

## GSWS 002: Gender & Society

Course Syllabus Fall 2021

Tues/Thurs 12.00-1.00pm

College Hall 200

Fri recitation sections (times & locations vary; check course in touch)

Dr. Murphy

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Office Hours: Thurs 3.00pm-4.30pm & by appointment (345 Fisher Bennett Hall, Suite 342)

Teaching Assistants:

Matty Hemming

she/her

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Office Hours:

Tues 10.30am-11.30am &

p.m.

by appointment

TA meetings: 345 Fisher Bennett Hall, Suite 302

Nat Rivkin

they/them or she/her

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Office Hours:

Fridays 2:00-3:00 pm

& by appointment

Liz Rose

they/them

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Office Hours:

Fridays 11:15 a.m.-12:15

and by appointment

## Course Description

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies with a focus on the ways in which sex, gender, and sexuality mark our bodies, influence our perceptions of self and others, organize families and institutions, delimit opportunities for individuals and groups of people, and impact lived experiences. We will explore the ways in which sex, gender, and sexuality work with other markers of difference and social status such as race, class, nationality, and ability to further demarcate possibilities, freedoms, choices, and opportunities available to people. This course will cover the material and social constructions and productions of sex and gender, and the power dynamics that drive and structure gendered social orders.

## Course Objectives

- To gain an introductory understanding of the field of gender, sexuality, and women's studies
- To define, describe, and analyze different approaches to feminist thought
- To develop a basic knowledge of the gendered and racialized historical legacies of colonialism that structure society today
- To understand and be able to utilize feminism as a lens for self-reflection as well as an entry point for discussion and comprehension of academic texts, popular culture, music, films, and other media
- To become familiar with key texts and major scholars, activists, and performers who have contributed to the growing body of feminist knowledge

## Academic Accommodations

The University of Pennsylvania provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and been approved by the office of [Student Disabilities Services](#) (SDS). Please make an appointment with me as soon as you can in the semester so we can discuss your accommodations and your needs. Even if you think that your particular accommodations may not pertain to class assignments, for example, I would really enjoy the opportunity to learn about your needs.

If you have not yet contacted SDS, and would like to request accommodations or have questions, you can make an appointment by calling SDS 215.573.9235. The office is located in the [Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#) at Stouffer Commons 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300. There is [also information about financial support](#) for students with disabilities on their website.

## Statement of commitment to inclusion

In support of the University of Pennsylvania's commitment to providing an equitable and safe experience for students whose birth name and/or legal name does not reflect their gender identity and/or gender expression, Penn accepts requests from any student seeking to use a preferred first and/or middle name in University records. A student's preferred name can and will be used where feasible in all University systems unless the student's birth name and/or legal name use is required by law or the student's preferred name use is for intent of misrepresentation.

Any student, including transgender, gender nonconforming, gender variant, and non-cisgender students who wish to designate a preferred name should fill out the Preferred Name Change Form. Students wishing to change a birth name and/or legal name to a preferred name must meet with one of the following designated University Life trans\* allies to discuss the scope and limitations of the preferred name request:

[Erin Cross, Director, LGBT Center](#), 215-898-5044

[Rodney Robinson, Associate Director, Office of Student Affairs](#), 215-898-6533

For additional Preferred Name Information: <https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/preferrednames.php>

### A Note on Pronouns

Pronouns are a common way to refer to someone in the third person instead of using a name (ie. she, he, they, zie, ze, ve--there are many!) and in our classroom, it is essential that we refer to each other by the names and pronouns that each person uses. Remember that pronouns may or may not specifically affirm someone's gender identity and you cannot tell what someone's pronouns are by their name or by looking at them.

You are not required to declare or share your pronouns. If you would prefer not to share, we will refer to you exclusively by name. You are welcome to include your pronouns on [your canvas profile](#) if you would like. If the pronouns you use change over the course of the semester, please let us know so we can be sure to use them.

Take care to take note of each other's pronouns. If you accidentally refer to someone by the wrong pronoun, quickly apologize, correct yourself, and move on with whatever you were saying.

## Communication Policy & Office Hours

We hope you take advantage of office hours to ask questions or chat about course materials-- you don't have to have an academic issue to come to office hours, and we enjoy getting to know our students better. We will have a sign-up sheet after the first recitation session to visit our office hours at least once. Office hours are posted at the top of the syllabus.

Feel free to email us with any concerns or questions and we will do our best to get back to you in a timely fashion, typically within 48 hrs, Monday-Friday between 9am and 5pm eastern. Please note: if you email an hour before class, we will NOT get that message until after class.

## Academic Integrity

Since the University is an academic community, its fundamental purpose is the pursuit of knowledge. Essential to the success of this educational mission is a commitment to the principles of academic integrity. Every member of the University community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are also responsible for adhering to the principles and spirit of the following Code of Academic Integrity. Please familiarize yourself with it in its entirety:<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>

## Course Requirements

Class Engagement and Participation: 15%  
Protocol Assignment: 20%  
Current Event Report: 10%  
Autoethnography Midterm Paper: 20%  
Final Term Paper Proposal: 10%  
Final Term Paper: 25%

## Class Engagement & Participation

### Attendance

Class participation comprises a significant portion of your grade. Participation is integral in this class and I expect you to contribute thoughtfully to class discussion throughout the semester. Most importantly, to achieve course learning goals, you must attend and participate in classes. However, if you feel unwell or if you are under quarantine or in isolation because you have been exposed to Covid-19 or tested positive for it, you should not come to campus or attend in-person classes or activities. Any absences should be reported through the [Course Absence Report system](#). It is your responsibility to contact your TA or me to create a plan for participation and engagement in the course as soon as you are able to do so, and to make a plan to complete assignments when illness delays your completion. I recognize there can be a variety of extenuating circumstances that can prevent attendance. If you have additional

concerns about attendance, or if there are unforeseen circumstances that change for you over the course of the semester, please be in touch with us as soon as possible so we can discuss possible accommodations.

### **A note on wellness**

Please be in touch if you need additional support or accommodations and remember that taking care of yourself and your loved ones should be your top priority. I am always happy to discuss options to find an appropriate balance for the semester. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

### **Participation**

In class, we encourage you to ask questions, make clarifications, and share your thoughts about the readings, recordings, and viewings. To prepare for class, take notes while you are reading, listening to, and watching course materials. Look up names or concepts that are unfamiliar to you. We recommend keeping a running list of keywords/terms that we encounter throughout the semester.

Ways to participate can include:

- asking & answering questions on lecture presentations and the previous week's protocol submissions during lectures and recitations
- participating in discussions by sharing opinions, asking questions, and responding to the readings and course materials
- sending your TA questions and comments in advance of recitation sessions

### **Difficult Content & Building a Feminist Classroom**

In a feminist classroom, first and foremost is the creation of a respectful environment for learning. In this class, we will be discussing some difficult topics. As your teachers, we will never do anything to intentionally shock or upset you; it is also our intention to create a challenging and intellectually stimulating environment, which will occasionally involve unpacking and processing difficult topics. Please be conscious of the fact that others may have (and will have!) opinions different from your own. If you are having difficulty dealing with a class discussion, reading, viewing, or listening excerpt, you may voice these concerns in class or you may discretely step out of class (in this event, please send me/your TA a quick email afterward).

If you are someone who is confident about speaking in class, try to be mindful of how much time you are occupying and try to invite others into the conversation. Also, be mindful of others' experiences when you speak. Avoid making assumptions about anyone's experience. Respect each others' names, gender pronouns, and expressed identities; no one is required to share information about their identities or experiences. Do not hesitate to approach us if you feel there are measures we can take to make the classroom a more hospitable space for you.

### **A note on late work**

Assignments are due on the date listed in the syllabus/on canvas. 1 week extensions will be considered under extenuating circumstances, with the exception of the final paper, for which

we cannot grant extensions in order to get grades submitted on time. Improvement over the course of the semester will be taken into consideration for the final grade submission.

## Assignments

### Protocol Assignment

At the beginning of the semester, each student will choose a recitation session to take notes for and write up a detailed, thoughtful summary of the discussion, while situating the discussion as part of broader themes and concerns of the class. A protocol provides both a synthesized account of and constructive reflection on the topics covered during the synchronous discussion. It should connect the discussion overview to themes from the module's assigned readings (with relevant quotations) and broader course issues, questions, and concepts.

You will sign up for the recitation for which you'd like to write the protocol. You will write the protocol in groups of 2-3, depending on the interest for each module. If you prefer, you are also welcome to complete the protocol assignment on your own. When your session comes up, you will take detailed notes and submit your protocol before the next recitation session. The protocol should be 2-4 single-spaced pages (1200-2000 words).

### Current Event Report

**For the Report:** You will write a 800-1000 word report about one of three possible FQT/GSWS events (listed below). The report should include: a short description and summary of the event; at least two points/issues of relevance and importance to class materials; and, an evaluation of the ideas or perspectives presented during the event. This report needs to be submitted within 2 weeks of the event.

- |                                  |  |                        |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| <b>Option 1:</b> Sept. 30th      | <a href="#">Jeremy Dutcher performance, virtual</a>            | (report due Oct. 14)   |
| <b>Option 2:</b> Oct. 7th        | <a href="#">Screening of <i>Through the Night</i>, virtual</a> | (report due Oct. 21)   |
| <b>Option 3:</b> Oct. 29 or 30th | <a href="#">Opus Siniestrus, ICA outdoor terrace</a>           | (report due Nov. 13th) |

### Autoethnography Midterm Paper

This midterm assignment is an opportunity to do a critical self-reflection in the context of issues and questions raised in class. You are encouraged to write your paper in the first person as part of an analysis of your own subject position in relation to course materials and topics. We will have a class dedicated to analyzing different types of autoethnographies. Your paper should be approximately 1200 words and should incorporate a critical reflection on at least 2 assigned readings. This assignment can also be creative. If you would prefer to submit creative prose or poetry, a musical selection, a podcast episode, or some other multimedia format, please be in touch with Dr. Murphy or your TA to discuss possibilities. The autoethnography midterm is due **Thursday November 4th**.

### Final Term Paper

Throughout the semester, we will be practicing feminist analysis. The final term paper is an opportunity for you to choose your own "object" for analysis that is an appropriate length for

an 8-10 page term paper. Examples include a film, song or album, current event, specific policy issue, etc. Additional details will be provided on the canvas assignment prompt. The paper proposal is due **November 30th** and should include a tentative title, short outline, and introductory paragraph that presents a clear thesis statement. The final submission is due **December 16th**.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 Introduction to Gender & Society

Tuesday, August 31, 2021

- Emily Martin, "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles"

Thursday, September 2, 2021

- Combahee River Statement
- Heath Fogg Davis, "Introduction: Sex Stickers," *Beyond Trans: Does Gender Matter?*

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: knowledge production; documentation as evidence; bodily truth

### Week 2 Foundational Terms in GSWS

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

- Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color"

Thursday, September 9, 2021

- Susan Stryker, "(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies"

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: sex; gender; intersectionality; transgender; nonbinary; gender nonconforming; intersex; queer

### Week 3 Gender Discourse

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

with guest Dr. Gwendolyn Beetham

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses"

Thursday, September 16, 2021

with guest Dr. Dennis Flores

- Dalmacio Flores, Sarah Abboud & Julie Barroso, "Hegemonic Masculinity During Parent-Child Sex Communication with Sexual Minority Male Adolescents"

Friday Recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: Western feminism; Third World feminism; Hegemonic masculinity

#### **Week 4      Transnational Feminisms**

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

- Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, "[Until Black Women are Free, None of Us will be Free](#)"
- Harsha Walia, "Dispossession, Deprivation, Displacement: Reframing the Global Migration Crisis"

Thursday, September 23, 2021 with Liz Rose

- Dora Silva Santana, "Mais Viva!: Reassembling Transness, Blackness, and Feminism."
- Felipe Rivas San Martín and Jorge Díaz, "No Body without Fiction: Towards a Representation of Sexual Dissidence in Chile"
- Verónica Gago, translated by Liz Mason-Deese, "The Feminist International" (excerpt) in *Feminist International: How to Change Everything*. Verso, 2020, pp 181-199.

Engage: (Three Short YouTube Videos)

"Un violador en tu camino"

Collective Street Performance by La Tesis, Santiago de Chile, 2019.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSHUS2lehOY&t=11s>

"Marielle Franco: Killed for defending the people of Rio"

About Marielle Franco (narrated by her partner), Amnesty International, 2018.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9Ofg0ObVvY>

"YOUR MOTHER'S COMFORT – Trailer"

Documentary film on Trans Feminist Activism in Brazil, 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eYIZ3pvOMs>

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: migration; globalization; neoliberalism; World Bank; IMF; identity politics, intersectionality, assemblage, diaspora, fugitivity, travesti, post feminism

#### **Week 5      Settler Colonialism & Nation-States**

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

- Arvin Mail, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill, "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections Between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy"
- Jeremy Dutcher, "Honor Song"

Thursday, September 30, 2021

- "[Decolonizing Sex](#)," *All My Relations Podcast* with Kim TallBear (13:33-25:00)

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: colonialism; postcolonialism; logics of coloniality; heteropatriarchy; decolonization; ethnographic refusal; sovereignty; indigenous epistemologies

**\*\*SPECIAL (VIRTUAL) EVENT FOR CURRENT EVENT REPORT:**

[FQT/GSWS Jeremy Dutcher performance at 7.30pm ET](#)

### **Week 6 Labor & Gender**

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

- Amrita Pande, "Commercial Surrogacy in India: Manufacturing a Perfect Mother-Worker"

Thursday, October 7, 2021 with Matty Hemming

- Loretta J. Ross, "Preface"
- Alexis Pauline Gumbs, "m/other ourselves: a Black queer feminist genealogy for radical mothering"
- tk karakashian tunchez, "Telling Our Truths to Live: a Manifesta"

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: Surrogacy; reproductive labor; gestational labor; mother-worker; Black feminism, mothering, queerness, reproductive justice, institutional critique

### **Week 7 Auto-Ethnography**

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

- Read: Maggie Nelson, excerpt from *The Argonauts*
- Watch: [Joshua Whitehead @ KWH](#) (watch 7:00-26:00)
- Watch: Denice Frohman, "[First Kiss](#)"
- Listen: "[Fat Phobia & Diet Culture](#)" with Laverne Cox & Virgie Tovar

Thursday, October 14, 2021 -- NO CLASS FOR FALL BREAK -- (no tutorials on Friday either)

Friday recitation as scheduled.

### **Week 8 Planning & Envisioning**

Tuesday, October 19, 2021 with guest Dr. Akira Drake Rodriguez

- Readings TBA

Thursday, October 21, 2021 with guest Dr. Cat Dawson

- Readings TBA

Friday recitation as scheduled.

### **Week 9 Institutional Politics**

Tuesday, October 26, 2021 with Guest Kirsten Lee

- Alex Vitale, "The End of Policing"



- Listen: “Serve & Protect: A History of Policing”

Thursday, October 28, 2021

- Read excerpts from the [Penn & Slavery Project](#)
- Listen, “[The Case for PILOTs at Penn](#)” (on spotify and apple podcasts)
- Complete Virtual Reality tour at Penn

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: institutional responsibility; knowledge production; PILOTs

### **Week 10 Femonationalism & the Colonial Gaze**

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

- Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others”

Thursday, November 4, 2021 -- **\*\*NO CLASS -- AUTO ETHNOGRAPHY DUE\*\***

**\*\*No Recitation on November 5th\*\***

Key concepts; 9-11; commodities; War on Terror; femonationalism

### **Week 11 The Politics of Desire**

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

- Watch Jari Osborn’s [Picture This](#) (2017)
- Kaleigh Trace, excerpt from *Hot, Wet & Shaking: How I Learned to Talk About Sex*
- Ellen Samuels, “My Body, My Closet: Invisible Disability and the Limits of Coming-Out Discourse”

Thursday, November 11, 2021 with Nat Rivkin

- "Introduction," "Chapter 1: Comportment" and "Coda: Two Days in February" in Gayle Salamon's *The Life and Death of Latisha King*, pp. 1–58, 161–169.

Friday recitation as scheduled.

Key concepts: politics of recognition; transphobia; phenomenology; passing; gender expression; femininity

### **Week 12 Surveillance & Imperialism**

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

- Toby Beauchamp, “Flying Under the Radar”
- Cynthia Enloe, “Understanding Militarism, Militarization, and the Linkages with Globalization Using a Feminist Curiosity”

Thursday, November 18, 2021

- Horim Yi and Timothy Gitzen, "Sex/Gender Insecurities: Trans Bodies and the South Korean Military"
- Anohni, "Watch Me"

Friday, November 19th **\*\*Last Recitation Session\*\***

Key concepts: militarism; TSA; homonationalism; surveillance; imperialism; conscription; militarized masculinity; medical model of sexuality

**Week 13**

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

**GSWS Majors Presentation**

Thursday, November 25, 2021

-- NO CLASS --

**Week 14**

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

**Last Class -- Paper Proposal Due**

Thursday, December 2, 2021

**Final Paper Meetings**

**Week 15**

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

**Final Paper Meetings**

Thursday, December 9, 2021

**Final Paper Meetings**