

ANTH 6501 10
GENDER AND SEXUALITY
Wednesday 2:10pm-4:00pm
HAH 202

Prof. Attiya Ahmad

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2112 G St. NW, Office 102

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Pre-requisites:

Restricted to Graduate Students

Opening Gambit: Underlying Questions

Feminist theory and the associated realms of gender and sexuality 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 scholars 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 feminist studies.

Rules of the Game: Requirements

1- 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. Your

participation grade will also reflect your peer review work and presentation of your assignments (see 3a and 3b). Attendance is 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 25% of your final grade

2- Class Initiation/Facilitation: You will each be responsible for initiating a class seminar. For this assignment you will present for up to 30 minutes, and outline the major themes or arguments presented in the readings, and prepare 2-3 questions to begin our class discussion.

Counts towards 25% of your final grade

3a Three Short Papers of—2 that are 4-5 pages; the final of 8-10 pages

1-Gender/sexuality log and paper (15%): for this paper you must first keep a gender/sexuality log for 10 days—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 with what you are experiencing in your everyday lives, it will also set the stage for the first written assignment of our class, a 4-5 page paper due September 19 (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 from week 2 and discuss how they have helped you analyze your event/everyday experiences.

2-Gendered work paper (15%): for this paper you will undertake a gendered analysis of the film 'Bombay Calling' or your own experiences of work. For this assignment you will be expected to draw on class readings from weeks 4 and 5. Your paper should be 4-5 pages and is due October 16.

3- Ethnographic Research (20%): for this paper you will conduct short, ethnographic research on a topic that relates to issues we explore during weeks 7 to 13 (e.g. race, masculinity, agency/power, cross-cultural difference, transnational relations), and drawing on class readings, you will analyse your ethnographic case study. Your paper should be 8-10 pages. A rough draft (10%) is due November 30th (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 prepared for class presentations of the final papers. Presentations, 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 December 4th. Final papers (10%) are to be submitted to Blackboard by 5pm December 16th. **No late submissions will be accepted. No exceptions will be made.**

OR

3b- Research Paper: You will prepare a research paper (18-20 pages) on a topic of your choice. Paper topics and a bibliography (5%) are due to me by September 16th. Paper outlines (5%) are due to me by October 16th Rough drafts (15%) are due November 30th 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 prepared for class presentations of the final papers. Presentations, 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 December 4th. Final papers (25%) are to be submitted to Blackboard by 5pm December 16th. **No late submissions will be accepted. No exceptions will be made.**

Counts towards 50% 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, if 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 28: Introduction

Introductions and distribution of the class syllabus

Start gender/sexuality logs for first assignment OR begin work on research paper

Week 2, September 4: Nature/Culture and Sex/Gender

Emily Martin- "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles." 1991. In *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 16(31): 485-501.

Anne Fausto-Sterling- "How to Build a Man" in *The Gender Sexuality Reader*, R. Lancaster and M. di Leonardo, eds., 1997, pp. 244-48; "The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are not Enough", pp. 221-227.

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

Week 3, September 11: Gendered Performances

In-class film- Paris is Burning

Week 4, September 18: Political-Economic and Materialist Explanations for Gender Differences

First assignment due: short paper based on gender/sexuality logs OR paper topic and bibliography for research paper to be handed to me at the beginning of class

Karen Sacks- "Engels Revisited: Women, the Organization of Production, and Private Property," pp 207-234.

Gayle Rubin- "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," pp. 157-210.

Nancy Fraser- "From Redistribution to Recognition"

Judith Butler- "Merely Cultural"

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

Week 5, September 25: Materialist Feminisms in the Age of Globalization and Neoliberalism

Maria Mies- *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*, selections

Kathi Weeks- "Life Within and Against Work: Affective Labor, Feminist Critique, and Post-Fordist Politics," in *Ephemera* 7(1), 2007, pp. 233-249.

Rhacel Parrenas and Eileen Boris- "Introduction," in *Intimate Labors: Cultures, Technologies and the Politics of Care*, pp. 1-12.

Kalindi Vora- "The Transmission of Care: Affective Economies and Indian Call Centers" in *Intimate Labors: Cultures, Technologies and the Politics of Care*, pp. 33-48.

Week 6, October 2: Gendered Labour

In-class film: Bombay Calling

Week 7, October 9: 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- “La conciencia de la Mestiza”, pp. 93-107, and selections from “This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color,” pp. 3-9, 21-33.

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

Week 8, October 16: Anthropology and Feminist Studies

Second assignment due: Gender analysis of Bombay Calling or your experience in the workplace; OR, an outline of your research paper to be handed to me at the beginning of class

Michelle Rosaldo- ‘The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding,’ *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 5(3), 1980, pp. 389-417.

Marilyn Strathern- ‘An Awkward Relationship: The Case of Feminism and Anthropology,’ *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 12(2), 1987, pp. 276-292.

Saba Mahmood- selections from *Politics of Piety*, pp. 1-39 and pp. 153-88

Lila Abu-Lughod- ‘Do Muslim Women Need Saving?’

Week 9, October 23: Transnational Feminist Studies

Carla Freeman- “Is Local: Global as Feminine” Masculine? Rethinking the Gender of Globalization,” *Signs*, 26(4), 2001, pp. 1007-1037.

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

Inderpal Grewal- *Transnational America*, chapters 2, 3 and 4

Week 10, October 30: Independent Research and Writing

No class this week. Work on your final papers.

Week 11, November 6: Masculinity Studies

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.

Week 12, November 13: Queer Studies

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

Emi Koyama- “Whose Feminism is it Anyways,” pp. 698-705.

Sheila Jeffries- “The Queer Disappearance of Lesbians,” pp. 459-72.

Peter A. Jackson- “Capitalism and Global Queering,” pp. 356-395.

Katie King- “There are no Lesbians Here,” pp. 33-44.

Week 13, November 20: Material Feminisms and Science and Technology Studies

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

Elizabeth Grosz- "Darwin and Feminism," pp. 23-51.

Sara Ahmed- "Some Preliminary Remarks on the Founding Gestures of the 'New Materialism,'" pp. 23-39.

Week 14, November 27: Thanksgiving Break

Third assignment due: final short paper OR final research paper draft to be uploaded to Blackboard by Saturday November the 30th

Week 15, December 4: 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 to be uploaded to Blackboard by 5pm Monday December 16, 2013****