

Feminisms: Connecting global and local theories

“To engage in dialogue is one of the simplest ways we can begin as teachers, scholars and critical thinkers to cross boundaries, the barriers that may or may not be erected by race, gender, class, professional standing, and a host of other differences.” (bell hooks. 1994. *Teaching to transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. London: Routledge)

The words of bell hooks present an invitation, not only to feminism, but also to a feminist pedagogy, which involves the creation of a learning space in which we engage in dialogic learning. This is a pedagogy which excites us to learn together, and with respect. For hooks, respect means ‘to look at’ each other with understanding and care, while we challenge ourselves.

The aim of this elective is to expose students to different feminist theories from various positions across the globe. In our reading we will explore a select range of feminist positions and attempt to glean its relevance for developing country contexts. The feminist texts and topic covered in the elective are by no means exhaustive of all feminist positions. Instead, I hope we will develop a base of readings from which we can explore feminism further. As such, I present studies with both contemporary and classical texts from South Africa and internationally, and I aim to be flexible in considering the research interests and needs of students engaged in the elective.

The elective will be presented in a seminar-format which comprises all of us engaging with the topic and texts for the week. The designated time for the elective is 9:30 to 13:30 on Fridays but can be amended after discussion to suit our schedules.