HIST/WGSS 3560
Constructions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in U.S. History
University of Connecticut, Spring 2017
Professor Micki McElya, Department of History
Tuesday & Thursday, 3:30-4:45
Koons 301

Office Hours/Contact Info:
Tuesday, 11:00-12:30, 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• Work with a variety of historical documents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 will experience and view the material differently from you; 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 all of the readings.

• Two article précis on the course readings of your choice from the following list: Higginbotham, Tilton, Burstein, Gordon-Reed (“Engaging Jefferson”), Masur, Crenshaw (“Whose Story...”), Hutton, Paredez, Abu-Lughod, Somerville. These are due in class on the day for which the article is assigned. As a rule, no late papers or e-mailed submissions will be accepted. Please see HuskyCT for assignment guidelines and grading parameters.

• A book review of three pages on a course text of your choice from the following pair: Meyerowitz or Cott. This will be due in class on the Thursday of the week for which the book is assigned. This means 2/9 for Meyerowitz and 4/20 for Cott. Please see HuskyCT for assignment guidelines and grading parameters.

• In-class short document analysis and writing exercises that engage some or all of the readings will happen periodically throughout the semester. Barring extreme or extenuating circumstances, these cannot be made up—you must complete the work in class on the day it is given. Over the course of the term, you can drop two grades, meaning you can miss them or I will drop your lowest ones.

• Midterm and Final Examinations on essay questions provided in advance.

Grades will be calculated in the following manner:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Précis #1</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Précis #2</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class document/writing exercises</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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Accessibility: To request accommodations for a disability you must first contact the Center for Students with Disabilities. Located in room 204 of the Wilbur Cross Building, you can also reach them at 860.486.2020, csd@uconn.edu, or on the web at http://www.csd.uconn.edu. You must have the appropriate forms from this office before we can arrange accommodations.

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.

Computers: You may not use computers in this class—please leave them at home or in your bag. If an individual condition necessitates computer use for note taking or in-class assignments, documentation from CSD must be provided and I may ask that you sit in an area of the room that will reduce screen distractions for other students.

Cell phones: I don’t want to see or hear them in class. Please turn ringers off before we start and no texting!

University Policy on Final Exams: “Students are required to be available for their exam and/or complete any assessment during the time stated in the Registrar's Office schedule. If you have a conflict with this time you must visit the Office of Student Services and Advocacy to discuss the possibility of rescheduling this final. OSSA REQUIRES advance notice from students who have prior knowledge of a conflict (i.e., bunched finals, religious obligation, legal/medical appointments...) Please note that vacations, previously purchased tickets or reservations, graduations, social events, misreading the assessment schedule and over-sleeping are not viable reasons for rescheduling a final. If you think that your situation warrants permission to reschedule, please contact the Office of Student Services and Advocacy (2nd floor Wilbur Cross) to meet with a staff member.”

Readings:
The following books are required for the course. All are available on 3-hour reserve at Homer Babbidge Library, and all but Map of Ireland can be purchased at the UConn Bookstore.

• Stephanie Grant, Map of Ireland, A Novel (New York: Scribner, 2009)
• Brian Turner, My Life as a Foreign Country: A Memoir (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014)

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 & Racial Formation  
T, 1/17 Introductions  
TH, 1/19  
• Kathy O’Neil, “Collateral Damage: Landing Credit,” (2016)

Week Two: Sex and Gender  
T, 1/24  
• Michael Messner, “Ah, Ya Throw Like a Girl,” (1992)

TH, 1/26  

Week Three: Sexuality and Bringing it all together  
T, 1/31  
• Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” (1993)

TH, 2/2  
• Dorothy Allison, “A Question of Class,” (1994)  
• Film Clip (HuskyCT): Judith Butler and Sunaura Taylor in Examined Life (2008)  

Week Four: Bringing it all together, cont.  
T, 2/7  
Joanne Meyerowitz, How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States (2004)—Intro through Chapter 5

TH, 2/9 Joanne Meyerowitz, How Sex Changed—finish  
*Meyerowitz Book Review Due

CASE STUDY #1: CONTACT AND COLONIAL FANTASIES  
Week Five  
T, 2/14  
• 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)

TH, 2/16
Screening: clips from Disney’s *Pocahontas* (1995) and *The New World* (2005)

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

**Week Six:**
T, 2/21
• “The Memoirs of Madison Hemings,” (1873)
• Thomas Jefferson, “Query XIV: Laws,” from his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781-1787)

TH, 2/23

**Week Seven:**
T, 2/28

TH, 3/2
Screening: *Eyes on the Prize* episode: “The Keys to the Kingdom, 1974-1980” (1987)

**Week Eight:**
T, 3/7—MIDTERM EXAM!

TH, 3/9
• Meghan E. Irons, Shelley Murphy, and Jenna Russell, “History Rolled in on a Yellow School Bus,” (2014)

**Week Nine:** SPRING BREAK!

**Week Ten:**
T, 3/21
Stephanie Grant, *Map of Ireland, A Novel* (2009)—all

TH, 3/23
Stephanie Grant, *Map of Ireland, A Novel*, cont.
Week Eleven:
T, 3/28

TH, 3/30
• 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)

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

Week Twelve:
T, 4/4
• Screening: *Corpus, A Home Movie for Selena* (1999)

TH, 4/6
• Paul Andrew Hutton, “The Alamo as Icon,” (2010)
• Deborah Paredez, “Selenidad and Latinidad in the 1990s,” (2009)

Week Thirteen:
T, 4/11

TH, 4/13
Brian Turner, *My Life as a Foreign Country*—finish

CASE STUDY #4: MARRIAGE

Week Fourteen:
T, 4/18
Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (2002)—Intro through Chapter 6
TH, 4/20
Nancy Cott, *Public Vows*—finish

**Week Fifteen:**
T, 4/25

TH, 4/27
- Explore the webpage for *Against Equality* [http://www.againstequality.org]

**Final Exam Date and Time to be announced.**

**Course Bibliography**


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