

GNSE 23119 - Transnational Queer Politics and Practices

M-W 3:00-4:20PM

GSRP 103

I designed this interdisciplinary course for a class of 10-25 upper-level undergraduates who have had some previous exposure to gender and sexuality studies. The schedule is based on a quarter system, with two meetings per week over the course of ten weeks of instruction.

Course Description

This course aims to examine gender and sexual practices and identities in a transnational perspective. As people and ideas move across national, cultural, and racial borders, how is sexuality negotiated and redefined? How are concepts such as “global queerness” and the globalization of sexualities leveraged for change? How are queer identities and practices translated, both culturally and linguistically? To explore transnational articulations of queerness we will draw on a range of theoretical perspectives, including postcolonial, feminist, queer, and indigenous approaches to the study of sexualities. We will engage with scholarship on the politics of global gay rights discourses, on the sexual politics of migration, and on the effects of colonialism and neoliberal capitalism. By analyzing queer experiences and practices in a transnational context, our goal is to decenter and challenge Western-centric epistemologies and to dive into the complexities of cultural representations of queerness around the globe.

Course Requirements

Class Participation	20%
Reaction Posts	20%
Short Assignments	30%
Final Paper	30%
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Total	100%

Class Participation: I take attendance each day, and expect you to participate in discussions. To do so effectively, read all of the weekly assigned material BEFORE the class meets (e.g. you will read all of the readings listed under Wednesday of Week One *before* the class meets on Wednesday of Week One). In addition, each class period you’ll be expected to bring to class at least one question or comment based on the readings for that day. And remember – a good participator is one who speaks, but also one who knows how to listen to others.

- As part of your participation requirement, I will also ask you to attend at least ONE event organized by the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality during the Spring. You can attend any event you like, I will ask you to send me a brief memo (~1-2 paragraphs) about it.

Discussion Posts: Each week, there will be a group discussion board on Canvas. In Weeks 2-9, you will be responsible for posting 250-300 word reactions to the readings. These responses are your opportunity to critically engage with each other about the readings, formulate questions that emerged as you read, and reflect on how the current week's readings relate to previous material and class discussion. I welcome both academic and non-academic contributions, so feel free to be creative—if you have a non-academic example of the themes covered in a week's readings, from movies to tv shows to videogames, you can bring that up in your response. Please cut and paste your postings into the Canvas Discussion Board. Reaction posts are due at 5pm the day BEFORE class. **** You may opt out of one day of posting without penalty****

Short Assignments: There will be two short assignments, both designed to help you think about your final project. The first assignment will be a preliminary annotated bibliography on a topic of your choice (connected to the themes of the course and subject to my approval). You don't need to have a fully formed research question at this point, just a broad research interest. You will submit a one-paragraph description of this interest and an annotated list of at least five sources you have identified (class readings don't count) on Week 4.

The second assignment will be a research proposal (3-4 pages) due on Week 7. The proposal will build on the sources you have identified in the previous assignment, and it will be the starting point for your final project for class. The proposal must address the following:

- 1) Research question (what is your thesis?)
- 2) Relevance (why have you chosen this topic? Why is it important?)
- 3) Relation to class themes (how will your empirical project be related to the theoretical issues we have discussed in class?)
- 4) Reflection on potential issues (do you have concerns about the topic? Availability of sources? Anything else?)
- 5) Revised bibliography of at least 8 sources (including the original 5)

Final Paper: Your final paper (10-12 pages, double spaced) will be **due via email on Monday of Week 11 (June 10) at 5pm**. As mentioned above, the topic for the final paper is open as long as it is related to the topic of the course. I encourage everyone to come to office hours to discuss your paper ideas.

Classroom Policies: My goal is for all students to feel included in the course. I am readily accessible via email and office hours to address any concerns that may arise. In order to be successful in this course, it's important to take care of yourself, including your mental and physical health. If you are encountering any challenges, please come see me sooner rather than later so I can help you identify appropriate resources available to you. Please also be aware that some issues discussed in this course may present personal "triggers." If you need more guidance about the content of course materials in advance, please let me know and I will be happy to provide it. I am committed to meeting the needs of all my students. If you need any class-related accommodations, please visit: <http://disabilities.uchicago.edu/contacts/index.shtml>

Assignment Policies:

- Any suspected academic dishonesty in the form of cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office. The University's policy on academic integrity can be found here:
<https://college.uchicago.edu/advising/academic-integrity-student-conduct>
- Late papers (papers not turned in before the class period when they are due) will be penalized one third of a letter grade per day, and will not be accepted after 7 days. I will grant paper extensions in the case of an emergency - please notify me so I can make reasonable accommodations to ensure your inclusion and success in the course.
- Formatting: all assignments must be double spaced, standard 12-point font, with 1-inch margins.
- Incompletes and Withdraws: Under university rules, an incomplete is only available if you have completed at least 2/3 of the course assignments. If you are seeking an incomplete, please be in touch with your advisor and myself as early as possible. I will support a student's request to withdraw from the course at any time.
- Class notes: I will not provide notes on class material for missed classes. It is your responsibility to locate notes from one of your classmates.

Course Books

No books will be required for this course. Individual chapters from the following texts will be made available on Canvas:

Altman, Dennis. 2001. *Global Sex*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Leap, William L., and Tom Boellstorff (eds). 2004. *Speaking in Queer Tongues: Globalization and Gay Language*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Cantu, Lionel. 2009. *The Sexuality of Migration: Border Crossing and Mexican Immigrant Men*. New York: New York University Press.

Carrillo, Hector. 2017. *Pathways of Desire: The Sexual Migration of Mexican Gay Men*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Manderson, Lenore, and Margaret Jolly. 1997. *Sites of Desire/Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Morgansen, Scott. 2011. *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Munro, Brenna. 2012. *South Africa and the Dream of Love to Come: Queer Sexuality and the Struggle for Freedom*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Najmabadi, Afsaneh. 2013. *Professing Selves: Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Iran*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Savci, Evren. *Queer in Translation: Paradoxes of Westernization and Sexual Others in the Turkish Nation* [book project in progress]

Thoreson, Ryan R. 2014. *Transnational LGBT Activism: Working for Sexual Rights Worldwide*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Course Readings

Please read all of the readings for each class period in the order listed. All readings are available on Canvas under “Modules.”

Week One: Global Identities *Please note the unusual schedule*

- (W 4/3): Grewal, Inderpal, and Caren Kaplan. 2001. “Global Identities: Theorizing Transnational Studies of Sexuality.” *GLQ* 7(4): 663-670
Altman, Dennis. 1997. “Global Gaze/Global Gays.” *GLQ* 3(4): 417-436
Global Sex: Introduction
- (F 4/5): Oswin, Natalie. 2006. “Decentering Queer Globalization: Diffusion and the “Global Gay.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 24: 777-790.
Global Sex, Chapter 6: “The Globalization of Sexual Identities”
Rofel, Lisa. 2009. “Qualities of Desire: Imagining Gay Identities in China.” *GLQ* 5(4): 451-474

Week Two: Nationalism, Homonationalism, Postnationalism

- (M 4/8) Puar, Jasbir. 2011 “Citation and Censorship: The Politics of Talking About the Sexual Politics of Israel.” *Feminist Legal Studies* 19: 133-142
Rankin, Pauline. 2000. “Sexualities and National Identities: Re-Imagining Queer Nationalism.” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35(2): 176-196
South Africa and the Dream of Love to Come, Chapter 4: “City Sexualities: Richard Rive’s Queer Nostalgia”
- (W 4/10) Kahlina, Katja. 2015. “Local Histories, European LGBT Designs: Sexual Citizenship, Nationalism, and “Europeanisation” in Post-Yugoslav Croatia and Serbia.” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 49: 73-83
Schotten, C. Heike. 2016. “Homonationalism: From Critique to Diagnosis, or, We Are All Homonational Now.” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 18(3): 351-370
South Africa and the Dream of Love to Come, Chapter 7: “Queer Citizenship, Queer Exile: K. Sello Duiker and Zanele Muholi.”

Week Three: Queer Cultures Beyond Global/Local Dichotomies

- (M 4/15): Jackson, Peter. 2009. "Capitalism and Global Queering: National Markets, Parallels among Sexual Cultures, and Multiple Queer Modernities." *GLQ* 15(3): 357-395
- Bie, Bijie, and Lu Tang. 2016 "Chinese Gay Men's Coming Out Narratives: Connecting Social Relationship to Co-Cultural Theory." *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*: 1-16
- McLelland, Mark. 2000. "Is there a Japanese 'Gay Identity'?" *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 2(4): 459-472
- (W 4/17): Carrillo, Héctor. 1999. "Cultural Change, Hybridity and Male Homosexuality in Mexico." *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 1(3): 223-238
- Swarr, Amanda Lock, and Richa Nagar. 2004. "Dismantling Assumptions: Interrogating 'Lesbian' Struggles for Identity and Survival in India and South Africa." *Signs* 29(2): 491-516

Week Four: Translating Queerness

- (M 4/22) *Speaking in Queer Tongues*, Introduction
- Queer in Translation*, Introduction
- Ritchie, Jason. 2010. "How Do You Say 'Come Out of the Closet in Arabic?': Queer Activism and the Politics of Visibility in Israel-Palestine." *GLQ* 16.4: 557-575
- **** **Annotated Bibliography Due Before Class** ****
- (W 4/24): *Speaking in Queer Tongues*, Chapter 7: " 'Authentic, of Course!': Gay Language in Indonesia and Cultures of Belonging"
- Queer in Translation*, "Who Killed Ahmed Yildiz? Seeking Justice in Modernizing Turkey"
- Lim, Song Hwee. 2008. "How to Be Queer in Taiwan: Translation, Appropriation, and the Construction of a Queer Identity in Taiwan." Pp. 235-250 in Fran Martin et al (eds.) *AsiaPacifiQueer: Rethinking Genders and Sexualities*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press

Week Five: Circuits of Desire (1) - Migration

- (M 4/29) *Pathways of Desire*, Introduction + Chapter 4: "A Gay Culture of Migration?"
- Luibhéid, Eithne. 2008. "Queer/Migration: An Unruly Body of Scholarship." *GLQ* 14(2/3): 169-190

- (W 5/1) *The Sexuality of Migration*, Chapter 1: “Sexuality, Migration, and Identity” + Chapter 3: “Border Crossers: Seeking Asylum and Maneuvering Identities.”
Fajardo, Kale Bantigue. 2008. “Translating Filipino and Filipino American Tomboy Masculinities through Global Migration and Seafaring.” *GLQ* 14(2/3): 403-424

Week Six: Circuits of Desire (2) - Globalization

- (M 5/6) Sinnott, Megan. 2012. “Korean-Pop, *Tom Gay Kings*, *Les Queens* and the Capitalist Transformation of Sex/Gender Categories in Thailand.” *Asian Studies Review* 36: 453-474
Lim, Eng-Beng. 2005. “Glocalqueering in New Asia: The Politics of Performing Gay in Singapore.” *Theatre Journal* 57(3): 383-405
- (W 5/8) Howe, Cymene, and Jakob Rigi. “Transnationalizing Desire: Sexualizing Cultures and Commodifying Sexualities.” *Ethnos* 74(3): 297-306
Hoang, Kimberly Kay. 2014. “Flirting with Capital: Negotiating Perceptions of Pan-Asian Ascendancy and Western Decline in Global Sex Work.” *Social Problems* 61(4): 507-529

Week Seven: Local Activism

- (M 5/13) In-class film screening:
S. Leo Chiang and Johnny Symons. 2016. *Out Run*

****** Research Proposal Due Before Class ******

- (W 5/15) Levitt, Peggy. and Sally Merry. 2009. “Vernacularization on the ground: local uses of global women's rights in Peru, China, India and the United States. *Global Networks* 9: 441–461
McAllister, John. 2012. “Tswanarising global gayness: the ‘unAfrican’ argument, Western gay media imagery, local responses and gay culture in Botswana.” *Culture, Health, and Sexuality* 15(1): 88-101

Week Eight: Transnational Activism

- (M 5/20): *Transnational LGBT Activism*, Introduction + Chapter 3: “Fusing Human Rights and Sexual Politics: Advocating for LGBT Human Rights Worldwide.”
Stychin, Carl. 2004. “Same-Sex Sexualities and the Globalization of Human Rights Discourse.” *McGill Law Journal* 39: 952-968
- (W 5/22): Hildebrandt, Timothy. 2012. “Development and Division: the effect of transnational linkages and local politics on LGBT activism in China.” *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(77): 845-862
Offord, Baden. 2013. “Queer Activist Intersections in Southeast Asia: Human Rights and Cultural Studies.” *Asian Studies Review* 37(3): 335-349

Week Nine: Decolonizing Sexualities (1)

- (M 5/27): Memorial Day – No class
- (W 5/29): *Decolonizing Sexualities*, Foreword: “Decolonial Body-Geo-Politics at Large” + Prologue: “Paris Black Pride 2016” + Introduction
Cheney, Kristen. 2012. “Locating Neocolonialism, “Tradition,” and Human Rights in Uganda’s “Gay Death Penalty”.” *African Studies Review* 55(2): 77-95

Week Ten: Decolonizing Sexualities (2)

- (M 6/3): *Spaces Between Us*, Chapter 4: “Ancient Roots through Settled Land: Imagining Indigeneity and Place among Radical Faeries.”
Decolonizing Sexualities, Chapter 6: “Decoloniality, Queerness, and Giddha” + Chapter 8: “This Is How We Soften Our Hearts.”
- (W 6/5): *Spaces Between Us*, Chapter 6: “Together We Are Stronger: Decolonizing Gender and Sexuality in Transnational Native AIDS Organizing.”
Decolonizing Sexualities, Chapter 10: “Theoretical Coalitions and Multi-Issue Activism: ‘Our Struggles Will Be Intersectional or They Will Be Bullshit!’ ”

**** Final Paper due via email by 5PM on June 10****