

CULT 814: Gender/Sexuality

FALL 2021

W 4:30—7:10 PM

ONLINE

Office Hours: Zoom, by appointment

WHY GENDER/SEXUALITY? Why the “slash?” Beginning in the 1960s, young people revolted in large numbers against social inequality and forms of personal domination, especially those based on race, gender, and sexuality. From the beginning, these rebellions were interlinked, and the resulting new social movements have reshaped societies around the world. This course explores the history of scholarly and activist arguments about gender norms, sexual mores, and their relationship to each other and to other inequalities. We will look at key nodes and moments from the second wave, gay liberation, black and latina feminisms, queer theory, and more, examining the successes and failures of select currents of thought up to the present. It goes without saying that we seek to understand the connections among various kinds of social inequality with the wider political-economic system.

APPARATUS: First, we will seminar [intransitive verb] about the reading materials, mostly essays or chapters. Second, you will select four books from the list in the far-right column to digest and present/discuss in class. Finally, you will work on your own class project (e.g., a term paper, field statement, etc., as appropriate).

EVALUATIONS:

- Class participation (including class presentations): 40%
- Four book digests (5% each): 20%
- Class project: 40%

#	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	BOOKS
1	25 Aug	INTRODUCTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Micaela di Leonardo and Roger Lancaster, “Gender, Sexuality, Political Economy,” from <i>The Socialist Feminist Project</i> ▪ “Academic Turf War,” <i>Anthropology Newsletter</i> 	
2	1 Sept	One Is Not Born a Woman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simone de Beauvoir, from <i>The Second Sex</i> ▪ Juliet Mitchell, “Women: The Longest Revolution” ▪ Kate Millet, from <i>Sexual Politics</i> ▪ Shulamith Firestone, from <i>Dialectic of Sex</i> ▪ Silvia Federici, “Wages Against Housework” ▪ Monique Wittig, “One Is Not Born a Woman” 	Friedrich Engels, <i>Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State</i>
3	8 Sept	But If Gender Inequality Isn’t “Natural,” Why Does It Appear to be Universal? Some Guesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sherry Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” ▪ Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women” ▪ Luce Irigaray, “This Sex Which Is Not One” ▪ Catherine MacKinnon, “Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State” 	Toril Moi, <i>What is a Woman?</i>

4	15 Sept	Gay Identity and Its Discontents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Baldwin, “Preservation of Innocence” ▪ Karl Witman, “A Gay Manifesto” ▪ Red Butterfly, “Comments” ▪ Martha Shelley, “Gay is Good” ▪ Radicalesbians, “The Woman Identified Woman” ▪ Huey Newton, “The Women’s Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements” ▪ David Halperin, “One Hundred Years of Homosexuality” ▪ Johnathon Ned Katz, “The Invention of Heterosexuality” ▪ Bersani, “Gay Betrayals” 	Herbert Marcuse, <i>An Essay on Liberation</i>
5	22 Sept	Intersections and Articulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combahee River Collective Statement ▪ Audre Lorde, “Man Child,” “The Master’s Tools,” and “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference,” from <i>Sister Outsider</i> ▪ Gloria Anzaldua, “The New Mestiza Nation,” “To Live in the Borderlands Means You,” and “Bridge, Drawbridge, Sandbar, or Island” ▪ Kimberl�e Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex” 	Anne McClintock, <i>Imperial Leather</i>
6	29 Sept	Retrospectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joanna Wuest, “Uneven Egalitarianism” ▪ Nancy Fraser, “Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History” ▪ Nivedita Majumdar, “Silencing the Subaltern” 	Martin Duberman, <i>Has the Gay Movement Failed?</i>
7	6 Oct	Provocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Donna Haraway, “Cyborg Manifesto” ▪ Joan Scott, “The Evidence of Experience” ▪ Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes” ▪ Tim Dean, “Bareback Time” 	Tim Dean, <i>Unlimited Intimacy</i>
8	13 Oct	The Queer Moment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Judith Butler, “Critically Queer” ▪ Eve Sedgwick, “Queer Performativity” ▪ Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, “Sex in Public” ▪ Biddy Martin, “Extraordinary Homosexuals and the Fear of Being Ordinary” 	Lauren Berlant, <i>The Queen of America Goes to Washington City</i>
9	20 Oct	Sex and Political Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amy Gluckman and Betsy Reed, “The Gay Marketing Moment” ▪ Judith Butler, “Merely Cultural” ▪ Nancy Fraser, “Heterosexism, Misrecognition, and Capitalism” ▪ Roger Lancaster, from <i>The Trouble with Nature</i> ▪ Tony Kushner, “A Socialism of the Skin” ▪ Endnotes, “The Logic of Gender” 	Mitchell Dean and Daniel Zamora, <i>The Last Man Takes LSD</i>

10	27 Oct	Queer of Color Critique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roderick Ferguson, “Reading Intersectionality” ▪ Roderick Ferguson, “Our Normative Strivings” ▪ Martin Manalansan IV, “In the Shadows of Stonewall” ▪ Martin Manalansan IV, “Race, Violence, and Neoliberal Spacial Politics” ▪ Hiram Perez, “You Can Have My Brown Body and Eat It Too” ▪ Jack Halberstam, “Shame and White Gay Masculinity” ▪ David M. Halperin and Valerie Traub, “Beyond Gay Pride” ▪ Bruno Perreau, “Transatlantic Homecomings” 	Héctor Carillo, <i>Pathways of Desire</i>
11	3 Nov	Historicizing the Articulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Henry Abelove, “Some Speculations on the History of Sexual Intercourse in the Long Eighteenth Century in England” ▪ Thomas Laqueur, “The Rise of Sex in the Eighteenth Century” ▪ Thomas Laqueur, “Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology” ▪ Ann Stoler, “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power” ▪ Siobhan Somerville, “Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body” ▪ John D’Emilio, “Capitalism and Gay Identity” 	Ann Stoler, <i>Race and the Education of Desire</i>
12	10 Nov	Sex Wars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roger Lancaster, “The Magical Power of the Accusation” ▪ David M. Halperin, “The War on Sex” ▪ Aya Gruber, “Sex Wars as Proxy Wars” ▪ Philip Fornaci and Roger Lancaster, “In Arlington, A Judge Must Decide....” 	Joann Wypijewski, <i>What We Don’t Talk About When We Talk About #MeToo</i>
13	17 Nov	Trans Wars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frank Bruni, “Republicans Have Found Their Cruel New Culture War” ▪ Andrew Sullivan, “A Truce Proposal in the Trans Wars” ▪ Sahar Sadjadi, “The Vulnerable Child Protection Act and Transgender Children’s Health” ▪ Joanna Wuest, “A Conservative Right to Privacy” ▪ Jack Halberstam, from <i>Trans*</i> 	Dean Spade, <i>Normal Life</i>
14	24 Nov	THANKSGIVING	Time off!	Read what you please!
15	1 Dec	CONCLUSIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roundtable Discussion, “Queer Studies, Materialism, and Crisis” 	Present Work

POINTERS ON CLASS DISCUSSION and class presentations of significant texts should address a broad spectrum of the following questions:

- 1) What are the text's *key arguments*? (This can sometimes include the author's engagement with other thinkers.) Are they internally consistent?
- 2) What sort of *system* do the author's arguments posit, presuppose, or seek to demonstrate?
- 3) What are the *cultural objects* or *social institutions* that the text purports to address?
- 4) What *methods* are utilized by the author and are they adequate to the objects under examination and the arguments in play?
- 5) What is the *evidence* for the author's arguments?
- 6) Where is "*the political*?" How is it defined, shaped, called-out, or postponed in the text?
- 7) Where is "*the analytical*?" Does the text maintain an adequate distance between *evidence* and *political expediency*, or does it cobble together soothing stories for its intended audience?
- 8) How does the text lay claim to the attention of *cultural studies scholars* or otherwise help us to think about an ever-mutating field?
- 9) Does the text lend itself to a *present-day research or activist agenda*? How so or how not?

Having a script like this might seem mechanistic, but it will give our presentations and discussions some consistency *and* will help you to develop habits of mind that will be useful for future work.

A sign-up sheet for presentations will be made available. Each student should take responsibility for two classes.

POINTERS ON CLASS PRESENTATIONS: I grow weary of seeing poorly prepared talks at colloquia, in professional venues (e.g., association meetings), and at program dissertation proposal presentations. So I hope to train you for a brave new future of crisp, clear, and engaging presentations. You will pick one or two of the weeks' readings for fifteen-minute class presentations: summarize, synthesize, link to other issues, and prod class discussion. You may use PowerPoint; you may use audiovisual props; you may script your presentation; or you may even make a short video. But do try to keep to the standard-issue fifteen-minute presentation window, after which you will manage and coordinate class discussion.

House Rules, Fine Print, and Miscellanea

Classroom Environment: We support each other in our development as scholars and thinkers. We aim for a respectful learning environment in which everyone can participate. It is okay for us to disagree with one another in class discussion, in fact, it is expected; but let's do so in the spirit of dialogue and let's remember to substantiate assertions. In short, let's keep the conversation as open and informative for everyone as possible.

Email: GMU faculty and students are required to use GMU email accounts to communicate. You must regularly check your GMU email address, as important updates will be sent that way. I will not announce any major changes to the syllabus with less than 24 hours notice. I will respond to emails within 24 hours. I do not respond to emails on the weekends; an email sent on Friday will receive a response by Monday.

Diversity: Diversity is one of the university's core values. See <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>

ACADEMIC HONESTY: When submitting work under your own name, keep in mind that plagiarism is a violation of the GMU Honor Code. The Honor Code states, “Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Plagiarism means using words, ideas, opinions, or factual information from another person or source without giving due credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles consulted is not sufficient. Nor does rearrangement of another person’s phrasing (paraphrase) release one from the obligation to document one’s sources. Plagiarism is a form of fraudulently claiming someone else’s work as your own, and as such is the equivalent of cheating on an exam. A serious academic offense, plagiarism is grounds for failing at least the assignment, if not the whole course. If you are unclear about what you should document, consult with me. When in doubt, document. *(Adapted from the English Department Statement on Plagiarism)*

LAPTOPS AND CELLPHONES:

- Web surfing, Facebooking, Snapchatting, Tweeting, Instagramming, hunting Pokémon, and so on, are strictly prohibited during class time.
- Please try to keep your cellphones on silent mode, and your email accounts should be off (not constantly dinging).
- I apologize in advance if I violate any of these rules myself.

SOME CAMPUS RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU:

- **Writing Resources:** You may wish to use the Writing Center to assist you with an assignment. Tutors at the Writing Center can help you brainstorm, structure, and revise your written work. The Writing Center is located in Robinson A 114; 703-993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.
- **Counseling Services:** Professional counselors provide individual and group sessions for personal development and assistance with a range of emotional and relational issues. Counseling Services are located in SUB I, Rm.364; 703-993-2380; <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc>. In addition, the Learning Services Program (703-993-2999) offers academic skill-building workshops as well as a tutor referral service.
- **Student Technology Assistance and Resource Center (STAR):** The STAR Center is available to help students with technology needs, such as video, multimedia, desktop publishing, and web skills. The STAR Center is located in Johnson Center, Rm.229; 703-993-8990; <http://media.gmu.edu>.
- **Division of Instructional and Technology Support Services (DoIT):** If you have any difficulties with accessing the campus network or on-campus computers, please contact the help desk. DoIT is located in Innovations Hall, Rm.416; 703-993-3178; <http://www.doit.gmu.edu>.

- **Last but not least, I am your resource!** I am available during office hours and by appointment to discuss and support any and all aspects of your learning and development in this course. We can go over assignments before and after you've turned them in; we can review concepts from class; and we can extend discussions just because you're interested and curious. If you are experiencing difficulties, please come to me for assistance before you fall behind. I will be glad to match your efforts.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.