Cheris Kramarae

1. Kramarae suggests that the oppression and silencing of women in the mainstream world is rooted in language and language choices. Do you agree or disagree? Provide examples to support your position.

2. Kramarae avoids using the term patriarchy because it encourages thinking about women as an "undifferentiated mass" and may efface other oppressions that both women and men face. Propose an alternative term to patriarchy that does not have these same problems.

3. Give some examples of ways in which the English language does not allow women to articulate their experiences as easily as men. Suggest some experiences women have for which there are no words and create words for them.

4. Select an area of the communication discipline (for example, small group communication, leadership, or interpersonal communication) and examine its theories and literature to discover if a white male bias exists in that area.

5. Providing examples from your own experience, confirm or disconfirm Kramarae's idea that the educational system often makes women uncomfortable because of its white male bias.

6. Use your own experiences to identify ways in which women are silenced in the mainstream world.

7. Kramarae uses the metaphors of beer groups and food groups to differentiate between the communication that typically characterizes the mainstream world and women's world. On the basis of your experience in or observation of such groups, identify the primary communication characteristics of each.

8. Kramarae suggests that women's world can be created within environments in the dominant culture. Provide examples from your own experience in which this has been done.

9. Kramarae asserts that women often have difficult relationships with one another because the values and goals of the mainstream world "infest all of us." Suggest some rhetorical options that might be used to improve difficult relationships between women that
somehow disinfect the environment and allow different values to flourish.

10. Kramarae suggests that characteristics of women's world include qualities such as interconnection, safety, holism, trust, mutuality, adaptability, and equal access to information. Briefly review the major concepts of the small group communication literature. What are some ways in which it would have to be changed to incorporate Kramarae's characteristics?

11. Kramarae suggests that feminists are those who speak in ways not sanctioned by the patriarchy—who are "linguistically creative." How might feminists be linguistically creative in the mainstream world? Provide examples, if you can, from your own experience.

12. Select a basic construct in the communication field (such as ethos or the stages of a relationship) and critique it the way Kramarae encourages. What is left out of that construct from the perspective of women and other marginalized groups?

bell hooks

1. Respond to hooks' critique of feminism. Do you agree with her analysis and assessment? Why or why not? If you agree, how might feminists begin to work together in more productive ways?

2. Hooks argues that critical thinkers must theorize from the "passion of experience." What does she mean by this, and what role does passion play in theorizing?

3. Hooks suggests that being on the margins affords individuals a particular and important position from which to theorize. She also suggests that rhetors remain on the margins. Do you agree with hooks' claims? Discuss and give examples of the benefits of theorizing from the margins. Are there also disadvantages to such theorizing?

4. Articulate some of the ways that domination has affected you. How have these experiences influenced your views of communication?

5. Theorize decolonization as a communication notion. Give examples of decolonization and a description of the mindset of the colonizer and the decolonized.

6. Develop a feminist theory that addresses the particular circumstances of oppression, as hooks requests. Identify how this theory can be applied in daily life.
7. In what spheres of "coercive hierarchies of domination" have you participated? How could you have said "no" to this domination, and what communication behaviors might you have used to do so?

8. Connect confession (your own or that of others) to structures of domination. You might use talk shows as your model or example of confession. In what ways do these confessions support or challenge "white supremacist capitalist patriarchy"?

9. Hooks argues that the oppressed need to be willing to show the way to those in positions of domination. Do you agree? Why or why not? To whom does the responsibility of "showing the way" fall, or is there some other structure for educating and eliminating oppression?

10. How is a willingness to let fear go so you can move toward another who is not like you possible? Give examples to support your arguments.

11. Hooks suggests that individuals should cut down on the amount of time they spend watching television. Do you believe this will accomplish what she hopes it will? Explain.

12. Provide an example of hooks' notion of the critical gaze. Interrogate the message and analyze the complexity of what is taking place in your example.

13. Hooks suggests that art is a way of imagining new possibilities. Do you agree or not? Provide examples to support your claim.

14. Hooks suggests that aesthetics can generate healing and/or transformation. Do you agree or not? Give examples to support your claim.

15. Respond to hooks' notion of education as a "practice of freedom." What would education as a practice of freedom look like? Have you ever experienced it?

16. Choose another name for yourself (as hooks has done). Why would you choose this name, and what is represented by the name and the choice to select a new name?

17. When and how have you "talked back" to authority? Describe the experience, and explain why you chose to take the risk to do so. What were the results of your talking back?
18. Hooks suggests that home should be a place of radical openness where individuals can create freely. Describe this radical openness and give examples of what it is or would be like. How would home be created in this way?

19. Who is hooks' audience when she addresses the link between money, critical thinking, and the successes of people of color? Does the presumed audience affect the nature or effectiveness of this link as a rhetorical option?

20. When hooks talks about resistance, what kind of resistance does she mean? Is it deliberate, subtle, a type of disconfirmation, or what?

21. Must feminists agree on a definition of and theory of feminism in order for feminism to create radical change?

22. Can feminism exist in popular culture, or are feminism and popular culture antithetical?

23. Cultural criticism is one of hooks' main rhetorical options for the transformation of society. How does cultural criticism move individuals from the point of recognizing the domination in our culture to actual transformation? In other words, how does cultural criticism lead to the actual transformation of relationships where alienation, competition, and dehumanization are replaced with feelings of intimacy, mutuality, and camaraderie?

24. Hooks emphasizes the importance of linking confession to a larger political structure or issue. What are some ways in which such linking might be done?

Gloria Anzaldúa

1. Define appropriate using Anzaldúa's work as your model. What is appropriate writing and speech according to this model, and how is it different from the traditional rhetorical tradition?

2. Should academics "throw away abstraction and the academic learning, the rules, the map and compass," as Anzaldúa suggests? What would the results be for teaching and scholarship?

3. Without dualities (superior/inferior, male/female), what can we use to conceptualize the world? Do the Borderlands or the mestiza provide models for the alternative?
4. If unity is an Anglo invention, as Anzaldúa suggests, what concept might replace it? How would the replacement of unity with something new affect our theorizing and teaching?

5. Define feminism from a mestiza perspective. How does this differ from the various kinds of feminism that have been discussed in class? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this definition?

6. Discuss Anzaldúa's conceptualization of the Borderlands. In what ways can it be used as the starting point for theorizing about communication?

7. Using Anzaldúa's notion of making face, offer a theory of ethos. Discuss the dimensions of this new construct of ethos and compare them to those of the traditional conception of ethos.

8. Anzaldúa suggests that everyone lives on borders. Do you agree or disagree? If you agree, discuss ways in which you find yourself on the borders. If you disagree, explain why and offer an alternative explanation of the positions individuals occupy in society.

9. How is Anzaldúa's rhetor different from the rhetor traditionally conceptualized in rhetorical theory? Explain the nature of the traditional rhetor and compare it with Anzaldúa's conception of the rhetor.

10. Using Anzaldúa's rhetorical options of the island, drawbridge, bridge, and sandbar, analyze a rhetorical text or artifact to illustrate the usefulness of these options. If you do not believe these options are useful, explain why.

11. Traditional rhetorical theories suggest that in order to change the world, rhetors must work to change others. Anzaldúa suggests that changing the world occurs by changing oneself. Do you agree with Anzaldúa? Support your claim.

12. Discuss the role of art or some other form of expression that does not fall within classical conceptualizations of rhetoric as means for creating change. How does this nontraditional rhetorical form create change? Is it as effective as more traditional forms in creating change? Why or why not?

13. Anzaldúa discusses the ability to adapt and change while maintaining a sense of the self. Is adapting an advantage or simply a necessity for people of color and
other Borderlands cultures? Is there, realistically, any other option except to accommodate?

14. How might Anzaldúa define culture? At times, her notion appears to be racially and ethnically rooted, while at other times, it seems to be a set of traditions. Can you reconcile these in her definition?

15. Anzaldúa often does not translate her Spanish phrases and references. How does this practice function rhetorically? Does it facilitate or impede transformation?

Mary Daly

1. Find examples of the foreground and the Background in your everyday life. Provide examples of the communication that occurs in each and the benefits and disadvantages of each kind of communication.

2. Is Daly promoting a duality with her articulation of the foreground and the Background? Do you see the duality as a positive or negative aspect of her theory? If you believe the duality she offers is negative, offer an alternative. If you do not believe she is promoting duality, explain why not.

3. Daly suggests that Background rhetors intuitively know how to be Self-loving, Self-directed, and Self-communicating rhetors. Does intuition have a role as a source for argument or knowledge? Explain your position and describe how intuition may or may not function as grounds for making claims about the world.

4. Outline or develop the logic of the background. What does "The Wrong Way" look like logically? You might use Stephen Toulmin's layout of an argument here as your springboard, but feel free to use any creative ideas of your own as your starting place.

5. Are the foreground and the Background the only two rhetorical realms in existence? If you believe that other rhetorical realms exist, describe them and their natures, characteristics, and rhetorical possibilities.

6. What is your greatest source of discomfort with Daly's rhetorical theory? In what ways would her theory have to be remedied to eliminate your discomfort?

7. What aspects of communication are covered by Daly's theory that other theories do not discuss? In other words, for what does her theory account that other theories of communication you have encountered do not?
8. Describe men in the Background. What would be their characteristics and styles of communication? Do men in the Background simply communicate in the ways that women in the Background do? Should men be in the Background at all? If not, is there a third rhetorical realm that is an alternative to the foreground and the Background in which feminist men operate? What would this rhetorical realm look like?

9. Daly describes fear-instilling strategies used by foreground rhetors to silence women who speak out against the foreground. What are some appropriate and effective responses to these fear-instilling strategies?

10. Daly's theory is grounded in her own ability to risk and to expose controversial aspects of her Self. Is risk a valuable quality in feminist rhetorical theory? Why or why not? What kinds of contributions might risk make to the development of theory, and what kinds of hazards and problems might it present?

11. How do women begin to see the Background? Where do women go to find Background meanings?

12. How can Daly's notions of Background and foreground be applied to everyday life?

13. Can women experience happiness in the foreground or would it be, according to Daly, a false sense of happiness?

14. Daly does not seem to be concerned with changing the male-dominated world in which we live but is more concerned with surpassing it--living in the Background and simply leaving the foreground behind. How can and do women surpass the drudgery (and bores) of the foreground and live in the Background? What happens once they're there?

15. How does Daly envision Background rhetors actually making changes in the world? Is it by encouraging women to adopt feminism through traditional rhetorical strategies? Is it by the active conversion of women by women through interpersonal relationships? Is it by exposing the oppression of foreground institutions? Is it by dismantling the foreground politically? How, exactly, does change happen, according to Daly?

16. Assess Daly's own language as a tool of transformation. Is it helpful or an impediment?
Starhawk

1. Describe situations of power-over in which you have been involved. What was communication like in these situations? How could it have been different had those involved recognized the possibility of something other than power-over?

2. Does self-hate exist in your life? If so, describe some of the messages of self-hate that you communicate to yourself or that have been communicated to you. What is your reaction to these messages? Does Starhawk's theory of power-from-within give you ideas for how you might have reacted or will react differently to these messages in the future?

3. Respond to Starhawk's five self-hater rhetorical options. Provide examples of these five options and the ways in which they function to silence or constrain you. How can individuals avoid these self-hater options?

4. Deliberately engage in the rhetorical option of mystery for a day or part of a day. Did anything change as a result of using this option? Was your communication different? Did your definition of yourself change?

5. Identify a fear that you are willing to confront. Using ritual (either one of Starhawk's or one you create), create an alternative world in which that fear is confronted and banished. Describe your process and its effects.

6. What rituals are a regular part of your life? Describe them and discuss what they communicate to you and others and how they function for you.

7. Respond to Starhawk's definition of magic, "the art of changing consciousness at will." How does this definition fit with how you have defined magic in the past. What would a communication system based on magic be like? What would its benefits and disadvantages be?

8. Is Starhawk's notion of power-with possible in a group, or must someone always take over? Offer examples to support your claims. Are there situations in which power-with is undesirable and power-over is preferred?

9. Starhawk suggests that conflict is a valuable part of group process because it is a sign of growth. When you are engaged in such conflict, how can the conflict be framed positively so that it produces growth?
10. Describe the role(s) and/or personality(ies) you usually assume in groups. Do you agree that roles should be rotated, as Starhawk suggests? Why or why not?

11. Starhawk suggests that change only can happen collectively; at the same time, she discusses change as derived from power-from-within, a seemingly more personal orientation for focusing individual energy to create change. Are these notions compatible? If so, how do they work together to create change?

12. How can individuals participate in rituals or attend coven meetings and then go to the office and function in patriarchy? How can the effects of these feminist/spiritual activities practically be carried into daily life?

13. How would current theories of leadership in the communication field have to change to reflect Starhawk's notions of leadership?

14. Many individuals shun the mystical and spiritual dimensions of life. How can such people be brought to the Goddess so that they may experience and participate in the changes Starhawk envisions?

Paula Gunn Allen

1. Gunn Allen believes that individuals are a part of a storyline. Articulate your storyline as you currently know and understand it. Does it help explain some of your choices in terms of communication?

2. Gunn Allen suggests that feminism is rooted in appropriateness. Suggest what some of the dimensions of a feminist communication style rooted in appropriateness might be.

3. Gunn Allen argues that white women are powerful in ways they do not recognize. Describe some of these ways and suggest how white women might use their power to create change.

4. Gunn Allen's rhetorical theory includes a consideration of the paranormal and supernatural and relations between the human and nonhuman worlds. In what ways might such dimensions expand communication theory? What would communication look like from this perspective? What are its purpose, characteristics, and options, for example?
5. What does Gunn Allen mean by her notion that the inside is the outside? Select an aspect of rhetorical/communication theory and discuss the implications of the notion for that dimension--i.e., public discourse, change, interpersonal communication.

6. Gunn Allen suggests that alienation leads to speechlessness and that, even when alienated individuals do speak, the dominant culture cannot understand them. Discuss the implications of these claims, whether you agree, and how such speechlessness and lack of understanding might be remedied.

7. Gunn Allen sees the lesbian as the center, spirit, intelligence, and force field. How would communication change if its starting place were the lesbian?

8. Compare and contrast Gunn Allen's theory of stories to Walter Fisher's theory of narrative. What are the similarities and differences between the two theories?

9. Gunn Allen suggests that reality is internal--not external--and that rhetoric is used to bring the internal to the external realm. How would aspects of rhetorical theory have to be changed to take this notion into account?

10. Compare and contrast Gunn Allen's theory of power with other Western theories of power (Foucault, Gramsci, Habermas, or even Starhawk, for example). What are the similarities and differences between the two theories? What are the implications for communication of these differences?

11. Examine a rhetorical text or artifact by a Native American or other marginalized rhetor in which humor is predominant. Is the use of humor different and does it function differently from mainstream humor?

**Trinh T. Minh-ha**

1. Do you agree or disagree with Trinh's statement that power and the production of meaning in filmic representation are obscene? Provide examples as support for your position.

2. Recall an instance in which you have been in the position of both insider and outsider. How did you manage these two positions? Do you believe valuable insights come from being in both positions?

3. Explicate Trinh's notions of identity as difference and as other. What kinds of communication behaviors would
tend to differentiate identities formed on the basis of these two different notions?

4. What are the implications for the traditional notion of clarity of Trinh's rhetorical options of violating expectations and honoring multiplicity? How would clarity have to be revised and reformulated if we accepted Trinh's rhetorical options?

5. What are the implications for the traditional notion of audience analysis and adaptation of Trinh's rhetorical options of violating expectations and honoring multiplicity? How would audience analysis and adaptation have to be revised and reformulated if we accepted Trinh's rhetorical options?

6. What would be considered "good" or "effective" organization of a presentation, essay, or other text if organization were not based on a clear beginning, linearity, and a clear conclusion?

7. How might Trinh's rhetorical options be applied to oral and written discourse and interpersonal interaction? Her options are easy to apply and to see at work in visual texts; do they have applicability to other kinds of symbols, too?

8. Explicate Trinh's notion of "speaking near by" in terms of argumentation. How can individuals make claims or arguments about issues and concepts if they only can speak near by? What would an argument look like if it were developed out of a commitment to speak near by?

9. Discuss the traditional American notion of the melting pot in terms of Trinh's notion of living fearlessly with and within difference(s). Are these compatible?

10. Without some kind of basic hegemony, on what can individuals base their communication? Doesn't hegemony serve a basic function in communication of providing a common ground?

Sally Miller Gearhart

1. Gearhart argues that working within a system for change can be problematic. Develop some rhetorical options that can be used by individuals who wish to work within the system that avoid, as much as possible, the problems she sees with such options.

2. Do you believe that re-sourcement is a viable rhetorical option? Offer examples of occasions in which re-sourcement has or has not worked. Are there
particular conditions or qualities of communication that must be present to insure the success of re-
sourcement?

3. Assess Gearhart's idea that there is a difference between "wanting things to change" and "wanting to change things." Is the difference here significant enough to warrant the theorizing she does on the basis of this difference?

4. Gearhart suggests that the attempt to persuade constitutes violence. Do you agree or disagree? Are there ways of engaging in persuasion that you do not see as violent?

5. Is enfoldment a viable option in public or political discourse? Can you find examples where it has been used in public situations? If so, explicate how it was used in these situations.

6. Are there other criteria that might be used to assess the effects of enfoldment other than the feelings of the rhetor?

7. Gearhart suggests that when an individual changes herself or himself, the world changes. Do you agree or disagree? If you agree, explain how change happens in the public sphere in light of this notion.

8. How does Gearhart's notion of fantasy, which she sees as one of the first steps of political action, compare to Daly's notion of the Background?

Sonia Johnson

1. Johnson suggests that change occurs not when feminists focus on issues but when they adopt feminism as a perspective, a new universal habit, or a new mind. What does Johnson mean by this? Do you agree or disagree?

2. Johnson asserts that we must take women seriously. What are some ways in which women are not taken seriously in our culture? Are there ways in which you, personally, do not take other women or yourself seriously?

3. Johnson suggests that whatever we resist persists. How would argumentation theory change if this notion were taken seriously?
4. Johnson asserts that individuals cannot change others; they only can change themselves. Assess this idea. Have you had experiences that confirm or disconfirm it?

5. Johnson rejects the assistance of men in transforming patriarchy because she does not believe any man can reject the privileges of being male sufficiently to be able to contribute to the transformation. Do you agree or disagree?

6. Describe some ways in which you can see patriarchy as a sham in your own life.

7. Theorize some aspect of communication from a position of "vibrant aliveness." How would this notion, used as a starting place, change the construct or theory?

8. Johnson believes that we must live now as we want the future to be. Assess this notion as a rhetorical option. Is it practical? Effective?

9. Examine Johnson's notion that we must live now as we want the future to be. Select some concept in rhetorical theory (i.e., argumentation, strategy) and discuss how it would change if it were theorized on the basis of Johnson's notion.

10. Johnson suggests that taking responsibility for others diminishes their competency. Do you agree or disagree? Are there ever situations in which taking responsibility for others would be justified?

11. Assess Johnson's notion of commitment in a relationship. Do you believe this notion can be used as the grounds for building a happy interpersonal relationship?

12. How would interpersonal communication theory have to change if theorizing in this area began with Johnson's notion of commitment in a relationship?

13. In many instances, the giving of a gift to someone generates feelings of indebtedness toward the gift giver. Indebtedness clearly is not something Johnson would want in her rhetorical system. How could such feelings be avoided?

14. Johnson no longer uses the term feminist to describe herself because she believes it suggests "hanging on the fringes of the men's club, begging to be let in." Is there another word that could be used to describe feminist ideals that does not have this connotation and that would capture Johnson's perspective on feminism?
15. Johnson does not want to take care of others or to take responsibility for others. This is contrary to the stereotypes (and roles) of women as caretakers of others. Can Johnson's theory be reconciled with these stereotypes and roles? What happens to caregiving in Johnson's theory?

16. What part, if any, do men play in Johnson's "universe that wishes all life well"? Are men part of the magic of the universe?

17. Johnson's notion of never doing anything we don't want to do seems to require that individuals' needs never come into conflict. What happens when they do?

18. Is there an element of elitism in Johnson's notion of living in the world the way we want it to be? This seems easier for a wealthy white woman in the United States to do than for a Latina woman with several children living in poverty. Are there "outliers" in her garden of thinking?

19. Truly incorporating Johnson's notion of living in the world the way we want it to be would require that virtually everything in our lives be done differently. Are there some ways that we can make use of Johnson's rhetorical option in practical, less overwhelming ways?