**George Mason University Women and Gender Studies Program**

**WMST 640—WMST 890—SOCI 633:**

**TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER AND RACE**

**Fall 2022**

**Mondays, 7:20pm—10:00pm**

**ONLINE**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Rachel Lewis**

**Associate Professor**

**Women and Gender Studies Program**

**George Mason University**

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**Office: Johnson Center Room 240C**

**Office Hours: by appointment**

**Course Description**

This course offers an introduction to transnational feminist perspectives on gender, race, and sexuality. During the semester, we will examine a variety of texts—cultural, socio-legal, and historical—across a range of humanities and social science disciplines, including women’s and gender studies, sociology, anthropology, history, law, cultural studies, and race and ethnic studies, to name a few. Specific topics we will address include the following: transnational, postcolonial, and intersectional feminist perspectives on gender and race; gender and religion; sexual and gender-based violence; migration, diaspora, and border-crossing; sex work and sex trafficking; maternal and surrogate bodies; beauty and colorism across the globe; postfeminism and transnational culture; and transnational feminist perspectives on disability and sexuality. The primary goal of the course is to familiarize students with transnational, postcolonial, and intersectional feminist perspectives on gender, race, sexuality, and disability.

**Required Texts**

* Ashwini Tambe and Millie Thayer (eds.), *Transnational Feminist Itineraries: Situating Theory and Activist Practice* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2021).
* Simidele Dosekun, *Fashioning Postfeminism: Spectacular Femininity and Transnational Culture* (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2020)

**Course Requirements**

* Class attendance and participation: 30% (including one 20-25 minute class presentation on the assigned readings)
* One 6-8 page analytical essay: 20%
* Annotated bibliography for the final research paper: 10%
* A final research paper (18-22 pages) on any issue relating to the topic of transnational feminisms and/or sexualities due via email on December 5th at 11:59pm EST: 40%

All written work must be submitted in hard copy form.   
  
This course follows a standard seminar format. Students are expected to attend class and contribute to each week’s discussion of the readings. More than one absence from class requires makeup work in the form of a four-page essay on the literature for the missed class. This work cannot count toward the student’s short essay.  
  
**Class participation** includes general participation in class discussion, leading class sessions, peer feedback on proposals and a presentation of a research proposal. To facilitate widespread discussion, students should come prepared with at least two questions for each class. Class participation also includes discussing research projects and providing peer feedback for proposals.  
  
**Leading class discussion**: Students should summarize the argument for the readings and then ask questions based on the thesis and supporting evidence. Students should prepare a minimum of 4-5 questions in all.  
  
**Analytical essay:** Students will write one short paper analyzing the readings of one class session. In addition to examining the authors’ arguments, students may structure their essay in the following ways: What are the differences and commonalities in the themes and arguments across the literature? How well does the evidence support the argument or thesis? How do the themes and arguments of the literature fit in with other course readings? What are other approaches or questions that arise from the literature? The paper is due a week after the class of choice discussion.

**Proposal and annotated bibliography:** you should use at least 12-15 scholarly sources for the final research paper.   
  
On **October 31** **graduate** students will provide me with a hard copy of their research proposal and annotated bibliography.  
  
For the research proposal and annotated bibliography, students should include the following information as thoroughly as possible given the amount of research conducted.  
  
1. State the thesis or the question(s) you want to explore in your paper. What do you hope to get out of your research? Your thesis statement should be analytical, displaying your intention of making an argument related to a specific topic. Your paper should not just be descriptive but should focus on asking questions of your topic that address issues of efficacy, tactics, strategy, bias, methodology, etc. related to a particular problem or issue.  
  
2. Explain the importance of the topic. Why is this topic worthy of research? What is the public concern with this issue? What conclusions do you expect to reach?  
  
3. Write an annotated bibliography of at least ten scholarly sources. Summarize the text and then state how you believe it will help you with your research. Annotations should be brief, written in short paragraph form.   
  
**About Research**  
Megan Reichelt, Women’s Studies Liaison Librarian is available to help anyone with research.   
[mreichel@gmu.edu](mailto:mreichel@gmu.edu)

A244 Fenwick Library 703/993-2211  
You may also schedule individual consultations with librarians.  
E-mail Reference Service <http://library.gmu.edu/research/email/>  
Call Fenwick Library 703/993-2210, Johnson Center Library 703/993-9070  
  
**University-wide Grading System**

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Grade | Quality Points | Graduate Courses | | A+ | 4.00 | Satisfactory/Passing | | A | 4.00 | Satisfactory/Passing | | A- | 3.67 | Satisfactory/Passing | | B+ | 3.33 | Satisfactory/Passing | | B | 3.00 | Satisfactory/Passing | | B- | 2.67 | Satisfactory\*/Passing | | C | 2.00 | Unsatisfactory/Passing | | F | 0.00 | Unsatisfactory/Failing | |

\* Although a B- is a satisfactory grade for a course, students must maintain a 3.00 average in their degree program and present a 3.00 GPA on the courses listed on the graduation application.  
<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=104#grad_poli>  
  
**PLEASE NOTE**: **COURSE POLICIES**  
  
**George Mason University Honor System and Code**  
**Honor Code**  
George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.  
  
**Plagiarism** (statements from Mason Web Site)  
Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit.  
<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm#plagiarism>  
  
Please familiarize yourself with the Honor System and Code, as stated in the George Mason University *Undergraduate Catalog*. When you are given an assignment as an individual, the work must be your own. Some of your work may be collaborative; source material for group projects and work of individual group members must be carefully documented for individual contributions.  
<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:**  
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.  
  
The need for accommodations should be identified at the beginning of the semester and the specific accommodation needs to be arranged through the Office of Disability Resources. Faculty cannot provide accommodations to students on their own (i.e. allowing a student extra time to complete an exam because the student reports having a disability).

**George Mason University: Diversity Statement**   
George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study, and personal growth.   
  
An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices can be voiced, heard and respected.   
  
The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group, and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach. Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group, and organization, and to make improvements as needed.   
  
**Women and Gender Studies Commitment to Diversity Statement**  
The Women and Gender Studies program seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

**Syllabus—Subject to Change**

**Week 1: Introduction**

M Aug. 22 Introductions, course overview

**Week 2: Postcolonial and Transnational Feminisms**

M Aug. 29 Chandra Mohanty (1986), “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses” **(Blackboard)**

Valerie Amos and Pratibha Parmar (1984), “Challenging Imperial Feminism” **(Blackboard)**

Sara Ahmed (2000), “Close Encounters: Feminism and/in the Globe” **(Blackboard)**

Chandra Mohanty (2002), “Under Western Eyes Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anti-capitalist Struggles” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 3: Intersectionality and Transnational Feminisms**

M Sept. 12 Sandra Soto (2005), “Where in the Transnational World Are U.S. Women of Color? **(Blackboard)**

Ashwini Tambe and Millie Thayer (2021), “Introduction” (Tambe and Thayer, 1-9)

Ashwini Tambe and Millie Thayer (2021), “The Many Destinations of Transnational Feminism” (Tambe and Thayer, 13-36)

Jennifer C. Nash (2021), “Beyond Antagonism: Rethinking Intersectionality, Transnationalism, and the Women’s Studies Academic Job Market” (Tambe and Thayer, 37-51)

Inderpal Grewal (2021), “Rethinking Patriarchy and Corruption: Itineraries of US Academic Feminism and Transnational Analysis” (Tambe and Thayer, 52-68)

**Week 4: Gender, Race and Religion after 9/11**

M Sept. 19 Paola Bacchetta, Tina Campt, Inderpal Grewal, Caren Kaplan, Minoo Moallem, and Jennifer Terry (2002), “Transnational Feminist Practices Against War” **(Blackboard)**

Monisha Das Gupta (2005), “Bewildered? Women’s Studies and the Global ‘War on Terror’” **(Blackboard)**

Lila Abu-Lughod (2002), “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others” **(Blackboard)**

Amy Farrell and Patrice McDermott (2005), “Women’s Rights in Afghanistan” **(Blackboard)**

Madhavi Sunder (2005), “Piercing the Veil” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 5: Sexual Violence and the Globalization of #MeToo**

M Sept. 26 Eleni Coundouriotis (2013), “You Only Have Your Word:” Rape and Testimony” **(Blackboard)**

Srila Roy (2021), “Transnational Feminism and the Politics of Scale: the 2012 Antirape Protests in Delhi” (Tambe and Thayer, 71-85)

Vrushali Patil and Bandana Purkayastha (2018), “The Transnational Assemblage of Indian Rape Culture” **(Blackboard)**

Farnush Ghadery (2019), “#MeToo—has the ‘Sisterhood’ Finally Become Global or Just Another Product of Neoliberal Feminism” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 6: Migration, Borderlands, and Diaspora**

M Oct. 3 Gloria Anzaldua (1987), “Towards a New Consciousness” **(Blackboard)**

Sylvanna Falcon (2001), “Rape as a Weapon of War: Advancing Human Rights for Women at the U.S.-Mexico Border” **(Blackboard)**

Katie Acosta (2008), “Lesbianas in the Borderlands: Shifting Identities and Imagined Communities” **(Blackboard)**

Carlos Decena (2008), “Tacit Subjects” **(Blackboard)**

Katie Acosta (2011), “The Language of (In)Visibility: Using In-Between Spaces as a Vehicle for Empowerment in the Family” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 7: Sex Work and Sex Trafficking**

M Oct. 10 Jo Doezema (1994), “Ouch! Western Feminists’ Attachment to the Figure of the ‘Third World Prostitute” **(Blackboard)**

Jo Doezema (1998), “Forced to Choose: Beyond the Free V. Forced Prostitution Dichotomy” **(Blackboard)**

Kamala Kempadoo (2001), “Women of Color and the Global Sex Trade: Transnational Feminist Perspectives” **(Blackboard)**

Wendy Hesford (2011), “Global Sex Work, Victim Identities, and Cybersexualities” **(Blackboard)**

Julietta Hua (2011), “Seeing Race and Sexuality: Origin Stories and Public Images of Trafficking” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 8: Maternal, Reproductive and Surrogate Bodies**

M Oct. 17 Amrita Pande (2010), “Commercial Surrogacy in India: Manufacturing a Perfect Mother‐Worker” **(Blackboard)**

Amrita Pande (2021), “Wombs in India: Revisiting Commercial Surrogacy” (Tambe and Thayer, 171-189)

Nancy A. Naples and Mary Bernstein (2021), “Reproductive Justice and the Contradictions of International Surrogacy Claims by Gay Men in Australia” (Tambe and Thayer, 151-170)

Rafael de la Dehesa (2021), “Network Ecologies and the Feminist Politics of ‘Mass Sterilization’ in Brazil” (Tambe and Thayer, 101-120)

Michelle LaKisha Simmons (2021), “Black Feminist Theories of Motherhood and Generation: Histories of Black Infant and Child Loss in the United States” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 9: Beauty and Colorism Across the Globe**

M Oct. 24 Oluwakemi M. Balogun and Gracia Dodds (2020), “Transnational Feminist Approaches to Beauty” **(Blackboard)**

Jemima Pierre (2008), “‘I Like Your Colour!’ Skin Bleaching and Geographies of Race in Urban Ghana” **(Blackboard)**

Laura Quiros and Beverly Araujo Dawson (2013), “The Color Paradigm: The Impact of Colorism on the Racial Identity and Identification of Latinas” **(Blackboard)**

Chandra Waring (2013), “‘They See Me as Exotic... That Intrigues Them:’ Gender, Sexuality, and the Racially Ambiguous Body” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 10: Postfeminism and Transnational Culture**

M Oct. 31 Simidele Dosekun (2020), *Fashioning Postfeminism: Spectacular Femininity and Transnational Culture* (University of Illinois Press)

**Week 11: Gender, Disability, and Transnational Feminisms**

M Nov. 7 Míriam Arenas Conejo (2011), “Disabled Women and Transnational Feminisms: Shifting Boundaries and Frontiers” **(Blackboard)**

Nirmala Erevelles (2011), “The Color of Violence: Reflecting on Gender, Race, and Disability in Wartime” **(Blackboard)**

Nirmala Erevelles and Xuan Thuy Nguyen (2016), “Disability, Girlhood, and Vulnerability in Transnational Contexts” **(Blackboard)**

Xuan Thuy Nguyen (2016), “Girls with Disabilities in the Global South” **(Blackboard)**

Sami Schalk (2016), “Ablenationalism in American Girlhood” **(Blackboard)**

**Week 12: Transnational Sexualities**

M Nov. 14 Katie King (2002), “There Are No Lesbians Here: Feminisms, Lesbianisms, and Global Gay Formations” **(Blackboard)**

Evelyn Blackwood (2005), “Transnational Sexualities in One Place: Indonesian Readings” **(Blackboard)**

Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar (2004), “Dismantling Assumptions: Interrogating “Lesbian” Struggles for Survival in India and South Africa” **(Blackboard)**

Amanda Lock Swarr (2012), “Paradoxes of Butchness: Lesbian Masculinities and Sexual Violence in Contemporary South Africa” **(Blackboard)**

Amanda Lock Swarr (2012), “*Stabane*, Raced Intersexuality and Same-Sex Relationships in Soweto” **(Blackboard)**

**CONCLUSION: FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

M Nov. 21 Final research paper presentations

M Nov. 28 Final research paper presentations

**Monday, Dec. 5** Final paper due via email by 11:59pm ESTCE on HBO. Her writing and published by the Associated Press, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times Lens Blog, The Isabel Castro is a multimedia director and producer based in Brooklyn,

**of Photography**