



Image: <http://sjwiki.org/wiki/Feminism#.VfIRROn4ull>

Spring 2017 Honors Seminar

Gender, Performance and the 3rd Wave

Professor Gwendolyn Alker

THEA-UT 800-001 – 4 Credits

Days and times: TBA

This honors seminar will begin with the hypothesis that Third Wave feminism is currently cresting—suggesting that there is both a newfound visibility of feminist issues and that there is currently a shift within political movements that include topics related to gender. We will proceed into three main areas of inquiry; first, we will unpack the historical roots of third wave feminism that emerged in the late 1980s in response to a perceived narrowness of feminists' engagement with race, class, and sexuality—particularly heterosexuality. Second, we will engage with some of the ways that contemporary feminism engages with critical studies of race, gender identification and sexuality studies. We will ask how feminism might continue to intervene within broader cultural and political discussions of the 21st century. Key issues will include Butler's idea of gender as performance, the catch phrase, "having it all," sex positive feminism, the use of popular culture and social media to promote social movements, the movement for marriage equality and the increasing visibility of transgender individuals. Finally, we will question what comes next: are we nearing the end of third wave feminism? What issues remain to be uncovered? What actions need to be implemented?

Recent feminist plays will be read alongside contemporary popular culture and political texts. Playwrights will include Naomi Wallace, Annie Baker, Sarah

Ruhl, Gina Gionfriddo, and others. We will dip into print and on-line social media (such as *Jezebel*, *Bust* magazine, online platforms such as Tumblr, and websites such as feministfrequency.com). Finally, all primary sources will be bolstered through engagement with critical theory by authors including Rebecca Walker, Jill Dolan, Judith Butler, bell hooks, and others.