GSWS 822-5: Feminist Theory from Beauvoir to Butler
An Intellectual History of Postwar Feminist Theory (1960s-1980s)

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Office hours: TBA
Lecture: Wednesdays 9:30 – 13:20; AQ 5019

Course Description:

Often referred to as the period of ‘second wave feminism’ in North America, the era between the late 1950s and the early 1980s produced 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.

Focusing closely on the theoretical innovations from this particular period of time, we explore the wide theoretical terrain of (mainly) North American feminist theory, placing these theoretical developments within a rich historical context. We will examine the relationship of feminism to the New Left, particularly the civil rights and student movements of the 1960s and 1970s; identify ongoing conflicts and internal debates within feminist theory; discuss the changing relationship between theory and activism; explore the intersection of theories about gender oppression with oppressions of race, disability, and sexuality.

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

Course Texts and Courseware:

Books on Order (some will also be on library reserve):
- Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique
- Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex
- Shulamith Firestone, Dialectic of Sex
- Audre Lorde, Sister, Outsider: Essays and Speeches
- Susan Wendell, The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability
- Judith Butler, Undoing Gender (also available as an e-book at the SFU library)

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

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

Course Evaluation and Assignments:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay Proposal / Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>20% (due midterm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>40% (due the last week of class)</td>
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