

## **SPECIAL TOPICS IN APPLIED FEMINISM**

Introduction to Feminist Legal Theory

January 13, 2020

Professor Margaret Johnson

4:20-6:10 p.m.

AL 109

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain different strands of feminist legal theory.
2. Consider critiques of feminist legal theory.
3. Apply feminist legal theory to current social, political and legal issues.
4. Apply feminist legal theory to the practice of law.

### **Class Format:**

1. Discussion.

### **Assignment for this Class:**

1. Read:
  - a. Berta Esperanza Hernández-Truyol, *Talking Back: From Feminist History and Theory to the Feminist Legal Methods and Judgments*, FEMINIST JUDGMENTS: REWRITTEN OPINIONS OF THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT (Kathryn Stanchi, et al., eds. 2016) (excerpt) (posted on TWEN);<sup>1</sup>
  - b. Katharine T. Bartlett, *Gender Law*, 1 DUKE J. GENDER L. AND POL'Y 1 (1994) (posted on TWEN);<sup>2</sup>
  - c. Review the website for the UB's Center on Applied Feminism, <http://law.ubalt.edu/centers/caf/index.cfm>.<sup>3</sup>
2. Please draft a 3-5 page memorandum answering the following questions after reading the assigned reading. You must submit the memorandum via

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<sup>1</sup> To avoid confusion, please note that this is the first chapter of a book of rewritten Supreme Court opinions (called "feminist judgments") and therefore, at times, this piece references the "feminist judgments" in the book.

<sup>2</sup> Although there is some overlap with the Hernández-Truyol piece, we assign Bartlett's piece because it amplifies and applies some of the feminist legal theories to case law and statutes in a helpful way.

<sup>3</sup> As Co-Director of the Center on Applied Feminism, I want to make you aware of it and the work we do. In addition, one of your assignments this semester is to attend a portion of the Center's 12<sup>th</sup> Feminist Legal Theory Conference on April 2 and 3, 2020.

drop box on the TWEN course site no later than **Friday, January 10, 2020, at 4 p.m.**

- a. Feminism:
    - i. How do you define feminism?
    - ii. Please describe a recent current event that is or could be shaped by your view of feminism and explain the way in which it is or could be shaped.
  - b. Feminist Legal Theory:
    - i. Please analyze two feminist legal theories<sup>4</sup> from the assigned readings and discuss their strengths and weaknesses in addressing the current event you described in response to 2.a.ii.
  - c. Your view:
    - i. Which of the theories set forth in Hernández-Truyol and Bartlett's pieces resonates most with you? Why? Which one resonates the least with you? Why?
3. Please come prepared to discuss all of the feminist legal theories as well as the content of your memos.

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that while some of the feminist legal theories identified in the Hernández-Truyol and Bartlett readings are the same, they are named differently. Please group together similar theories if applicable when answering this question.