

# NOISE 2009 Summer School

## Moving Boundaries in Feminist Theory: Postcoloniality and Posthumanity

17 August – 28 August, Utrecht, the Netherlands

- **Do you consider yourself a human, a cyborg, a man, a woman, a transgender, a citizen, a nomad?**
- **Would you like to map new directions in your understanding of what makes Europe a postcolonial place and what the posthuman is?**
- **Have you always wanted to know about cutting-edge feminist theories?**

**Then join the 2009 Summer School and test your boundaries in order to discover your own moving identity!**

### **Moving Boundaries in Feminist Theory: Postcoloniality and Posthumanity**

This course will explore the moving boundaries of feminist thinking given the impact of postcolonial and posthuman theories. These seemingly obvious categories have come under scrutiny recently and feminists in particular have called them into question. We thus intend to interrogate what each of these terms mean in today's world. While they may seem like unrelated subjects, postcolonial and posthuman theories both take issue with the notion of fixed, stable, essential identity categories. In other words, the fixed boundaries we take as a given are more accurately described as moving boundaries. As such, this year's Summer School as a whole will focus on the movement and fluidity of those identity boundaries that we take for granted in our common sense conceptions of ourselves as European and Human. Given that both of these areas are interdisciplinary, we will draw from a range of disciplines and methodological strategies. This will be achieved by having guest lecturers from a host of different fields, who can provide a myriad of perspectives on each of these issues.

### **First Cluster: Feminist Perspectives on Postcolonial Europe**

Postcolonial critique aims to account for structures of domination and resistance, which are present in our globalized world. In this cluster we engage with the field of postcolonial critique by mapping out some of its major contentions and paradoxes. For example, we will expand the field to minor and removed colonial legacies (i.e. Dutch, French, Italian, Nordic, Soviet, or Austro-Hungarian) and address the problems of postcolonialism as an all-encompassing buzzword, which has also turned into a fashionable commodity. The scope of this cluster is therefore to apply the tools of postcolonial feminist critique to specific historical and geo-political formations in Europe, which has remained a blind spot in postcolonial critique. We will discuss what makes Europe postcolonial and why the notion of Europe is more contested than ever, both internally (through the proliferations of ethnic, religious, regional differences) and externally (Europe expanding its boundaries but closing its borders).

We will do so by exploring major debates in contemporary Europe on citizenship, migration, secularism and multiculturalism both at the level of representation and of socio-cultural formations through the analysis of different media, genres and strategies.

## **Second Cluster: Posthuman Tropes in Feminist Theory**

This cluster will interrogate the effects posthuman theories have been having on feminist theories in recent years. Posthuman theories aim to overturn the Enlightenment construction of the human as autonomous, self-identical, rational, static, and distinct from animals, artifacts, and nature. Since these notions of the human are essential to what it means to be human under the humanist paradigm, if we repudiate them, the resulting "human" would be unrecognizable to us as such, hence the term "posthuman". Posthuman theories thus seek to re-imagine the human beyond humanism and they do so in a variety of (inter-)disciplines: technoscience studies, media studies, animal studies, and queer theory, among others. In light of posthuman theoretical insights, we are compelled to revisit and call into question many key issues in feminist theory, for example: questions of sexual difference, the sex-gender distinction, notions of embodiment, and understandings of sexuality, subjectivity, and identity. We will use posthuman interpretative techniques as analytical tools to reconceptualize feminist strategies and theories. We will thus explore what it means to be a sexed/raced/gendered/sexual body in light of the shifting, leaky, fluid, moving boundaries advocated by posthuman theories.

## **Aims**

This advanced training course offers a diversified, but coherent programme of study from an interdisciplinary perspective. It is meant for MA students and PhD students and it will provide special and separate seminars to these two groups.

## **Formula**

- Two lectures in the morning
- Separate MA- and PhD-specific seminars in the afternoon
- Social programme
- Students prepare during the summer by reading and collecting material for assignments (approximately 70 hours of work). After fulfillment of all requirements (preparation of assignments and reading, active participation and final essay of 10 - 15 pages), participants receive the NOISE Certificate for 240 hours of work, equaling 9 ECTS
- All participants are expected to participate in the entire programme during the two weeks

Please check <http://www.genderstudies.nl/summerschool2009> for more information, registration and regular updates.

Please check <http://www.genderstudies.nl/summerschool> for last years' programmes to get an impression of the structure of the programme.

## **Accommodation for students**

Accommodation is arranged by Utrecht University and can be reserved in advance. For information on prices and payment, please contact the NOI♀SE organization. Participants can also arrange their own accommodation; however, we advise you to 'stick together' at the same accommodation!

## **Tuition Fees**

The tuition fee is €550,- This includes reading materials, but is exclusive of accommodation, subsistence costs (i.e. evening meals, drinks etc) and possible excursions.

## Teachers in the course

The first week of the Summer School is coordinated by Dr. Sandra Ponzanesi (Utrecht University, NL) and Dr. Marsha Henry (London School of Economics, UK);

The second week is coordinated by Dr. Jami Weinstein (Utrecht University, NL) and, provisionally, Prof. Dr. Maureen McNeil (Lancaster University). Several renowned professors and scholars from various disciplines will be teaching at the Summer School. These will be announced on the website.

## For more information:

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## Registration:

Please note that you can **only** register online (before May 1st) at this address:  
<http://www.genderstudies.nl/summerschool2009>

**COME TO THE NOI♀SE SUMMERSCHOOL  
AND BE CHALLENGED!**

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A NOI♀SE grant is available for two students from every NOI♀SE partner university. If you want to apply for the grant of your university, please check with your local contact person for the application procedure.

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