

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

**WMST 407/507—ANTH 396—GLOA 450/599—GOVT 414: TRANSNATIONAL  
SEXUALITIES**

**Spring 2023**

**Mondays, 7:20pm—10:00pm**

**Class Location: Horizon Hall 1012**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Rachel Lewis**

**Associate Professor**

**Women and Gender Studies Program**

**George Mason University**

**E-mail: [rlewis13@gmu.edu](mailto:rlewis13@gmu.edu)**

**Office: Johnson Center Room 240C**

**Mailbox: Johnson Center Room 240K**

**Office Hours: Mondays 2:00pm to 4:00pm, or by appointment**

**Course Description**

This course explores the globalization of sexual identities, cultures, and social movements from a transnational perspective. We will consider some of the social and political movements as well as the kinds of legal and policy-making arguments that have helped to shape gender and sexual rights advocacy. To this end, the course readings are organized around three key areas—migration, development, and human rights—to reflect the increasing turn towards issues of sexuality in each of these fields of academic scholarship and social policy. We will examine a variety of texts—anthropological, cinematic, literary, and legal—across a range of disciplines, including women's and gender studies, sexuality studies, anthropology, sociology, political science, history, law, cultural studies, and critical ethnic studies, to name a few. Engaging with literature from across the social sciences and humanities, we will consider how sexual rights discourses get defined and utilized in relation to theories of desire and the body; sexual health and reproductive rights; sex work; travel and tourism; border-crossing and migration; and neoliberalism and development.

**Required Texts**

- Evelyn Blackwood, *Falling into the Lesbi World: Desire and Difference in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).
- Serena Owusua Dankwa, *Knowing Women: Same-Sex Intimacy, Gender, and Identity in Postcolonial Ghana* (Cambridge University Press, 2021)
- Amy Lind, ed., *Development, Sexual Rights and Global Governance* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010).
- Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Professing Selves: Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Iran* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013)
- Mark Padilla, *Caribbean Pleasure Industry: Tourism, Sexuality, and AIDS in the Dominican Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007)

- Amanda Lock Swarr, *Sex in Transition: Remaking Gender and Race in South Africa* (Albany: Suny Press, 2012)
- All additional readings will be available online via Blackboard

The required texts are available for purchase through the campus bookstore. Alternatively, you may purchase the course texts through any other bookstore or online retailer.

### **Undergraduate Course Requirements**

- Class attendance and participation: 25%
- One 12-15 minute in class presentation on the assigned readings: 15%
- One 3-4 page analytical paper based on the assigned readings: 20%
- Annotated bibliography for the final research paper: 10%
- A final research paper (9-10 pages) on any issue relating to gender, sexuality, and globalization due on May 8 (via email): 30%

### **Graduate Course Requirements**

- Class attendance and participation: 30% (including one 20-25 minute in class presentation on the assigned readings)
- One 6-8 page analytical essay: 20%
- Annotated bibliography for final research paper: 10%
- A final research paper (18-20 pages) on any issue relating to the topic of gender, sexuality, and globalization due by May 8 (via email): 40%

All written work must be submitted via email.

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 analytical 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 assigned to the same day may collaborate on how to present the readings and the 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 3-4 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.

**Undergraduate and Graduate Proposal and Annotated Bibliography:** you should use at least 6 scholarly sources (undergraduate) and twelve scholarly sources (graduate) for the final research paper.

On **April 3** students will provide me with a hard copy of their research proposal and annotated bibliography.

On **April 24 and May 1** students will discuss their research projects.

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 five (undergraduate) and ten (graduate) 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.

#### **University-wide Grading System**

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](http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=104#grad_poli)

**PLEASE NOTE: COURSE POLICIES**

### **George Mason University Honor System and 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 (e.g. 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.

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### **Syllabus—Subject to Change**

#### **Introduction**

M Jan. 23                      Introductions, course overview

Watch *Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World* (John Scagliotti, 2003): available on Kanopy via GMU

#### **Thinking Sexuality Transnationally**

M Jan. 30                      Elizabeth Povinelli and George Chauncey (1999), “Thinking Sexuality Transnationally” **(Blackboard)**

Martin F. Manalansan (1995), “In the Shadows of Stonewall: Examining Gay Transnational Politics and the Diasporic Dilemma” **(Blackboard)**

Joseph Massad (2002), “Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World” **(Blackboard)**

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

Clare Hemmings (2007), “What’s in a Name? Bisexuality, Transnational Sexuality Studies, and Western Colonial Legacies” **(Blackboard)**

In class discussion: *Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World* (John Scagliotti, 2003)

## UNIT I: MIGRATION, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

### Queer Migration and Border Crossing

- M Feb. 6                      Martin Manalansan (2006), “Queer Intersections: Sexuality and Gender in Migration Studies” **(Blackboard)**
- Eithne Luibhéid (2008), “Queer/Migration: An Unruly Body of Scholarship” **(Blackboard)**
- Carlos Decena (2008), “Tacit Subjects” **(Blackboard)**
- Katie Acosta (2008), “Lesbianas in the Borderlands: Shifting Identities and Imagined Communities” **(Blackboard)**
- Katie Acosta (2011), “The Language of (In)Visibility: Using In-Between Spaces as a Vehicle for Empowerment in the Family” **(Blackboard)**
- Kale Bantigue Fajardo (2008), “Transportation: Translating Filipino and Filipino American Tomboy Masculinities through Global Migration and Seafaring” **(Blackboard)**

### Queer Tourism

- M Feb. 13                      Jasbir Puar (2001), “Transnational Sexualities and Trinidad” **(Blackboard)**
- Jasbir Puar (2002), “A Transnational Feminist Critique of Queer Tourism” **(Blackboard)**
- Jasbir Puar (2002), “Queer Tourism: Geographies of Globalization” **(Blackboard)**
- Venetia Kantsa (2002), “‘Certain Places Have Different Energy’: Spatial Transformation in Eresos, Lesbos” **(Blackboard)**
- Lionel Cantu (2002), “*De Ambiente*: Queer Tourism and the Shifting Boundaries of Mexican Male Sexualities” **(Blackboard)**
- Dereka Rushbrook (2002), “Cities, Queer Space, and the Cosmopolitan Tourist” **(Blackboard)**

### Queering Development

- M Feb. 20                      Amy Lind (2010), “Introduction: Development, Global Governance, and Sexual Subjectivities” (Lind, 1-19)

Susie Jolly (2010), “Why the Development Industry Should Get Over Its Obsession with Bad Sex and Start to Think About Pleasure” (Lind, 23-38)

Jyoti Puri (2010), “Transgendering Development: Reframing Hijras and Development” (Lind, 39-53)

Ara Wilson (2010), “NGOs as Erotic Sites” (Lind, 86-98)

Kate Bedford (2010), “Promoting Exports, Restructuring Love: The World Bank and the Ecuadorian Flower Industry” (Lind, 99-112)

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

### **Sex Work, Tourism and HIV/AIDS**

M Feb. 27                      Mark Padilla, *Caribbean Pleasure Industry: Tourism, Sexuality, and AIDS in the Dominican Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) (selections)

### **UNIT II: QUEER REGIONS**

#### **Queer Asia**

M March 6                      Ara Wilson (2006), “Queering Asia” (**Blackboard**)

Peter A. Jackson (2001), “Pre-Gay, Post-Queer” (**Blackboard**)

Lisa Rofel (1999), “Qualities of Desire: Imagining Gay Identities in China” (**Blackboard**)

Teri Silvio (1999), “Reflexivity, Bodily Praxis and Identity in Taiwanese Opera” (**Blackboard**)

Mark McLelland (2000), “Is there a Japanese ‘Gay Identity?’” (**Blackboard**)

Mark McLelland (2003), “Japanese Queerscapes: Local/Global Intersections on the Internet” (**Blackboard**)

#### **Queer Indonesia**

M March 20                      Evelyn Blackwood, *Falling into the Lesbi World: Desire and Difference in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010) (selections)

## **Black Queer Diaspora**

- M March 27      Jafari Allen (2012), “Black/Queer/Diaspora at the Current Conjecture” **(Blackboard)**
- Ashley Currier and Therese Migraïne-George (2016), “Queer Studies/African Studies: An (Im)possible Transaction?” **(Blackboard)**
- Xavier Livermon (2012), “Queer(y)ing Freedom: Black Queer Visibilities in Postapartheid South Africa” **(Blackboard)**
- Agatha Agathangelou (2013), “Neoliberal Geopolitical Order and World Value: Queerness as a Speculative Economy and Anti-Blackness as Terror” **(Blackboard)**
- Henriette Gunkel (2009), “What’s Identity Got to Do With It?”: Rethinking Intimacy and Homosociality in South Africa” **(Blackboard)**

## **Female Same-Sex Intimacy and Desire in Postcolonial Ghana**

- M April 3      Serena Owusua Dankwa, *Knowing Women: Same-Sex Intimacy, Gender, and Identity in Postcolonial Ghana* (Cambridge University Press, 2021)

## **Sexuality, Gender Identity and Race in South Africa**

- M April 10      Amanda Lock Swarr, *Sex in Transition: Remaking Gender and Race in South Africa* (Albany: Suny Press, 2012) (selections)

## **Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Iran**

- M April 17      Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Professing Selves: Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Iran* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013) (selections)

## **CONCLUSION: FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS**

- M April 24      Final Research Paper Presentations
- M May 1      Final Research Paper Presentations
- M May 8**      Final Paper due via email @ 11:59pm EST