1. Course Aims and Objectives

This course will introduce and examine a range of topics at the intersection of epistemology and political/social/feminist philosophy, examining our actual epistemic practices in light of the relations of power and subordination that exist between differently placed groups in society, and looking at different proposals for how this should shape our theorizing about knowledge and ignorance. Topics covered will include standpoint theory in feminist epistemology, alternative standards for assessing claims to knowledge (such as those offered by Collins’s black feminist epistemology), different varieties of epistemic injustice (including but not limited to the two varieties discussed in influential work by Miranda Fricker: testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice), the epistemology of ignorance, the epistemological significance of pride movements, epistemic objectification, ideology, and propaganda.

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

This course will allow students to demonstrate core skills in philosophy, including interpreting and critically engaging with philosophical texts, evaluating arguments and theories, and developing one's own ideas in response to the issues discussed. Students will gain knowledge of some principal theories within analytic feminist epistemology, as well as the main accounts of phenomena such as epistemic injustice and active ignorance, and will be able to write short, clear papers on the topics covered in the class, manifesting the core philosophical skills listed above.

3. Course Content

There is no required text for the course – we will be reading most of Miranda Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice* and so you may find it convenient to own your own copy of that, but it's not necessary that you do so since an electronic version of the entire book is available through the library.

1. Introduction: 'Malestream' Epistemology

*Background*

Roxane Gay, 2012, 'Peculiar Benefits', *The Rumpus*. Available at: [http://therumpus.net/2012/05/peculiar-benefits/](http://therumpus.net/2012/05/peculiar-benefits/)

*Primary Reading*

University Press, 267-88, especially sections 1 and 2. Available online through the university library.

**Advanced Readings**


**2. Standpoint Epistemology**

*Background*

*Hypatia Author Interviews*, interview with Sandra Harding, ‘On Standpoint Theory’s History and Controversial Reception’. Available at: [https://youtu.be/xOAMc12Pqml](https://youtu.be/xOAMc12Pqml)

*Primary Reading*


Kristen Intemann, 2010, ‘25 Years of Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?’, *Hypatia* 25, 778-96. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/1914570/25_Years_of_Feminist_Empiricism_and_Standpoint_Theory_Where_Are_We_Now](https://www.academia.edu/1914570/25_Years_of_Feminist_Empiricism_and_Standpoint_Theory_Where_Are_We_Now)

*Advanced Readings*

Patricia Hill Collins, 1986, ‘Learning From the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought’, *Social Problems* 33, 14-32. Available at: [http://users.clas.ufl.edu/marilynm/Theorizing_Black_America_Syllabuses_files/Learning_from_the_Outsider_Within.pdf](http://users.clas.ufl.edu/marilynm/Theorizing_Black_America_Syllabuses_files/Learning_from_the_Outsider_Within.pdf)


3. Black Feminist Epistemology

Background


Primary Reading


Advanced Readings

A number of the things we'll read later on the course will build on Collins's work, particularly the papers by Kristie Dotson.

4. Active Ignorance

Background


Kevin McKenna, 2015, 'We Scots must face up to our slave trading past', *The Guardian*. Available at: [https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/22/scots-must-face-up--to-slave-trading-past](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/22/scots-must-face-up--to-slave-trading-past)

Primary Readings


(If you only have time to read one thing, go for the Mills.)

Advanced Readings

5. Testimonial Injustice and Epistemic Violence

Background


**Primary Reading**


**Advanced Reading**


6. Hermeneutical Injustice

Background

*Hypatia Author Interviews*, interview with Gaile Pohlhaus, Jr., ‘Feminist Epistemology and Willful Hermeneutical Ignorance’. Available at: [https://youtu.be/QRosT01dpsQ?list=PL_Z9mt0HJeskJVuqIrZCnSzkWOSaxNtx](https://youtu.be/QRosT01dpsQ?list=PL_Z9mt0HJeskJVuqIrZCnSzkWOSaxNtx)

**Primary Reading**


(If you only have time to read one, make it the Fricker chapter.)

**Advanced Reading**


### 7. Disability Pride

**Background**

*What is it Like to be a Philosopher*, interview with Elizabeth Barnes, available here: [http://www.whatisitliketobeaphilosopher.com/elizabeth-barnes/](http://www.whatisitliketobeaphilosopher.com/elizabeth-barnes/)

**Primary Readings**

Elizabeth Barnes, 2016, *The Minority Body*, chapters 4 and 6. Available online through University library. (If you only have time to read one of these, focus on chapter 6. But chapter 4 is important too.)

**Advanced Readings**

(These aren’t commentaries on Barnes, but rather invitations to explore the topic of epistemic injustice from other angles.)


Havi Carel and Ian James Kidd, forthcoming, ‘Epistemic Injustice in Healthcare: a Philosophical Analysis’, *Medicine, Healthcare, and Philosophy*. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/6681815/Epistemic_Injustice_in_Healthcare_A_Philosophical_Analysis](https://www.academia.edu/6681815/Epistemic_Injustice_in_Healthcare_A_Philosophical_Analysis)

### 8. Testimonial Injustice and Epistemic Objectification

**Background**

None.

**Primary Readings**


**Advanced Readings**


José Medina, 2013, *The Epistemology of Resistance*, chapter 3 section 1 (repeated from weeks 5 and 6).

### 9. Epistemic Objectification

**Background**


**Primary Readings**

Rae Langton, ‘Feminism in Epistemology: Exclusion and Objectification’, section 3 (this is a repeat from week 1 – we’re focusing on the final section this time around).


**Advanced Readings**


### 10. Propaganda and Ideology

**Background**


**Primary Reading**


**Advanced Readings**

Amia Srinivasan, forthcoming, ‘Philosophy and Ideology’, *Theoria*. Available at: [http://users.ox.ac.uk/~corp1468/Research & Writing files/Stanley%20%E2%80%93%20Propaganda%20%28Theoria%29.pdf](http://users.ox.ac.uk/~corp1468/Research & Writing files/Stanley%20%E2%80%93%20Propaganda%20%28Theoria%29.pdf)


**11. Revision Week**