

Gender and Sexuality Studies Courses 2014-15

Autumn 2014

GNSE 12000. The Biology of Gender

This course explores the biological evidence and theories that seek to explain gender in humans. This course relies on current research in neuroscience, physiology, and cell biology to address topics such as the genetics of gender; sexual differentiation of the fetus; sexually dimorphic brain regions; the biology of gender identity and gender preference; and hormonal/environmental contributions to gender.

Mark Osadjan TR 10:30-11:50

GNSE 15002. Gender and Sexuality in World Civilizations I (currently filled)

The first quarter offers a theoretical framing unit that introduces concepts in feminist, gender, and queer theory, as well as two thematic clusters, "Kinship" and "Creativity and Cultural Knowledge." The "Kinship" cluster includes readings on such topics as marriage, sex and anti-sex, love and anti-love, and reproduction. The "Creativity and Cultural Knowledge" cluster addresses the themes of authorship and authority, fighting and constructing the canon, and the debates over the influence of "difference" on cultural forms.

Section 01 – *Tara Zahra* TR 10:30-11:50

Section 02 – *Susan Burns* MW 1:30-2:50

GNSE 15600. Medieval English Literature (= ENGL 15600)

This course examines the relations among psychology, ethics, and social theory in fourteenth-century English literature. We pay particular attention to three central preoccupations of the period: sex, the human body, and the ambition of ethical perfection. Readings are drawn from Chaucer, Langland, the Gawain-poet, Gower, penitential literature, and saints' lives. There are also some supplementary readings in the social history of late medieval England.

Mark Miller TR 12:00-1:20

GNSE 20170. Sociology of Deviant Behavior (=SOCI 20175)

This course examines how distinctions between "normal" and "deviant" are created, and how these labels shift historically, culturally, and politically. We analyze the construction of social problems and moral panics (e.g., smoking, "satanic" daycares, obesity) to explore how various moral entrepreneurs shape what some sociologists call a "culture of fear." Additionally, we investigate the impact on individuals of being labeled "deviant" either voluntarily or involuntarily, as a way of illustrating how both social control and social change operate in society.

Kristen Schilt TR 9:00-10:20

GNSE 21001. Cultural Psychology. (=CHDV 21000,PSYC 23000,PSYC 33000,ANTH 35110,CHDV 31000,AMER 33000,ANTH 24320,GNSE 31000)

There is a substantial portion of the psychological nature of human beings that is neither homogeneous nor fixed across time and space. At the heart of the discipline of cultural psychology is the tenet of psychological pluralism. Research findings in cultural psychology thus raise provocative questions about the integrity and value of alternative forms of subjectivity across cultural groups. This course analyzes the concept of "culture" and examines ethnic and cross-cultural variations in mental functioning, with special attention to the cultural psychology of emotions, self, moral judgment, categorization, and reasoning.

Staff TR 3:00-4:20

GNSE 23100 Foucault: History of Sexuality. (=PHIL 24800,CHSS 41900,HIPS 24300,CMLT 25001,FNDL 22001)

This course centers on a close reading of the first volume of Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, with some attention to his writings on the history of ancient conceptualizations of sex. How should a history of sexuality take into account scientific theories, social relations of power, and different experiences of the self? We discuss the contrasting descriptions and conceptions of sexual behavior before and after the emergence of a science of sexuality. Other writers influenced by and critical of Foucault are also discussed.

Arnold Davidson TR 10:30-11:50 (plus discussion sections)

GNSE 23203. Haunted Houses: Or, the Gothic Transformation, an American Tale

The vengeful Indian spirit reclaiming the home built on stolen burial grounds. The black blood staining the walls of the plantation house. The neglected family religion reasserting its relevance when its demons possess the body of the prepubescent girl-child. The "man-eating" house that swallows, body and soul, the woman desperately trying to escape. And the vast, overwhelming suburban home haunted by an absence of history as well as by an absence of domestic servants.

These familiar tropes of American gothic fiction serve as our topic for investigation. What does this genre have to say about the architecture of social relations in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America? Our syllabus takes prominent examples of haunted house fiction from both literary and filmic texts spanning a wide period of American literary history. The focus of our study will be on narrative construction and character development . . . or lack thereof.

We begin our study with notably canonical texts in order to develop a framework for the serious questions that haunted houses pose about American domesticity: questions about the fraught relations between sexes, races, and classes that unfold with a gothic flourish behind the closed doors of private homes. The canonical and historical background will serve as a framework for studying the formal aspects of genre texts. The theoretical component of this class will help us address the categories of genre fiction and low-brow fiction and why these silly texts might be worth serious consideration. There is also a significant comparative component to the course due to the heavy emphasis on film in the second half of the term. Class discussions will include analyses of how literary themes are taken up and translated into motion pictures, and students will be expected to read the films as closely and formally as they read printed texts. Students will develop a final paper that 1) analyzes a specific haunted house text or cluster of texts, 2) makes a historically based argument about gendered relations in the context of haunted house genre fiction, and 3) makes a case for studying those gendered relations in the history, form, *and* content, of genre fiction.

Amanda Davis TR 12:00-1:20

GNSE 25111 Identities are not born but made: What has race to do with sex? (=LACS 25101,LACS 35101,ANTH 23085,ANTH 31630,CRES 25101)

The French Anthropologist Roger Bastide declared "the question regarding 'race' always provokes the answer 'sex.'" Both doctrines are ideological constructs which serve to justify socio-political inequalities by claiming they are in the nature of things and, therefore, innate and inevitable rather than being liable to be contested as political phenomenon. This course will examine the ways in which the ideas of modern Western naturalism allow for the existence of these two interrelated doctrines: sexism and racism. The course will be taught in English. Knowledge of Spanish is advantageous.

Verena Stolcke TR 10:30-11:50

GNSE 25204 Economies of Gender (=ANTH 25204)

This course traces intersections between gender and economy with particular focus on the transformations associated with globalization and capitalist expansion. Part of our mission is to explore how capitalism has shaped conceptions, practices, and performance of gender in particular places. At the same time, we will also ask how gender, in turn, is mobilized in larger social imaginaries that contribute to and mediate global capitalist processes. After outlining key theoretical concerns, we will

explore these issues through ethnographic and historical case studies rooted in the particulars of everyday life. Topics include the global assembly line, affective labor, the commodification of language and the body, fashion and style, transformations in family relationships, and new intimacies.

Susanne Cohen MW 93:0-11:20

GNSE 25310 Love Connections: Stories of Famous Couples in Pre-Modern Indian Literature.

(=SALC 25300,RLST 26811,CMLT 25310)

Is love a universal theme? What constitutes a good match? To what extent are love and desire culturally constituted? This course aims to answer such questions through the stories of five famous couples in pre-modern Indian literature. These couples—some divine, some human and some mixed—will provide multiple perspectives on central themes in Indian culture such as love, desire, and devotion as well as on the advantages and disadvantages of being human and/or of being divine where love is concerned. Readings in this course will include translations of classical Sanskrit texts their retellings in various regional languages and a few modern adaptations.

Ilanit Loewy Shacham TR 10:30-11:50

GNSE 27607 Gender in Balkans: Wounded Men, Sworn Virgins, Eternal Mothers (=SOSL

27601,SOSL 37601,CMLT 23902,CMLT 33902)

Through some of the best literary and cinematic works from Southeastern Europe, we will consider the questions of socialization into gendered modes of being – the demands, comforts, pleasures and frustrations that individuals experience while trying to embody and negotiate social categories. We will examine how masculinity and femininity are constituted in the traditional family model, the socialist paradigm, and during post-socialist transitions. We will also contemplate how gender categories are experienced through other forms of identity—the national and socialist especially—as well as how gender is used to symbolize and animate these other identities. The course assumes no prior knowledge of the history of Southeastern Europe, literature or gender theory. All readings in English translation.

Angelina Ilieva TR 1:30-2:50

Winter 2015

GNSE 10100. Problems in the Study of Gender: Gender and Transfeminism

How does transgender change feminism? This course will serve as an introduction to the study of gender, transgender, and trans*feminism, a branch of feminism that forefronts the significance of transgender and gender non-conforming phenomena to feminist projects and ideas and vice versa. Relations between transgender and gender non-conforming individuals and U.S. feminisms have not been easy. This course will begin by exploring some of those contentious encounters in order to address the differing interpretations of gender and social justice at work in each. We will then fan out both backwards and forward in time. We will look at histories of gender non-conforming phenomena in the U.S. that pre-date the coinage of the word transgender, such as those found in George Chauncey's *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*, Esther Newton's *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America*, and various documentations of both the Stonewall riots and the riot at Compton Cafeteria—histories that bring transgender phenomena in (anachronistic) contact with the many sexual histories of the U.S. We will consider as well key texts in feminist theory worrying the relation between gender and sexuality by such authors as Judith Butler, Audre Lorde, and Monique Wittig. Finally, we will turn to essays, novels, manifestoes, films, and documentaries from the 1990s onwards—by such author-activists as Sharon Bridgforth, Eli Clare, Leslie Feinberg, Vic Muñoz, Vivian Namaste, Sylvia Rivera, Dean Spade, Susan Stryker, and Riki Wilchins—in order to explore how transgender and feminism transform each other.

Shanna Carlson TBA

GNSE 15003. Gender and Sexuality in World Civilizations II

Three thematic clusters make up the second quarter. “Politics” focuses on texts related to activism/movement politics and women’s rights as human rights and the question of universalism. “Religion” contextualizes gender and sexuality through examinations of a variety of religious laws and teachings, religious practices, and religious communities. “Economics” looks at slavery, domestic service, prostitution as labor, consumption, and the gendering of labor in contemporary capitalism.

Section 01 – *Kristen Schilt* TR 10:30-11:50

Section 02 – *Rochona Majumdar* MW 1:30-2:50

GNSE 21400/31400 Advanced Theories of Gender and Sexuality

[Course description from Winter 2014, subject to change.] This year the class will focus on affect theory in relation to debates in contemporary queer and feminist theory: rights, normativity, love/desire, sex, history, biopower, labor, affect. Aesthetic objects will be brought into contact with theoretical work: we will be thinking about argument and evidence and also about how mediation and exemplarity matter. Students can choose to write a standard essay or can contribute to constructing class anthologies that will contextualize three aesthetic works: such as Frank O’Hara’s “Having a Coke with You”; Saidiya Hartman’s *Find Your Mother*; Kim Peirce’s *Boys Don’t Cry*. Key authors include: Sara Ahmed, Lee Edelman, Patricia Williams, Jose Muñoz, Judith Butler, Eve Sedgwick, Michael Warner, Mel Chen, Jasbir Puar, Gayatri Gopinath, Leo Bersani, Michael Foucault, Gayatri Spivak, Fred Moten, Jennifer Doyle.

Lauren Berlant TBA

GNSE 24504 What is Masculinity?

This course is a deep-history of changing ideas of normative male behavior, ranging from antiquity to the contemporary world. Whilst masculinity is a concept that we often think of as static, permanent and natural, this course argues that it is, in fact, socially constructed and historically dynamic: what any society thinks of as normal male behavior is always liable to change. More than that, ideals of manliness are often bound up with questions of race, class and power.

Thus, this course looks at the different ideas of masculinity that existed in the ancient world and in the Middle Ages as well the ideals of male behavior at the heart of a number of modernist political projects. The intersections of race and masculinity and changing attitudes toward homosexuality are also studied. This broad range is intended to give students a solid grounding in the academic study of masculinity as well as an understanding of how easily masculinity can change and how regularly it acts as a vehicle for other political concerns.

Aidan Beatty TR 12:00-1:30

GNSE 26213: Art of the Culture Wars? New Queer Cinema, Performance, Visual Art, 1980s-1990s (=ARTH TBA)

This course offers a broad introduction to Gender and Sexuality Studies through the early history of New Queer Cinema, a loose movement of film and video practices coined by critic B. Ruby Rich that developed in parallel to academic queer theory and AIDS activism in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While we will focus on New Queer Cinema’s initial practitioners (for example, Derek Jarman, Isaac Julien, Sadie Benning, Todd Haynes, Gregg Arraki, Tom Kalin, Gus van Sant, and Marlon Riggs), we will also treat New Queer Cinema as an opening toward a broader set of historiographic questions. How did New Queer Cinema function as itself a form of theory in dialogue and friction with early writings on Queer Theory? In what ways did individual works within New Queer Cinema reflect upon previous traditions of gay avant-garde and feminist and lesbian film? Centrally, what are the legacies of New Queer Cinema upon visual art practice?

Methodologically drawing from both Art History and Cinema & Media Studies, this course considers New Queer Cinema in dialogue with queer image-making practices broadly -- from the photographic and performance works at the center of the ‘culture war’ debates about obscenity and state funding, to art works that desired to function as AIDS activism, to the early video installations of Matthew Barney

and Steve McQueen. Topics might include depictions of explicit sexuality, figuration/abstraction, projection, 'negative' images, cinematic gesture, appropriation, subculture, queer aesthetics as contested, collectives, direct action vs. lyricism, and the role of video art. Weekly screenings are a required part of the course.

Solveig Nelson MW 3:00-4:20

Spring 2015

GNSE 10310 Theories of Gender and Sexuality

This course is a new introductory theory course that is a requirement for GSS majors and minors who enter the College in Autumn 2014 or thereafter.

Lauren Berlant, Kristen Schilt TBA

GNSE 20309 Sex, Gender, and Medical Technologies of The Body

This course is designed to explore the intersection of sex, gender, and medical technologies of the body. Drawing from feminist, gender, and queer theoretical perspectives we will examine the ways in which the material and corporeal body is altered, manipulated, and gendered through medical interventions and surgical practices. In particular, we will interrogate the sociohistorical understandings of what material configurations define and determine the "sex" of the body, and how such scientific distinctions interact with concepts of the gender embodiment and trans/queer corporealities. To this end, this course poses to read the body as both object and subject, as we investigate the medical practices surrounding intersex/disorders of sex development (DSD), female cosmetic surgeries, and transgender medicine.

Brandon Hill TBA

GNSE 22804 A Global History of Sexualities

This course is the fourth offering in the course series connected to the "Closeted/Out in the Quadrangles: A History of LGBTQ Life at the University of Chicago" project at CSGS.

Lauren Stokes TBA