

**Comparative Studies/Women's Studies 535
Science and Gender**

Dr. Nancy Jesser,

Email: jesser.2@osu.edu,

Office: 468 Hagerty Hall, Southwest corner of building

T/TH 10:30-12:18, office hours 12:30-1:30 pm Tues. and by appointment

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-Thursdays 1- 130, and by appointment

TEXTS

All Articles are on Electronic Reserve. If you do not know how to access them, or need an accessible format, please let me know.

Accommodations

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.

If you will need to miss class for a religious observance, please let me know in advance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Throughout this course we will analyze the discourses of science, both popular and "professional" surrounding issues of gender and sexuality. Through various of these deployments of scientific knowledge, power, and authority through and over the gendered and sexual body we will interrogate the gendering of bodies, 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 science, read feminist critiques of scientific philosophy and practice, and investigate the effects of science and technology on sexuality and gender in 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, Sexuality and Science-Technology.

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 (no more

than three). 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, Sexuality 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 and other sexual surgeries in the United States, and technology, masculinity and advertising. A Brief Proposal (2pages) outlining your specific topic, methodology, criteria for success, and sources in-hand, will be due in Class on May 23rd. Projects will be due June 5th.

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 be neither extensive nor time-consuming, but they will reward you for your attention to the readings. Some in-class essays may 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 except in the case of serious medical and family emergencies.

Daily Discussants

A team of two students will lead the class in discussion for approximately 40-50 mins. each class period. Sign up for days will be March 30th and the first student lead discussion will be on April 4. 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, so discussants may end class, instead of starting it. 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.

Bi-weekly Written Responses to the Readings

Starting on April 10th, 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 12th, the other half on April 19th. Groups will be determined March 30th—if you have special considerations about your placement, please let me know before that date.

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, 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 challenge you. 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 for any reason, 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 at best use this as the beginning of a discussion, not an ending or silencing. Take the various perspectives of other students seriously and respectfully, but expect yourself 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 can be an opportunity to explore personal and intellectual experiences as such, it is **possible** that you will be offended by something said or read in this classroom. Please try to bring this into the discussion--opened to respectful questioning, understanding and disagreement. If you do not feel you can bring them up, I encourage you make an appointment with me to talk.

FINAL GRADES

Participation	20%
Class Discussant	10%
Weekly Writings	40%
Final Project	30%

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)

March 28: Gender and Sexuality in Science: Knowledge, Power, Authority in Science and in the Classroom.

Doing Techno-Science

March 30: Londa Schiebinger: "Women and the Origins of Science" in "The Gender of Science", ed. Janet Kourany, Prentice Hall: ISBN: 0-13-347972-2

April 4: Londa Schiebinger: "The Exclusion of Women and the Structure of Knowledge" *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1989, 1-35. And "Women's Traditions" 265-77,

April 6: Banu Subramaniam, "Snow Brown and the Seven Detergents", in *Women, science, and technology : a reader in feminist science studies*, edited by Mary Wier ... [et al.] New York : Routledge, 2001

And

Aimee Sands, interview with Evelyn Hammonds, "Never Meant to Survive" *The "Racial" economy of science : toward a democratic future*, edited by Sandra Harding Bloomington : Indiana University Press, c1993,

April 11: Sandra Harding: "Why "Physics" is a Bad Model for Physics" in *Whose Science, Whose Knowledge*. Cornell, 1991,

Paper 1: Women in Science, Due April 12 by 5 pm, Option A (Schiebinger, Subramaniam, Sands).

April 13: Karen Barad; "Agential Realism" in *The Science Studies Reader*, Mario Baglioli, Routledge, 1999,

April 18 Sharon Traweek, "Cultural Differences in High Energy Physics" in *The "Racial" economy of science : toward a democratic future*, edited by Sandra Harding, Bloomington : Indiana University Press, c1993.

Techno-Science Does Gender and Sexuality

Paper 1: Physics and Gender? Due April 19 by 5 pm, Option B (Harding, Barad, Traweek).

April 20: Donna Haraway, "Virtual Speculum in the New World Order", *The Gendered Cyborg*, ed Kirkup, James, Woodward, and Hovenden, Routledge, 2000, 221-244.

April 25: Catherine Waldby, "Technologies of the Body Politic: The HIV antibody test," *AIDS and the Body Politic*, Routledge, 1996, 112-39.

April 27: Suzanne Kessler, "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants." *Women, Science, and Technology*, ed Mary Wyer. Routledge: New York, 2001, 285-299.

Paper 2: Technologies and Bodies, Due May 1 by 5 pm, Option A (Haraway, Waldby, Kessler).

May 2: Anna Wilson, "Sexing the Hyena: Intraspecies Readings of the Female Phallus" in *Signs* Spring 2003.

May 4: Jennifer Terry, "The Seductive Power of Science in the Making of Deviant Sexuality," *Science and Homosexualities*, ed. Vernon Rosario. Routledge.: NY 1997. 271-95.

May 9: Garland E. Allen, "The Double-Edged Sword of Genetic Determinism: Social and Political Agendas in Genetic Studies of Homosexuality, 1940-1994." *Science and Homosexualities*, ed. Vernon Rosario. Routledge. NY 1997. 242-70.

May 11: Emily Martin: "Women in the Flexible Body" in *Revisioning Women*, ed. Virginia Olesen, Routledge, 1999.

Paper 2: Scientific Sexing: studies of sex, gender, and sexuality, Due May 15 by 5 pm, Option B (Wilson, Terry, Allen).

May 16: Lisa Handwerker "The Hen that Can't Lay an Egg" in *Deviant Bodies*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995. 358-80.

May 18: Anne Balsamo: "Public Pregnancies" in *Revisioning Women*, ed. Virginia Olesen, Routledge, 1999.

Paper 3: Cultures of Women's Bodies Due May 15 by 5 pm, Option A (Martin, Handwerker, Balsamo).

May 23: Roseanne Allucquere Stone, "Will the Real Body Please Stand Up? Boundary Stories about Virtual Cultures." *Cybersexualities*. Ed. Jenny Wolmark. Edinburgh U P: Edinburgh. 1999, 69-98.

May 25: Donald Morton, "Birth of the Cyberqueer", *Cybersexualities*. Ed. Jenny Wolmark. Edinburgh U P: Edinburgh. 1999, 295-313.

May 30: Susan Hawthorne "Wild Bodies/Technobodies" *Women's Studies Quarterly* Fall/Winter 2001, 54-69.

June 1: Conclusions and such

Paper 3: Cyberbodies, technologies of communication, gender and sexualities, Due June 1 in class, Option B (Allucquere, Morton, Hawthorne).

Projects Due June 5, in my office, by 5pm. More on this later...