

Real Men and Dragon Ladies: Race and Sexuality in America, 1662-1965

History 55S, Bldg. 260-002

Tues./Thurs. 4:15-5:45

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs

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“Nobody in this section of the country believes the old thread bare lie that Negro men rape white women. If Southern white men are not careful, they will over-reach themselves and public sentiment will have a reaction: a conclusion will then be reached which will be very damaging to the moral reputation of their women.” – Ida B. Wells, 1892

Savages. Real Men. True Womanhood. Bull Daggers. Dragon Ladies. Each is freighted with racial and sexual implications and contested meanings. This course is organized around two questions: 1) How do race and sexuality mutually construct each other throughout American history? 2) How do historians use primary sources to make historical arguments?

We will examine a variety of primary sources, including political pamphlets, legal documents, illustrations, and film. Each week we will also discuss how secondary sources illustrate different approaches to primary documents, from economic history to queer theory, as well as how the interpretations contradict or complement the others. How do historians read sources “against the grain?” How might we uncover marginalized voices of historical actors? The historical trajectory we will follow examines the creation and elaboration of racial and sexual categories, from colonial slave codes through the GI Bill.

Office hours

I strongly encourage you to visit me during my office hours to discuss the class, writing, or studying history in general. I look forward to getting to know each student as an individual. **Please make sure to see me at least once**, preferably before mid-quarter. My office hours are in 200-204 Tuesdays and Thursdays, and by appointment. Feel free to email me during the week as well, but allow 24 hours for me to respond. Many questions can best be discussed in person, so it is often best to ask during office hours.

Course Requirements

Attendance: Your attendance and participation every week is critical. Each student is allowed one “freebie” absence; however, perfect attendance will enrich your experience and your preparation. Excused absences will only be granted in case of documented emergency. Any absence will be made up with a written reading response. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a lowered section grade. If you have any questions about this, please see me at the beginning of the quarter.

Participation: I encourage each student to see her/himself as a co-facilitator of the discussion: keep an eye on where the discussion is going and actively participate in a respectful manner. If there are seven people in the class, challenge yourself to speak about one-seventh of the time (speaking up or stepping back accordingly).

Start-ups: At the beginning of each class, we will spend 5-10 minutes preparing an ungraded written response to the week's reading. I will ask a question and each student will brainstorm an informal response that shows engagement with the reading. After I collect them, you will briefly share in pairs/small groups what you generated. The start-ups are intended to generate stimulating discussions and a roadmap of the texts discussed. While these will be ungraded responses, their thoughtful completion will count as points toward your overall participation grade.

Assigned Texts

Recommended for purchase: Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally* \$25

Chad Heap, *Slumming* \$25

Available on reserve at Green Library and for sale at the bookstore

Required for purchase: Course Reader

Optional survey text for self-directed reading: Estelle Freedman and John D'Emilio, *Intimate Matters*

ASSIGNMENTS **NOTE: All assignments are to be emailed AND delivered hard-copy**

Four Short Writing Assignments (2 pages each, due dates from sign-up sheet) (20% total)

Each short reading response will address a primary or secondary source assigned that week. You will write a total of TWO primary-source responses **and** TWO secondary-source responses. Given that the responses are brief, focus on explaining the main aspects and ideas. Analysis is more important than finessed writing. This is your chance to step back and reflect on the challenges of using primary sources in thinking and writing about history.

Responses are due by email **before class** begins on the assigned day. Hard copies may be delivered in class.

For primary-source responses:

You may wish to consider some of the following questions: What information can you glean from this source? What stands out to you? Who wrote it and who was their intended audience? What is the historical context/what issues of its time does it reflect? What research questions does it raise for you? What assumptions must we be careful about making? What is the secondary-source (historiographical) context for this source, or relevant issues?

For secondary-source responses:

Historians interpret primary sources to make arguments. What is the main argument or point in this secondary source? What kinds of sources does this historian use? What approach does s/he use to "read" sources? If there are two secondary sources assigned this week, you can also

consider how the two historians are in conversation, debate, and/or agreement with each other. Do they share similar approaches to sources?

Facilitating Discussion

One of the weeks for which you write a response, you will also facilitate group discussion. To complete this assignment you must meet with me **the week before the discussion** with at least 5 discussion questions already prepared. You will need to encourage students to analyze the primary documents, examine methodology, and put sources in conversation with each other.

Final Project

10% first draft, 8-9 pages, due Week 7

20% final, 8-9 pages, due last day of class

We will discuss paper topics in class at various points during the quarter, and students are required to meet with me **before week 5** to discuss their individual research projects. I will grade both drafts on the quality of the writing, as well as the argument and use of sources (see writing rubric). I will not grade final drafts based upon the exact incorporation of my feedback (you should write your own paper as you see it), but I will look to see that you have thoughtfully addressed any major issues.

Option 1: Document collection

Choose a time period or issue we are **not** covering – a few examples include early minstrelsy, frontier settlements, the Harlem Renaissance, the WWII military, reproduction and birth control, and second-wave feminism. Find at least three primary sources and at least two secondary sources about your focus area. Your primary sources must represent at least two different types of sources (newspapers, images, advertising, songs, etc.). Write an introductory essay for your collection of documents in which you explain the significance of each source, give your reasons for grouping them together, and provide a brief interpretation of the historical issue/moment/theme you've chosen and its importance in the intertwined histories of race and sexuality. I can help provide suggestions and bibliographic references.

Option 2: "What do race and sexuality have to do with each other?"

Drawing from this course, how would you answer the question, "What do race and sexuality have to do with each other?" You may draw from a time period and/or issue focused on in class, but you will need to use new sources to support your answer. Find at least three primary sources and at least two secondary sources to convince your listener of your argument. Your primary sources must represent at least two different types of sources (newspapers, images, advertising, songs, etc.). You may also bring in sources assigned in class, and address what arguments other historians have made, and/or which approaches and types of sources you think are particularly revealing.

Option 3: Oral history

We are all potential historical sources. The oral history final project will be to interview someone who has experienced part of the history covered in this class (ie: at least born before 1940). Your interview and transcript will be your primary source; you will need to find one secondary source in addition to assigned sources. Your paper should highlight the most important themes you discovered, relating them to what we have studied in the class. Note especially the impact of historical events on your subject's personal life and how her/his story confirms or challenges the historical interpretations we have read and seen. What are the challenges and benefits of oral history methodology?

If you are considering doing an oral history, wonderful! However, to do this project, you will need to confirm an interview subject and let me know by the **fourth** week of class. This will entail an additional meeting with me about oral history methodology.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED ON TIME; late papers will be downgraded a full grade per day and will not be accepted after three days. An extension or incomplete will be granted ONLY in the case of documented medical or family emergency.

Presentation (Last class) (5%)

Students will prepare a short presentation of what you found in your final projects. The presentation should offer a summary of your argument and findings, a photocopy or electronic copy of one or two of the sources that can be quickly reviewed by the class for discussion, and a brief articulation of your argument. The time allowed will be determined by class enrollment.

This is a chance to discuss the process of research and writing, what worked and did not work, and what new questions emerged. Students should feel free to meet with me ahead of time to discuss their presentations.

Grading:

Participation (including Attendance and Start-Ups): 30%

Discussion facilitation: 5%

Short Papers: 20% total (5% each)

First Draft of Final Paper: 10%

Final Paper: 30%

Final Presentation: 5%

Student Services and Obligations

Excellent resources for writing help and oral presentations are available for all students at:

http://www.stanford.edu/dept/undergrad/cgi-bin/drupal_ual/ARS_index.html

I strongly encourage students with disabilities to notify me if it will help their learning experience in this course. Students who have a disability that may necessitate an academic accommodation or the use of auxiliary aids and services in a class must initiate the request at the Disability Resource Center (723-1066).

Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the Honor Code. For more details please consult <http://judicialaffairs.stanford.edu>.

Week 1: Approaches to the Histories of Race and Sexuality

A

Introduction to course

In-class primary sources exercise: Frank Chin, "Frank Chin: Back-Talk," in *Counterpoint: Perspectives on Asian America*, 1976, p. 557

- "Combahee River Collective Statement, 1977," *Major Problems in African American History*, pp. 319-320

B

Short papers and discussion dates sign-ups

Secondary: Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race" *Signs*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Winter, 1992), pp. 251-274

- Estelle Freedman, "The Burning of Letters Continues: Elusive Identities and the Historical Construction of Sexuality" in *Feminism, Sexuality and Politics*, pp. 159-174.

Questions: How and why do we study the histories of sexuality and race? What are some areas of divergence among historians?

Week 2: Reading Silences: Early Slavery

A

Primary: *Virginia Slave Codes (1661-1705)* from Kirsten Fischer and Eric Hindraker, eds., *Colonial American History*, pp. 130-139.

Secondary: Kathleen Brown, Excerpt re: 1662 Virginia Slave Code, from *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs*, pp. 129-134

- "From 'Foul Crimes' to 'Spurious Issue': Sexual Regulation and the Social Construction of Race", *Good Wives*, Ch. 6 pp. 187-211

B

Primary: Thomas Jefferson, "Query 14: Laws" and "Query 18: Manners" from *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 1784, pp. 137-143, 162-163.

- **Skim** "Query 11: Aborigines," *Notes*, 219-233.

Secondary: Annette Gordon-Reed, *The Hemingses of Monticello*, Preface and Intro pp. 15-32

- "During that Time," *The Hemingses*, Ch. 13 pp. 264-289

Recommended: "The Children of No One," *The Hemingses*, Ch. 3 pp. 77-90

Questions: How have historians read silences? What are the primary sources' intended audience? How might we address contradictions and complexities of historical actors?

Week 3: Legal and social history: Violence and sexuality in slavery and freedom

A

Primary: L. Seaman, "What Miscegenation Is!" 1864

Secondary: **skim** Ariela Gross, "Performing Whiteness" in *What Blood Won't Tell*, Ch. 2, pp. 48-72

- Peggy Pascoe, "Introduction" and "Engendering Miscegenation," in *What Comes Naturally*, pp. 1-46

B

Primary: "Fugitive Slave Lewis Clarke Explains Why 'A Slave Can't Be a Man,' 1842," "J.W. Lindsay Describes Sexual and Family Relations under Slavery, 1863," "Dr. Esther Hill Hawks Recounts the Rape of 'Susan Black,' 1865," "Harriet Jacobs Relates Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, 1861," "The Freedpeople's Ideal of Marriage, 1865," "William H. Stallings Testifies About Ku Klux Klan Lynchings, 1871," *Major Problems in the History of Sexuality*, pp. 143-154

Secondary: Martha Hodes "The Sexualization of Reconstruction Politics: White Women and Black Men in the South after the Civil War" in *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 3, No. 3, Special Issue: African American Culture and Sexuality (Jan., 1993), pp. 402-417.

Questions: We have read a variety of types of primary sources this week. How might you put them in conversation? What does each perspective reveal and/or obscure? How have historians addressed the role of sexual violence in slavery and freedom?

Week 4: Discourse analysis: Race, rape, and masculinity

A

Primary: Ida B. Wells, "Lynch Law" (1893) in Robert W. Rydell, ed., *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbia Exposition*, pp. 29-43.

Secondary: Gail Bederman, "Remaking Manhood through Race and 'Civilization,'" *Manliness and Civilization*, Ch. 1 pp. 1-45.

- Siobhan Somerville, Excerpt from "Introduction," *Queering the Color Line*, pp. 1-3.

Recommended: Siobhan Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body," *Queering the Color Line*, pp. 15-38.

Recommended: Frederick Douglass, "Introduction" and Robert W. Rydell, Editor's Introduction in Rydell, ed., *The Reason Why* pp. xi-xlvi, 7-16.

B

Primary: "What is it?," *The Illustrated Wasp*, v. 2, 1877-1878, p. 544

- "Goodbye, John!" *The Wasp*, Cover, 1880
- "Our New Citizens," *Harper's Weekly*, Cover, Jan. 14, 1899

Secondary: Ruby C. Tapia, "'Just Ten Years Removed from a Bolo and a Breech-Cloth': The Sexualization of the Filipino 'Menace'," in *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse*, pp. 61-72

- **skim** Robert Lee, "The Third Sex," in *Orientalism*, Ch. 3 pp. 83-105.

Questions: How were racial and sexual ideologies intertwined in late-19th-century culture? What types of non-written sources can historians use to make connections?

Week 5: Reading sources: Policing race and sex in San Francisco's Chinatown

This week's office hours: DEADLINE for meetings to discuss final project topics

A

Meeting with Green Library Research Specialist Ben Stone

Each student must email me at least one question related to his/her project the day before. Think about what challenges you have found in looking for primary sources. Do you know which databases might be most helpful for you?

B

Primary: Three images:

"Bulletin No. 1 of the Chinese League of Justice of America," 1909 (4 pages)

"A Slave Girl in Holiday Attire" late 19th century

"White Women in Opium Den, Chinatown, S. F." 1892

Secondary: Nayan Shah, "Perversity, Contamination, and the Dangers of Queer Domesticity," *Contagious Divides* Ch. 3 pp. 77-104.

- **skim** Lucie Cheng, "Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century America," in Kathleen Kennedy and Sharon Ullman, eds. *Sexual Borderlands: Constructing an American Sexual Past*, pp. 131-158.

Week 6: Looking from within and without: Commercialized urban space

A

Primary: Clement Wood, "The Celestial Settlement," "The Queen of Chinatown," and "The Flight of the Moon," *The Truth About New York's Chinatown*, 1926, pp. 1-13, 36-57 (mini-book).

- Song lyrics, Irving Berlin, "Slumming," 1937

Secondary: Chad Heap, *Slumming* "Introduction" and **skim** Ch. 5, "The Negro Vogue," pp. 1-15, 189-230.

Recommended: **skim** Ch 2, "Beyond the Slums: Commercial Leisure and the Reorganization and Policing of Urban Space" pp. 70-97, to see how Heap approaches spatial history.

B

Primary: Listen to songs via Stanford's electronic resource, (search "Ma Rainey," etc. in SearchWorks)

“People We Can Get Along Without,” *Chicago Defender*, Aug. 13, 1921, Apr. 14, 1923.

Secondary: Heap, *Slumming*, Ch. 6, “The Pansy and Lesbian Craze in White and Black” pp. 231-277.

Questions: How do historians analyze the “built environment”? How does looking at different sources illuminate different uses/meanings of space? Does the meaning of a musical/lyrical source change if divorced from the experience of listening to the music?

Week 7: Cultural history: Racial performance and commodification

FIRST DRAFT DUE

A

Primary: Image analysis: “Mah-Jongg,” *Oregonian*, 9/3/1922

Photo stills of Anna May Wong

Secondary: Alys Eve Weinbaum, “Racial Masquerade,” in *The Modern Girl around the World*, **required:** pp. 120-123, **recommended:** pp. 120-146

B

Primary: 1933 Film “Roman Scandals,” 90 min. (Available on Reserve)

Secondary: **skim** Robert Lee, “Inner Dikes and Barred Zones,” *Orientalis*, pp. 106-144

Questions: What are the merits and limitations of cultural history? What do image and film analyses provide vis-à-vis discourse/textual analysis?

Week 8: Seeing like a state: Constructing authority, race, and sexuality

A

Primary: 1923 U.S. v Bhagat Singh Thind

Secondary: Peggy Pascoe, “The Facts of Race in the Courtroom,” *What Comes Naturally* pp. 109-130

B

Primary: GI Bill government film, 8 min.

<http://www.military.com/video/education/gi-bill/gi-bill-newsreel/664169074001/>

Secondary: Compare two interpretations of the GI Bill:

- Margot Canaday “Building a Straight State: Sexuality and Social Citizenship under the 1944 G.I. Bill” *The Journal of American History* Vol. 90, No. 3 (Dec., 2003), pp. 935-957

- Elaine Tyler May, “War and Peace: Fanning the Home Fires” *Homeward Bound*, Ch. 3, 58-88.

Questions: How does the history of sexuality relate to the primary sources this week? How might we put the two interpretations of the GI Bill in conversation?

Week 9: Hearing Voices: Oral history

A

Primary sources: Oral history transcripts, from Nan Boyd, *Wide Open Town*

Jose Sarría pp. 20-24; Reba Hudson pp. 63-67; Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon pp. 148-159

Secondary: Elizabeth L. Kennedy and Madeline D. Davis, "Constructing Lesbian Community History Using Oral History," *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold*, pp. 15-26

- Boyd, "Lesbian Space, Lesbian Territory," *Wide Open Town*, pp. 68-101

B

John Howard, "Norms and Laws," *Men Like That*, pp. 127-174

Recommended: Allen Bérubé, "How Gay Stays White and What Kind of White It Stays," *My Desire for History*, pp. 202-232.

Questions: What are the merits and limitations of oral history? How do these historians use and integrate the sources? How do they represent themselves as intermediaries in the text?

Week 10: History in Poetics: Looking back, looking forward

A

Primary:

- Countee Cullen, "Tableau," 1928,

- Gwendolyn Brooks, "Ballad of Pearl May Lee," 1945, *A Street in Bronzeville*

- Al Robles, "A Manongs Language," *Bridge: An Asian American Perspective*, October 1976

- Cherríe Moraga, "Welder," 1983, *This Bridge Called My Back*

- Audre Lorde, "Poetry is Not a Luxury," 1984, *Sister Outsider*, pp. 36-40

Secondary: Evelyn Hammonds, "Toward a Genealogy of Black Female Sexuality: The Problematic of Silence," in Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick, eds. *Feminist Theory and the Body*, pp. 93-103.

Recommended: Thomas Holt, "Race, Race-making, and the Writing of History," *The American Historical Review*, 100:1, pp. 1-20.

Questions: How can poetry be used as a historical source? What themes emerge in this week's reading that echo through this course?

B

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Week 11:

Tuesday, Dec. 13: FINAL PROJECT DUE