

Professor Stephanie Clare
Course time: T Th, 1:30 – 3:20 PM
Course location: RAI 109
Office hours: Thursdays, 12:15 – 1:15, and by appointment
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ENGL 555 A: Feminist Publics, a graduate course

“Feminist Publics” surveys contemporary public-facing work in feminist studies, broadly conceived, highlighting writing in multiple forms and modes including blogs, op-eds, monographs (including “auto-theory”), and essays. We attend especially to scholarship in the field that is explicitly interested in engaging beyond the academy walls, both in bringing scholarly work to non-academic publics *and* also in joining and building communities of thinkers that are not based in the academy. We look at public-facing platforms and public-facing initiatives and we consider what it means to produce literary and cultural criticism in “community.” The course has students practice public-facing communication. Our goal here is not only to write about feminism but to write feminist texts (broadly conceived).

While public-facing work is the focus of the course assignments, our readings and discussions circle around a central theme: care. I am interested in thinking about the complexities of care within the contexts of Covid-19, environmental devastation, and ongoing racialized dispossession. Who is deemed worthy of care? Who is required to provide it? How can academic and creative work be understood as practices of care?

“Care” has a long history in feminist thought: starting in the 1980s, white, mostly American-based feminist philosophers and psychologists brought attention to the forms of ethical reasoning embedded in the practice of care. This reasoning challenges masculinist concepts of justice, reason, and subjectivity. At the same time, other feminists, especially socialist feminists, made visible the centrality of undervalued and sometimes unpaid reproductive labor. But embedded in much of this theorization was an implicit, unspoken imaginary of the private sphere, motherhood, and the family and even the category “labor” itself, as white and heteronormative. In turn, BIPOC feminists have brought attention to the undervalued care work both at home and in the labor force, and scholars working at the intersections of disability, feminist, queer, critical race, and trans studies have argued that care can be (or is) a practice of anticolonial, antiracist, and trans radical politics. That said, “care” can also be mobilized for projects of protection, violence and control. It can become complicit with “desires for wholeness, conformity, and civility” and can “morph into forms of containment and exclusion.”¹

Three central learning objectives frame the course: (1) to have students understand and practice public-facing academic communication, experimenting with different voices; (2) to have students become familiar with central platforms and initiatives that support this work and to be able to think critically about these; (3) to have students think through the (feminist) politics of care.

¹ Vincent Duclos and Tomás Sánchez Criado, “Care in Trouble: Ecologies of Support from Below and Beyond,” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 34.2 (2019), 155.

Course materials:

- I suggest that you purchase Grace M. Cho's *Tastes Like War* and Anne Boyer's *The Undying*. You could also purchase Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America*, although the book is available online through the University's library.
- I have also placed hard copies of Cho, Boyer, and Nakano Glenn on hold at the library.
- All other readings are either on Canvas or online, but I could easily make the readings into a course pack for you, should you prefer. Let me know!

Weekly Schedule:

Part One: Introduction to the Public Humanities

Week 1: Introduction to the Public Humanities

March 29, brief course introduction

March 31, Introduction to the public humanities

Guiding questions:

- What are the public humanities?
- What publics do they create?
- What is (or can be) feminist about this?

Preparatory materials:

[NHA Humanities for All, "A Typology of the Publicly Engaged Humanities" \(please also review at least 5 sample projects that they gather\) \(online\)](#)

[Whiting Public Engagement Seed Grants](#) (please review at least 5 sample projects) (online)

[Devoney Looser, "The Hows and Whys of Public Humanities"](#) (Canvas)

Sarah Chihaya, Merve Emre, Katherin Hill, and Jill Richards, Introduction: Collective Criticism, *The Ferrante Letters* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020). (Canvas)

Suzanna Danuta Walters, "We Are all (Public) Feminists Now," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 45.3 (Summer 2020): 785-793. (Canvas)

Zero draft 1 due

Part Two: Reproductive Labor and Feminist Care Ethics

Week 2: Introduction to Care Work

April 5: Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010). Chapters 1 – 5. (University Library)

April 7: Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010). Chapters 6 – 7 (University Library)

Zero draft 2 due

Week 3: Feminist Care Ethics

April 12: Introduction to Care Ethics

Nel Noddings, “Care,” in *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics*, edited by Virginia Held (New York: Routledge: 1995).

Joan Tronto, “Care as a Basis for Radical Political Judgments,” *Hypatia* 10.2 (Spring 1885): 141-149.

Michelle Murphy, “Unsettling Care: Troubling Transnational Itineraries of Care in Feminist Health Practices,” *Social Studies of Science* 45.5 (October 2015): 717-737.

April 14: Community-Engaged Research

Jillian Hernandez, Introduction, *Aesthetics of Excess: The Art and Politics of Black and Latina Embodiment* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 1 – 28.

Check out: <https://womenwhorockcommunity.org/> and <https://content.lib.washington.edu/wwrweb/>

Please watch: “Women Who Rock Oral History Preview,” at <https://womenwhorockcommunity.org/>

Sonnet Retman and Michelle Habell-Pallan visit!

Zero draft 3 due

Part Three: Representing Care

Week 4: “Roma” dir. Alfonso Cuarón (2018)

April 19: Watch the film “Roma,” dir. Alfonso Cuarón (2018) [available at UW library and on Netflix]

April 21: Public-Facing Writing, news and op-eds

[*The National Domestic Workers Alliance, “From *The Help* to *Roma*: How the National Domestic Workers Alliance is Transforming Narratives in Pop Culture” \(2019\)*](#)

Ai-jen Poo, “How “Roma” Reveals the Complex Reality of Domestic Work,” *The Hollywood Reporter* (December 14, 2018).

Laurie Marhoefer visit, *The Conversation* and the Op-Ed Project

Zero draft 4 due

Week 5: Writing about Care (public-facing writing, continued, auto-theory/memoir)

April 26: Grace M. Cho, *Tastes Like War* (New York: The Feminist Press, 2021), p. 1-154; 268-279.

April 28: Anne Boyer, *The Undying* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), p. 2-87.

Michael Steinberg, “Finding the Inner Story in Memoirs and Personal Essays,” in *Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction* 5.1 (Spring 2003): 185-188.

Zero draft 5 due

Part Four: Radical Care

Week 6: Radical Care and Mutual Aid

May 3:

Hi’ilei Julia Kawehipuaakahaopulani Hobart and Tamara Kneese, “Radical Care: Survival Strategies for Uncertain Time,” *Social Text* 38.1 (March 2020): 1-16.

Dean Spade, “Solidarity Not Charity: Mutual Aid for Mobilization and Survival,” *Social Text* 38.1 (March 2020): 131 – 151.

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinta, *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice* (Vancouver: Arsenal Press, 2019), p. 32-68. (requested)

May 5: Blogs, Vlogs, and Podcasts

C.R. Grimmer visit, The Poetry Vlog

In preparation, please watch “2019 Youth #Poet Laureate Kara Jackson Explaining #blackfeminist Embodiment & Legacy.” Available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nyinai_DTng&list=PLsIc9vBng_A0fejHQ2XdyXR34O9GgzvPN

Zero draft 6 due

Week 7: Care, Neoliberalism, and Kin

May 10: Podcasts and websites

Visit! English Librarian, Elliot Stevens

In preparation, please do the following assignment:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdKuJHR37BYkx7agEdpq33MGAbbfa450XjxPdNb2ug9p8WVuw/viewform>

May 12:

Donna Haraway, “Making Kin: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene,” *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke University press, 2016), 99-103.

** please also read the extensive footnotes, on Canvas as “Haraway Notes”

Jennifer Nash, “Practicing Love: Black Feminism, Love-Politics, and Post-Intersectionality,” *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 11.2 (2013): 1-24).

Lizzie Ward, “Caring for Ourselves? Self-Care and Neoliberalism,” in *Ethics of Care*, edited by Marian Barnes, T. Brannelly, Lizzie Ward and N. Ward (Bristol: Policy Press, 2015) 42-56.

Zero draft 7 due

Part Five: Working on Your Project

May 17: Individual meetings

May 19: Individual meetings

May 24: Proposals due, in class presentations

May 26: Individual meetings

May 31: Individual meetings

June 2: Rough drafts due, in class peer review

June 9: Final portfolios due

Assignments:

a) **Seven zero drafts, 5% each (35% total)**

These assignments, due every week until we start working on project, are meant to get you writing and thinking. They are not about producing a polished text but rather about jotting down notes or thinking in prose. Overall, I want you to be thinking about the reading/viewing/listening of the week. What was interesting about it? What don't you understand? What do you think is great about the text? Is there something that bothers you about it? Is there something strange or surprising? Quite simply, what has the week's topic made you think? You might want to focus on one passage of a text in particular, or you might want to draw connections between one text and another text. There is no right or wrong here – as long as you are writing about the course material and/or thinking about what projects you might take on yourself. The simple goal is just to think in words, to **write freely**.

Behavioral psychologists claim that we can only concentrate on writing for about 25 minutes at a time. For this reason, I ask that you spend 25 minutes on each of these assignments. Turn off the Internet. Turn off your phone. Find a space where you will have no distractions. Set a timer for 25 minutes, and then, 25 minutes later, you will be done!

Generally, students write about 600 - 1000 words. If your text is shorter than this, please either put in more time, or write me an email so we can meet to talk about it.

These are due by the end of the day Friday of weeks 1 – 7, but you can complete it any time each week. If you need an extension, let me know, but I like the idea of having you write every week at one point.

If you complete the assignment, you will be given full points (5/5).

b) **Final Portfolio (65%)**

Students have the choice of several options:

- a) Write three short personal essays, memoir essays, op-eds or news articles (between 500-1500 words). Please write for a particular venue. In a brief note attached to each essay, explain your choice of venue.

- b) Write one longer essay (5,000-10,000 words), perhaps a memoir essay, though not necessarily. Again, please write for a particular venue or publication. In a brief note attached to the essay, please explain your choice of venue.
- c) Make a website, archive, online book, podcast, or video. If you pick this option, please include a statement (about 500 – 1000 words) about the project, how it went, why you did it, etc.
- d) Conduct a small-scale community-engaged project (this can be an exhibit, workshop, free course, etc). If you pick this option, please include a statement (about 500 – 1000 words) about the project, how it went, why you did it, etc.

Proposals are due May 24 (5%)

Rough drafts are due June 2 (10%)

Final projects are due June 9 (50%)

I'll give you more guidance about what I expect in the proposals later this quarter.

English Department's Statement of Values:

The UW English Department aims to help students become more incisive thinkers, effective communicators, and imaginative writers by acknowledging that language and its use is powerful and holds the potential to empower individuals and communities; to provide the means to engage in meaningful conversation and collaboration across differences and with those with whom we disagree; and to offer methods for exploring, understanding, problem solving, and responding to the many pressing collective issues we face in our world—skills that align with and support the University of Washington's mission to educate “a diverse student body to become responsible global citizens and future leaders through a challenging learning environment informed by cutting-edge scholarship.”

As a department, we begin with the conviction that language and texts play crucial roles in the constitution of cultures and communities. Our disciplinary commitments to the study of language, literature, and culture require of us a willingness to engage openly and critically with questions of power and difference. As such, in our teaching, service, and scholarship we frequently initiate and encourage conversations about topics such as race, immigration, gender, sexuality, and class. These topics are fundamental to the inquiry we pursue. We are proud of this fact, and we are committed to creating an environment in which our faculty and students can do so confidently and securely, knowing that they have the backing of the department.

Towards that aim, we value the inherent dignity and uniqueness of individuals and communities. We aspire to be a place where human rights are respected and where any of us can seek support. This includes people of all ethnicities, faiths, genders, national origins, political views, and citizenship status; LGBTQIA+; those with disabilities; veterans; and anyone who has been targeted, abused, or disenfranchised.

Course Policies

- Please turn off your phones in class
- Please submit work on time. If this will be a problem, email me before the due date.
- Please submit all your assignments on Canvas. I will be running your assignments through the university's plagiarism program.

Statement on Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university's imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas.

When an instance of suspected or alleged academic dishonesty by a student arises, it shall be resolved according to the procedures standard at the University of Washington. These procedures are listed here:

<https://depts.washington.edu/grading/pdf/AcademicResponsibility.pdf>

Plagiarism is:

- Copying any idea, piece of information, or expression of an idea (words, phrasing) without appropriate acknowledgement in the form of an accurate citation, reference to the source in the bibliography, and quotation marks around any words or phrases which are not the student's own.
- Submitting a paper that has been purchased or written by another person.

Also prohibited by the Student Conduct Code:

- Resubmitting any work for which credit has already been obtained in another course or for which credit is being sought concurrently.

I consider plagiarism to be a serious violation not only of university policies, but of the vital function of the university in a democratic society. I will follow university procedures in dealing with plagiarism.

If you are not sure what plagiarism is and is not, ask me! Ask before you turn in the assignment!

Also, consult this helpful guide on how not to plagiarize by Margaret Proctor of the University of Toronto:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Statement on Accessibility

Should any student require accommodation for physical or learning disabilities, please talk to me or see UW's Accessibility Resource Office. Information on this office can be found here:

<http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/>

Statement on Religious Accommodation

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy

(<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>).

Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>).

Grading Scale:

| Letter | Number | Percentage |
|--------|--------|------------|
| A + | 4.0 | 100 |
| A | 4.0 | 95 |
| A- | 3.8 | 92 |
| B+ | 3.4 | 88 |
| B | 3.1 | 85 |
| B- | 2.8 | 82 |
| C+ | 2.4 | 78 |
| C | 2.1 | 75 |
| C- | 1.8 | 72 |
| D+ | 1.4 | 68 |
| D | 1.1 | 65 |