

Intersections in Black Feminist Movement and Research

PSY 4272 [4-credits]

Spring 2021

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Class meets [online](#) Every Monday and Thursday, 10:00-11:50am

Student (office) hours [online](#) Every Wednesday, 1:40-3:30pm (or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

Intersectionality has become a buzzword. But, what does it really mean? Where are the roots of intersectional thinking? How do we use it today? In this course, we will trace back the history of Intersectionality as a theory and practice within Black Feminist Thought and Movement, then learn how it traveled into psychology and how it is used in research today. In the first third of the semester we will study original texts by Combahee River Collective and Black Feminists, Third World Women's Alliance, and Chicana Feminists. Next, we will examine intersectionality as a developing theoretical framework since the 1990s in broader feminist social scientific imagination. And lastly, we will focus on how intersectionality traveled into psychology in the early 2000s and how it is used in research today. We will also touch on a wide range of ways of "doing intersectional scholarship," including qualitative analysis, visual arts, ethnography, archival research, and quantitative analysis. Our goal in this course is to center Black Feminist Thought in assessing the how intersectionality is used in scientific research, in particular in psychological research. While doing this, we will pay attention to a broad range of multiple social locations we each occupy in categories such as race, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, religion, nation, language, ability.

LEARNING GOALS

- Explain the historical origins of intersectionality theory, and its relevance in contemporary psychological research.
- Identify interlocking systems of oppression (i.e. racism, sexism, classism, heteropatriarchy, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism) and analyze how they construct different realities for individuals who occupy positions of marginality and privilege variously.
- Generate research questions to be answered through psychological empirical research using an intersectional lens.
- Develop a muscle for self-reflexivity (both in everyday interactions, and in academic writing), and an ability to evaluate your social positionality and identities in its situated context.

COURSE ACCESSIBILITY

Your success in this class is important to me. We all need different kinds of accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning with your optimum capacity or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I encourage you to talk to Katy Evans, the Academic Services and Accommodations Advisor, to determine how you could improve your learning as well. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in remote class is [required](#) for successful completion of coursework. In the event that you must miss a class, you should email and notify me ahead of time. However, this does not mean that your absence is excused and the deliverables and coursework must still be completed on their due dates. If you are experiencing a personal emergency, including a medical emergency, you must be in touch about that with me.

A Note on Online Classroom and Attendance: Ideally when we are in the classroom in person, it is easy to begin to recognize faces and get to know you as a student. In Zoom classroom, I rely on much less information to be able to get to know you and assess your work. If you cannot or will not turn on your camera in the zoom meetings, please let me know about that so we can discuss other ways of helping me assess your performance as a student.

STUDENT (OFFICE) HOURS

I hold weekly [online](#) student hours (Wed 1:40-3:30pm). These hours are for you to drop in at any time, bring in course-related questions, get help for assignments, discuss topics related to your progress in the course, chat with me about life on campus, ask questions about graduate school or life after college. You are also welcome to contact me anytime to schedule an appointment outside these office hours if you cannot make it on Wednesdays 1:40-3:30 due to your weekly schedule. I strongly recommend that you come in and discuss your assignments and progress in the course at any time.

BASIC NEEDS

Basic needs (food, housing, and wellness) have a direct impact on academic performance, mental-emotional-physical health, professional development, and holistic success. If you have a personal circumstance or need that will affect your learning or performance in this course, please let me or your faculty advisor know so that we can direct you to available resources to help support you during the term.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS & EVALUATION

Participation	20%
Reading Responses	20%
Research Lab Contributions	30%
Full Draft of Final Paper: Research Proposal	30%

PARTICIPATION [20%]

Active participation in the class discussions is one of the best ways of learning. That said, I understand that people are different in their comfort levels about speaking up in class. Rather than viewing these individual differences as fixed personality traits, we can try as a class and see if we will succeed in creating a more inviting, safe and brave space for everyone in the class. Psychology research shows that people who typically feel uncomfortable speaking up in group settings are more likely to talk when they feel supported by others. Therefore, your participation will be assessed not only based on how much you talk or how your contribution enhances the quality of class discussion, but also how you take care of each other during the discussion. We will all be working together towards building a multicultural community where every person feels they belong and comfortable sharing their thoughts.

Formula for effective class participation: Reading the assigned readings and writing reading responses before class is essential for this. You are encouraged to bring up points you discussed in your reading responses during class discussions. For the weeks we do not have a reading response due, you are encouraged to jot down notes for yourself before coming to the class. That will help you formulate your thoughts.

READING RESPONSES [20%]

Reading responses are a tool for you to engage with the readings deeply and critically, and an opportunity to formulate your thoughts and new questions before speaking up in class.

There are 12 reading responses due by class time on different weeks (sometimes before a Thursday class sometimes before a Monday class; all are clearly indicated in the course schedule below on the "Assignments due" column). You can skip any of the 2 reading responses without penalty. You will have submitted in total 10 reading responses of your choice by the end of the semester. All reading responses are due by the beginning of that class. Late reading responses will not be accepted.

Formula for effective writing: Although relatively more informal in style, I expect reading responses to have a clear argument structure, as well as creative and generative elaborations on the arguments and findings of the authors we read. Your paper should include a clear introduction paragraph, body section, and a conclusion. Use the Guiding Questions in the [course schedule](#) as a guide to write your response. You do not have to directly respond to the guiding questions or “answer” them in your paper. Only use them to help facilitate your thinking about the readings. Look over the questions before starting to read the articles, and keep the questions in mind as you read. Feel free to expand on the questions in reflecting on the readings and audio-visual sources. *[2-3 pages long, double space, Times New Roman, APA style. Please share your assignment in .doc (Microsoft word) or google doc format. No other format will be accepted.]*

RESEARCH LAB CONTRIBUTIONS [30%]

We will run this class as half theory half laboratory (hands-on implementation of the theories and literature we learn). We will be discussing the readings and literature on Mondays, and we will run a research lab on Thursdays. For most Thursdays, you will either be expected to complete a draft of a component of your final paper or will be expected to do preparation before the class. Each are indicated on the [course schedule](#). Your lab contributions are going to be evaluated holistically based on your performance in mini-talks, the feedback you give to your peers and help others think about their research proposals.

FINAL PAPER: RESEARCH PROPOSAL [30%]

The full draft of the final paper is due on the last day of the class, however, components of the final paper are due on different days before the full draft, and your performance will be assessed both based on the process (timely submission of each component and incorporating feedback to the final version) and the quality of the final full draft. I will give feedback and/or meet with you after the submissions of the three components below. You are supposed to incorporate those feedback to the final version.

Final Paper Component 1: Research question, due by April 1

Final Paper Component 2: Methods Section First Draft, due by April 26

Final Paper Component 3: Self-reflection on insider/outsider status, due by May 6

Final Paper Component 4: Hypotheses or Expected Results, due by May 20

Full Draft of Final Paper, due by May 27

A research proposal is a proposal to conduct research. It includes (1) an introduction section (with review of the previous literature, theoretical approaches and previous research findings on your topic, the goals of the proposed research and why you think this research is important and what questions this research aims to answer), (2) a methods section (with a description of the targeted participants, and measurement instruments, e.g. an interview protocol or scale descriptions for survey research), (3) hypotheses or expected results (most survey research proposals include hypotheses if they use deductive methodology, not all interview research includes hypotheses since they could be using induction, but even in that case they may mention expected results). A template for a full draft will be provided. Full draft with revisions to the research question, methods, self-reflection, and hypotheses (expected results) incorporated is due by May 27. *[10-13 pages long, double space, Times New Roman, APA style, Please share your assignment in .doc (Microsoft word) or google doc format. No other format will be accepted.]*

EXTENSIONS

If you need an extension for a certain assignment you need to get in touch with me ahead of time (at least 3 days before it is due). Note that in-class presentations will be difficult to reschedule.

ETHICS & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated in this course. Failure to abide by this rule may result in failure in the class and/or expulsion depending on severity. For more information, please visit the [academic and artistic ethics policy](#) of the college. All written assignments are required to follow [APA formatting and style](#). Please get more information and help from the Crossett Library peer writing tutors to learn about academic writing and styles.

COURSE RESOURCES

We will use Google drive, Zoom, and Populi each for different functions in this class. Below are explanations for how/when to use each.

GOOGLE DRIVE

There are several folders shared with the entire class in the drive. I describe each of them below. There will also be a folder with your name, and this is shared only between you and me. This is where you will upload all your assignments throughout the semester (this helps declutter the email inbox).

Readings: This is where you will find all the weekly **readings** for the class. Please note that some weeks we have audio-visual material to be streamed before coming to the class. The links to these are provided in the syllabus (if you are viewing the syllabus through Populi the links may not work, download the syllabus to your computer to be able to click on them.) Always refer to the syllabus before accessing the weekly material.

Resources: The syllabus, templates, guidelines, or rubrics for assignments that are linked in the syllabus live in this folder. You can click on the link in the syllabus or directly go to the google drive to access these.

Submissions: You will be sharing your completed assignments with me in this folder by their due dates. Inside the Submissions folder there is a folder with *your name*, and it is private between you and me. So, you are supposed to upload your completed assignments inside the folder with your name. All written assignments should be shared in google.doc or .doc (Microsoft word) format.

ZOOM

We will use Zoom for our twice weekly [online](#) meetings, every Monday and Thursday 1:40-3:30pm. Each of you will receive a google calendar invite with the Zoom link and the password. Make sure you accept the invitation to save the meeting times in your google calendars. We will also use zoom for student office hours, or for any scheduled appointments between you and me.

POPULI

I will mark your attendance in Populi. The syllabus will also will up in there, but the most up-to-date version of the syllabus will also always be uploaded in the Google Drive.

COURSE SCHEDULE

MODULES	DATE	TOPIC	PREP BEFORE THE CLASS	ASSIGNMENT DUE
	Feb 18 – Th	Introductions	Read the Syllabus.	
The Origins of Intersectionality	Feb 22 – Mon	From Abolition to Suffrage	<p>1.Read: Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments (1848)</p> <p>2.Read: Sojourner Truth’s Speech: Ain’t I a Woman (1851)</p> <p>3.Read: Frederick Douglas’ Speech “On Woman Suffrage” (1888)</p> <p>4.Read: Anthony, S. B. “Constitutional Argument” (1898)</p> <p>5.Watch on Youtube: Kimberlé Crenshaw speech: “What is Intersectional Feminism” (2016)</p> <p>6.Read: Julie Ajinkya (2010) <i>Intersecting Oppressions: Rethinking Women’s Movements in the United States.</i></p> <p>Note: The first four readings are from original historical documents (1-2 pages each). The last two are based on scholarly work to put the historical documents into perspective. Crenshaw’s speech on youtube is 4 minutes long, but the Ajinkya reading is dense and longer (28 pages). Plan accordingly.</p>	<p>Reading Response 1: Due by class time: [Feb 22, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>Reading Response Guiding Questions:</p> <p>1.What were the challenges of the abolitionists and the suffragettes of mid 1800s and early 1900s?</p> <p>2.What are some parallels between the mid 19th century and the contemporary United States in terms of how we talk about racial and gender justice? And what is different?</p> <p>3.How does Julie Ajinkya’s account of Women’s Movements in the United States challenges the mainstream understandings of Feminism?</p>
	Feb 25 – Th	No synchronous meeting on this day		
	Mar 1 – Mon	Whose liberation is “Women’s Liberation”?	1.Read: Jo Freeman: “The Women’s Liberation Movement”	Reading Response 2: Due by class time: [Mar 1, 10:00 EST]

		<p>2.Read: Hayden and King: "Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo"</p> <p>3.Read: Hanisch "The Personal is Political"</p> <p>4.Read: The Chicago Women's Liberation Union, "How to Start Your Own Consciousness Raising Group"</p> <p>5.Read: No More Miss America!</p> <p>6.Read: Kimberly Springer (2005) "Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations of 1968-1980"</p> <p>Note: The first five readings are historical documents (1-2 pages each). The last one (Springer) is an excerpt from a scholarly source (25 pages).</p>	<p>Reading Response Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.How did the 60s and 70s White feminists define women's liberation? 2.What tensions were present between White and Black Feminist organizations of the 60s and 70s? 3.What can we learn about feminist and anti-racist organizing from the 60s and 70s social movements?
	Mar 4 – Th	<p>Research Lab Topic: Rap Groups, Consciousness Raising, and Feminist Research.</p> <p>Watch before class: Interview with feminist activist Loretta Ross from USA (~80 minutes: Transcription of the interview is available here).</p>	
	Mar 8 – Mon	<p>Multiracial Feminism(s)</p> <p>1.Read: Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement"</p> <p>2.Read: Third World Women's Alliance Documents</p> <p>3.Read: Alma M. Garcia (1989) "The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse 1970-1980"</p>	<p>Reading Response 3: Due by class time: [Mar 8, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>Reading Response Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.What systemic issues are addressed in Combahee River Collective and Third World Women Alliance statements? How are they different than/similar to the

			<p>4.Read: Becky Thompson (2002) "Multiracial Feminism: Recasting the Chronology of Second Wave Feminism."</p> <p>Note: The first two are historical documents. Think about them in relation to the historical documents from the week before. The last two are scholarly sources. While reading Thompson, see where all the historical documents from last week and this week fall in the timeline she provided at the end of the article.</p>	<p>historical documents from the last week?</p> <p>2.According to Thomspson, what is wrong with the wave metaphor of feminism? What does it preclude?</p> <p>3.How would you explain the history of feminist movements to someone who is only exposed to the history of feminism through the wave metaphor? What do you think would be the most important things for this person to know about the history of feminisms?</p>
	Mar 11 – Th	No synchronous meeting on this day		
From Practice to Theory	Mar15 – Mon	Critical Race Theory: What is intersectionality?	<p>1.Watch the Interview on Youtube: Kimberlé Crenshaw discusses 'Intersectional Feminism'</p> <p>2.Read: Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics."</p> <p>3.Read: Patricia H. Collins (1993) "Toward a new vision: Race, class, and gender as categories of analysis and connection"</p> <p>Note: Crenshaw and Collins are the two important scholars who coined "intersectionality." How are they in conversation with each other? – If you took Psychological Study of Sex and Gender with me, you have read Collins. Read it again.</p>	<p>Reading Response 4: Due by class time: [Mar 15, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>Reading Response Guiding Questions:</p> <p>1.What is intersectionality? Why does Crenshaw coin the term intersectionality?</p> <p>2.According to Collins, what are the dimensions of oppression? How does intersectionality help us understand these dimensions?</p> <p>3.If Crenshaw and Collins were on a dinner table together, what would they discuss as being important to the future of intersectional analysis?</p>
	Mar 18 – Th		Research Lab Topic: How to formulate a research question?	Lab Mini-Talk 1: <i>Preliminary Research Idea</i>

				To be delivered in class: [Mar 18, 10:00 EST]
	Mar 22 – Mon	Who is included in Psychological Research?	<p>1.Read: Elizabeth Cole (2009) "Intersectionality and Research in Psychology"</p> <p>2.Read: Joseph Henrich, Steven J Heine, & Ara Norenzayan (2010) "Most people are not WEIRD"</p> <p>3.Read: Stephanie Shields (2012) "Waking up to Privilege: Intersectionality and Opportunity." In G. G. Muhs, Y. F. Niemann, C. G. González, and A. P. Harris (Eds.) Presumed Incompetent.</p> <p>Optional reading: Jeffrey Arnett (2008) The Neglected 95%: Why American Psychology Needs to Become Less American"</p> <p><i>Settles et al. (2020) "Understanding psychology's resistance to intersectionality theory using a framework of epistemic exclusion and invisibility"</i></p>	
	Mar 25 – Th		<p>Research Lab Topic: (1) Who is included/excluded in research (2) What is the role of inequality, (3) Where are the similarities?</p>	<p>Mini-Talk 2: <i>Inspired or not?</i> Bring a piece of empirical research published in a peer reviewed journal to the class for discussion (2-4 minutes). To be delivered in class: [Mar 25, 10:00EST]</p>
	Mar 29 – Mon	Multiple Identities, Marginalization and Privilege	<p>1.Read: Isis Settles & Nicole T. Buchanan (2014) "Multiple Groups, Multiple Identities, and Intersectionality"</p>	
	Apr 1 – Th		<p>Research Lab Topic: Theoretical Background</p>	<p>Mini-Talk 3: <i>Conceptualizing the issue.</i> Present a theory, concept or framework that you might base your</p>

				research on. (2-4 minutes) (more information will be provided) To be delivered in class: [Apr 1, 10:00EST]
Debates inside the Discipline	Apr 5 – Mon	No synchronous meeting on this day		
	Apr 8 – Th	Prototypicality and (In)visibility of Inequities	<p>1.Read: Valerie Purdie-Vaughns & Richard P. Eibach (2008) Intersectional Invisibility: The Distinctive Advantages and Disadvantages of Multiple Subordinate-Group Identities.</p> <p>2.Read: Erin L. Thomas, John F. Dovidio & Tessa V. West (2014) "Lost in the Categorical Shuffle: Evidence for the Social Non-Prototypicality of Black Women"</p>	<p>Reading Response 5: Due by class time: [Apr 8, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>Reading Response Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.What is intersectional invisibility? How does it affect research findings in psychology? 2.How are the discussions about prototypicality in research is similar to the experiences of Black women in social movements based on what we read earlier? 3.Can you think of everyday life examples to be addressed through research to eliminate invisibility? 4. What are the connections between (in)visibility, prototypicality, and representation?
	Apr 12 – Mon	How to measure structural inequity in psychological research?	<p>1.Read: Shelly Grabe, Rose G. Grose, & Anjali Dutt (2014) "Women's Land Ownership and Relationship to Power: A Mixed Methods Approach to Understanding Structural Inequities and Violence Against Women"</p> <p>2.Read: Amy Heberle, Elsia Obus, & Sarah Gray (2020) "An intersectional perspective on the intergenerational transmission of trauma and state-perpetrated violence"</p>	<p>Reading Response 6: Due by class time: [Apr 12, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>Reading Response Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.What structural/systemic/institutional issues did the authors identify? How different do you think these research findings would be without identifying and naming those issues?

			<p>Optional Reading: Bullock et al (2020) "An intersectional analysis of the feminization of homelessness and mothers' housing precarity.</p>	<p>2.How did the authors measure these structural/systemic/institutional issues? 3.What challenges do you think researchers in psychology could run into when measuring structural/systemic/institutional issues?</p>
	Apr 15 – Th		<p>Research Lab Topic: How to measure things?</p>	<p>Mini-Talk 4: <i>Digging deeper to address inequity...</i> Find a piece of research published in a peer reviewed journal that claims to be using intersectional lens, identify their research question and tell us if the author(s) address (measure) the systemic issues. If yes, tell us if it could be improved. If not, tell us what you would do differently using intersectional lens to address inequity. (2-4 minutes) (more information will be provided) To be delivered in class: [Apr 15, 10:00EST]</p>
	Apr 19 – Mon	Methodology	<p>1.Read: Lisa Bowleg (2008) "When Black + Lesbian + Woman ≠ Black Lesbian Woman: The Methodological Challenges of Qualitative and Quantitative Intersectionality Research"</p>	<p>Reading Response 7: Due by class time: [Apr 19, 10:00 EST] [No guiding questions, you figure out what's more important to say!]</p>
	Apr 22 – Th		<p>Research Lab Topic: Creating/finding survey or interview questions. How to capture inequality?</p>	<p><i>Final Paper Component 1: Research Question.</i></p>

				Give your research question its final form. (submission in google drive by midnight).
	Apr 26 – Mon	Epistemology and Ontology	<p>1.Read: Patrick Grzanka (2018) “Intersectionality and Feminist Psychology: Power, Knowledge, and Process.”</p> <p>2.Read: Sue Wilkinson & Celia Kitzinger (2013) “Representing Our Own Experience: Issues in “Insider” Research”</p>	<p>Reading Response 8: Due by class time: [Apr 26, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>[No guiding questions, you figure out what’s more important to say!]</p> <p><i>Final Paper Component 2: Methods Section</i> After our discussion on measurement on April 15 and more on methodology on 19th, you will submit the first draft of the Methods section of your research proposal. (submission in google drive by midnight).</p>
	Apr 29 – Th	No synchronous meeting on this day		
From Research Back to Practice	May 3 – Mon	Politicized Consciousness and Intersectional Awareness	<p>1.Read: Nicola Curtin, Abigail Stewart, and Elizabeth Cole (2015). “Challenging the Status Quo: The Role of Intersectional Awareness in Activism for Social Change and Pro-Social Intergroup Attitudes.”</p> <p>2.Read: Ronni Greenwood & Aidan Christian (2008) “What Happens When We Unpack the Invisible Knapsack? Intersectional Political Consciousness and Inter-group Appraisals”</p>	<p>Reading Response 9: Due by class time: [May 3, 10:00 EST]</p> <p>[No guiding questions, you figure out what’s more important to say!]</p>
	May 6 – Th		Research Lab Topic: Hypothesis-testing or not? : Deduction and Induction	<p><i>Final Paper Component 3: Self-Reflection on insider/outsider status.</i> (submission in google drive by midnight).</p>

May 10 – Mon	Intragroup conflict and solidarity	1.Read: Rashmi Nair and Johanna Vollhardt (2020) “Intersectionality and relations between oppressed groups: Intergroup implications of beliefs about intersectional differences and commonalities”	Reading Response 10: Due by class time: [May 10, 10:00 EST] [No guiding questions, you figure out what’s more important to say!]
May 13 – Th		Research Lab: How to Write a Research Proposal?	
May 17 – Mon	Privilege and Critical White Studies	1.Read: Andrea L. Dottolo & Abigail Stewart (2012) “I Never Think about My Race”: Psychological Features of White Racial Identities 2.Read: Kim Case (2012) “Discovering the Privilege of Whiteness: White Women’s Reflections on Anti-racist Identity and Ally Behavior”	Reading Response 11: Due by class time: [May 17, 10:00 EST] [No guiding questions, you figure out what’s more important to say!]
May 20 – Th		Research Lab: Workshopping Papers	<i>Final Paper Component 4: Hypotheses or expected results of your research proposal. (submission in google drive by midnight).</i>
May 24 – Mon	Allyship and Coalition-building	1.Read: Elizabeth Cole (2008) “Coalitions as a Model for Intersectionality: From Practice to Theory” 2.Read: Kendrick Brown & Joan Ostrove (2013) “What does it mean to be an ally?: The perception of allies from the perspective of people of color”	Reading Response 12: Due by class time: [May 24, 10:00 EST] [No guiding questions, you figure out what’s more important to say!]
May 27 – Th		REVIEW	Full Draft of Final Paper (submission in google drive by midnight).