

Instructor- Christina Carney
Office Hours - Wednesday noon-2:00pm,
and by appointment
Office Location – SSB 251
Email - cjcarney@ucsd.edu

ETHN 165
Sex and Gender in African-American Communities
Fall 2013
Monday Wednesday and Friday, 3pm-3:50pm
SEQUO 148 #788928

This course explores the lived experiences of African-Americans in the United States, from Emancipation to present, with a particular emphasis on the intersections of gender and race, class, sexuality and other categories of power. Though readings will be drawn from a variety of disciplines, the course highlights the intellectual tradition of black feminism by situating sexuality as constitutive of race and gender, including: sexual and gendered norms of respectability and value, in addition to the production of 'moral panics' by the U.S. state that pathologize sexual and gender difference, consequently reinforcing black communities as signifiers of social deviance. We will pay particular attention to how blackness does not exist as a biological truth or universal identity, but as daily contestations and highly performative acts for space and community in a system embedded with economic and class stratification. Therefore the course readings, drawing from primary sources, life stories and scholarly essays, investigates how black people themselves make sense of their experiences in order to show how black identity is always unstable, strategic, shifting and geographically specific. Furthermore, we will discuss and think critically about the ways categories of difference proved both sources of solidarity and division for African American and US communities more broadly.

All course materials are available at Ted.ucsd.edu or as stated

Grading – Assignments

Attendance/Participation 20%

Reading Responses 20%

Midterm 25%

Final Paper 35%

Attendance

- 20% of Final Grade

Attendance and active participation will determine 20% of the student's total course grade. You are required to bring ALL course materials to class for reference, including notes and questions.

Attendance is mandatory for weekly lectures, scheduled Mon, Wed, and Fri. The weekly lectures engage other materials in our discussions that are essential to the course and your assignments. Please arrive on time; being late will hurt your grade and is disruptive to your peers. If you miss more than two classes ½ a letter grade will be deducted from the final grade.

Your preparation will help you get the most out of lectures and presentations. I expect democratic participation that involves careful listening and thoughtful speaking to contribute to a productive learning environment. Along with the UCSD Principles of Community

(<http://www.ucsd.edu/explore/about/principles.html>) the following guiding principles are the basis for building a positive space: *Assume nothing *Respect is key (consider all experiences, perspectives and positions) *Support your arguments by engaging the texts (academic settings necessitate scholarly claims) *Disagree with the argument, not the person (no personal attacks!)

Reading Responses

- 20% of Final Grade

Reading responses are a 2-page written analysis of the week's readings. They are due the Friday of every week during class- physical copies only. These responses move beyond simple summarization of the readings and identify key ideas/concepts/theories from the readings and class discussions.

Focus on whatever strikes you as particularly important/difficult/ surprising about the text in question. Some of the texts are rather challenging, so do not be frustrated if you do not immediately understand everything. My advice with a reading that you find especially difficult is to read it all the way through once, without stopping to figure things out, look up words, etc. Then, read it through again, slowly, picking out one line of argument and following it all the way through the article. Don't try to gain a 'comprehensive' knowledge of the text, just try to gain a sense of one important line of argument, and the ways that it relates to other texts and questions we are addressing in the class. Your response papers are a good site for engaging this critical work.

Midterm/Final Exams

- 25% of Final Grade
- 35% of Final Grade

The Midterm exam will be short answer/essay format and will be take-home, October 28th and is due at the beginning of class Friday November 1st.

For the final exam, you will turn in a research paper on a topic relevant to black communities in the San Diego or Southwest region (5-7 type written pages). Paper must include at least 4 references from class, 2 additional academic sources, and 1-2 primary sources. Paper must also include a bibliography and proper citation of sources (more information regarding midterm and final exams will be provided).

E-mail/ Office Hours Policy: You may email me at my UCSD e-mail address to schedule an appointment or if you have general inquiries about assignments or class logistics. For questions or concerns that cannot be handled via email, I will ask you to see me during office hours.

Students with disabilities should be sure to register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu/about/index.html> and please let us know at the start of the quarter of any required accommodations and your individual needs.

COURSEWORK (subject to change)

Week 0-Introductions

Friday, September 27

Introductions – Syllabus Overview

Week 1- Introduction: Reconstructing Race/Gender/Sexuality

September 30-October 4

- E. Higgenbotham, "African American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race"
- Smith, Barbara, "Some Home Truths on the Contemporary Black Feminist Movement," *Words of Fire*

Week 2- Sexual Economies of Slavery & Gendered Labor

October 7- October 11

- Sterling, Dorothy, "Slavery I" (Childhood- Work, Seduction, Rape, Concubinage- Courtship and Family Life), *We Are Your Sisters*
- Davis, Angela, "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," *Words of Fire*

Week 3- Is it human? Science and the Construction of Race, Sexuality and Gender

October 14- October 18

- E. Frances White, Ch. 2: The Dark Continent of Our Bodies: Constructing Science, Race, and Womanhood in the Nineteenth Century, *Dark Continent of Our Bodies: Black Feminism and the Politics of Respectability*
- Somerville, Siobhan, Chapter 1, *Queering the Color line: race and the invention of homosexuality in American culture*

Week 4 - Politics of Respectability: Negotiating Difference and Recognition

October 21 -October 25

- Carby, Hazel V, "It Jus Be's Dat Way Sometime: The Sexual Politics of Women's Blues"
- Walker, Alice, In the Closet of the Soul, *Words of Fire*
- Cheney, Charise L. "We Men Ain't We?": Mas(k)ulinity and the Gendered Politics of Black Nationalism, *Brothers Gonna Work It Out: Sexual Politics in the Golden Age of Rap Nationalism*

Week 5 - Contested Space: Class, Race, Gender and Sexuality in the City

October 28- November 1

- Enke, Anne, Chp. 1, Someone or Something Made That A Women's Bar, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism*
- Marlon, Bailey. "Gender/Racial Realness: Theorizing the Gender System in Ballroom Culture"

Midterm Due Beginning of Class Friday, November 1st No Late Papers Will Be Accepted

Week 6- Reproduction, the Body, and Access

November 4- November 8

- E. Franklin Frazier, "Unfettered Motherhood," and "The Matriarchate" in *The Negro Family in the United States*. 1948. Rev. and abridged ed. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1966.
- Richie, Beth, "Reproduction in Bondage," *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*

- Grayson, Deborah R, "Necessity was the midwife of Our Politics": Black Women's Health Activism in the "Post"- Civil Rights Era (1980-1996), *Still Lifting, Still Climbing: African American Women's Contemporary Activism*

Week 7- Prisons, Poverty and Policing

Monday, November 11, No-Class (Veterans Holiday)

- Media: Free Assata (2012)

Wednesday, November 8 - Friday, November 15

- Eliason, Michele, Chesney, Lind Meda. "From Invisible to Incurigible: The Demonization of Marginalized Women and Girls," 2006, Vol 2(1): 29-47
- Nicole Pasulka, "The Case of CeCe McDonald," Mother Jones, 2012
<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/05/cece-mcdonald-transgender-hate-crime-murder>
- CC McDonald's Blog: <http://supportcece.wordpress.com/>

Week 8- Contradictions: The Racialized Politics of Desire

November 18- November 22

- Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power"
- Tim'M T. West, "Keepin' It Real: Disidentification and Its Discontents"
- Mireille Miller-Young, "Putting Hypersexuality to Work: Black Women and Illicit Eroticism in Pornography"

Week 9- Methodological Interventions and Form: Ethnography and the Fictive

Monday, November 25- Wednesday, November 27

- E. Patrick Johnson, Chp. 5 (trannies, transvestites, and drag queens, oh my! Transitioning the south), *Sweet Tea: Gay Black Men of the South*
- Audre Lorde, Selected Chapters, *Zami*

Friday, November 29 No-Class (Thanksgiving Holiday)

Week 10- How do we make sense of our lives? Black Feminists' Theoretical Interventions

December 2- December 7

- Cathy Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers and Welfare Queens"
- The Combahee River Collective, A Black Feminist Statement

Final Exam DUE: Friday, Due December 13, 2013 at 3pm in SSB 251