
FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY

PH 8112
RYERSON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
FRIDAY 3-6 PM
JOR 440
WINTER 2012

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

From the Calendar: This course involves a close study of one or more philosophical topics in historical and/or contemporary feminist thought. Examples include: the nature and origins of gendered identity; feminist approaches to ethics; feminist epistemology; feminist perspectives on motherhood, sexuality, the body, and reproductive technology; critical approaches to gender-based oppression.

For this Course: We will look at feminist approaches to ethics. We begin by examining some traditional approaches to ethics: social contract theory, utilitarianism and deontology. Despite their variety these approaches have some similarity in the way they conceive of the self, society and the moral domain. The way traditional moral theories frame ethical issues often leaves women and intimate relationships out of the moral purview. In response, some feminist philosophers developed *Care Ethics*, which attempts to focus on women's perspectives and modes of moral reasoning. Care ethics has been criticized for leaving the care-giver open to exploitation, for endangering her integrity, and for having a scope which is too narrow and leaves the care-giver oblivious to wider concerns of social justice. For the remainder of the course we look at two attempts to address these criticisms: Joan Tronto's political account of care and Margaret Urban Walker's ethics of responsibility.

COURSE TEXTS

Joan Tronto (1993). *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*. New York: Routledge.

Margaret Urban Walker (2007). *Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics*. Second Edition.
Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Various readings available on the Blackboard website.

EVALUATION

Participation in class discussions		10%
Presentation		10%
Reflection on Tronto talk	(Talk: March 13, Reflection Due March 23)	15%
Critical Comments	(Best 5)	25%
Term Paper	(Due: April 20)	40%

GRADING SCALE:

Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	F
/100	100-90	89-85	84-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	0-69

For more information see: http://www.ryerson.ca/facultysupport/grading/GS_gradinginfo/index.html

POSTING GRADES AND RETURNING ASSIGNMENTS

All grades for will be posted on the course Blackboard site.

The final grades will *only* be posted on RAMSS (final grades will *not* be posted on Blackboard).

EXPLANATION OF EVALUATION

PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS

The participation grade will be evaluated based on the student's thoughtful participation in class discussions. Students are expected to read the assigned papers and texts before coming to class. Students should bring the readings to class (either in paper or electronic form), and be prepared to discuss the material covered.

If students have anxiety about speaking during class discussions, they should come and see me or send me an email as early as possible at the beginning of the term. I am willing to make alternative arrangements so that students can participate in class even if they are not comfortable speaking in groups.

PRESENTATION

Each student is required to give a thirty (30) minute presentation based on the readings for the week. The presentation should briefly introduce one or two important themes from the week's readings and engage the class in discussion about these issues or questions. The main goal of the presentation is to stimulate class discussion, and will be graded based on the effectiveness at promoting engaged discussion. To facilitate class discussion students are not permitted to read their presentation.

REFLECTION ON TRONTO'S TALK (Talk: March 13, Reflection Due: March 23)

Students are required to attend Joan Tronto's talk on March 13th 2012, as part of the Ryerson Philosophy Department's speaker series. You should then write a 5 page reflection on the content of Tronto's talk. The reflection should be a short discussion or critique of some of the points made during Tronto's talk. If you ask a question during the talk, the question can form the basis of the reflection.

CRITICAL COMMENTS

Short critical comments (1-2 pages) due in-class or by email on the day of class. Critical comments should be a short discussion, or critique of some interesting, important, or contentious point or argument in the week's readings. Do not summarize the text, instead engage with the text. For example, you might look at one concept and examine it critically to determine whether it is workable. You can also criticize just one part of the text. If you like a theorist's position or discussion, perhaps try to apply it to a concrete example. The writing is not intended to be formal (like a paper), instead a conversation between you and the theorist, try to imagine what the theorist might say back to your criticism. The point of the comment is to encourage you to engage critically with the readings and to come well-prepared for class discussion.

You are welcome to write as many of these as you please. The best 5 comments will count toward this grade, 5% each (total 25%).

TERM PAPER (Due: April 20th, 2012)

The term paper should critically engage with the material studied during the term. The papers will be evaluated in terms of demonstrated understanding of key course material, quality of argument, sensitivity to alternative views, original thought (i.e. independent thinking, not just quotes or paraphrases of others), and quality of expression (spelling, word usage, grammar, etc.). You are not required to do additional research, although additional research is permitted.

The term paper should be about 15 typed, double-spaced pages.

If I suspect plagiarism, I might use turnitin.com, and I reserve the right to conduct an oral examination on the topic of the assignment.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to be familiar with the policies on plagiarism and academic integrity referenced at: <http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity/Undergraduate/plagiarism/> According to Ryerson University's Academic Code of Conduct, "plagiarism means *claiming the words, ideas, artistry, drawings, images or data of another person as if they were your own.*" Students are reminded that failure to properly reference sources, including the class texts and lectures, is considered academic misconduct and will result in serious penalties ranging from a mark of '0' on the assignment to expulsion from the university.

Ignorance of these policies is no excuse for violations. If you are unsure about how to avoid plagiarism please consult the academic integrity website or ask me during my office hours. The Writing Centre is also able to assist with questions related to referencing sources for your papers.

USE OF ELECTRONICS AND RECORDING DEVICES IN CLASS

You are welcome to record the class in any way that is useful to you (e.g. video, audio, written or typed notes). You **may not share** digital or analog recordings (video, audio, or other recordings) with other students (e.g. watching or listening to recordings together), on the web (e.g. Youtube, facebook, by e-mail, etc.) or in any other way (e.g. sharing mp3 or mp4 files on memory sticks, etc.). You are welcome to share your written notes or electronic copies of your written notes with other students (e.g. if they missed the class). You may cite class information if you give proper attribution.

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

LATE ASSIGNMENTS OR TERM PAPERS

Unless students can provide evidence of a medical reason, conflict with religious observance, or evidence that there are compassionate grounds for an extension, late papers will be penalized at the rate of one 10% per day including weekends. Students requiring an extension must request it at least 3 days in advance of the due date, unless it is impossible to do so. It is not necessary to provide documentation at the time the request is made, but documentation must be provided before a grade can be assessed.

Ryerson's policy concerning alternative arrangements for medical and compassionate reasons may be found at <http://ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol134.pdf>

The Ryerson Medical Certificate may be found at <http://ryerson.ca/senate/forms/medical.pdf>

QUESTIONS ABOUT GRADES AND APPEALS

It is important that you understand why you receive the grades you do in this class, since that understanding is the foundation for future improvement. In order to understand the grades that you receive, you should read the comments provided. The comments are intended to explain areas of strength and areas that could be improved on future assignments.

According to Ryerson University policy, students who are concerned about a grade and might want to request regarding must contact the instructor within **ten (10) working days** from when the graded work is returned, even if the student picks up the work late. Please send me an email as soon as possible to let me know of your concern.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Ryerson is a community which celebrates diversity and places a high value on inclusion and respect for differences. As part of respecting differences, I am willing to make accommodations for students who might otherwise be disadvantaged if arrangements were not made.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment. This responsibility is *shared* by the students, the instructor and the Access Centre (among others).

Students who require alternate format materials, academic accommodations for classroom participation or the writing of tests, quizzes and exams should make their request to the Access Centre.

If there is anything that I can do to accommodate your disability in the classroom (unrelated to evaluations, which are already covered by the Access Centre), I welcome any suggestions that you might have. I also welcome any feedback about the accessibility of this class. It helps me to improve my teaching when I hear from students about what I can do better. There might be situations in which I have not adequately considered accessibility; student feedback will help me to better plan for accessibility in the future. You are invited to provide feedback to me via email, in writing, in person during my office hours or by telephone during my office hours. If there is another way that you would like to provide feedback, please let me know. If you would like to provide anonymous feedback, please contact the Access Centre and have one of their members relay the information to me.

Access Centre Website: www.ryerson.ca/student-services/accesscentre/

Access Centre Locations: Front Desk: POD 62B Text/Exam Centre: VIC B21

Access Centre Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Access Centre Phone: 416-979-5290

Access Centre Fax: 416-979-5094

Access Centre TDD/TTY: 416-979-5274

Access Centre Email: accessfrontdesk@ryerson.ca

ACCOMMODATIONS OF STUDENT RELIGIOUS, ABORIGINAL AND SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCE

Requests for accommodation of specific religious or spiritual observance must be presented to the professor no later than two (2) weeks prior to the conflict in question (in the case of final examinations within two (2) weeks of the release of the examination schedule). In extenuating circumstances this deadline may be extended. If the dates are not known well in advance because they are linked to other conditions, requests should be submitted as soon as possible in advance of the required observance.

Given that timely requests will prevent difficulties with arranging constructive accommodations, students are strongly encouraged to notify the professor of an observance accommodation issue within the first two (2) weeks of classes. Formal requests for accommodation can be made using the

Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance form, which may be found at <http://ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf>

For more information see the Student Guide

<http://www.ryerson.ca/studentguide/AcademicMatters3.html> or the Senate Policy

<http://ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf>

OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require accommodation for reasons other than disability, religious or spiritual observance you should come see me as soon as possible at the beginning of the year. I do not guarantee that I will accommodate an accessibility request (unless covered in the two previous sections), but if I decide to accommodate a student in any way I will announce the general outline of the accommodation to the class so that all students can have an opportunity to access the change. In this way I hope to ensure both flexibility and fairness so that all students are able to access the course and meet its requirements, though no student is disadvantaged by accommodations offered to others.

EMAIL POLICY

Note: As per the Ryerson University policy, I will only respond to emails that come from an @ryerson.ca account. I will not open, read or respond to emails from any other account (e.g. @gmail.com, @yahoo.com, @hotmail.com, etc.). I will try to respond to emails within 48 hours, but in general, I will not respond to emails on weekends. No questions about the content of the course will be answered by email. Students should use the Blackboard discussion forum if there are any questions about course content.

OFFICE HOURS

My office hours will be held on Mondays from 2 pm – 4 pm. I encourage you to come and talk to me during office hours. I am always happy to talk with students about this course or philosophy in general. If you have questions about the course content I will be happy to discuss them at this time. If you are unable to make it to my office during the scheduled times, please contact me so that we can set up an appointment.

READING SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	January 13	Introduction: What is Feminist theory? Is moral theory gendered? Part 1: Are women invisible? Are women morally defective?	Selections from: Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel Nietzsche (on Black Board). 44 pgs.
2	January 20	Is moral theory gendered? Part 2: "Women's Morality" and Care Ethics	Carol Gilligan "In a Different Voice" 36 pgs. Nel Noddings <i>Caring</i> 24 pgs. Sara Ruddick <i>Maternal Thinking</i> 15 pgs.
3	January 27	Critics of Care Ethics and Care Ethics as Political	Claudia Card "Caring and Evil" 6 pgs. Sarah Hoagland "Some Concerns about Nel Noddings' 'Caring'" 5 pgs. Michele Moody-Adams "Gender and the Complexity of Moral Voices" 11 pgs. Uma Narayan "Colonialism and Its Others" 7 pgs. Levin "Is There a Female Morality?" 16 pgs Joan Tronto <i>Moral Boundaries</i> Part 1 Introduction 21 pgs.
4	February 3	Care Ethics as Political	Joan Tronto <i>Moral Boundaries</i> Part 2 Against Women's Morality Chapter 2, 36 pgs.
5	February 10		Joan Tronto <i>Moral Boundaries</i> Part 2 Against Women's Morality Chapter 3, 40 pgs.
6	February 17		Joan Tronto <i>Moral Boundaries</i> Part 3 An Ethic of Care Chapter 4, 26 pgs.
7	February 24	Study Week	
8	March 2	Ethics of Responsibility	Joan Tronto <i>Moral Boundaries</i> Part 3 An Ethic of Care Chapter 5, 30 pgs & Chapter 6, 24 pgs
9	March 9		Joan Tronto <i>Moral Boundaries</i> Part 3 An Ethic of Care Chapter 6, 24 pgs <i>Care and Democracy</i> Chapters 6 & 7
10	March 13 (Tuesday)	Joan Tronto Speaker Series	
	March 16	Ethics of Responsibility	Margaret Urban Walker <i>Moral Understandings</i> Part 2: Clearer Views Chapter 3, 28 pgs.
11	March 23	Reflection on Tronto Talk DUE	Margaret Urban Walker <i>Moral Understandings</i> Part 2: Clearer Views Chapter 4, 26 pgs.
12	March 30	Future Directions for Care Ethics	Margaret Urban Walker <i>Moral Understandings</i> Part 3: Chapters 7 & 8, 50 pgs.
13	April 6	Good Friday (University Closed)	

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR COURSE READINGS

WEEK 01: IS MORAL THEORY GENDERED? PART 1: ARE WOMEN INVISIBLE? ARE WOMEN MORALLY DEFECTIVE?

Aristotle (2007, orig. 350 BCE). "Book IX, 1." *The History of Animals*. eBooks@Adelaide
<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/history>

Aristotle, (2000, orig. 350 BCE). *Politics*. Benjamin Jowett trans. John Berseth ed. Toronto: Dover Thrift Editions.

St. Thomas Aquinas (2006, orig. 1273). *Summa Theologica*. Raleigh: Hayes Barton Press.

Thomas Hobbes (1983, orig. 1642). *De Cive*. Howard Warrender ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (2004, orig. 1762). "Book V: Sophy, or Woman" *Emile: or, On Education*. The Project Gutenberg eBook edition. <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/5427>

Immanuel Kant (2011, orig. 1764). "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime: Third Section," *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime and Other Writings*. Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer, eds. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Immanuel Kant (1996, orig. 1797). "The Doctrine of Right," *The Metaphysics of Morals*. Mary Gregor, trans. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Georg H. W. Hegel (2008, orig. 1821). "Marriage," *Philosophy of Right*. S.W. Dyde, trans. New York: Cosimo.

Friedrich Nietzsche (2006, orig 1885). "On the Friend," and "On Little Women Old and Young," *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Adrian Del Caro and Robert Pippin, eds. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Friedrich Nietzsche (2000, orig. 1886). "Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future," *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Peter Gay, ed. Random House.

RECOMMENDED

Lawrence H. Summers (2005). "Remarks at NBER Conference on Diversifying the Science & Engineering Workforce" http://www.harvard.edu/president/speeches/summers_2005/nber.php

WEEK 02: IS MORAL THEORY GENDERED? PART 2: "WOMEN'S MORALITY" AND CARE ETHICS

Nel Noddings (1984). "Chapter 4: An Ethics of Caring," *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sara Ruddick (1995, orig. 1989). "Chapter 1: Maternal Thinking," *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. Boston: Beacon Press.

RECOMMENDED

Carol Gilligan (1977). "In a Different Voice: Women's Conceptions of Self and Morality," *Harvard Educational Review*. 47(4): 481-517.

Carol Gilligan (1993, Orig. 1982). "Chapter 2: Images of Relationship," *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 26, 28, 32-37 (cases)

Nel Noddings (1984). "Introduction," *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sara Ruddick (1995, orig. 1989). "Introduction: Love's Reason," *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. Boston: Beacon Press.

WEEK 03: CRITICS OF CARE ETHICS

Claudia Card (1990). "Caring and Evil" *Hypatia*. 5(1): 101-108.

Sarah Lucia Hoagland (1990). "Some Concerns about Nel Noddings' 'Caring'" *Hypatia*. 5(1): 109-114.

Uma Narayan (1995). "Colonialism and Its Others: Considerations on Rights and Care Discourses," *Hypatia*. 10(2): 133-140.

RECOMMENDED

Michele Moody-Adams (1997, orig. 1991) "Gender and the Complexity of Moral Voices" in *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*. Diana Tietjens Meyers, ed. New York: Routledge.

Michael Levin (2002). "Is There a Female Morality?" in *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Fourth Edition. Louis Pojman, ed. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Susan Sherwin (1992) "Ethics, 'Feminine' Ethics and Feminist Ethics" in *No Longer Patient: Feminist Ethics and Health Care*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

WEEK 04-9: CARE ETHICS AS POLITICAL

Joan Tronto (1993). *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*. New York: Routledge.

WEEK 10-12: ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Margaret Urban Walker (2007). *Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics*. Second Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

WEEK 12: FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR CARE ETHICS

ETHICS OF RELATIONSHIPS

Margaret Olivia Little (1999). "Abortion, Intimacy and the Duty to Gestate," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*. Vol. 2 No. : pg. 295-312.

CARE ECONOMICS

David Graeber (2006). "Turning Production Inside Out: Or, Why Capitalism is a Transformation of Slavery," *Critique of Anthropology*. 26(1): 61-85.

Marilyn Waring (1995) "Who's Counting?" directed by Terre Nash, National Film Board of Canada
http://www.nfb.ca/film/whos_counting