

Course Title: **Sexuality and Nation**

Professor: **Roshanak Kheshti**

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Meeting time and Location: T/TH 12:30-1:50, Cognitive Science Building Room 005

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3pm Thursdays 10-11am (Social Sciences Bldg 231)

*To some, sexuality may seem to be an unimportant topic, a frivolous diversion from the more critical problems of poverty, war, disease, racism, famine, or nuclear annihilation. But it is precisely at times such as these, when we live with the possibility of unthinkable destruction, that people are likely to become dangerously crazy about sexuality.*

—Gayle S. Rubin

**Description:** What is a nation? How can sexuality function as a prism through which we understand the idea of nation? While this may seem at first like a philosophical exercise, the historical, discursive, political and cultural emergence of the notion of sexuality alongside other modern inventions like race and nation suggest that there is an important, yet under examined, connection between these seemingly disparate concepts. We will trace sexuality's co-construction with race through colonialism and modernity, examining transformations the concept has undergone in its transnational circulation. Some questions we will take up: How has colonialism contributed to contemporary notions of sexuality, race, bodies, desire, pleasure, and identity? What is the relationship between power, the nation, and sexuality in various sites? How are sexual identities constructed outside of the so-called "West?" We will interrogate the commonly held idea that normative sexualities have been historically and globally stable and instead historicize the emergence of normativity (sexual, gendered, racial, etc.) examining how it has been put to service in the maintenance of a particular set of power dynamics. We will conclude the class by interrogating what has happened to the nation, gender and sexuality under global capitalism.

### Course Requirements

#### **Required Texts:**

Course materials are available through the course e-reserve page on the UCSD library website (note: you must access these through the UCSD libraries proxy network if you are logging in from off campus). The password for our course is: **rk112**. All readings are to be done by the date they appear on the syllabus. If by chance you miss an in-class screening, all films will be available on reserve at Geisel library and for streaming through the proxy network if you are off campus.

#### **Attendance & Participation (15% of final grade):**

More than two absences will absolutely not be tolerated. Each additional class missed will result in a ½ reduction in final letter grade. If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to keep up with the notes, films and assignment submission schedule (it is advised that you network with peers on this matter). Presence and preparedness are key aspects to the successful fulfillment of requirements for this course.

**Films:** Films function as texts in this class. You are expected to know the filmic materials as well as the print ones. Note taking is encouraged. It is your responsibility to screen any film you miss at the Geisel Film and Video Library on your own time.

#### **Coursework:**

Reflection Papers (25% of final grade)

Each student is responsible for submitting a total of **seven** reading reflection papers that are no less than one page (double-spaced, 12pt. font) and no more than one and a half pages in length. Students with last names beginning with the letters A-L submit reflections beginning the Thursday of week 2 and subsequent Thursdays until week 8. Students with last names beginning with the letters M-Z submit reflections beginning the Thursday of week 3 and subsequent Thursdays until week 9.

**Reflection papers will not be accepted by email.** Each reflection should have your name, the date and the reflection number written at the top. Only one reflection paper will be accepted per class meeting. Also, reflection papers are not to be submitted in my mailbox or by email. There is no particular due-date for submissions; it is your responsibility to keep up with your submission schedule.

What are reflection papers?:

THESE ARE NOT SUMMARIES OF THE READINGS NOR ARE THEY OPINION PAPERS! Reflection papers are opportunities for you to raise questions or issues about the readings, make interpretations of and connections between various readings and apply the readings to current events. Because reflection papers require that you analyze articles and synthesize the ideas between articles, you must read the article(s) on which you reflect in their entirety.

Two Analytical Papers:**Midterm (25% of final grade) & Final (35% of final grade)**

Each student must submit one 5-6-page midterm and an 8-10 page final paper at the **beginning** of lecture on the due date. Papers will not be accepted from students arriving to lecture late on this day. Expect a prompt with details on paper topic and page length handed out no later than two weeks prior to due dates.

**Schedule:****Week 0: The Nation-State and the History of Sexuality**

September 26: Course introductions & handouts

**Week 1: Getting grounded: the invention of sexuality in the 19<sup>th</sup> century according to Foucault**

October 1: Michel Foucault Part 1, Chapter 1 in *History of Sexuality vol. 1*

October 3: Michel Foucault Part 2, Chapter 1 in *History of Sexuality vol. 1*

**Week 2: The idea of sexuality is born: the 19<sup>th</sup> century, colonialism and the construction of a perverse other**

October 8: Ann Stoler “Colonial Studies and the *History of Sexuality*” in *Race and the Education of Desire*

October 10: Anne McClintock “The Lay of the Land” in *Imperial Leather*

**\*Last names beginning with A-L submit first reflection papers**

**Week 3: Black, Female, Sexuality I**

October 15: Evelyn Hammonds “Toward a genealogy of Black Female Sexuality” in *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures* edited by M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty

October 17: Audre Lorde “Uses of the Erotic” in *Sister Outsider*

Recommended:

Anne Fausto-Sterling "Gender, Race and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of Hottentot Women in Europe, 1815-1817" in *Deviant Bodies: Critical Perspectives on Difference in Science and Popular Culture* edited by Jennifer Terry

**Film:** *The Life and times of Sara Baartman: "The Hottentot Venus"* / a film by Zola Maseko; FVLV 3294

**\*Last names beginning with A-L submit first reflection papers**

**\*Midterm paper prompt distributed**

#### **Week 4: Black, Female, Sexuality II**

October 22: Saidiya Hartman "Seduction and the Ruses of Power" in *Between Woman and Nation* edited by Caren Kaplan, et.al.

October 24: Hortense Spillers "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe" in *Black, White and in Color*

#### **Week 5: Orientalist Yearnings**

October 29: Sunaina Maira "Belly Dancing: Arab Face, Orientalist Feminism and US Empire" in *American Quarterly* 60:2

October 31: Leila Ahmed "Discourses of the Veil" in *Veil: Veiling, Representation and Contemporary Art*

**\*Midterm paper due**

#### **Week 6: ReOrientations**

November 5: Afsaneh Najmabadi "Beyond the Americas: Are Gender and Sexuality Useful Categories of Historical Analysis?" *Journal of Women's History* 18.1 (2006) 11-21

November 7: Afsaneh Najmabadi "Women or Wives of the Nation" in *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*

#### **Week 7: Questions of Gender, Sexuality and Sovereignty**

November 12: Qwo-Li Driskill "D4y DBC (Asegi Ayetl): Cherokee Two-Spirit People Reimagining Nation" in *Queer Indigenous Studies*

Recommended:

**Film:** *Two Spirits* ( [FVLVDV 9690-1](#))

November 14: Jennifer Denetdale "Carving Navajo National Boundaries" in *American Quarterly* 60:2

**\*Final paper prompt distributed**

#### **Week 8: Diaspora Sexuality I**

November 19: Martin Manalansan "Migrancy, Modernity, Mobility" in *Queer Migrations*

November 21: Lisa Lowe "The Gender of Sovereignty"

**\*No Class Meeting**

#### **Week 9: Diaspora Sexuality II**

November 26: Ch.1 Gloria Wekker "No Tide, No Tamara/ Not Today, Not Tomorrow: Misi Juliette Cummings's Life History" in *The Politics of Passion*

November 28: Thanksgiving Holiday

#### **Week 10: What next?**

December 3: Ch. 6 Gloria Wekker "No Tide, No Tamara/ Not Today, Not Tomorrow: Misi Juliette Cummings's Life History" in *The Politics of Passion*

December 6: Andrea Smith "American Studies Without America" in *American Quarterly* 60:2

**\*Final Paper**

December 13:

**Due by** 11:30 on Ted