

1. Short Response Paper

Since the beginning of the semester, we have read various essays that offer different perspectives on the ways in which we can understand the concept of “difference” (both between men and women and among women). All of them emphasize the constructedness of identity categories based on difference (gender, race, sexuality, class, nationality, etc). However, each of them takes a distinct approach and foregrounds specific contexts within which difference needs to be understood as she responds to particular viewpoints and conversations.

In this 3-5 page short response paper, please select two essays and compare/contrast the authors’ viewpoints on the following issues:

- (1) In what context does each author analyze the construction of difference?
- (2) How does each author explain the ways in which difference emerges?
- (3) What are the author’s assumptions of the basis of feminist knowledge about difference?
- (4) What specific feminist agenda is each author proposing in order to solve the specific problems that each of them addresses?
- (5) How do their perspectives on difference and their approaches to the analysis of difference diverge and converge?

On 9/15, we will brainstorm ideas about this paper in small groups and discuss the questions you might have about this essay. Please bring 3 copies of your rough draft or your preliminary outline to class on 9/20. We will devote some time in class to workshop your draft or outline and discuss evaluation criteria. On 9/27, we will workshop your essay in class, and the final paper will be due on 9/29. Between now and 9/29, I would welcome you to stop by my office hours to discuss your ideas and your questions.