

HIST/WGSS 3560: Constructions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in U.S. History

University of Connecticut, Spring 2015
Professor Micki McElya, Department of History
Monday & Wednesday, 4:40-5:55
Castleman Building, Room 201

Office Hours/Contact Info:

McElya, Monday 9:00-10:30, and by appointment 226 Wood Hall
e-mail: micki.mcelya@uconn.edu

Course Description and Expected Outcomes:

This course examines the development, interconnections, and complexities of race, gender, and sexuality in U.S. history from European conquest to the present. After laying solid historical and theoretical foundations, we will consider a series of case studies that reveal how these categories are produced and contested over time while paying particular attention to political, social, economic, and cultural mechanisms of power, oppression, and resistance. We will analyze a variety of texts and primary sources, including legal and governmental documents, memoir, documentary and feature film, literature, material culture, visual cultures, and historical and theoretical works.

Students in this class will:

- Understand race, gender, and sexuality as components of identity and experience that *have* multiple histories
- Explore race, gender, and sexuality (along with class, region, and nation) as interdependent categories of identity, experience, and analysis
- Become more conversant with a range of historical and theoretical approaches to the study of race, gender, and sexuality
- Work with a variety of historical documents
- Hone critical reading, verbal expression, and writing skills

Requirements and Class Policies:

Content: The material discussed in this class engages with complex and sensitive issues concerning bodies, power, sex, and violence. You should be aware that some material might be troubling or upsetting. This awareness also means that you should come to all discussions with the understanding that other people might view the material in different ways; we must always be mindful and respectful of one another.

Participation: This course is a mix of lecture and discussion. Your success requires thoughtful participation and the completion of all readings and assignments. Each student is expected to attend every class meeting, to be on time, to have read completely and with care all assignments, and to engage actively and intelligently in our conversations. While attendance does not comprise a numerical part of your grade, it bears noting that you cannot participate if you are not in class.

The assignments are:

- This course has a good deal of **reading**, some of it complex and time consuming. You are expected to complete all of the readings for each day and be prepared to discuss them. Don't worry if something doesn't make sense—bring your questions and issues to the class for **discussion**—but make sure to always work your way through the readings.
- **Response papers** of no more and no fewer than two pages that engage the week's readings and link them to the larger themes of the course will be due most weeks in class. I will provide prompts for the first three responses, after that you will respond in a manner of your choosing. Barring extenuating circumstances, late responses will not be accepted after the due date, nor will I accept e-mailed responses. I expect response papers to reflect a thorough reading of the assignments and thoughtful consideration of ideas, problems, and/or issues they raise in the context of the course as a whole and our discussions. These will be graded on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest possible grade. Over the course of the term, you can drop one response paper grade, meaning you can choose not to do one or I will drop your lowest grade. Please see the Response Paper Guidelines for more information on content expectations and grading.
- **Midterm and Final Examinations** on essay questions provided in advance.

Grades will be calculated in the following manner:

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Participation | = | 15% |
| Response Papers | = | 40% |
| Midterm | = | 20% |
| Final | = | 25% |

Accessibility: To request accommodations for a disability you must first contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). CSD engages in an interactive process with each student and reviews requests for accommodations on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature and functional limitations of a student's documented disability, he/she may be eligible for academic accommodations. CSD collaborates with students and their faculty to coordinate approved accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at csd@uconn.edu. Detailed information regarding the process to request accommodations is available on the CSD website at www.csd.uconn.edu

Academic Integrity and Misconduct: I take academic honesty and integrity very seriously, and expect everyone in my classes to do so as well. Plagiarism, which includes the misrepresentation of another's ideas as your own as well as copying word-for-word from another source, will not be tolerated. Any case of misconduct will be handled in accordance with the guidelines established in *The Student Code* as they are outlined at: http://www.dosa.uconn.edu/student_code_appendixa.html.

The Unplugged Classroom: You *may not* use computers or cell phones during lecture or discussion—please leave them at home or in your bag. If a disability necessitates computer use

for note taking, documentation from CSD must be provided and I may ask that you sit with other computer users.

University Policy on Final Exams: From the Dean of Students—“Finals week for Spring 2015 takes place from Monday, May 4th through Saturday, May 9th. Students are required to be available for their final and/or complete and assessment during the stated time. If you have a conflict with this time you must visit the Dean of Students Office to discuss the possibility of rescheduling your final. DOS is REQUIRING that students who have a conflict about which they have or should have had advanced notice (bunched finals, religious obligation, legal/medical appointments...) MUST seek permission to reschedule their assessment NO LATER THAN April 24th. Please note that vacations, previously purchased tickets or reservations, graduations, social events, misreading the finals schedule and over-sleeping are not viable excuses for missing a final. If you think that your situation warrants permission to reschedule, please contact the Dean of Students Office, Wilbur Cross Building, 2nd floor, room 203 to meet with a staff member.”

Readings:

The following books are required for the course. All are available for purchase at the Co-op and all but *Map of Ireland* are on reserve at Homer Babbidge Library.

- Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002)
- Stephanie Grant, *Map of Ireland, A Novel* (New York: Scribner, 2009)
- Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004)
- Anthony Swofford, *Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles* (New York: Scribner, 2003)

In addition, students are required to read a number of articles, chapters, and documents marked on the syllabus with a (•) that can be found on electronic reserve via HuskyCT. Full citations for these readings appear at the end of the syllabus.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

GETTING STARTED:

HISTORICIZING & THEORIZING RACE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY IN THE U.S.

Week One: Introductions

W, 1/21 Introductions

Week Two: Racial Formation, Sex, and Gender

M, 1/26

- selections, Omi & Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (1994)

- David Zirin, “Jeremy Lin: Taking the Weight,” (2012)

W, 1/28

- Judith Lorber, “The Social Construction of Gender,” (1992)
- Michael Messner, “Ah, Ya Throw Like a Girl,” (1992)
- Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are Not Enough,” (1993) and “Letters from Readers,” (1993)
- Ariel Levy, “Either/Or: Sports, Sex, and the Case of Caster Semenya,” (2009)

Response Paper #1 Due [prompt provided on Husky CT]

Week Three: Sexuality and Bringing it all together

M, 2/2

- Anne Fausto-Sterling, “Thinking About Homosexuality,” (2012)
- Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” (1993)

W, 2/4

- Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “African-American Women’s History and the Metalanguage of Race,” (1992)
- Evelyn Alsultany, “Los Intersticios: Recasting Moving Selves,” (2002)
- Eli Clare, “Body Shame, Body Pride: Lessons from the Disability Rights Movement,” (2013)

Response Paper #2 Due [prompt provided on Husky CT]

Week Four

M, 2/9

Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (2004)—Intro through Chapter 5

W, 2/11 Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*—finish

Response Paper #3 Due [prompt provided on Husky CT]

CASE STUDY #1: CONTACT AND COLONIAL FANTASIES

Week Five

M, 2/16

- Letter from John Rolfe to Sir Thomas Dale (1614)
- Selections from John Smith’s *Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624)
- Robert S. Tilton, “Miscegenation and the Pocahontas Narrative in Colonial and Federalist America,” (1994)

W, 2/18

Screening: clips from *Disney’s Pocahontas* (1995) and *The New World* (2005)

Response Paper #4 Due [No prompt, design your own]

CASE STUDY #2: SLAVERY, SEGREGATION AND THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

Week Six:

M, 2/23

- Thomas Jefferson, “Query XIV: Laws,” from his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781-1787)

- “The Memoirs of Madison Hemings,” (1873)

W, 2/25

- Annette Gordon-Reed, “Engaging Jefferson: Blacks and the Founding Father,” (2000)
- Andrew Burstein, “Jefferson’s Rationalizations,” (2000)

Response Paper # 5 Due

Week Seven:

M, 3/2 MIDTERM

W, 3/4

- Louis P. Masur, “Boston and Busing,” (2008)
- Meghan E. Irons, Shelley Murphy, and Jenna Russell, “History Rolled in on a Yellow School Bus,” (2014)

No response paper due this week

Week Eight:

M, 3/9

Stephanie Grant, *Map of Ireland, A Novel* (2009)—pages TBA

W, 3/11

Stephanie Grant, *Map of Ireland, A Novel*—finish

Response Paper #6 Due

Week Nine: SPRING BREAK!

Week Ten:

M, 3/23

Screening: *Sex and Justice: Anita Hill vs. Clarence Thomas* (1993)

- Neil A. Lewis, “Law Professor Accuses Thomas of Sexual Harrassment in 1980s,” *New York Times* (October 7, 1991); Andrew Rosenthal, “Bush Emphasizes He Backs Thomas In Spite of Uproar,” *NYT* (October 10, 1991); R.W. Apple Jr., “On Thomas: More Questions, Not Fewer,” *NYT* (October 12, 1991).

W, 3/25

- Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Whose Story Is It, Anyway? Feminist and Antiracist Appropriations of Anita Hill,” (1992)
- Patricia J. Williams, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Katha Pollit, and Jessica Valenti, “Twenty Years Later ... We Still Believe Anita Hill,” (2011)
- Jeffrey Toobin, “Partners,” (2011)

Response Paper #7 Due

CASE STUDY #3: FOREIGN RELATIONS, EMPIRE, AND THE MILITARY

Week Eleven:

M, 3/30

- Screening: *Corpus, A Home Movie for Selena* (1999)

W, 4/1

- José Limón, “The Other American South: Southern Culture and Greater Mexico,” (1998)
- Deborah Paredez, “Selenidad and Latinidad in the 1990s,” (2009)

Response Paper #8 Due

Week Twelve:

M, 4/6

- Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others,” (2002)
- Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai, “The Remaking of a Model Minority: Perverse Projectiles Under the Specter of (Counter)Terrorism,” (2004)

W, 4/8

- Sunaina Maira, “Belly Dancing: Arab-face, Orientalist Feminism, and U.S. Empire,” (2008)

Response Paper #9 Due

Week Thirteen:

M, 4/13

- Carol Burke, “Military Culture,” (2004)

Anthony Swofford, *Jarhead: A Marine’s Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles* (2003)—
pages TBA

W, 4/15

Anthony Swofford, *Jarhead*—finish

- Anthony Swofford, “Prologue” to *Hotels, Hospitals, and Jails: A Memoir* (2012)

Response Paper #10 Due

CASE STUDY #4: MARRIAGE

Week Fourteen:

M, 4/20

Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (2002)—Intro through
Chapter 6

W, 4/22

Nancy Cott, *Public Vows*—finish

Response Paper #11 Due

Week Fifteen:

M, 4/27

- George Chauncey, “The Present as History,” (2005)
- Ariel Levy, “The Perfect Wife,” (2013)
- *Film Clip*: “NAACP Endorses Gay Marriage: Interview with Julian Bond,” (2008)
- Julian Bond Testimony before the New Jersey State Legislature, (2009)

W, 4/29

- Siobhan B. Somerville, “Queer *Loving*,” (2005)
- Lisa Duggan, “Beyond Marriage: Democracy, Equality & Kinship for a New Century,” (2012)
- Explore the webpage for *Against Equality* [<http://www.againstequality.org>]

Final Exam (preliminary time): Tuesday, May 5, 3:30-4:45

Course Bibliography

Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others,” *American Anthropologist* vol. 104, no. 3 (September 2002): 783-790.

Evelyn Alsultany, “Los Intersticios: Recasting Moving Selves,” in Gloria Anzaldúa and Analouise Keating, eds., *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation* (New York: Routledge, 2002): 106-110.

Carol Burke, *Camp All-American, Hanoi Jane, and the High-and-Tight: Gender, Folklore, and Changing Military Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004).

Andrew Burstein, “Jefferson’s Rationalizations,” *William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 57, no. 1 (Jan 2000): 183-197.

Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” in Henry Abelove, et. al., ed., *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

George Chauncey, *Why Marriage: The History Shaping Today’s Debate Over Gay Equality* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

Eli Clare, “Body Shame, Body Pride: Lessons from the Disability Rights Movement,” in Susan Stryker and Aren Z. Aizura, eds., *The Transgender Studies Reader 2* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Whose Story Is It, Anyway? Feminist and Antiracist Appropriations of Anita Hill,” in Toni Morrison, ed., *Race-ing Justice, En-gendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality* (New York: Pantheon, 1992).

Lisa Duggan, “Beyond Marriage: Democracy, Equality, and Kinship for a New Century,” *The Scholar and Feminist Online* no. 10.1-10.2 (Fall 2011-Spring 2012).

Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes,” *The Sciences* March/April 1993 and letters to the editor, July/August 1993.

Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

Annette Gordon-Reed, “Engaging Jefferson: Blacks and the Founding Father,” *William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 57, no. 1 (Jan 2000): 171-182.

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “African-American Women’s History and the Metalanguage of Race,” *Signs* 17:2 (Winter 1992): 251-274.

Meghan E. Irons, Shelley Murphy, and Jenna Russell, “History Rolled in on a Yellow School Bus,” *Boston Globe* (September 7, 2014): A1.

Ariel Levy, "Either/Or: Sports, Sex, and the Case of Caster Semenya," *The New Yorker* (November 30, 2009): 46-59.

Ariel Levy, "The Perfect Wife," *The New Yorker* (September 30, 2013): 54-63.

José Limón, *American Encounters: Greater Mexico, the United States, and the Erotics of Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

Judith Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender," in Paula S. Rothenberg, ed., *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*, fifth edition (New York: Worth Publishers, 2001).

Sunaina Maira, "Belly Dancing: Arab-face, Orientalist Feminism, and U.S. Empire," *American Quarterly* 60: 2 (June 2008): 317-345.

Louis P. Masur, *The Soiling of Old Glory: The Story of a Photograph that Shocked America* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008).

Michael Messner, "Ah, Ya Throw Like a Girl," in Paula S. Rothenberg, ed., *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*, fifth edition (New York: Worth Publishers, 2001).

Michael Omi & Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 1994).

Deborah Paredez, *Selenidad: Selena, Latinos, and the Performance of Memory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai, "The Remaking of a Model Minority: Perverse Projectiles Under the Specter of (Counter)Terrorism," *Social Text* 80 (Fall 2004): 74-104.

Siobhan B. Somerville, "Queer Loving," *GLQ* 11:3 (2005): 325-370. Anthony Swofford, *Hotels, Hospitals, and Jails: A Memoir* (New York: Twelve, 2012).

Robert S. Tilton, *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Jeffrey Toobin, "Partners," *The New Yorker* (August 29, 2011): 40-51.

Patricia J. Williams, et. al., "Twenty Years Later ... We Still Believe Anita Hill," *The Nation* (October 24, 2011): 11-17.

David Zirin, "Jeremy Lin: Taking the Weight," *The Nation* (March 19, 2012): 24-25.