

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS PROJECT PODCAST SERIES:
CONTEXTUALIZING FEMINIST VOICES:
THE LESSON PLANS**

Topic: Black Feminisms

**Host: Özge Savaş
Speakers: Marisol Fila**

**University of Michigan
Institute for Research on Women and Gender
1136 Lane Hall Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1290
Tel: (734) 764-9537**

**E-mail: um.gfp@umich.edu
Website: <http://www.umich.edu/~glblfem>**

© Regents of the University of Michigan, 2023

Özge Savaş: Hello, everyone. My name is Ozge Savas, and today I'm with Marisol Fila from the University of Michigan Romance Languages Department. She prepared a lesson plan on Black Feminisms using the Global Feminisms Project archive, and she's going to tell us a little bit about that. Hi Marisol. Can you provide a brief overview of the lesson plan and its learning goals?

Marisol Fila: Absolutely, and thank you so much Ozge, thank you so much for having me today. The lesson plan "Black Feminisms" is looking to discuss the unique features of Black diasporic feminisms through the analysis of interviews with Black feminist women from four different countries: Brazil, Nicaragua, Germany, and the United States. Through all the activities, the idea is that the students will be able to identify similarities and differences between the ways in which these women consider activism as well as their relationship between personal and political identities. All of this is designed from an intersectional approach that looks through race, gender, and class. Furthermore, the lesson plan also encourages students to consider some of the shared elements with mainstream or dominant feminisms.

ÖS: That sounds great. Can you tell us about the proposed activities in this lesson plan, and what the instructors can find in this lesson plan?

MF: Of course. In the first activity, the students draw from previous knowledge and experiences and some of the information provided in the interviews so they can create a concept map in which they discuss what the topic/idea of Black Feminisms means for them and the interviewees. The second activity builds from the work done during the first one, and it asks the students to discuss the interviews in light of some excerpts of an essay titled "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference,"; that essay was published by Audre Lorde in 1980. Audre Lorde was a very famous Black feminist from the United States. In this activity, students consider differences and similarities between Black feminisms and mainstream feminisms, as well as the connections between personal and political identities. Finally, the final assignment, which is optional, encourages the students to reflect on how their understanding of Black feminist activists has changed through the lesson and all the work done. This final assignment uses the prompt "I used to think... And now I think...". So, the students can look back at what they used to know or understand about Black feminisms, and what they do now based on the work done, and also based on the work and the discussion with some interviews that draw from all of these different places, these different countries around the world.

ÖS: I like that this lesson plan draws interviews from those four different countries, Brazil, Nicaragua, Germany, and the US, because we have another lesson plan on intersectionality that gets into a little bit into the idea of Black feminisms in the US, but doesn't necessarily look across cultures, so this sounds really wonderful. Why would you say this lesson plan is

a helpful resource for instructors, and are there any adaptations that instructors can make while they are using it?

MF: I think that this lesson is a great resource for instructors that are seeking to teach and discuss the intersections between gender, race, and class, and also from a transnational perspective, right? The different interviews suggested for this lesson are a great resource for highlighting the unique features of Black diasporic feminisms and the way in which they are in dialogue with mainstream or dominant feminisms, and also the way they are in dialogue with Black feminisms from the United States. So, different from this transnational approach, this lesson is great in bringing this type of awareness to some other experiences that many times are not considered within the United States, and how these experiences are in close connection to the racial politics and ideologies of their countries of origin. Something to know, and this speaks to the adaptations that instructors can make to this lesson plan, is that when I created this particular plan, I focused on Black feminisms in the diaspora. That is, I wasn't looking at the ways in which African women articulate their feminist practices and understanding. So, it will be fantastic for any instructor to bring one or some interviews with women from Africa (we have Nigeria on the website, and soon we will also have Tanzania) to discuss the similarities and differences between Black diasporic feminisms and Black feminisms from Africa. This is also a task that I have for this lesson as an adaptation or another supplement to this lesson plan.

ÖS: **That sounds wonderful. This sounds like it will be useful for, you know, for anything like a feminist studies class to a diaspora studies class, there is so much rich material in this lesson plan to be used. Is there anything else you would like to share about this lesson plan, and why you created this lesson plan?**

MF: Something that I think that can be helpful for teaching with this lesson plan is that I included a variety of resources that an instructor can use to either prepare the classes and the activities or to introduce the topic to students in class. On the lesson packet, instructors can find links to podcasts, brief texts, and presentations, and also videos created by places like the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and all of these resources are very short and very approachable for students and instructors, who we know that many times are running out of time to prepare classes. Furthermore, I also included a list of additional readings and resources for instructors that are seeking to expand this discussion in class. Through all of that, and this is included at the end of the overview of the lesson plan, I try to show, and this is also why I created this lesson plan, how Black feminisms have their unique features and practices, and I try as much as possible to bring Black women's own voices to reflect on them. So if anyone uses any of these resources or has any feedback on this lesson, we would be extremely interested in listening to their experiences, and if they are willing to share any adaptations that they are making, that would be great, so we can also have that on our website.

ÖS: Wonderful. I can't wait to use this lesson plan. Thank you so much for helping us understand what this lesson plan includes and why you created it. Thank you, Marisol.

MF: Absolutely! Thank you so much, Özge.