

**WGSS 290C: History of Race & Sexuality in the U.S.  
Fall 2020**

Instructor: Derek Siegel  
Instructor Pronouns: they/them/theirs  
Class Meetings: Wed 2:30-3:45pm EST

Email: dpsiegel@soc.umass.edu  
Office Hours: Mon 2:30-3:45pm EST

**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary feminist study of sexuality and race. Its primary goal is to provide a forum for students to consider histories of the concepts of sexuality and race in the U.S. We will explore these concepts through theoretical frameworks within and outside of WGSS. It will emphasize the links rather than differences between theory and practice and between cultural, material, and historical approaches to bodies, race, gender, and sexuality. Throughout the course, we will consider contemporary U.S. politics in light of histories of racial and sexual formations, and how these formations shape our own subjectivities.

**Course Objectives**

- To provide a critical introduction to the concepts of sexuality and race in the U.S.
- To provide an introduction to the historical interconnectedness of formations of race and sexuality in the U.S.
- To emphasize the role of sexuality and race in the formation of the modern self and its social, legal, political, and cultural frames of reference
- To insist on the necessary relationship between theory and lived experiences of bodies

**Readings**

I have assigned a mix between journal articles, think pieces, book chapters, and other texts. Readings should be done for the date they are listed under on the syllabus. Sometimes I assign only excerpts of a reading, so please pay careful attention to page numbers. Lastly, note that all readings are available for free either on Moodle or online (links provided in the syllabus).

Anytime during the week – Spend at least 20 minutes on Slack reading and commenting on various discussions (we'll review slack during the first week, don't worry if you're not familiar). Channels for you to engage in include: readings (what stands out, favorite quotes, questions, etc), discussion questions (start and/or continue the conversation), and general (how do you see the content connecting to the news or other aspects of your life? Share and discuss outside sources).

**Course Requirements & Evaluations**

**1. Active Participation (25%)**

Based on 1) attending and participating in Wednesday discussion groups, 2) your participation on the Slack workspace (students should spend at least 20 minutes on Slack/week, reading others people's comments *and* posting your own), and 3) coming to office hours during Weeks 2 or 3. The participation grade will be based, in part, on several self-evaluations throughout the semester.

**2. Unit Response Papers (50%)** – *Prompts + rubrics available at least two weeks before deadline*

Paper 1 (**Due 9/14**) – 10% (2-3 Pages) – **Reflection on Key Terms**

Paper 2 (**Due 10/7**) – 10% (2-3 Pages) – **TBD**

Paper 3 (**Due 11/4**) – 15% (4-5 Pages) - **Either individual or group research paper**

Proposal due by 10/14 (3%). Paper due by 11/4 (12%).

Paper 4 (**Due 12/4**) – 15% (4-5 Pages) – **Reflection Paper**

### 3. Midterm Exam (10%)

Midterm will include 3-5 short answer questions (~paragraph per question) that cover readings, lecture, and our discussion questions. The exam will be posted on Moodle at 5pm EST on Wednesday October 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be due on Friday October 21<sup>st</sup> at 5pm EST.

*I'll provide some sort of study guide at least one week before the exam.*

### 4. Final Exam (15%) – Date of the Final Exam TBD by University.

Final will include 4-6 short answer questions (~paragraph per question) that cover readings, lectures, and our discussion questions. You will have 48 hours to complete the exam, and I will provide some sort of study guide at least one week before the exam.

### **Academic Honesty & Writing Support**

I expect you to write your own original content and adhere to high levels of academic honesty. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary action and will receive an “F” in the course. You are encouraged to read and discuss these issues widely; however, make sure to use your own words and cite others when you’re referencing ideas that are not your own. If you’re overwhelmed, please don’t plagiarize! I’m a resource, as well as the research librarians and the Writing Center, which provides free, 1-on-1 help by appointment.

### **Disability & General Accommodations**

Whether or not you have official disability accommodations, I encourage you to meet with me in office hours or via email to discuss any issues you may anticipate this semester. The sooner we talk, the better! I understand that we’re living in a pandemic and that you all are not only taking other classes, but negotiating a wide range of other stressors and responsibilities. Which is to say that I’ll do my best to reasonably accommodate your needs. Don’t hesitate to reach out.

*Note: For privacy reasons, I will not be recording our classes. I will, however, post my lecture notes/outlines for the information I plan on presenting at the beginning of class. You should also be in the practice of asking friends for notes for the weeks that you miss.*

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Unit 1: Introductions + Key Terms**

*Week One – Intersecting Systems of Oppression*

Mon. August 24<sup>th</sup> – **This is the one Monday we will meet.**

*Please Read this Syllabus in Full.*

*Create Profile on Slack (check inbox for complete instructions)*

Wednesday August 26<sup>th</sup>.

1. Coaston, Jane. <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/5/20/18542843/intersectionality-conservatism-law-race-gender-discrimination>

2. Johnson, Allan G. 1988. "Patriarchy. The System: An It, Not a He, a Them, or an Us."

*Women's Lives: Multicultural Perspectives.* pp.68-76.

*Week Two – Key Terms: Race & White Supremacy*

Mon. Aug 31<sup>st</sup>

1. Smith, Andrea. 2015. “Heteropatriarchy and the three pillars of white supremacy: Rethinking women of color organizing.” Pp. 66-73.

2. Mock, Brentin. 2019. Article in the Atlantic. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-09-03/the-amazing-resiliency-of-white-wealth>

Wednesday Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>

1. Smedley & Smedley, 2005. "Race as Biology is Fiction, Racism as a Social Problem is Real." *American Psychologist*, 60(1) pp. 16-26.
2. Blaque, Kat. "The History of Whiteness." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmHct5IHxrA>

*Week Three – Key Terms: Sex and Sexualities*

Mon Sept 7<sup>th</sup> \*\*Last Day of Add Drop (Labor Day – Classes Held)

1. Serano, Julia. 2013. "A Word About Words." *Excluded*. Seal Press, pp. **8-20**.
2. Rubin, Gayle. 1984. "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." Excerpt: "Sexual Thoughts." **Pp. 148-155**.

Wed Sept 9<sup>th</sup>

1. Foucault, Michel. 1990. *History of Sexuality Vol. I*, pp. **103-107**.
2. Weeks, Jeffrey. 1989. "Construction of Homosexuality." **Pp. 134-147**.

## **Unit 2: Producing "Other-ness": A Historical Perspective**

*Week Four – Eugenics & Reproductive Justice*

Mon Sept 14<sup>th</sup>

1. Kline, Wendy. 2001. "Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom." **Pp. 16-29**.
2. "America Created Eugenics, Not Hitler." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxPCBNuNQoc>
3. Krase, Kathryn. 2014. "History of Forced Sterilization and Current U.S. Abuses." <https://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/book-excerpts/health-article/forced-sterilization/>

Wed Sept 16<sup>th</sup>

1. Ross, Loretta and Rickie Solinger. 2017. "Reproductive Justice: An Introduction." **P. 58-73**
2. 10 Reasons to Rethink Overpopulation – Population & Development Program @ Hampshire
3. Fried, Marlene Gerber. 2008. "10 Reasons to Rethink Reproductive "Choice." **P. 1-2**

*Week Five – Immigration, Nation, Producing "the Other"*

Mon Sept 21<sup>st</sup>

1. Molina, Natalia. 2014. "Placing Mexican Immigration within the Larger Landscape of Race Relations in the United States," *How Race Gets Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the historical power of racial scripts* **pp. 19-28, 34-38**.
2. Reilly, Katie. 2016. <https://time.com/4473972/donald-trump-mexico-meeting-insult/>

Wed Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>

1. Weinbaum, Alys Eve. 2007. "Nation," *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, pp. **175-80**.
2. Friedman, Uri. 2012. "American Exceptionalism: A Short History." **P 1-5**.

*Week Six – Policing Bodies, Constructing "Normal"*

Mon Sept 28<sup>th</sup>

1. Carter, Julian B. 2007. "Introduction." In "The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America, 1880-1940." **First 12 pages – I'm only including what you need to read**
2. Henderson, Kevin. 2020. "J.K. Rowling and the White Supremacist History of "Biological Sex." [shorturl.at/suvK3](http://shorturl.at/suvK3) [copy and paste this link – it should work!]

Wed Sept 30<sup>th</sup>

1. Forbes, Kate. 2012. "Do These Earrings Make Me Look Dumb: Diversity, Privilege, and Heteronormative Perceptions of Competence in the Academy." **Pp. 34-44.**
2. McRuer, Robert. 2002. "Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence." **88-97.**
3. Driver, Betsy. Interface Project: Communicating the Experience of Intersex People. <https://www.interfaceproject.org/stories#/betsy-driver/>

### Unit 3: Contemporary Sexual and Racial Politics

*Week Seven – Black Sexual Politics & Black Feminism*

Mon Oct 5<sup>th</sup>

1. Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images." In *Black Feminist Thought*. **Pp. 69-84.**
2. Harris-Perry, Melissa. 2011. "Crooked Room." In *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*. **Pp. 51-57.**

Wed Oct 7<sup>th</sup>

1. Lorde, Audre. 1984. "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power." In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press Feminist Series. **Pp. 93-103.**
2. hooks, bell. 2000. "Community: Loving Communion." In *All About Love*. **Pp. 127-136.**

*Week Eight – "Just Not Attracted to People Like You": Manufacturing Desire*

Mon Oct 12<sup>th</sup>

1. Strings, Sabrina. 2019. "Intro." *Fearing the Fat Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia*. **p.8-20**
2. Hunter, Margaret. 2007. "The Persistent Problem of Colorism: Skin Tone, Status, and Inequality." *Sociology Compass*, 1(1). **pp. 237-240; 246-250.**

Wed Oct 14<sup>th</sup>

1. Sara C. – Article on Medium. <https://medium.com/@QSE/when-you-say-i-would-never-date-a-trans-person-its-transphobic-here-s-why-aa6fdcf59aca>
2. Robinson, Brandon A. 2015. "Personal Preference as the New Racism: Gay Desire and Racial Cleansing in Cyberspace." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 1(2), **pp. 317-330.**

*Week Nine – Creating the Modern LGBT Movement*

Mon Oct 19<sup>th</sup>

1. Stryker, Susan. 2008. *Transgender History*. "Stonewall" and "Stonewall's Transgender Legacy." Seattle: Seal Press. **Pp. 121-129.**
2. Rivera, Sylvia. 1973. "Y'all Better Quiet Down" Speech. <https://vimeo.com/234353103>
3. Gould, Deborah B. 2012. "ACT UP, Racism, and Question of How to Use History." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 98(1): **pp.54-61.**

Wed Oct 21<sup>st</sup>

1. Read *all three* "Against Equality" Memos (they're each extremely short!)

- <http://www.againstequality.org/about/marriage/>  
<http://www.againstequality.org/about/military/>  
<http://www.againstequality.org/about/prison/>
2. Krell, Elías Costanzo. 2017. "Is Transmisogyny Killing Trans Women of Color: Black Trans Feminisms and the Exigencies of White Femininity." *TSQ* 4(2): pp. 226-239.
  3. Willis, Raquel. 2020. "I Was Born for This Time: Angelica Ross is Black, Trans, and Fearless." [shorturl.at/fgxA7](http://shorturl.at/fgxA7) (copy and paste the link!) - *this is so good!*

*Week Ten – Sex Work & Racial Justice*

Mon Oct 26<sup>th</sup>

1. Poltras, Andrew. "What Constitutes Sex Work." <http://www.hopesandfears.com/hopes/now/question/216863-what-constitutes-sex-work>
2. Jackson, Crystal and Jennifer Reed. 2016. "Missing Rights + Misplaced Justice for Sex Workers in the United States." pp. 15-21
3. Scaccia, Annamarya." 2018. <https://rewire.news/article/2018/04/02/sesta-already-devastating-impacts-sex-workers-just-like-predicted/>

Wed Oct 28<sup>th</sup>

1. Khan, Cristina. 2019. "Constructing Eroticized Latinidad: Negotiating Profitability in the Stripping Industry." *Gender & Society* 33(5): pp. 702-718.

**Unit 4: Anti-Racism & Solidarity**

*Week Eleven – Politicizing Everyday Life*

Mon Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>

1. Kendall, Mikki. 2020. "Solidarity is Still for White Women." In *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women a Movement Forgot*. Pp. 1-14.
2. AwesomelyLuvvie (2018). <https://www.awesomelylucvvie.com/2018/04/weaponizing-white-women-tears.html>
3. Graham, Renée. (2019). <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2019/04/30/black-women-aren-here-save-america-from-itself/GmP5RedfNptOzOmEoUyAJP/story.html>

Wed Nov 4<sup>th</sup>

1. Lorde, Audre. 1984. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Pp. 110-114.
2. Napikoski, Linda. <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-personal-is-political-slogan-origin-3528952>

*Week Twelve – Transnational Feminisms*

Mon Nov 9<sup>th</sup>

1. Enloe, Cynthia. 2014. "Understanding Militarism, Militarization, and the Linkages with Globalization." Pp. 7-9.
2. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 2003. "Antiglobalization Pedagogies." In *Under Western Eyes: Revisited, Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles*. Pp. 517-524.
3. Sedghi, Hamideh. 2006. "Global Feminism, Local Agendas and Actions." Pp. 157-159.

Wed Nov 11<sup>th</sup>

1. Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2002. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others." pp. 783-790.

2. Jordan, June. 1982/2003. Report from the Bahamas. *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* 3 (2): pp. 6-16.

Week Thirteen – **To be Determined Based. Check Newest Version of Syllabus**  
Mon. Nov 16<sup>th</sup> and Wed. Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>