Feminist Studies 250AF
Feminist Theory: Marxism and Feminism

Eileen Boris
4703 South Hall
eboris@ucsb.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:00 am—12:00 pm
and by appointment

Winter 2020
Feminist Studies Conference Room
Wednesdays, 4-6:50 p.m.

Course Description
What are the affects of class and where does intimate labor fit into Marxist notions of use and exchange value? Is commodification and decommodification gendered? How does an intersectional perspective illuminate such processes as the wage? What is the sex of class and the class of pleasure? This graduate seminar explores that which economist and feminist theorist Heidi Hartmann called “the unhappy marriage of Marxism and Feminism” by considering key texts in the historical construction of the woman question, the traffic in women, double and triple oppression, the domestic labor debate, the political economy of women’s liberation, alternative household economy, commodity fetishism, reproductive labor, the dialectic of sex, and queering class. Including classic Marxist and other radical writings from the 19th century through WWII, it also turns to more recent works of socialist feminism, materialist feminism, and queer theory, taking account of intersectionality, settler colonialism, racial capitalism, and anti-imperialism. It explores how the Marxist tradition considered gender, sexuality, the home, the family, women, and reproductive labor in relation to race and sexualities.

Course Requirements
I expect students to take an active role in the class. To facilitate discussion, some of you will take charge each week. This is essentially a reading colloquium. For your week, in advance, you may select complementary readings, especially from “authorities” cited or discussed by the texts under consideration. In this way, we will further probe feminist appropriations and commentary as well as to make sense of original writings. For those of you who would like a primer or refresher on Marxist terms, I have a url on Garuchospace under Instructor Assignments

• Reaction Journal
You are expected to record queries, comments, critiques, and other observations to the weekly readings in an informal reaction journal. Here is a place for you to think out loud, make connections between the readings and between what you are coming into contact with in this class and other classes, between your own discipline and others, between the work of other scholars and your own. These can be handwritten and need not be more than a page or
two, but can be longer if you wish (within reason!) The journals serve two purposes: the first, they help you order thoughts for class; the second, they provide a record for your future reference. I will collect these weekly. I will record done, comment where appropriate but not grade.

- Paper of your own choice
  Think of this as an opportunity for you to pull together what you’ve thought about over the course of the quarter. It will serve as your own capstone to the course and as a reflection on your own work in terms of our discussions and readings. This will be around 10 pages.

- Self-Evaluation
  This is a space to assess your own efforts over the quarter. 2-3 pages due at the end of the quarter.

Instead of class on January 22 the class will attend the Hull Lecture featuring Susan Stryker. We will have to reconfigure our schedule but this lecture is not to be missed!

**Grading Policy**
My role is to help you get what you need out of this class. I expect everyone to do well. The self-evaluation will help me determine your grade. The journals are a participation measure. The paper is the product of your labor.

**Books for Purchase** The following books need to be purchased or found. Articles and some other readings are available on Gauchospace.


**Agenda** (Subject to Modification and Class Interests)

**January 8: Introductions: Unhappy Marriages and Alienated Labors**

On Gauchospace:
-Marx, “Estranged Labor,” from *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*
-Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism,” *Capital & Class* 1979 3: 1-33 [this is original article version]
-Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement”
Gimenez, “Capitalism and the Oppression of Women: Marx Revisited”
“Women’s Unpaid Labor in Political Economy Revisited”

January 15: Capital, Value, and Commodification

On Gaucho’s pace
Marx, in *Selected Works of Karl Marx*  
*Grundisse* (1857), Selections
Introduction (1857) ........................................................................................................ 74  
(1) Production .................................................................................................................. 74  
(2) The General Relation of Production to Distribution, Exchange, Consumption .......... 76  
(3) The Method of Political Economy.............................................................................. 82  
(4) Production. Means of Production and Relations of Production. .................................. 86

Chapter 1 ..................................................................................................................... 115  
§1 The Two Factors of a Commodity: Use-Value and Value .............................................. 115  
§2 Two-Fold Character of Labour Embodied in Commodities .......................................... 118  
§3 The Form of Value ....................................................................................................... 120  
§4 The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret thereof .................................................... 121

Grace Kyungwon Hong, “Existentially Surplus: Women of Color Feminism and the New  
Crises of Capitalism,” *GLQ* 18:1 (2011), 87-106
Leopoldina Fortunati, *Arcane of Reproduction* (first half)

Recommended:
Tithi Bhattacharya, *Social Reproduction Theory*, Chapters 1-4

January 22: Intimacies, Racial Capitalism, and Settler Colonialism

Lowe

All on Gauchospace:
Jodi A. Byrd, Alyosha Goldstein, Jodi Melamed, and Chandan Reddy, “Predatory Value:  
Economies of Dispossession and Disturbed Relationalities,” *Social Text*, 135,  
Vol.36, June 2018: 1-18 (0360001)
Jodi Kim, “Settler Modernity, Debt Imperialism, and the Necropolitics of the Promise,”  
*Social Text*, 135, Vol.36, June 2018: 41-61 (0360041)

Recommended:
Anne-Maria Makhulu, “A Brief History of the Social Wage: Welfare before and after  
Racial Fordism,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 115:1, January 2016, 113-124
Alyosha Goldstein, “The Ground Not Given: Colonial Dispositions of Land,  

January 29: The Great Transition

All on Gauchospace
Karl Marx, “Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations”

Recommended:
Cecilia Rio, “‘On the Move’: African American Women’s Paid Domestic Labor and the Class Transition to Independent Commodity Production,” *Rethinking Marxism* 17 (2005), 489-510
Silvia Federici, “Women, Reproduction, and the Commons,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 118:4 October 2019, 711-724 (1180711SF)

**February 5: Out of the Family**

All on Gauchoospace:
Frederich Engels, *The Origins of Private Property, the Family, and the State*, selections
Marx, *Capital*, chapter 15

Historical
Emma Goldman, “The Traffic in Women,” 1910
Alexandra Kollontai, “Theses on Communist Morality in the Sphere of Class Struggle,” 1921; “Sexual Relations and the Class Struggle,” 1921
Mary Inman, *In Women’s Defense* (1940), selections
Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women” in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, 157-210

Recommended

**February 12: The Domestic Labor Debate**

On Gauchoospace:
Beth Capper and Arlen Austin, “‘Wages for housework means wages against heterosexuality’: On the Archives of Black Women for Wages for Housework and Wages Due Lesbians,” *GLQ*, 24:4, October 2018, 445-466
Angela Davis, “Reflections on the Black Women’s Role in the Community of Slaves,” *Massachusetts Review*, 13, No. 1/2, (Winter - Spring, 1972), 81-100
Marlene Dixon, “Wages for Housework and Strategies of Revolutionary Fantasy,” 1977

Leopoldina Fortunati, *Arcane of Reproduction* (read second half)

Recommended On Gauchospace:
Lise Vogel, “Domestic Labor Revisited”

**February 19: Queering Marxism**

On Gauchospace
Meredith Beloso, “Sex, Work, and the Feminist Erasure of Class,” *Signs* 38 (September 2012), 47-70
Nat Rahna, “Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 116:3 July 2017, 632-646
Bhattacharya, chapter 9

Recommended: Debate between Nancy Fraser and Judith Butler

**February 26: Creative Labor and Knowledge Workers**

La Berge

On Gauchospace:

**March 4: Globalization and Biocapital**
Vora

On Gaucho Space:
Selma James, “The Global Kitchen,” from Sex, Race and Class (PM 2012), 161-73

March 11: Beyond Work. Feminist Futures
Kathi Weeks, The Problem with Work (Duke, 2011)