

SOP77072: Gender and Race

Duration:	Hilary Term
ECTS:	10 credits
Lecturer:	Dr Phil Mullen (mullenma@tcd.ie)

Module Description Overview:

This module examines how race and gender intersect to produce and reproduce dynamics of oppression. Drawing on Black feminist and transnational perspectives, we explore how these categories are socially constructed yet have material consequences, shaping individual lives and social structures. Students will consider the performance of gendered roles, the reproduction of norms and institutions, and the ways in which change is possible. Key questions include how we know what we know about race and gender, how structures and agency interact, and how concepts like womanism relate to and differ from feminism. The module also addresses the intersection of race, gender, and nationalism, and the representation and experience of raced and gendered identities in society.

Objective

The objective of this course is to explore and understand the ways in which race and gender intersect to create dynamics of oppression in our society. However, while the concepts of race and gender are critical categories for understanding how inequality, oppression, and difference are produced in our society, these categories have also been reified to produce stereotypes of difference and division. So, although it is important to recognize how categories have material implications, we will be mindful of the ways in which the very categories can be employed to keep the dynamics of racism, sexism and heterosexism intact or moving. This module examines the ways that race and gender are conceptualised, constituted, and interpreted. Therefore, we will ask questions such as, how do we employ these categories as socially constructed, but also having material effects on the lives of racialized people? We will look at how race and gender intersect, at how structures are reproduced through institutions and action over time and generation? How do social structures and individual agency intertwine to produce raced and gendered individuals? What is womanism and how is it different from feminism?

Learning objectives

Upon completion of the module, students will be able to:

- critically theorise and contextualise race and gender;
- engage in critical thinking about the intersection of race and gender and how to incorporate intersectionality in research;
- understand the foundational and contemporary debates in Race and Gender Studies concerning race and intersectionality, sex and gender, femininity and masculinity, and gender identities;
- discuss theorists of race and gender and apply a Critical Race Theory approach;

- develop and articulate well-informed arguments about race and gender in both written and spoken formats.

Assessment

Students are expected to attend both lectures and seminars and to actively contribute to the seminars.

1) Assignment at midterm will consist of a reflective writing assignment which is combined with a presentation to form part of final grade. **30% (15% each)**

2) End of module - 2500 words Essay. Students are expected to follow the style guidelines in the MPhil student handbook. **70%**

Contact hours

Lectures and seminars begin in Hilary Term. This will involve a combined one-hour lecture and one-hour seminar per week.

Reading List

An extensive reading list will be given by the lecturer in the manual for the module, in addition to weekly chapter/article readings being provided as outlined below. (*Readings are subject to change*)

Textbook - Hill Collins, P. (1922). Black Feminist Thought, 30th Anniversary Edition: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment. Routledge