

Comparative Studies/Women's Studies 535
Science and Gender
Dr. Nancy Jesser, email: jesser.2@osu.edu, Office: 320 Dulles Hall
MW 9:30-11:18 UH 147

Please contact me through **email**, if you need to contact me urgently. You may also leave a message at my office at 292-0389. I check my office phone messages when I can, but I check email more often.

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 12-1 and by appointment

TEXTS

Coursepak Available at Zip Publishing on Tuesday March 30th from 9:00-9:30am in 147 University Hall to make your course packet available or you can call the Zip office at 614-263-0833 for more information. All readings **except for** the Chapters from *The Mind has No Sex* by Londa Schiebinger. This book is available on Closed Reserve. Articles and the books from which chapters are taken will also be available in Closed Reserve at the Main Library. You are responsible for obtaining the readings, reading them, and bringing them to class

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at (614) 292-3307, or visit 150 Pomerene Hall, to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Throughout this course we will analyze the discourse of science, both popular and "professional," through various of the deployments of scientific knowledge, power, and authority through and over the gendered body as well as the gendering of scientific discourses, practices and technologies. Over the ten weeks of the course we will read and explore the history and role of gender in the development of Eurocentric and cosmopolitan science, read feminist critiques of scientific philosophy and practice, and investigate the effects of science and technology on the experience of sexuality, gender and the world around and within us. A significant portion of each class will be directed by student discussion leaders (see Daily Discussants).

I will leave significant time at the end of the term for each of us present individual/group research projects on Gender and Science. In addition, as a class, we will unpack a cultural artifact relating gender to the cultural representation of science/scientists and technology for the whole class to discuss (movie, tv show, video game, etc.).

REQUIREMENTS

Final Project: You will hand in a significant research project on a topic chosen by you in consultation with me. You may do projects in pairs or small groups. Your project may result a formal research paper or it may take on a different format. I am open to various methods and forms as long as they represent serious, critical and reflective work on **Gender and Science**. In the past projects have ranged from studies of the gendered use of condoms, manifestos on feminism and the environment, the intersex movement,

filmic representations of science and sexuality, histories of gender in medicine, the practices of circumcision on men and women historically in the United States, the contestation of culturally bound surgical practices in the US and globally, and technology, masculinity and advertising. A Brief Proposal outlining your topic, methodology, criteria for success, and annotated sources, will be due in Class on May 21st. Projects will be due June 7th.

IN-CLASS

Your presence and punctuality will be rewarded.

In order to foster class participation, regular attendance and accountability for assigned readings, on most if not all class meetings there will be in-class writing. These will not be extensive nor time-consuming, but they will reward you for your attention to the readings. Some in-class essays will be shared with your classmates or the whole class.

In-class writing assignments will relate to that day's assigned reading or relate that day's readings to previous class discussions and/or readings. They will be graded Pass/Fail.

After two missed classes your participation grade will be negatively affected.

Daily Discussants

A team of two or three students will lead the class in discussion for approximately 40 mins. each class period. Sign up for days will be March 31st and the first student lead discussion will be on April 5. I will meet briefly (in person or virtually) with discussants prior to the class to coordinate the day's plan. Occasionally, a reading may require more or less "working through" by me. It is not always possible for me to anticipate which readings will need this, so discussants will need to be somewhat flexible. In addition, the discussants will be in charge of addressing questions and issues raised by the class through questions written at the beginning of each class.

Research Presentation to Class

Each person will be responsible for presenting a brief on her/his research to the class (approx. 10 mins). These presentations will be modeled on a professional/academic presentation such as you might see at a conference or round-table. Whenever possible and with advance notice, I will have video/DVD equipment available. This presentation will be graded on polish, relevance, and value to the class.

Bi-weekly Written Responses to the Readings

Every other Monday, starting on April 12^h, you will hand in a 3-4 page typed response/analysis of the previous weeks readings. (Out of a possible three authors you must cover at least two.) You will be graded on your thoughtful engagement and assessment of the readings and the coherence of the essay. In other words, do not ramble and touch superficially on many points. Take one or two subjects/ideas that most interested you from the readings and wrestle with it, add to it, contest it, refute it, etc. You will be able to re-write your first paper if you feel you misinterpreted the assignment and my expectations. If you would like to exercise this option, please let me know. In order to allow me to comment more fully the half the class will turn in their first assignment on April 5th, the other half on April 12th. Groups will be determined March 31st—if you have special considerations about your placement, please let me know before that date. If all goes well, these papers will be turned in and commented upon electronically through Web CT.

Do not hesitate to ask me to explain unfamiliar or complex terms. Chances are there are others in the class who would benefit. You can email me with specific questions or bring them up in class.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Late assignments will lose 1/2 grade for the first day and 1/2 grade for every two days after that.

PARTICIPATION

In this course there will be discussions about Science-Technology and its relation to sexuality, race, gender, religion and socioeconomic status. These issues are inherently personal, political, powerful and contested. Some may consider the readings are **difficult**, too long, intellectually and emotionally challenging. They may make you uncomfortable. Things said in class may make you uncomfortable, angry, annoyed, or laugh. THIS IS TO BE EXPECTED and EMBRACED. If however, you feel unable to participate or respond, I hope you will come to me. If you are upset with something in the readings or something said in class, by me or by a student, we can use this as the basis for learning. Be respectful of the various perspectives of other students, but expect also to be challenged on your own ideas, beliefs, feelings and assumptions.

The class will spend a substantial amount of time discussing the readings and topics as a class. Since the material is about our selves and raced, gendered, internal and external bodies, our beliefs and values, the issues will touch us all very close to "home." This goes for me too. Spend some time each week reflecting on discussions, how the class affects each of us emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Such reflections are often a good place to *start* your writing assignment, but you should aim to end in a moment of **critical reflection**.

Class discussions will help you to formulate and clarify your thoughts on the readings and to understand the positions others take. The issues of difference and power we discuss will be particularly and personally important to you and others in the class. Some issues may touch some people more closely than others. Some issues will be felt differently by members of the class. Sometimes this may be obvious to the rest of the class, sometimes not. Be aware but not silent.

Class discussions are an opportunity to explore theory's relevance to personal and intellectual experiences. It is **likely** that you will be offended by something said or read in this classroom. These feelings need to be brought into the discussion--opened to respectful questioning and disagreement. If you do not feel you can bring them up, I encourage you make an appointment to discuss them with me.

FINAL GRADES

Participation: Credit/NC attendance(10), discussant(5),and in-class writings(5)	20%
Research Presentation	10%
Weekly Writings	35%
Final Project	35%

Students are expected to know and understand the rules regarding academic misconduct, particularly the rules regarding plagiarism as stated in the University's Student Code of Conduct. All cases of plagiarism will be treated very seriously according to the University's guidelines.

PLEASE TALK TO ME **NOW** IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT COURSE REQUIREMENTS OR MY EXPECTATIONS.

Reading and Discussion Schedule
(all readings are to be **finished** for the class indicated)

Introductions

March 29: Women in Science: Knowledge, Power, Authority and Learning in Science and in the Classroom.

"Letter to a Graduate Student," Handout

"Never Meant to Survive," Handout

Gender does Techno-Science

April 1: Londa Schiebinger: "Women in the Origins of Modern Science" excerpts from *The Mind Has No Sex?; Women in the Origins of Modern Science*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1989, 10-101.

Discussants:

April 5: Londa Schiebinger: "The Public Route Barred" and "The Exclusion of Women and the Structure of Knowledge" 245-277. **MAIN Library Closed Reserve Only.**

Discussants:

April 7: "Faultlines" Sharon Traweek, in *Doing Science + Culture*, Ed. Sharon Traweek and Roddey Reid, Routledge, 2000, 21-48.

Discussants:

April 12: "Postcolonial Science, Big Science and Landscape", Itty Abraham, in *Doing Science + Culture*, Routledge, 2000, 49-70.

Discussants:

Group A Paper 1 Due (On Schiebinger/Traweek/Abraham)

April 14: "Virtual Speculum in the New World Order in *Revisioning Women, Health and Healing*, Adele Clarke and Virginia Olesen eds. Routledge, 1999, PAGES 49-66 up to "The Right Speculum for the Job".

Discussants:

April 19 : Virtual Speculum in the New World Order in *Revisioning Women, Health and Healing*, Adele Clarke and Virginia Olesen eds. Routledge, 1999, 66- to the End.

Discussants:

Group B Paper 1 Due (On Traweek/Abraham/Haraway)

Techno-Science Does Gender

April 21: "Race and Gender: The role of Analogy in Science", Nancy Leys Stepan in "*Racial Economy of Science*", ed Sandra Harding, Indiana UP, 1993.

Discussants:

April 26: "Nymphomania: The Historical Construction of Female Sexuality," Carol Groneman in *Deviant Bodies*, ed Jenny Terry and Jacqueline Urla, Indiana UP, 1995, 219-249— Available On-line Library to OSU Students.

Discussants:

Group A Paper 2 Due (On Haraway/Stepan/Groneman)

April 28: "Genes and Gender," Anne Fausto-Sterling in *Myths of Gender*, Basic Books, 1992, 61-89.

Discussants:

May 3: "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants." Suzanne Kessler, *Women, Science, and Technology*, ed Mary Weyer. Routledge: New York, 2001, 161-174.

Discussants:

Group B Paper 2 due (On Groneman/Fausto-Sterling/Kessler)

May 5: Sexing the Hyena: Intraspecies Readings of the Female Phallus Anna Wilson, in *Signs* Spring 2003.

Discussants:

Sexed Technologies

May 10:

"Introduction" and "Unsettled Discourses, Chap 2." Ruth Oldenziel,, in *Making Technology Masculine: Men Women and Modern Machines in America 1870-1945*, Amsterdam UP, Amsterdam, 1999, 9-50.

Discussants:

Group A Paper 3 Due (On Kessler/Wilson/Oldenziel)

May 12: "The Built Environment" and "Technology as Masculine Culture" Judy Wajcman, *Feminism Confronts Technology*. London: Judy Wajcman,

Discussants

May 17: "Wild Bodies/Technobodies," Susan Hawthorne *Women's Studies Quarterly* Fall/Winter 2001, 54-69

Discussants:

Group B Paper 3 Due (On Oldenziel/Wajcman/Hawthorne)

May 19: Will the Real Body Please Stand Up? Boundary Stories about Virtual Cultures, Allucquere Rosanne Stone, in *Cybersexualities: A Reader on Feminist Theory, Cyborgs and Cyberspace*, ,Edinburgh UP, Edinburgh Scotland, 1999, 69-98.

May 24: "Birth of the Cyberqueer" in *Cybersexualities: A Reader on Feminist Theory, Cyborgs and Cyberspace*, ,Edinburgh UP, Edinburgh Scotland, 1999, 295-313.

May 26: Presentation of Research

May 31: NO CLASS

June 2: Presentation of Research

Projects Due June 7

Depending on the Class Size Presentations will continue during the Exam Period if Necessary