

Fall 2017

16:988:582 Feminist Genealogies

T 3:55pm – 6:55pm

RDJC-011 C/D

Professor Ed Cohen

This course examines a deceptively simple question: "Is feminism a modern problematic?" At one level, the answer is obviously yes. But more critically, construing "the modern" itself as central to the question, we might ask: to what extent does what we now call "feminism" lean upon a series of "modern" antinomies, paradoxes, and contradictions that not only radically transformed, but indeed may have actually created "Europe," simultaneously in relation to itself and to the rest of the world? Moreover, does this particular geo-political legacy inform the domain "contemporary feminist theory"? And, if so, how? In order to meditate upon these questions, we will consider an archive of mostly European texts, written over the last three hundred years, which actively inform "modern personhood." Our readings of these texts will try to glean how "gender," "sex," and "sexuality" emerge throughout this period as salient "differences" that cut across and inflect these powerful new incarnations of "the human."