

Political Science 363
Oregon State University
Spring 2007
Mon. & Wed., 9-10:50
107 STAG Hall

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Gender and Race in American Political Thought

This course addresses how issues of race and gender intersect with each other and with the American political ideals of justice and democracy. The focus is on how these issues manifested themselves in recent American history, from the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, through the women's movement, to recent philosophical reflections. Among the questions to be discussed are the following: In what ways did the civil rights movement, the black power movement, and the women's movement appeal to, and to what extent did they challenge, traditional American political ideals? Do issues of race and gender raise fundamentally new questions for political theory? Do our political principles and institutions have to be altered in light of the inclusion of historically excluded groups? Has American society lived up to its ethical obligations to its minorities and women, or does more remain to be done? The course satisfies the upper-division political theory requirement for political science majors and the DPD Bacc Core requirement for all OSU undergrads.

The aims of the course are essentially two. First, the student should become familiar with the material covered in the course. S/He should be able to discuss the material, both verbally and in writing, in an informed way. Second, the course will also emphasize the development of skills in critical reading, thinking, and effective communication. These are skills that are essential to liberal arts education, and will be essential to the student's future success, whatever their chosen profession or field.

Requirements:

There will be three short papers and a final exam. In addition, some in-class writing assignments or group projects may be assigned. The papers will be short (about 1000 words) and will require no research beyond the assigned reading for class. Paper assignments will be distributed at least a week before each paper is due. Papers should be submitted in the political science department office, 307 Gilkey Hall, by 4pm on the dates indicated on the schedule, below. Late papers will not be accepted. The final exam will consist of essay questions that ask you to demonstrate your understanding of the material in the course. Each paper is worth 25% of your final grade, as is the final exam. In-class writing and other minor assignments will be included in the exam portion of the grade. Participation in class discussion may improve your grade.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is an extremely serious matter. Students are expected to properly cite any sources used in writing their papers (including internet sources), and to work alone and without notes on the examination. Violations of academic honesty will result in failing the course, and will be reported to the proper university authorities for further action.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom:

During class students are expected to turn off and put away all electronic devices including cellphones, ipods, pagers, etc. Use of computers is permitted for note-taking only, not for emailing, surfing the web, instant messaging, etc.

Readings:

The following books are required for the course, and are available at the OSU bookstore:

The Strange Career of Jim Crow, by C. Vann Woodward. Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1955] 2002.

Why We Can't Wait, by Martin Luther King, Jr. New York: Pegnuin, [1964] 2000.

Black Power: The Politics of Liberation, by Charles V. Hamilton and Kwame Ture. New York: Vintage, [1967] 1992.

Women, Race, and Class, by Angela Y. Davis. New York: Vintage, 1981.

Justice, Gender, and the Family, by Susan Moller Okin. New York: Basic Books, 1989.

Inclusion and Democracy, by Iris Marion Young. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Additional readings may be assigned.

Schedule:

This schedule is tentative, and subject to change. Changes will be announced in class, and it is the student's responsibility to keep abreast of any such changes. **[Note: There is a chance that the last three sessions will be rescheduled. These rescheduled meetings will probably be on three Fridays in May at 9am. For those who are not available at this time, the classes will be videotaped and made available on the web.]**

1. April 2: Course Introduction: What is gender? What is race?

I. Historical Background to Civil Rights

2. April 4: Slavery and Reconstruction. Read Woodward, chapters 1-2.

3. April 9: The Entrenchment of Jim Crow. Read Woodward, chapters 3-4.

4. April 11: The Beginning of the End. Read Woodward, chapters 5-6.

II. The Civil Rights Movement

5. April 16: Birmingham, 1963. Read King, chapters 1-3.

6. April 18: Means and Ends. Read King, chapters 4-6.

7. April 23: Looking Ahead. Read King, chapters 7-8.

April 24: First paper due.

III. The Black Power Movement

8. April 25: What is Black Power? Read Hamilton and Ture, chapters 1-2.

9. April 30: Black Power as Strategy. Read Hamilton and Ture, chapters 3-5.

10. May 2: The Search for New Forms. Read Hamilton and Ture, chapters 6-8.

IV. Black Feminist Thought

11. May 7: Black Critique of the Women's Movement. Read Davis, chapters 2-4.

12. May 9: Black Women's Perspectives. Read Davis, chapters 5-7.

13. May 14: Sex and Race. Read Davis, chapters 11-12.

May 15: Second paper due.

V. Feminist Justice

14. May 16: Justice and Gender. Read Okin, chapters 1-2.

15. May 21: Justice and the Family. Read Okin, chapters 5-6.

16. May 23: Can the Institution of Marriage be Just? Read Okin, chapters 7-8.

VI. Gender, Race, and Democracy

17. May 30: Inclusive Democracy and Justice. Read Young, Introduction and chapter 1.

18. June 4: Representation. Read Young, chapter 4.

19. June 6: Residential Segregation. Read Young, chapter 6.

June 8: Third paper due.

Final Exam: Thursday, June 14, 9:30-11:30.