by people far removed from academia. All of it is theoretical-which simply means that all of it will help us in our projects to develop general, flexible explanations of the workings of race and gender, of racism and sexism, and of anti-racism and anti-sexism.

Course Goals

This course fills the requirements for both a writing credit and an Area C (Meaning, Value and the Historical Perspective, or HUMAN) credit. In order to meet these requirements, it has two goals: 1) to enable you to become familiar with a body of philosophical ideas and theories about racism and sexism; and 2) to give you the opportunity to develop some philosophical skills in thinking and reasoning, both orally and on paper. I consider myself obliged to fill these two goals in this class. If at any time you think either skills or content is suffering, I urge you to talk with me. (This is, after all, your education.)

I also have another goal. I want to contribute to the transformation of society; I want this to be a more just world by the time I die. One of the ways I think I can contribute to that is by creating spaces in which people can think together about important questions. So, my real goal in this class is for you to think hard, read a lot, and engage with each other, not because you have to, but because by doing so, you might take us a little way down the road to more social justice.

The following components of the course are designed to help you meet these goals.

Course Components

You must complete all assigned coursework in order to pass the course; failure to do so will mean failing the course. Here are the specifics:

1. Participation (10% of final grade) Your regular, active presence in class is expected. "Active presence" includes making productive contributions to discussions, and also being an engaged listener. Time in class will be a mix of large- and small-group discussion, with small pieces of lecture thrown in as the need arises. You'll assign yourself a participation grade for the class, based on your own assessment of how well you achieved specific goals you set. See the page of this syllabus labeled "Discussion: Goal Setting" for your first assignment.

2. Attendance:

I regard all absences as "excused"; that is, I assume that, as busy, responsible adults, you will occasionally find yourself unable to attend class, whether it is because of illness, transportation problems, special events, family crises, etc. I do not differentiate among these reasons, and expect you to be responsible for your attendance. In a discussion-based class, however, missing class discussion is missing coursework that cannot be made up. (It's like missing a quiz that you can't take at a later date.) Therefore, absences affect final grades:

- a. 1-4 absences: no effect
- b. 5-8 absences: grade will be lowered one full letter
- c. 9-11 absences: grade will be lowered two full letters
- d. 12 or more absences: subject to my discretion, you may fail the course.

In connection with the course, each of you will choose and attend six lectures, meetings, workshops or other public Gustavus events that address race and racism, gender and sexism or sexual preference and heterosexism. You'll write brief (two page) informal

writings about these events. See the page entitled "Attending and Writing About Public Events" for details.

3. Focus on a Social Change Organization: Each of you will select one activist organization (national or regional-not Gustavus) whose primary aim is to challenge some aspect of racism, sexism or heterosexism/homophobia. During the course of the term, two of your informal papers will focus on this organization, as will some of your informal writings. By focusing on a real organization, you will learn to analyze theories to see how useful and reliable they are in the ordinary world. Your knowledge of the organization will also give you another meaningful way to contribute to class discussion. See the page labeled "Choosing a Social Change Organization" for more details, and for your first informal assignment about the organization.

4. Formal Papers (60% of final grade): You'll write three formal papers during the semester. Assignments will be designed to give you practice on various skills used in philosophizing (e.g. accurately summarizing an author's arguments, analyzing the quality of their arguments, constructing your own arguments, connecting theory to practice). They will also give you a chance to think more deeply about particular issues raised in class.

For the first two formal papers, we will spend one class period in a writing workshop, during which you will critique one of your classmates' papers. Drafts are required.

See the schedule at the end of the syllabus for paper writing due dates. Dates are somewhat tentative; they're subject to change, but not without notice. Each of you has one free one-week extension on one paper (except the final). On the day the paper is due, you may tell me "I'm taking my extension this time," and you may turn the paper in one week later. This offer may only be used once-NO OTHER LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED-so plan accordingly.

Here is a tentative list of paper topics (subject to change in light of people's interests).

- a. In Paper 1, you will attempt to ascertain how the organization you've chosen defines oppression. You will interpret and explain the organization's definition in light of the definitions you'll study during the first segment of the course.
- b. Paper 2 will construct an analysis of a form of privilege from which you benefit (race, gender, sexual orientation), utilizing the analyses of privilege you read in the second segment of the course.
- c. Paper 3 will again explore the organization you chose. In it, you will propose a strategy for resistance to oppression and privilege that you believe the organization should employ. You'll use the theories of resistance you'll read in the last segment of the course, and also your own research into the work of the organization.

5. Informal Writing (25% of final grade) In addition to writing formal papers, you will also do a significant amount of informal writing in the course. Informal writing is

designed to get you in the habit of thinking through your ideas by writing about them. Therefore, informal writings needn't be as "clean" or polished as your formal papers. Their aim is to give you a chance to work on some ideas without having to worry too much about the mechanics.

A second aim of informal writing is to give you opportunity to try out your ideas on your classmates. Thus, some informal assignments will be designed to be distributed to everyone, or to be read aloud and talked about in small groups during class. I want to encourage lots of conversations among the members of the class, both inside and outside the classroom. Make it a point to respond to your classmates this term when they say or write something you agree with, disagree with, don't understand, find interesting, or want to hear more about.

Grading informal writing: Informal writing will be graded on a "percentage of work completed" basis. E.g. if you do 94% of the informal assignments, you get an A. Bethany and I read and comment on, but don't grade individual assignments.

Handing in informal writing: ALL informal writing goes to Bethany IN CLASS. NO work will be accepted late, or outside of class. (It's just too confusing for the bookkeeper.)

Varieties of informal writing: Informal writing will come in three main varieties:

- a. Occasionally, I'll ask you to write something during class, or outside of class for the next day's class. It might be a question or response to a question, it might be a response to a reading, or to how class is going. These writings may be the foundations for small group discussions, or I may just collect them and redistribute them randomly, to give you an idea of what other people are thinking. (I might ask you to write about how your organization would think about a particular issue, for example.)
- b. Theory into practice: writing about public events: You'll write six two-page papers about public events you attend. These papers are designed to help you identify the ways theories of oppression, privilege and resistance are at work in the world, and to make connections between what you're learning in class and what others are saying about these issues. (See "Attending and Writing About Public Events" for the details.)
- c. Your work to evaluate your classmates' drafts counts as informal writing.

A note on plagiarism: If you pass off someone else's words or ideas as your own, you have plagiarized-whether you do so intentionally or by accident, and whether you do so in a formal paper or an informal writing. That is true whether you quote directly, or paraphrase someone else's ideas. That includes ideas in books, exchanged in conversation, or on the web. Please consult a style manual, me, Bethany, Angela, the Writing Center, or someone if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism in your written work. (I have a handy sourcebook called Writing With Sources that I'd be happy to show you.) Suffice it to say, plagiarism is a violation of college policy, and is also a violation of the policies of this class. If you plagiarize, you will receive a zero on that assignment, and I will report the incident to the dean. If you plagiarize a second time, I will give you an F for the class, and inform the dean of the reason for the grade.

Access to education: Every student has a right to be able to learn in this class. If you have learning disabilities, please see me NOW about ways we can make the class work for you. Bring any documentation you have about your learning disability.

Racism and Sexism Assignment Quick Reference Guide

Handy! Klip-n-save for your wallet!

Requirement Where do I find out how to do it? How much is it worth; how is it graded?

Formal papers 1. Syllabus: "Formal Papers"

2. Assignments handed out a week in advance Three papers, 60%; letter grades assigned by me

Informal writing 1. Syllabus:

a. "Attending and Writing About Public Events"

b. "Choosing a Social Change Organization"-your first assignment

2. Assignments given in class, on email

3. First draft evaluation forms, handed out with formal paper assignments.

All assignments together, 25%; graded on a percentage-of-work-completed basis

Participation Syllabus: "Discussion: Goal Setting" 15%; self-graded, based on your assessment of progress

Attendance Syllabus: "Attendance" Grade drops after more than four class absences

Social Change Organization 1. Syllabus

2. "Choosing a Social Change Organization" Built into formal and informal writing grade

Attendance @ public events Syllabus: "Attending and Writing About Public Events"

Built into informal writing grade

Note: You must complete all assignments in order to pass this course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Schedule Dates to Note:

· February 10: Classes begin

· February 14: All-college conversation (we'll attend this in lieu of regular class)

· February 17: Discussion assignment due

· February 21: Select your organization and submit your one-page description of it

· Paper 1

a. March 12: Assignment distributed, discussed

b. March 17: Draft workshop

c. March 21: Final due

· March 28: half of your writings about public events must be handed in

· March 29-April 6: Spring Break

· Paper 2

a. April 9: Assignment distributed

b. April 16: Draft workshop

c. April 23: Final due

· April 18-21: Easter Break

· April 30: MayDay! Conference (we'll attend in lieu of regular class)

· May 21: Last day of classes

- ????: Final scheduled; we'll use this for a last, more informal class session
- Paper 3
 - a. May 16: Assignment distributed
 - b. NO IN-CLASS DRAFT WORKSHOP; DRAFTS ON YOUR OWN
 - c. May 24: Final draft due in my office by 5 p.m.

Reading List/Rough Schedule

I've listed more readings than we can cover. That means we have some flexibility; we can eliminate things that people are less interested in. That, in turn, means that it is up to you to keep track of which reading we are doing when. I've noted the approximate number of days we will spend on each section.

A. Theorizing Forms of Oppression

1. Oppression: General Theories (4 days)

Paolo Freire, Chapter 1 of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Sandra Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression"

Iris Young, "Five Faces of Oppression"

2. Oppression Axis 1: Racism (3 days)

bell hooks, "Overcoming White Supremacy"

Rodolfo Acuna, "Occupied America"

Ward Churchill, "Encountering the American Holocaust"

Ward Churchill, "Proposed Convention on the Prevention of Genocide"

Michael Omi, Howard Winant, "Racial Formation"

3. Oppression Axis 2: Sexism (3 days)

Heidi Hartmann, "Towards a Definition of Patriarchy"

Carole Sheffield, "Sexual Terrorism"

Marilyn Frye, "Oppression"

Michael Kimmel, "Inequality and Difference"

4. Oppression Axis 3: Heterosexism/Homophobia (2 days)

Charlotte Bunch, "Not for Lesbians Only"

Timothy Beneke, "Homophobia"

Cheryl Clarke, "The Failure to Transform: Homophobia in the Black Community"

Suzanne Pharr, "Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism"

B. Theorizing Forms of Privilege

1. Privilege: A General Theory (1 day)

Alison Bailey, "Privilege"

2. Axis 1: White Privilege (2 days)

Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege"
doris davenport, "The Pathology of Racism"
Ruth Frankenberg, from the Introduction, *White Women, Race Matters*

3. Axis 2: Male Privilege (2 days)

John Stoltenberg, "How Men Have (a) Sex"
Alice Walker, "Coming Apart"

4. Axis 3: Heterosexual Privilege (2 days)

Bruce Ryder, "Straight Talk: Male Heterosexual Privilege"
Devon Carbado, "Straight Out of the Closet"

C. Complicating Theories of Oppression and Privilege

1. Challenging Dichotomous Thinking (3 days)

Mari Matsuda, "We Will Not Be Used"
Ana Castillo, "A Countryless Woman"
Francisco Valdes, "Notes on the Conflation of Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation"
Anne Fausto-Sterling, "The Five Sexes"

2. Recognizing Multiple Axes of Oppression (3 days)

Angela Harris, "Race and Essentialism in Feminist Legal Theory"
Edna Bonacich, "Inequality in America"
Marlon Riggs, "Black Macho Revisited"
June Jordan, "Report from the Bahamas" (last two pages are reversed)

3. Being Both Privileged and Oppressed (3 days)

Patricia Hill Collins, "Toward a New Vision"
Timothy Beneke, "Gay Sexism"
Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class and Sex"

D. Theorizing Resistance

1. Resistance Strategy 1: Education

Lawrence Blum, "Antiracism, Multiculturalism, and Interracial Community"
Tia Cross, Freada Klein, et al., "Face to Face, Day to Day-Racism CR"
Paul Hornacek, "Anti-Sexist CR Groups"
Leonard Schein, "Dangers"

2. Resistance Strategy 2: Disloyalty, Disobedience, Traitorousness

Audre Lorde, "The Uses of Anger"
Vine Deloria, "Indian Humor"
Adrienne Rich, "Disloyal to Civilization"

3. Resistance Strategy 3: Separatism and Identity Politics

Marilyn Frye, "Willful Virgin"

James Boggs, "Black Power: A Scientific Concept"

4. Resistance Strategy 4: Revolution

James Cone, "Toward a Constructive Definition of Black Power"

pat parker, "Revolution"

bell hooks, "Feminist Revolution"

5. Resistance Strategy 5: Coalition

Bernice Johnson Reagon, "Coalition Politics"

Elly Bulkin, "Breaking a Cycle"

Manning Marable, "Beyond Racial Identity Politics"

Mari Matsuda, "Standing Beside My Sister Facing the Enemy"

6. Resistance Strategy 6: Neither/Nor

Kate Bornstein, "This Quiet Revolution"

Gloria Anzaldua, "La Consciencia de la Mestiza"

Karin Baker, "Bisexual Feminist Politics"

DISCUSSION: GOAL SETTING

This page contains a writing assignment DUE IN BETHANY'S HANDS FEBRUARY 17

About Discussion in Philosophy

Being able to discuss an idea with others--being able to follow a line of argument, to contribute relevant information, to formulate and express an opinion, to ask questions of clarification and challenge--is an extremely important skill for philosophers. Often it is only through discussing someone's argument with others that you really come to see how it works, to see its strengths and weaknesses. The same is often true of one's own arguments; not until you try to explain and defend them to others does one really develop all the nuances of one's own position.

If we are rigorous and honest with each other in our discussions--demanding clear, well-thought-out answers of ourselves and each other--we can come to better understandings of what we believe. Just as writing clearly makes us think more clearly, so too do speaking clearly and listening carefully.

Discussion and Your Grade: Your Assignment

Because I consider discussion to be such a central part of doing philosophy, and because one of the ways I can show it is important is by grading it, I calculate class participation into your final grade. (It will be worth 10 percent of that grade.) However, because I also believe that I am not always in the best position to know the ways in which a student is contributing to the class discussion, I ask students to assess themselves, and to tell me the grades they believe they have earned.

To give yourself a starting point for thinking about participation, write one or two pages

in which you do the following:

1. Discuss how to create a discussion atmosphere in which participants think hard and learn something. (Don't be satisfied with flabby talk about how good discussions leave everyone feeling happy; try to think of a discussion when you've come away having learned something. What was it like? Was it necessarily comfortable?)
2. Describe what is required of a good discussion participant.
3. Assess your own abilities in light of your analysis. What do you do well?
4. What would you really like to do better? Be specific. **GIVE YOURSELF ONE OR TWO SPECIFIC GOALS TO WORK ON DURING THE SEMESTER.** Be realistic. Think about what you can actually accomplish in a semester, and place that in the context of larger, longer-term goals you may have for yourself.

Keep one copy of this for yourself, and turn another copy in to me on February 17. Look back on this document over the term. Jot down ways in which your definition of good discussion changes, and also how you see your own abilities developing. You will use this analysis, with its revisions, to grade yourself at the end of the term.

I make a note of your goals, and work during the semester to create opportunities for you to achieve them. It's up to you to put effort into taking those opportunities, and also making your own.

ATTENDING AND WRITING ABOUT PUBLIC EVENTS

This page describes six informal writings due over the course of the term

Attending Events

During the course of the term, you will attend six public Gustavus events. These events may include, but are not limited to, lectures, plays, movies, organization meetings, conferences, or workshops. Each event must fill the following criteria:

- The event focuses on an issue of race and racism, gender and sexism, sexual identity and heterosexism and/or class and classism.
- There must be an opportunity for you to engage in discussion with other people present at the event. You have to have some opportunity to speak and/or listen to others present. (A movie should include a discussion session afterwards, for instance.) This is almost always a given at any education related event, so this shouldn't limit your options.
- It must be a different kind of event from the other five events you attend. (For instance, you can't go to six Women's Center meetings. Don't go to six movies. The idea here is to expand your horizons, to try out a meeting, a lecture, a movie.)
- The six events should not all focus on, say race and racism, but should be a mixture of issues.

Some additional suggestions and observations:

- Choose at least two or three events to attend that will place you in a minority position with respect to your race, gender, sexual orientation or class. (Examples here might include meetings of Q and A or Asian Cultures Club or Pan Afrikan Student Organization or Women's Center.)
- Watching a movie with your roommates does NOT count as a public event
- Bethany will announce relevant events during class each week; see her if you have questions about other events you think might count. Events already scheduled for this

spring include: Native American pow wow, Martin Luther King lecture, Building Bridges conference, workshops by Men Can Stop Rape organization.

Writing About Events

For each event you attend, you will write a two-page (double-spaced, typed) informal writing. In your writing:

- Identify the thesis, the main point, the essential issues, or the gist of the talk, workshop, etc. (This is good practice at an activity that you'll use for the rest of your life.)
- Draw out some connection(s) between the point of this event, and an issue or issues we've discussed in class. I'll leave this purposely open ended, because I can't predict the events you will attend, or the issues that will come up at them. Feel free to be very inventive and experimental in drawing connections. (Think of yourself as trying to make a map for yourself, by drawing lines between the topics in class, and the topics that arise at this event.)
- Head your piece with the date, the event, and the number of the assignment (e.g. Event Writing #3, April 1, Asian Cultures Club meeting.)

Due Dates

- You may turn in your informals to Bethany any day in class. Some caveats:
- You can only turn in one of these writings a day, and
- You must turn in at least three writings by the midpoint of the semester (March 28). (Together, these two caveats constitute the "no bunching" clause, designed to encourage you to spread out this writing over the semester, instead of stuffing it all into a long night.)

This page contains a writing assignment due TO BETHANY February 21

This semester, you will be testing the theories you learn in class against an actual organization aimed at challenging racism, sexism or heterosexism/homophobia. What do these theories enable us to see about that organization that we might otherwise not notice? What do they miss? How might we use the experience of this organization to strengthen them? Focusing on a specific organization is one very concrete way you will gain skill in connecting theory to practice.

You'll focus on one organization for the entire semester, which will give you the chance to explore it quite a bit, and come to understand it in something more than just a superficial way.

Criteria for Choosing an Organization

1. The organization must be outside the confines of Gustavus. It may be a St. Peter organization, or it may be a regional, national, or international organization.
2. It must be aimed at challenging some aspect of racism, sexism or heterosexism/homophobia.
3. It must be an activist organization, aimed at some form of social change/social transformation. (It may be conservative or radical/progressive in its approach, or anywhere in between.)
4. You must be able to get access to considerable information about the organization.

That includes its mission, its projects, its goals. You will have to write a paper in which you figure out how it defines oppression, and another in which you make suggestions about how the organization chooses to challenge oppression. Do you think you can determine these things, on the basis of the information you have available?

5. It ought to be an organization in which you have some interest--something that you care about, for whatever reason.

Having trouble finding an organization? See Bethany or me SOON for advice and guidance.

Assignments Involving Your Organization

1. Informal writing, due February 21: A description (one to two pages, typed) of the organization you have selected, including:

a. Its purpose/mission

b. The means you have for investigating this organization (e.g. you are a member or know a member; you have found an extensive web site for the organization; there is a chapter in town/in Mankato/in your hometown; there are articles on it in the newspaper; there are books about it).

Need more information about how to choose an organization? Bethany or I will be more than happy to help you. It is extremely important that you choose carefully; you need to pick an organization for which you can find enough information to complete subsequent assignments. NOTE: you won't get more details about this assignment, or a warning that it is due.

2. Miscellaneous writing through the semester: On occasion, I'll ask you to write about your organization, in connection with an issue arising in class discussion.

3. Formal paper #1, due March 21: How does your organization define oppression--and how does that match up against a model or models of oppression we've read in this class? (Detailed assignment to follow.)

4. Formal paper #3, due May 24: Propose some tools for resistance that your organization ought to consider using. (Detailed assignment to follow.)

Racism and Sexism Formal Paper Assignment 1

Yes, this assignment is very lengthy. And you know what?

It will answer a lot of questions if you read and think about it carefully!

Length: 5-7 pp.

Draft workshop: March 17

Due date: March 21 (be sure to include your critiqued draft)

Topic: An analysis of your organization's definition of oppression, using theories from class

The Project

In your first paper, you will explain how the organization you have chosen to work on for the semester defines oppression. To do so, you will make use of ideas from at least two of the theorists that we will have read in class so far.

· The assignment will most likely require you to extrapolate, hypothesize, and otherwise deduce your organization's definition, given what else they say about themselves. Most

websites don't have a page called "How We Define Oppression Here." You must get creative in interpreting what the organization does say about itself, in order to figure out what it would say about this question.

· The assignment also requires you to really work with the definitions of oppression you've encountered-to move beyond the understanding you've gotten of these definitions in class, and to come to a deeper comprehension of them. Only then can you decide which ones best fit what your organization is saying.

NOTE 1: the focus of this paper is oppression. Later, you'll have the opportunity to talk about how the organization understands liberation or social transformation. For now, focus on the way it analyzes the problem.

NOTE 2: it's not your job, in this paper, to decide whether this is a good definition of oppression, or whether this is the definition the organization should adopt. However, you should make some notes about these matters, because they may come in handy when you write your last paper, in which you will be making recommendations to the organization.

Eligible Theorists

You may utilize any of the theorists listed in Section A, "Theorizing Forms of Oppression," on the syllabus. That includes the theorists writing about heterosexism, which we've not yet gotten to.

A message from The Department of the Obvious: In order to use these theorists, you are going to have to reread them carefully. I know, I know; this is obvious, right? Good.

Audience

You'll write this paper as if it were to be read by a group of students who know nothing in particular about either theories of oppression or the organization you are studying-and who don't know you either. How would you address such a group? (Hint: assume nothing is obvious.)

Additional Details

1. Your introduction should include the group's definition of oppression, as you have put it together from their materials.
2. Use the theory to illuminate the organization, not the other way around.
3. Make the structure of your paper organic and integrated. Don't just make it clear; make it have an aim. Your aim is to persuade us that the definition of oppression you have attributed to this organization is in fact the definition it would/could give itself.

Rationale

This paper will give you the opportunity to work on several different skills, all of which will come in handy to you in any number of ways in later life (and later in this very course):

1. Explicating a concept or theory. Your paper will necessarily include clear, accurate and situationally relevant explanations of the concepts that you are employing. (What's marginalization? What's genocide?)
2. Identifying theory in an organization's description of itself. This is a big one, and it's tough. You have to play detective, drawing inferences from what an organization does

say, to what it would say about its particular form of oppression.

3. Drawing connections between and among theoretical understandings. You will have to find, and then explain, how the way that your organization understands oppression is connected to the ways that our theorists understand oppression. What concepts or pieces of analysis from the theorists are most connected to your organization's definition of oppression? Which ones don't fit at all? Which ones don't fit together smoothly?

4. Extending the scope of a theory or concept. Our theorists use various concepts and tools to talk about the particular form of oppression they are interested in, but those concepts can be extended to other forms of oppression as well. For example, Churchill talks about assimilation in connection with his discussion of racism. But you might find yourself wanting to use that notion to talk about your organization's definition of homophobia. Likewise, Bartky talks about mystification with respect to women. Maybe you want to use that concept to talk about how your organization defines racism. Think about how to make those extensions.

The paper also requires you to deepen your understanding of the foundational concepts that you have encountered so far. That means reading, rereading, and re-rereading the relevant texts, putting texts in conversation with each other, etc. Think of your work for this paper as being like studying for a test-only the test at the end is a paper. Do not make the mistake of thinking you understand the theories well enough right now to write the paper.

If you do it right, some of your most important learning will happen during the course of writing this paper and the other formal papers.

Draft Evaluation

Monday, March 17 is a draft evaluation day. Bring two copies of a completed first draft to class. You'll swap with each other, and evaluate each other's drafts using an evaluation form (which you'll find at the end of this assignment). You must have your paper evaluated by someone else in the class-and to get informal writing credit, you must evaluate someone else's paper.

The point of a draft evaluation is to make changes in accordance with your commentator's suggestions; that is why we spend a day in class doing it, and why we do it a couple days before the final paper is due. I'd make two observations about this process, based on several years' experience:

1. Pay attention to your commentator's remarks. Make the changes they suggest! Time and again, students ignore each other's excellent advice-and end up with lower grades because of it.
2. If you choose not to use the in-class evaluation day, that is obviously your choice. But if you decide to procrastinate, please keep it to yourself. Don't reveal it to me by coming to ask for an evaluation sheet on the day the paper is due, or by turning in your paper and telling me that your evaluator will be turning in your draft separately. This is known in the trade as a dead giveaway, and it will make me irritated and I will carry my irritation with me when I go to read your paper.

Ground Rules: To Be Observed on Pain of My Refusing to Accept Your Paper

1. Turn in your draft, critiqued and signed by a classmate, along with your final draft. Staple the entire lot together. Put your final draft on TOP and staple everything else

underneath. I'm not being finicky here; there's simply no other way to keep one person's paper all in one place, and to keep me from reading and evaluating a draft as if it were the final paper.

2. Papers are due in class on Friday, March 21.

3. Papers should be five to seven pages, double-spaced, and typed.

Some Pre-Writing Ideas

1. Think about audience: actively consider how you'll address the audience I've specified.

2. Spend time gathering information about your organization, using both its sources, and things that other people have said about it. Take careful notes, so that you can later go back to evaluate what that information means.

3. Try to draw some conclusions about what the organization seems to assume or believe about the nature of oppression, based on what you see it saying.

4. Identify concepts you think might be useful from the theorists we've read. (Note: don't neglect concepts that clash with your organization's definition. It can be very useful and illuminating to set up a contrast between two ideas.) Here's where your glossary will be very handy; you can use it to quickly locate concepts that you think might be of particular value. But spend time reading around in the texts as well; something you read earlier might now have a very different meaning to you, based on subsequent reading.

5. Work to put these pieces together; what do the theorists say that helps you to understand what the organization is up to? (Note: this stage is similar to the stage you should be using in your six short papers.)

First Draft Evaluation Form

Use your own paper for this: there isn't really room on the form to answer these questions

Author's Name:

Critic's Name:

1. Critic: Be specific. Give the author concrete suggestions

2. Author: Hand in this critique, along with your first draft, when you hand in your final paper. PAPERS UNACCOMPANIED BY CRITIQUED DRAFTS ARE NOT COMPLETE.

State the thesis of the paper. (It should address the question "how does this organization define oppression?")

Is the thesis clear? How could it be improved?

What information about the organization does the author use to support their thesis?

How well does this information support the thesis? How could it be made stronger?

What theoretical tools from our text does the author employ? (List on the reverse side.)

Does the author accurately represent the theories? How could it be better?

How well does the author use these tools to make and support their thesis? How could it be improved?

Is the paper clear for someone in the intended audience? (Remember who audience is.)
How might it be clearer?

What were the strongest aspects of this paper?

What is the most important thing this author could do to improve the paper?

Additional suggestions or comments:

Racism and Sexism Formal Paper #2:

Constructing a Theory of Privilege

Summary

Length: 5-7 pp.

Draft workshop: April 16

Due date: April 23 (be sure to include your critiqued draft, SIGNED BY YOUR CRITIC)

Topic: Choose either:

1. Write an essay analyzing white privilege, male privilege, or heterosexual privilege that addresses some aspect(s) of that privilege not discussed in the texts we read in class.
2. What is the relationship between masculinity and male privilege, or between whiteness and white privilege or heterosexuality and heterosexual privilege? Write an essay exploring the question.

OPTION #1

Write an essay analyzing white privilege, male privilege, or heterosexual privilege that addresses some aspect(s) of that privilege not discussed in the texts we read in class.

You will have to formulate your own theory about what this form of privilege is, how it operates, and how it is maintained, using the theoretical tools you have gathered so far in this class, and in other areas of your life. Here are some of the theoretical tools you can use:

- 1) You can use theories of the oppression of women or of people of color or glbt persons

as starting points for your portrayal of male or white or heterosexual advantage. (In other words, look at the theories of oppression from the first section of the course and manipulate them to extract the corresponding theory of privilege from them.)

2) You can use the theories of white, male or heterosexual privilege, and privilege-in-general, as sources of insight for your own theory about an aspect of privilege that they do not address.

3) You can take a personal experience, media event, law, policy, or stereotype and use it as the starting point for reflecting theoretically on the pervasiveness of white or male or heterosexual privilege in our culture.

One requirement with Option 1 is that you must choose a topic that requires you to theorize about your own privilege. (Translation: if you don't identify as a heterosexual, then don't pick the assignment on heterosexual privilege. Ditto if you don't identify as white, or don't identify as male. If you don't fit any of these forms of privilege, but you still would like to do this assignment, see me, and we can talk about a refinement of the assignment to make it work.)

Observations About Option #1

You will probably use a combination of the three kinds of tools to shape your conception of privilege. The theories we have discussed will provide the initial foundation for your ideas, but you will need to dig deeper and shape concepts of your own. (Think about how Bailey did this, for example, in coming up with her theory of privilege-in-general. She invented concepts to illustrate what she saw around her.) Formulate your own theory and support it with examples and arguments. Do not be afraid to go beyond the obvious effects we have already discussed in class; develop a new, more radical view! This should be an original paper, intelligently informed by the other things you have read. Remember that you are formulating a theory, not simply describing how things are different for people who are privileged and people who are oppressed by a particular. Emphasize structure and system, not isolated acts. Other people should be able to use your theory to examine and reflect on their own lives.

Also, think about how your theory shows how your privilege is a consequence of the oppression of another group. How do you benefit as the result of someone else being harmed by a system?

Don't worry about whether your theory is absolutely watertight and can address every imaginable kind of situation. (Even the best theory can't do that-but that doesn't mean it can't tell us a lot about our world.) Present your position clearly and strongly, through arguments and examples.

Rationale-Option 1

1. To develop your skills in building original theory.
2. To practice assimilating parts of others' theories, and putting them to work for your own purposes.
3. To think seriously about the nature of heterosexual privilege, and to make it visible.

Audience-Option 1

This paper should be written to an audience that has some understanding about theories

of oppression and privilege. Imagine you are actually writing to supplement the articles compiled for this class (if you are successful enough in this project that may be where your paper ends up!)

OPTION #2

Write a paper that addresses this question: What is the relationship between masculinity and male privilege, or between whiteness and white privilege or between heterosexuality and heterosexual privilege?

This question arises out of the title of Stoltenberg's essay. Stoltenberg suggests that he must refuse to be a man (as he conceives of that identity), in order to refuse to participate in the system of oppression that privileges him. For Stoltenberg, then, masculinity is a tool or instrument of male privilege; the one reinforces the other.

You may choose to explore the relation between masculinity and male privilege. (Is there a connection? If so, what is it?). You may also explore the connection between whiteness and white privilege. (Is whiteness a social construction? If so, is it in the service of white privilege?) Or you could look at heterosexuality and heterosexual privilege. (Is heterosexual identity constructed in a way that works to shore up heterosexual privilege?)

Note: if you are interested in this assignment, it would also be worthwhile going back to look at Omi and Winant's model of racial formation. They assert that NOT all racial formation is racist. By extension, this would mean that they would say that resisting white privilege would NOT necessarily mean "refusing to be white" in all senses of that term. (Whiteness isn't only in the service of white privilege.)

Rationale-Option 2

1. To work on framing an argument, identifying the relevant sources of it, when it doesn't come from just one identifiable location but must be pieced together.
2. To develop skills in spelling out the consequences of particular theoretical positions/arguments.
3. To develop systematic critiques of positions.

Audience-Option 2

Your audience is someone who has thought quite long and hard about the matter of privilege, and has begun to ask questions about the scope and limits of the notion. You might even think of a particular person in class to whom you want to write-a person who has asked questions or made claims that you think are related to this topic.

DRAFT EVALUATION

Wednesday, April 16 is a draft evaluation day. Bring two copies of a completed first draft to class (you'll probably only have time for one evaluation, but bring two in case someone else doesn't have one). You must have your paper evaluated by someone else in the class--and to get all your informal writing credit, you must evaluate someone else's

paper. Revisit my comments about the importance of draft evaluations, posted on the last paper assignment.

GROUND RULES

(TO BE OBSERVED ON PAIN OF MY REFUSING TO ACCEPT YOUR PAPER)

1. Turn in your draft, critiqued and signed by a classmate, along with your final draft. Staple the entire lot together. Put your final draft on TOP and staple everything else underneath. I'm not being finicky here; there's simply no other way to keep one person's paper all in one place, and to keep me from reading and evaluating a draft as if it were the final paper.
2. Papers are due in class on Wednesday, April 23.
3. Papers should be five to seven, double-spaced, typed.

ON CITING SOURCES

Make sure you do it. If you pass off someone else's ideas as your own, you have plagiarized-whether you do so intentionally or by accident. That is true whether you quote directly, or paraphrase someone else's ideas. That includes ideas in books, exchanged in conversation, or on the web. IT INCLUDES OUR CLASS READINGS AS WELL. (Don't have all the information? Use your research skills to find it. If you fail, include the information that you have; an incomplete cite is far better than no cite at all.) Please consult a style manual, me, Bethany, Angela, the Writing Center, or someone if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism in your written work. (I have a handy sourcebook called Writing With Sources that I'd be happy to show you.) Consult the syllabus for my policy on plagiarism.

Draft Evaluation

Use your own paper for this: there isn't really room on the form to answer these questions

Author's Name:

Critic's Name:

3. Critic: Be specific. Give the author concrete suggestions
4. Author: Hand in this critique, along with your first draft, when you hand in your final paper. PAPERS UNACCOMPANIED BY CRITIQUED DRAFTS ARE NOT COMPLETE.

What were the strongest aspects of this paper?

State the thesis of the paper. (Make sure you can clearly identify a thesis in the paper, and

that the thesis addresses the assignment directly.)

Is the thesis clear? How could it be improved?

How does the author support their thesis? Distinguish between:

- a) Facts, observations, examples; and
- b) Theoretical claims from other authors

How well does this support the thesis? How could the support be made stronger?

Does the author accurately represent the theories they use? How could it be better?

How might the organization of the paper be changed to make it a more understandable and convincing paper?

Is the paper clear for someone in the intended audience? (Refer to assignment, to find out who audience is.) How might it be clearer?

Additional suggestions or comments:

Racism and Sexism Formal Paper Assignment 3

Length: 5-7 pp.

Draft workshop: ON YOUR OWN

Due date: May 24, by 5 p.m. in Lisa's office (be sure to include your critiqued draft)

Topic: An analysis of your organization's definition of oppression, using theories from class

The assignment:

- In this paper, you attempt to persuade the social organization on which you focused your first paper to adopt certain strategies of resistance.
- You argue that certain theoretical approaches to resistance best suit the organization, given its mission, its understanding of oppression, and its projects. Consider yourself the helpful salesperson at the outdoor store, counseling the customer to choose the pack and contents best suited to that person.
- You must advocate for at least two different approaches to resistance.
- You must explain how the strategies you propose fit together, and why these make for a

good combination for this organization.

Audience:

You will write for representatives of the organization. Some observations:

- While a representative of the organization should know its mission and projects, you do still need to draw the connections between the mission/projects and the strategies you advocate. This will help with the plausibility and persuasiveness of your recommendations.
- Identify a particular person, or a particular set of persons, or a particular layer of the organizational structure, and target your paper specifically to them. (Don't write generically to "members of NOW," for instance. Really think about who you want to address-who you think you can write to effectively)
- Think about who YOU are, as well as who your audience is. Who in the organization would it be most appropriate for YOU to address? What sort of tone/style would you adopt with such a person? (For instance, how will the tone of your paper differ, depending upon whether you are writing as a white ally to the president of the NAACP, as opposed to if you are writing as a Latina who is a member of the campus Women's Center, writing to other members of the Women's Center?)

Rationale and criteria for evaluation:

- Accurate explication of theories and strategic approaches to resistance
- Connection between concrete projects/mission of the organization, and theories of resistance you choose
- Persuasiveness of argument
- Clarity
- Sound structure and organization
- Grammar

Draft Evaluation Form-Third Paper

Author's Name:

Critic's Name:

5. Critic: Be specific. Give the author concrete suggestions

6. Author: Hand in this critique, along with your first draft, when you hand in your final paper. PAPERS UNACCOMPANIED BY CRITIQUED DRAFTS ARE NOT COMPLETE.

State the thesis of the paper. (It should address the question "what strategies of resistance are most useful for the organization given its mission, definition of oppression, and projects?")

What information about the organization does the author use to support their thesis?

How well does this information support the thesis? How could it be made stronger?

Does the author accurately represent the theories? How could it be better?

Are the arguments for the adoption of particular strategies compelling? If not, what would help to make the case?

What were the strongest aspects of this paper?

How might the organization of the paper be changed to make it a more understandable and convincing paper?

Is the paper clear for someone in the intended audience? (Remember who audience is.)
How might it be clearer?

Additional suggestions or comments: