

ANT 6501 10
GENDER AND SEXUALITY
Tuesday 2:10pm-4:00pm
HAH 202

Prof. Attiya Ahmad

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10am-12pm

Opening Gambit: Underlying Animating Questions

Feminist theory and the associated realms of gender, sexuality and queer studies are dynamic and diverse areas of analysis and study, ones this course will prepare you to navigate and engage further.

Our course is animated by several interconnected questions:

- how are differences of sex/gender established and evaluated?
- how have sex/gender been differently understood and elaborated in varying socio-cultural and historical contexts?
- how do these categories and differences index and instantiate power relations?
- how do categories and relations of sex/gender emerge in relation to class, race, age, processes of colonial modernity, and ongoing asymmetrical transnational relations in our contemporary world?

Thematic Overview

We begin by examining a range of conceptual approaches to the study of sex/gender difference and its attendant relations of power. This includes the longstanding, persistent and always mutating question of whether nature or culture accounts for sex/gender difference, and analyses that foreground socio-cultural or political-economic factors.

We then examine critiques that feminist theory and praxis has unduly privileged the understandings, activities and socio-cultural worlds of Western middle-class white women. Here, we will read from the works of anthropologists focused on questions of power and agency, critical race and postcolonial scholars, and theorists of transnationalism and globalization.

We conclude by examining foundational texts in masculinity studies, queer studies, and science and technology studies—realms that complement, challenge and extend our understanding of gender studies.

Rules of the Game: Requirements

Participation: Your active participation is crucial not only to your own learning, but to those of your peers and to me—your instructor and fellow scholar. Participation doesn't necessarily mean speaking a great deal in class. The ability to listen attentively, respond thoughtfully to others' comments and ask questions—including not being afraid to say 'I don't understand'—are productive to class discussion and our collective learning. Attendance is therefore required and failure to show up to class without a valid excuse or proper documentation (e.g. physician's note) will adversely affect your final grade. If you miss more than two classes without proper documentation, I reserve the right to drop you from the class.

Counts toward 10% of your final grade

Reading Response and Discussion Questions: You will be required to post a reading response (no longer than one double-spaced page) and discussion questions (1-2) to the class's Blackboard page by 5pm Monday evening before our class. These reading responses and questions will facilitate your active engagement with the class, and provide you with a written archive of your readings for the semester. Over the course of the semester you must submit a minimum of 8 readings responses (out of a possible 10 weeks of readings; leaving you with two 'free passes'). If you submit more than 8 reading responses, the top 8 will be used to assess your final grade. **No late submissions will be accepted. No exceptions will be made.**

Counts toward 15% of your final grade

Class Initiation/Facilitation: You will each be responsible for initiating a class seminar. For this assignment you will present for up to 20 minutes, and outline the major themes or arguments presented in the readings, and prepare 2-3 questions to begin our class discussion.

Counts towards 10% of your final grade

Gender/Sexuality Log, Short Paper and Presentation: For the first month of our course (August 30- September 27) every student will be responsible for keeping a 'gender/sexuality' log—consisting of a short daily diary-type entry that outlines the means and forms through which you have been shaped and disciplined into a gendered and sexualized being over the course of your day. This log will not only help you to bridge and bring into conversation the scholarship we are engaging with in our course what you are experiencing in your everyday lives, it will also set the stage for the first written assignment of our class, a 4-6 page paper due October 4 (to be submitted with your log) in which you will discuss an event or series of everyday experiences that have shaped/disciplined you into a particular gendered/sexualized being. For this assignment you will be expected to draw on class readings and discuss how they have helped you to analyze your event/everyday experiences. Every student will also prepare a short presentation for our September 27 class (the length will depend on the number of students enrolled in our class) about your paper/findings. **No late submissions will be accepted. No exceptions will be made.**

Counts towards 20% of your final grade

Final Paper: You will prepare a final paper (15-18 pages) on a topic of your choice. Paper topics, a preliminary outline and bibliography (5%) are due to me by November 1st. Rough drafts (10%) are due November 25th at 5pm (to be uploaded to Blackboard) and will be circulated to the entire class in anticipation of your presentations. You are expected to read all of your colleagues' papers and have written suggestions for improvement (10%) prepared

for class presentations of the final papers. Presentations (5%), which will give you the chance to workshop your paper—both presenting the topic and eliciting your peers’ feedback and comments, should be no longer than 20 minutes, and will take place November 29th and December 6th. Final papers (15%) are to be submitted to Blackboard by 5pm December 9th. **No late submissions will be accepted. No exceptions will be made.**

Counts towards 45% of your final grade.

Community, Communication and Caveats

No electronic media are to be used in class (e.g. cell phones, blackberries, laptops, itouch, ipads) and if you do bring them to class, please ensure ringers are switched off and/or that your device does not make any sound. Laptops may only be used for class presentations or related to an accommodation.

No topics are off-limits during class discussion, however, please be respectful and judicious in your phrasing of comments and in your responses to your peers’ comments.

Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. You are expected to familiarize yourself and adhere to the GWU Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, please consult: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>. Any breach of the code (e.g. papers downloaded from the internet, not citing all the sources you use in your written work) **will be severely penalized.**

Religious Holidays: please contact me two weeks in advance if you are going to miss class due to religious holidays not recognized by GWU’s academic calendar.

Accommodations and Disability Support Services (DSS): Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>. In addition, **please meet with me at least one week prior to the requested accommodation and do not hesitate to discuss with me your needs for any accommodation.**

Counseling: The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:

- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals

For further information, please refer to:

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices>

Security: In the case of an emergency, it at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined location.

I reserve the right not to respond to email or telephone questions sent less than 24 hours before a paper or assignment is due. Please send your questions ahead of time to ensure I have the time to respond to them appropriately.

Classes: Breakdown of Topics and Readings

Week 1, August 30: Introduction

Introductions and distribution of the class syllabus

Begin gender/sexuality log

Week 2, September 6: Socio-Cultural Constructions of Gender, pt. 1

Michel Foucault- Part I Ch. 1 and Part II Ch. 1-3 from Discipline and Punish and 2 related articles

Week 3, September 13: Socio-Cultural Constructions of Gender, pt. 2

Michel Foucault- entirety of the History of Sexuality and 2 related articles

Week 4, September 20: Gendered Performances and Embodiment

Judith Butler- "Gender Trouble", pp. 1-46, 194-203.

Judith Butler- "Bodies that Matter", pp. 27-55.

Nancy Fraser- "From Redistribution to Recognition"

Judith Butler- "Merely Cultural"

Nancy Fraser- "Heterosexism, Misrecognition, and Capitalism: A Response to Judith Butler"

Week 5, September 27: Difference and Incommensurability- Feminist Theory and the Anthropology of Gender

Michelle Rosaldo- "The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding"

Marilyn Strathern- "An Awkward Relationship: The Case of Feminism and Anthropology"

Saba Mahmood- excerpts from the "Politics of Piety" (pp. 1-39 and 153-88), AE and CA articles

Presentations of gender/sexuality logs and short paper ideas

Week 6, October 4: Construction of Difference- Race and Gender

bell hooks-“black women shaping feminist theory”, pp. 33-9, and (optional) “ain’t I a woman?”, pp. 159-96.

Audre Lorde- “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference”, pp. 114-23, and “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”, pp. 89-92.

Gloria Anzaldua et. al.- excerpts from “This Bridge Called my Back”

Chandra T. Mohanty- “Under Western Eyes Revisited” pp. 499-535.

Michel Rolph-Trouillot- Ch. 1 from *Global Transformations*

Reminder: gender/sexuality log and short paper are due today at the beginning of class

Week 7, October 11: Construction of Difference- Colonialism and Biopolitics

Ann Stoler- pp. 1-136 from “Race and the Education of Desire” and pp. 1-21 and 41-78 of “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power”

Week 8, October 18: Configurations of Difference- Transnational Feminisms

Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan- “Introduction: Transnational Feminist Practices and Questions of Postmodernity”, in *Scattered Hegemonies*, 1994, pp. 1-33

Inderpal Grewal- “Introduction: Neoliberal Citizenship: The Governmentality of Rights and Consumer Culture”, in *Transnational America*, 2005, pp. 1-34.

Attiya Ahmad- Introduction from “Everyday Conversions”

Week 9, October 25: Fall Break

Week 10, November 1: Queer Theories and Masculinity Studies

Janet Jakobsen- ‘Queer is? Queer does?’

Eve Sedgwick- “Axiomatic”, pp. 22-45 (rest optional).

Jasbir Puar- excerpts from “Terrorist Assemblages”

Judith Halberstam- “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Men, Women, and Masculinity,” pp. 344-68.

Robin Wiegman- “Unmaking: Men and Masculinity in Feminist Theory,” pp. 31-59.

Optional: Scott Lauria Morgensen- ‘Theorizing Settler Colonialism Within Queer Modernities’ and Emi Koyama- “Whose Feminism is it Anyways”

Reminder: paper topics, outline and bibliography due at the beginning of class

Week 11, November 8: Affect and Critique

Patricia T. Clough- “Introduction”, in *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social.*, pp. 1-33

Eve Sedwick- excerpts from “Touching, Feeling, Affect”

Robyn Wiegman- excerpts from “Object Lessons”

Week 12, November 15: Material Feminisms

Donna Haraway- “Simians, Cyborgs and Women: the Reinvention of Nature”, pp. 149-201, and “A Modest Witness”, pp. 1-39.

Sara Ahmed- “Some Preliminary Remarks on the Founding Gestures of the ‘New Materialism’”, pp. 23-39.

Diana Coole and Samantha Frost- “Introduction” and excerpts from ‘New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics’

Week 13, November 22: Thanksgiving Break

reminder: paper drafts to be uploaded to Blackboard by 5pm November 25th

Week 14, November 29: Workshop of Final Papers

reminder: everyone is expected to have read the drafts and have constructive feedback prepared for class in written form. Please prepare two copies of your written comments/feedback. One is to be given to the presenter/ author and one to me.

Week 15, December 6: Workshop of Final Papers

reminder: everyone is expected to have read the drafts and have constructive feedback prepared for class in written form. Please prepare two copies of your written comments/feedback. One is to be given to the presenter/ author and one to me.

****Final papers are due December 9th at 5pm****