Fall 2009

WGS 552
Transgender Identities and Communities

TUESDAYS 3:35-6:20, HUM 383

Professor Nan Alamilla Boyd
alamilla@sfsu.edu
Office: 314 HUM
Office hours: M/Th 11-12 and 1-2:00 (sign up or drop in) and by appointment
415-338-3065

Course Description:
This course examines queer and transgender identities in different cultural and historical contexts. Drawing on historical and present-day studies, the course seeks to challenge Western assumptions about gender and sexual identities through a transnational feminist approach. Course materials include scholarly essays from a variety of disciplines, including history, anthropology, philosophy, literature, legal studies, and film studies. WGS 552 asks students to analyze queer identities, particularly transgender identities, as they intersect, specifically, with ideas about race and nation.

This semester we will study transgender identities by examining how sexual practices and gender identities are intertwined. What distinguishes a butch lesbian from a female-to-male transsexual? How do names for sexual and gendered practices (from "homosexual" to "tom") shape how we think about culture, gender, race, sexuality, and nation? How do these factors produce sexed and gendered identities that resonate with national identities and ideologies?

Course Goals:
The major goal of this course is to hone critical-thinking skills that allow us to examine the role gender and sexuality play in society and culture, both historically and in the present, from a local and transnational perspective. We will only scratch the surface of current work in the field of queer studies, and this course does not promise to provide a comprehensive survey. Rather, through the lens of transgender studies, it seeks to examine how studies of gender and sexuality have changed across time, context, and discipline.

Prerequisites and Segment III:
• ENG 114 or its equivalent is a prerequisite for this course. Please let the instructor know if you have not taken ENG 114. Previous coursework in gender, sexuality, and/or ethnic studies is strongly recommended.
• WGS 552 is part of the Human Sexuality Studies Segment III Cluster under “Category C: Humanistic Aspects”

Required Texts:
• Megan J. Sinnott, Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-Sex Relationships in Thailand (University of Hawai’i Press, 2004)
• Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, eds., The Transgender Studies Reader (Routledge, 2006) (TSR)
• Susan Stryker, Transgender History (Seal Press, 2008)

There are also articles available via electronic reserve (ER). Password: culture
Course Requirements:

- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Class presentation: 10%
- Commentaries (10): 40%
- Film-Studies Paper: 15%
- Final exam: 25%

Course Policies and Assignments:

Attendance and Participation
Students are expected to contribute significantly to discussion each week by reading the assigned texts before class and asking or responding to questions in ways that demonstrate your comprehension of the texts. I will make a note of your participation at the end of each class period. (10 points)

Class Presentation
Once during the semester, each student will present information to the class in one of several ways:

- YouTube video/music video/song/film presentation (5-minute max for video segment plus 5-minute presentation)
- Presentation of information and analysis related to an organization, agency or event mentioned or discussed in the assigned readings (5-10 minutes)

Your presentation will be evaluated on how well you sync your topic with the materials assigned that week. In other words, you should ground your analysis in the readings. Your presentation should take 5-10 minutes, and a 1-page (typed, double-spaced) description and analysis of your topic is due on that day. Please do not simply read your paper to the class; rather, be prepared to present your material in an interactive way, providing visual images or handouts when appropriate. (10 points)

Commentaries
A typed, double-spaced, 1-page response to the readings is due each week (for a total of 10). These are short analytical essays that should link the readings together rather than attempt to summarize them. Everyone must write a commentary for the first three weeks of class. (40 points)

Film-Studies Paper
5-page film analysis. Assignment to be handed out in class. (15 points)

Final Exam
A cumulative final exam will be given on Tuesday, December 15 in our regular classroom, at the regular hour. The exam will include identifications and short answer questions. Please bring a blue book to class. (25 points)

Extra Credit
Students may attend one campus or community lecture or event for extra credit. A 2-page summary and assessment is due within two weeks of attending the lecture or event. In order to receive extra credit, you must link your discussion to course readings and/or topics. (5 points)

A Few Notes on Grading:
- It is not ok to submit work for this class that has been submitted to another class for academic credit.
- All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day indicated. Late papers are not accepted without prior consent of the instructor.
• You must complete all assignments listed above (written and oral) in order to pass WGS 552. Failure to complete any one assignment will result in a course grade of F or NC.
• Attendance is mandatory in WGS 552. Missing more than one class meeting will result in a lowered final grade. If you must miss class for an unavoidable reason, contact the instructor as soon as possible. If you are ill and under a doctor’s care, please bring documentation when you return to class.

Academic Honesty
Academic honesty is required, and academic dishonesty will be penalized. Plagiarism occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgement, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an “F” grade. All instances of plagiarism in the College of Humanities will be reported to the Dean of the College, and may be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer for further action.

Accessibility
I want to make this course as accessible as possible to students with disabilities or medical conditions that may affect any aspect of course assignments or participation. You are invited to communicate with me at the outset of the course or at your discretion about any accommodations that will improve your experience of or access to the course. You can also contact the Disability Resource Center at 415-338-2472 (Voice/TDD).

Dates To Be Aware Of:
- Sept 8  last day to drop without a “W”
- Sept 22 last day to add a class
- Oct 20   CR/NC grading option deadline

<p>| Tues Aug 25 | Introductions and discussion of syllabus |
| Tues Sept 1 | Queer and Trans Theory |
|             | Susan Stryker, <em>Transgender History</em>, 1-29. |
|             | Lisa Duggan, “Making it Perfectly Queer,” 155-172. <strong>ER</strong> |
|             | Afshaneh Najmabadi, “Transing and Transpaassing Across Sex-Gender Walls in Iran,” 23-42. <strong>ER</strong> |
| Tues Sept 8 | furlough: state budget cuts reduce student access to education |
| Tues Sept 15 | Sex/Race and Globalization |
|             | Susan Stryker, “(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies,” 1-17. <strong>TSR</strong> |
|             | Nikki Sullivan “Queer Race” 57-80. <strong>ER</strong> |
|             | Evan Towel and Lynn Morgan, “Romancing the Transgender Native,” 666-684. <strong>TSR</strong> |
| Tues Sept 22 | Sex/Gender in Colonial San Francisco |
|             | Clare Sears, “All the Glitters: Trans-ing California’s Gold Rush Migrations,” 383-402. <strong>ER</strong> |
|             | Amy Sueyoshi, “Mindful Masquerades” 67-100. <strong>ER</strong> |
|             | Susan Stryker, <em>Transgender History</em>, 31-57. |</p>
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<th>Tues Sept 29</th>
<th>Queer/Transgender Politics in 20th Century San Francisco</th>
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| Nan Alamilla Boyd, “Transgender and Gay Male Cultures from the 1890s through the 1960s,” 25-62. ER  
Member of the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California, "MTF Transgender Activism in the Tenderloin and Beyond, 1966-1975," 349-372. ER  
Film: Screaming Queens (2007) (57 mins) |
| Tues Oct 6 | Transnational Sex and Gender Studies |
| Deborah Elliston, "Negotiating Transnational Sexual Economies” 232-252. ER  
Megan Sinnott, Toms and Dees, Intro, Ch 1-2 (1-75). |
| Tues Oct 13 | Transgender Identity in Thailand |
| Megan Sinnott, Toms and Dees, Ch 3, 4, 5 (47-161) and Conclusion (204-211). |
| Tues Oct 20 | Filipino Gay Men and Masculinities in the Diaspora |
| Martin Manalansan, Global Divas, Intro, Ch 1, 2 (1-44), Ch 4 (89-125), Conclusion (184-191).  
Kale Bantigue Fajardo, "Transportation: Translating Filipino and Filipino American Tomboy Masculinities through Global Migration and Seafaring,” 403-424. ER  
Film: Shinjuku Boys (1996) (53 mins) |
| Tues Oct 27 | Queer Phenomenology and the Materiality of the Body |
| Sara Ahmed, "Sexual Orientation,” in Queer Phenomenology, 65-108. ER  
Gayle Salamon, "Boys of the Lex: Transgenderism and the Rhetorics of Materiality,” 403-424. ER  
Film: transparent (2005) (61 mins) |
| Tues Nov 3 | FTM Border Wars |
| Nan Alamilla Boyd, “Bodies in Motion: Lesbian and Transsexual Histories,” 420-433. TSR  
Judith Halberstam, “The Brandon Archive,” 22-46. ER  
Jay Prosser, "There’s No Place Like Home,” 171-205. ER  
Film: The Brandon Teena Story |
| Tues Nov 10 | Stone Butch Blues |
| Leslie Feinberg, Stone Butch Blues (entire book)  
Diep Khac Tran, "Transgender/Transsexual Roundtable,” 227-243. ER  
Film: Mind if I call you Sir? (2004) (34 mins) |
| Tues Nov 17 | Intersex Histories, Theories, Politics |
| Anne Fausto Sterling, "The Sexual Continuum,” 30-44. ER  
Cheryl Chase, "Hermaphrodites with Attitude,” 300-314. TSR  
Judith Butler, "Doing Justice to Someone,” 183-193. TSR  
Film: Is it a Boy or a Girl? (2000) (60 mins) |
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<th>Tues Dec 1</th>
<th>MTF Border Wars</th>
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| Janice Raymond, “Sappho by Surgery,” 131-143. **TSR**  
Sandy Stone, “The Empire Strikes Back,” 221-235. **TSR**  
Susan Stryker, “My Words to Victor Frankenstein,” 244-256. **TSR**  

Film Studies Paper Due

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<th>Tues Dec 8</th>
<th>Contemporary Trans Politics</th>
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| Richard M. Juang, “Transgendering the Politics of Recognition,” 706-720. **TSR**  
Rickke Mananzala and Dean Spade, “The Nonprofit Industrial Complex and Trans Resistance,” 53-71. **ER**  |

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<th>Tues Dec 15</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
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Full Citations for Articles:


Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Transing and Transpassing Across Sex-Gender Walls in Iran,” Women’s Studies Quarterly 36: 3 & 4 (Fall/Winter 2008), 11-42.


