

# Gender and Sexuality Studies Course Descriptions

## Spring 2012

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### Undergraduate Level

#### **GNSE 18100/PLSC 20811. Violence and the Politics of Black Women in the United States. *Alexandra Moffett-Bateau.***

From slavery to hip-hop, violence has stayed at the center of the lives of black women within the United States, both in their everyday experience, as well as in discussions about black women in the public sphere. This class will illustrate black women's unique relationship with violence in this country, a relationship, that has, in fact, informed and motivated black women's resistance struggles since slavery. This course is interested in the ways in which experiences of and discussions around violence have shaped the politics of black women in the United States. While physical violence will be at the core of the discussions, we will also interrogate the extent to which other forms of harm, be they emotional or structural, should be considered violent aspects of black women's lives. The first five weeks of the class will provide a historical overview of black women's experiences with violence from slavery through the black power movement. We will explore the ways in which this violence radicalized black women during these periods and informed much of their political mobilization. The last five weeks will interrogate black women's contemporary experiences with violence. We will examine the way in which discussions and experiences of physical, sexual and domestic assault have changed, and how they have stayed the same over time. As a class we will debate whether or not these experiences of violence have informed contemporary black women's political organizing. We will spend our last two weeks discussing how violence should be considered. Should we only concern ourselves with measurable, discrete physical harm? Or should we take into consideration broader arguments about structural, emotional and psychic violence as well?

#### **GNSE 20202/CMST20101. Women Mystery Writers: From the Page to the Screen. *Rebecca West.***

Many distinguished filmmakers have found inspiration in mystery novels written by women. This course is a reading of novels by Patricia Highsmith (*Strangers on a Train*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, *Ripley's Game*) and Ruth Rendell (*Tree of Hands*, *The Bridesmaid*, *Live Flesh*). Time permitting, we also read *Laura* by Vera Caspary, *Bunny Lake Is Missing* by Evelyn Piper, and *Mischief* by Charlotte Armstrong. We also analyze the films based on these novels, directed by such luminaries as Hitchcock, Chabrol, Caviani, Clément, Wenders, Almodóvar, and Preminger. Topics include techniques of film adaptation; transnational dislocations from page to screen; the problematics of gender; and the transformations of "voice," understood both literally and mediatically

#### **GNSE 22504/ANTH 21713. Gender and Sexuality in Modern Africa. *George Paul Meiu.***

This course examines the relationship between gender, sexuality, and the politics of racial, ethnic, and cultural difference in colonial and postcolonial Africa. Since the nineteenth century, gender and sexuality represented central domains of struggle, contestation, and world-making in African contexts. While, on one hand, gender and sexuality offered arguments for the perpetuation of racial and ethnic stereotypes and the (re)production of socio-economic inequalities, on the other hand, they also opened up new venues for imagining and generating livelihoods. Issues pertaining to African genders and sexualities and their relationships to kinship, ritual, or the supernatural were foundational to classical anthropological theories. More recently, research in African contexts also began to challenge conventional theorizations of gender and sexuality and to reevaluate their political implications. This course sets out to familiarize students with the multifaceted aspects of gender and sexuality in Africa. Students will read about kinship, ritual, bridewealth, embodiment, development, queer

worlds, and everyday life in the time of AIDS as a way to engage with a set of theoretical questions: How do representations of racial, ethnic, and cultural Others – as particular kinds of gendered and sexual subjects – shape the subjectivities and lived worlds of those whom they represent? How do people navigate gendered and sexual worlds as a way to create social value and moral worth? And, how can we think and write about gender and sexuality in Africa, while questioning rather than reproducing hegemonic paradigms of alterity?

**GNSE 22505/CMLT 22504. Money and Literature. *Tamara Chin.***

Money and Literature (undergraduate only) This course explores a set of imaginative, anthropological, and economic writings about money. Topics will include economic rhetoric and genres, market values, housework, and ancient and modern economies. We will read Gide's *The Counterfeiters*, Adiga's *White Tiger*, biographies of coins, Chinese economic dialogues, and watch an episode of Suze Orman's *Money Class*. Critical readings will include Mauss, Simmel, Marx, Goux, Rubin, Spivak.

**GNSE 22703/HIST 28707. Queer on the Quads: Uncovering LGBTQ History at the University of Chicago. *Monica Mercado.***

This course will offer undergraduate students an introduction to the practice and interpretation of oral history as a primary source in studying the history of gender and sexuality in the 20th-century U.S. context. Using the University of Chicago as our primary research site, we will examine issues of meaning, memory, documentary, narrative, identity, and community in conversation with the experiences of LGBTQ students, alumni, faculty, and staff at the University of Chicago from the early twentieth century through the present. In the process, students will learn methods of conducting interviews and archival research for a final project that will contribute to the building of a new oral history archive documenting the LGBTQ experience at U of C, as part of the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality's ongoing project "Closeted in the Quadrangles."

**GNSE 23002/LAWS 63312. Workshop: Regulation of Family, Sex, and Gender. *Mary Anne Case.***

This workshop exposes students to recent academic work in the regulation of family, sex, gender, and sexuality and in feminist theory. Workshop sessions, to be held irregularly throughout the winter and spring, are devoted to the presentation and discussion of papers from outside speakers and University faculty. The substance and methodological orientation of the papers will both be diverse. The grade is based on either a series of short papers or a substantial paper, with class participation taken into account. Students are welcome to audit any number of meetings of the workshop. Sessions run on Wednesday from either 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. or 4:30-6 p.m.

**GNSE 24002/LAWS 68001. Marriage. *Mary Anne Case.***

With the aim of making predictions and recommendations for the future, this course examines marriage as a state-sponsored institution, considering its history, its variants (e.g., common law marriage) and close substitutes (e.g., domestic partnership), conceptual frameworks for analyzing it (e.g., analogies between marriage and the business corporation or partnership or relational contract), past and future variants on the joining of one man and one woman (e.g., polygamy and same-sex marriage), and the use of marriage as an ordering principle in various areas of law. The grade is based on a substantial paper, series of short papers, or final examination, with class participation taken into account.

**GNSE 24309/ENGL 24309. Navigating Global Literature. *Darrel Chia.***

Tracing routes through novels and poetry (predominantly post-1970's) that grapple with transborder flows, conjunctions and dislocations, we look at textual and aesthetic responses to different experiences of mobility and globalization. We read works discussing Bay Area intimacies, organ transplant, political ecology and the dictation class.

**GNSE 24325/EALC 24325. Courtesan Culture and the Arts in China from Late Imperial to Modern. Judith Zeitlin.**

Skill in the arts (particularly song, poetry, painting, and games) was a prerequisite for successful courtesans in China, interactions between courtesans and their clients played an important role in generating the literary and musical forms that lay at the heart of entertainment culture. Courtesans, in turn, were a perennially favorite topic for literary and visual representation, and books and magazines related to the pleasure quarter constitute a significant branch in the history of publishing. This year we will compare two crucial and well-documented eras: 1) late Ming through early Qing; and 2) late Qing through the prewar Republican period. We will study a wide range of primary sources, including fiction, poetry, plays, film, popular song, and memoirs, tracing changes and continuities in the relation of courtesan culture to the arts between the two eras. All works will be read in English translation, but students with proficiency in modern or Literary Chinese will be encouraged to do readings in the original.

**GNSE 24703/ENGL 25502 American Women Writing at Mid-Century. Deborah Nelson.**

American Women Writing at the Mid-Century: The absent "s" in the title of this course suggests the ambivalence with which many, though certainly not all, women writers from the mid-20th-century would treat the category of the "woman writer" when later applied to them. While the many women writers from this period enjoyed critical esteem and mass popularity (rarely at the same time, of course), their contributions to both American literature and women's literature remain under-described. This course will survey a range of writing from pulp novel to poetry.

**GNSE 25300/EALC 24305/CRPC 24305. Autobiographical Writings: Gender and Modern Korea. Kyeong-Hee Choi.**

This course explores the intersections between the genre of autobiography in a broad sense (what may be broadly called "self-writing") and the gendered subjectivity of Koreans formed and experienced both inside and outside of Korea. The authors of these self-writings are Koreans or ethnic Koreans, but the original languages they write in include English and Japanese; the main texts include literature, confined to non-fictional genres. While closely reading selected self-writings in their English renditions, students will be simultaneously studying theoretical writings on autobiography and gender. By paying special attention to those sites in which those self-writings complicate theoretical or critical debates, this course aims to identify and explore the cultural and political specificity that characterizes the needs, desires, and contexts informing Korean autobiographical storytelling.

**GNSE 27100/SOCI 20107/30107. Sociology of Human Sexuality. Edward Laumann.**

After briefly reviewing several biological and psychological approaches to human sexuality as points of comparison, this course explores the sociological perspective on sexual conduct and its associated beliefs and consequences for individuals and society. Substantive topics include gender relations; life-course perspectives on sexual conduct in youth, adolescence, and adulthood; social epidemiology of sexually transmitted infections (e.g., AIDS); sexual partner choice and turnover; and the incidence/prevalence of selected sexual practices.

**GNSE 28210/LAWS 99301/PHIL 25209. Emotion, Reason, and Law. Martha Nussbaum.**

Emotions figure in many areas of the law, and many legal doctrines (from reasonable provocation in homicide to mercy in criminal sentencing) invite us to think about emotions and their relationship to reason. In addition, some prominent theories of the limits of law make reference to emotions: thus Lord Devlin and, more recently, Leon Kass have argued that the disgust of the average member of society is a sufficient reason for rendering a practice illegal, even though it does no harm to others. Emotions, however, are all too rarely studied closely, with the result that both theory and doctrine are often confused. The first part of this course will study major theories of emotion, asking about the relationship between emotion and cognition, focusing on philosophical accounts, but also learning from anthropology and psychology. We will ask how far emotions embody cognitions, and of what type, and then we will ask whether there is reason to consider some or all emotions "irrational" in a normative sense. We then turn to the criminal law, asking how specific emotions figure in doctrine and theory: anger, fear,

compassion, disgust, guilt, and shame. Legal areas considered will include self-defense, reasonable provocation, mercy, victim impact statements, sodomy laws, sexual harassment, shame-based punishments. Next, we turn to the role played by emotions in constitutional law and in thought about just institutions - a topic that seems initially unpromising, but one that will turn out to be full of interest. Other topics will be included as time permits. Undergraduates may enroll only with the permission of the instructor.

**GNSE 28404/ENGL 25944/46101. Lines of Transmission: Comics and Autobiography. *Hillary Chute, Alison Bechdel.***

This course will incorporate attention to the rich and complex procedure of creating books like *Fun Home* and *Are You My Mother?* (Bechdel) with other primary readings and a wealth of secondary works on autobiography and attendant issues concerning narrative theory, historiography, gender, and format and book arts. In this vital and intense course students would learn about how to produce visual stories themselves as well as theorize about them.

**GNSE 28505. What's Queer? What's Theory?. *Jay Sosa.***

This course explores the connection between a series of texts that have emerged in the academy under the sign “queer theory,” as well as the relationship between queer theories and politics to the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. In our readings and conversations, we engage with classic and contemporary themes within queer theory (e.g. performativity, affect, publics, intimacy and kinship). We also consider the genre conventions, historical influences, political orientations and disciplinary exigencies that often lend coherence around queer theory. And we look at some expanding fields that increasingly reference queer theory (e.g. queer ecology, disability studies).

At the same time, we aim to build a conceptual toolkit around the readings, and to use this toolkit to question who/which/how counts as ‘queer’ and what/where/when can be called ‘theory.’ Just because readings are often theoretical does not mean our discussion must be abstract. In-class discussion topics and take-home writing assignments focus on how to pursue queer questions beyond scholarly inquiry. Seminar participants are encouraged to bring examples from arts, media, politics, current events and everyday situations. In preparation for writing about these examples, we will look at how queer knowledge is produced, and how it can be mobilized. Finally, in two short papers, participants will try their hands at writing queer critiques.

## **Graduate Level**

**GNSE 32200/RLST 27304. Religion, Sex, Politics and Release in Ancient India: The *Kamasutra* and the *Arthashastra*. *Wendy Doniger.***

A study of the indebtedness of the *Kamasutra*, the ancient Indian text of erotic love, to the *Arthashastra*, the ancient Indian text of political science. We will read both texts carefully, side by side, and look for each in the other, considering the role of politics in the formulation of ideas about sex, and for the uses of sex in a textbook of political science. As both texts justify their often Machiavellian ethics by paying lip service (or more?) to religion (*dharma*), we will also keep an eye out for the ways in which both texts both manipulate myth and ritual and, on occasion, seem to show genuine concern, or at least uneasiness, about religion. Reading: The *Kamasutra*, translated by Wendy Doniger and Dushir Kakar. The *Arthashastra*, translations by Patrick Olivelle (in press) and by R.P. Kangle.

**GNSE 33002/LAWS 63312. Workshop: Regulation of Family, Sex, and Gender. *Mary Anne Case.***

This workshop exposes students to recent academic work in the regulation of family, sex, gender, and sexuality and in feminist theory. Workshop sessions, to be held irregularly throughout the winter and spring, are devoted to the presentation and discussion of papers from outside speakers and University faculty. The substance and methodological orientation of the papers will both be diverse. The grade is based

on either a series of short papers or a substantial paper, with class participation taken into account. Students are welcome to audit any number of meetings of the workshop. Sessions run on Wednesday from either 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. or 4:30-6 p.m.

**GNSE 34002/LAWS 68001. Marriage. *Mary Anne Case.***

With the aim of making predictions and recommendations for the future, this course examines marriage as a state-sponsored institution, considering its history, its variants (e.g., common law marriage) and close substitutes (e.g., domestic partnership), conceptual frameworks for analyzing it (e.g., analogies between marriage and the business corporation or partnership or relational contract), past and future variants on the joining of one man and one woman (e.g., polygamy and same-sex marriage), and the use of marriage as an ordering principle in various areas of law. The grade is based on a substantial paper, series of short papers, or final examination, with class participation taken into account.

**GNSE 34300/LAWS 43701. Work and Gender. *Naomi Schoenbaum.***

This seminar will examine legal issues related to employment and gender. The seminar will begin with a theoretical exploration of the two key themes--work and gender--through the lens of sociological, economic, legal, and feminist scholarship. The seminar will then turn to consider contemporary issues on the law of gender and the workplace. Topics will include sexual harassment, pregnancy discrimination, caregiving accommodations and the intersection of work and family, pay equity, occupational segregation, gender stereotyping, contingent work and low-income workers, and issues facing gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender workers. Grades will be based on response papers and class participation.

**GNSE 35450/ENGL 35450. Modernism and Gender in Black and White . *Adrienne Brown.***

In the last twenty years, critics like George Hutchinson have pushed us to consider American Modernism as a site of interracial encounter, recovering the lines of influence between black and white aesthetic and philosophical traditions. However, this conversation remains mostly a conversation about men, as the privileged sites for thinking about Modernism across the color line, from pragmatism to the New Negro Anthology, remain highly masculine ones.

**GNSE 35802/ARTH 34811. From the Abject to the Sublime: The Body in Medieval Art and Visual Culture. *Aden Kumler.***

In the Middle Ages the human body provoked contention, ambivalence, desire, celebration and fear. Organized thematically, this course examines how medieval art and visual culture represented the human (and semi-human) form. Our discussions will consider representations of the exalted body of Christ, the courtly body of male and female aristocrats, the anatomical body of medical literature, the body at prayer and in erotic play, monstrous bodies at the edges of the world, the stereotyped body of the Jew, and the virginal body of the saint. One goal of the course is to examine how medieval representations and perceptions of the human form negotiated various forms of power, desire, fear, and aggression in ways that resemble but also profoundly differ from today.

**GNSE 41711/CMLT 41711/GRMN 41712/FREN 41712. Fashion and Modernity. *Barbara Vinken.***

The relation between fashion and modernity has always been taken for granted. Indeed, it is guaranteed in the very etymology of the French and German words “mode” and “modernité” (Mode und Moderne). Yet, on closer inspection, there is a blind spot in this relation in that fashion seems rather to be the other of modernity. The modern discourse of fashion testifies to the ambivalences and paradoxes in this relation. From the beginning until now, it is strangely split: there is fashion and fashion. Properly speaking, men's fashion is not really fashionable. The perfectly functional suit without superfluous adornment is, in its world-wide constancy through the centuries, almost invariably classical. Its staggering universal success is due to the fact that it is the ideal modern dress: beautiful, because functional. Women's fashion, on the contrary, is a remnant of the old, effeminate aristocracy — a frivolous frill, an all-in-all dysfunctional ornament, badly in need of thorough modernization. The “new woman“ is born in agonizing pain and perpetual fallbacks: while Chanel almost lead us toward a functional feminine form, Dior's new look was a setback. It brought back the unhealthy, restrictive corset and offered a slap in the face to the

modern aesthetic dogma of “form follows function”. Fashion therefore seems to be the locus of a strange intimation of the political set against the common politics of modernity. The course will center around this blind spot between fashion and modernity and the new gendering of fashion in the bourgeois, post-feudal era. Texts by Jean Jacques Rousseau, Barbey d'Aurevilly, Charles Baudelaire, Heinrich Heine, Georg Simmel, René König, Alfred Loos, Roland Barthes, Anne Hollander. There will be a reader for the students.

**GNSE 50101/LAWS 61512. Workshop: Law and Philosophy. Martha Nussbaum, Ryan Long.**

This is a seminar/workshop most of whose participants are faculty from various related disciplines. It admits approximately ten students. Its aim is to study, each year, a topic that arises in both philosophy and the law and to ask how bringing the two fields together may yield mutual illumination. Typically, half of the sessions are led by local faculty, half by visiting speakers. Several sessions involve students only, and are led by the instructors. The leader assigns readings for the session, and the session consists of a brief introduction by the leader, followed by structured questioning by the two faculty coordinators, followed by general discussion. Students write a 20-25 page seminar paper at the end of the year. The seminar satisfies the Law School Writing Requirement. The schedule of meetings will be announced by mid-September, and prospective students should submit their credentials to both instructors by September 15. Past themes have included: practical reason; equality; privacy; autonomy; global justice; pluralism and toleration; war; sexuality and family. Students are admitted by permission of the instructors. They should submit a c.v. and a statement (reasons for interest in the workshop, relevant background in law and/or philosophy) to the instructors by e mail. Usual participants include graduate students in philosophy, political science, and divinity, and law students.