



WST 398: Gender, Race, Ethnicity
{ Emotional Outlaws & Feminist Affect Theories }

Instructor: Joy Schaefer
Office: SB Manhattan Campus
Office hours: by appointment
e-mail: joy.schaefer@stonybrook.edu

Semester: Summer Session I,
May 23 - July 2, 2015
Time: Tues. & Thurs. 9:30AM – 12:55 PM
Location: SB Manhattan Campus, TBA

*"Implicit in a feminist politics of affect is the assumption that the association of femininity with affect has led to the simultaneous devalorization of both."*¹

Course Description:

The term "Affect Theory" seems, at first glance, to be an oxymoron, since affect is typically aligned with emotion and the body, while theory is aligned with reason and the mind. This course aims to disturb these assumptions by examining feminist theories of affect and emotion within the humanities and social sciences. We will look at how these theories work to dismantle the following problematic connotations: feminine is emotional is bodily is nature-oriented is backwards is colonized; and masculine is rational is cognitive is culture-producing is progressive is colonizing.

Questions that this course will ask us to reflect on include: How have thought and reason come to be identified with the male, Western subject? How have affects, emotions, nature and the body come to be identified with feminine and racial 'others'? How did feminist activists and scholars begin to dismantle these views—and/or appropriate these views for their own means—in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, and how have feminists continued to do so through the present day? Where do popular discourses stand in regards to these questions? What are "outlaw emotions"², and how do "politically engaged"³ affect theories differ from other affect theories? How do various theorists define "affect" as opposed (or

¹ Ann Cvetkovich, *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture, and Victorian Sensationalism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1992. 1.

² Alison M. Jaggar, "Love and knowledge: Emotion in feminist epistemology." *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy*, 32:2 (1989), 151-176.

³ Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg, "An Inventory of Shimmers." *The Affect Theory Reader*. Eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth. Durham and London: Duke UP, 2010. 7.

connected) to “emotion” and “feeling”? How have certain filmic representations maintained the status quo in regards to gender, race and class stereotypes, and how have other films subverted these stereotypes? Is it in our best interest to be “angry feminists” and, as Sara Ahmed claims, to “contest this understanding of emotion as ‘the unthought’, just as we need to contest the assumption that ‘rational thought’ is unemotional”?⁴ Does reason always play a part in emotion, and vice versa?

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate proficiency in the following skills:

1. Understand the category of gender as mutually constitutive with other categories, including race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, religion, dis/ability and nationality.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of feminist theories of affect, emotion, and the body through in-class discussion, quizzes and formal essays (see detailed rubric, ‘Grading Standards for Written Work’ below).
3. Demonstrate familiarity with the cultural and historical contexts of primary and secondary texts through in-class discussion, quizzes and essays.
4. Demonstrate ability to think critically, analytically and creatively via discussion and formal essays.
5. Understand some of the ways that scholars, activists, writers, and filmmakers attempt to transgress social inequalities.
6. Demonstrate the ability to actively listen, and to work respectfully with your peers via class discussion and peer writing workshop.
7. Revise and expand upon formal written work with the guidance of peer and instructor feedback.
8. Cultivate the ability to imagine otherwise.

*****Fulfills D.E.C. category K and SBC category SBS+*****

Required Prerequisites: WST major or minor, or WST 102 (formerly SSI/WST 102), or WST 103, or WST 301, or WST/PHI 284, or 6 credits of departmentally approved courses.

Required grade: A through D

***** Warning *****

This course, precisely because it is meant to challenge the status quo, contains difficult material. You are expected to approach the material in a serious and mature manner. Please let me know if you have any specific trigger warning requests via email, in person, or on your introduction sheet, but please also realize that it would be impossible to warn you before every instance of potentially traumatizing material. For a discussion of these issues, see <https://trigwarnings.wordpress.com>.

⁴ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2004. 170.

Required Books:

Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004). ISBN 0415972558. **(CPE)**

Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy. Eds. Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild (2002). ISBN 0805075097. **(GW)**

Recommended Books:

Sianne Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (2005). ISBN 0674024095.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. *Touching, Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003). ISBN 0822330156.

Barbara Tomlinson, *Feminism and Affect at the Scene of Argument: Beyond the Trope of the Angry Feminist* (2010). ISBN 143990247X.

In addition, many of your required reading will be posted on Blackboard [BB] under "Documents." Recommended readings, which are not required, will also be listed in the "Course Schedule" (some posted on BB, some found within required or recommended books).

Course Policies:

1. Professionalism and Attendance

- A. Please be respectful to everyone in class. Any comments or actions that instigate or contribute to a hostile environment in the classroom will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs.
- B. Attendance and participation are mandatory, meaning that students must attend all class meetings. The use of cell phones is strictly prohibited. You may take notes and/or refer to readings on a laptop, but **refrain from surfing the web**. If I see that devices become a distraction to you or others, I will prohibit them.
*****Turn COMPLETELY OFF and put away laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices before film screenings begin.**
- C. Timely arrival: Arriving late is disruptive and inconsiderate. Be respectful of your fellow classmates and me by showing up on time.

2. Blackboard website:

We will be using the course Blackboard (**referred to as BB**) website frequently, so please make sure to check it regularly for course information and readings. Much of your reading material will be available only on BB. You are responsible for printing these articles and bringing them to class or consulting them in class via your laptop. **Make sure that you**

consistently check your Stony Brook email since Blackboard is linked to this email address. You can access our course website online at <http://blackboard.sunysb.edu>. For problems logging in, go to the help desk in the Main Library SINC Site or the Union SINC Site, or call 631.632.9602 or email: helpme@ic.sunysb.edu

Course Requirements & Grade Determination:

20% Attendance & Participation: Attendance includes coming to class with relevant text(s) in hand, being prepared and speaking up. Completion of unannounced in-class writing or group assignments may be necessary for attendance points. You are expected to attend all class meetings. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and making up the work; I highly recommend that you ask a classmate if you may consult their notes. **See also "Professionalism and Attendance Policy" under "Course Policies" above.*

25% Quizzes (5): Five unscheduled, fifteen-minute quizzes composed of short answer questions, given at the beginning of class. The quizzes may cover required readings, films, lectures and/or discussions.

10% "Show and Tell" Presentation: You will each do an individual in-class "show and tell" presentation. This is a five-minute presentation in which you have the chance to present a text of your choice ("show"), and decode its meaning and analyze its relevance to course themes ("tell"). More specific instructions are given in the "Assignment Prompt: Show and Tell Presentation" document on Blackboard (Appendix). You will sign up for your presentation slot during our first lesson. If you are absent, you should email me by May 30th to secure a spot.

10% Essay Proposal: Propose an original research topic, drawing from at least two readings stipulated in the course schedule. It can be related to your own interests or discipline(s). You will write a **1.5-page** research paper proposal describing what your research topic is, why you have chosen it, and how it connects to the course themes. Mention at least 2 readings (outside our syllabus) that will be helpful to consider for your topic. **Use MLA format with Works Cited: at least 4 sources total.** *See "Grading Standards for Written Work" below.* Your proposals are due via email by Sunday, June 7th.

5% Writing Workshop Participation: One hour of a class session will be dedicated to exchanging the first draft of your essay with two of your peers and commenting on their drafts. Your active and full participation in the writing workshop will ensure you full credit for this assignment. **Be sure to bring 2 hard copies of your first draft to class on June 16th.*

10% Essay First Draft: Compose a properly formatted and well-prepared essay of **3.5 to 4 pages** (no more, no less) to be uploaded to BB using SafeAssign. *See “Grading Standards for Written Work” below. Due Friday, June 19th by 11:59pm.

20% Essay Final Draft: Revise and expand your first draft after carefully considering my comments and suggestions. Your final draft should be **7.5-8 pages** (no more, no less) and uploaded to BB using SafeAssign. I expect to see improvement where there is room for it, and this expectation will be reflected in your grade for this final assignment. See “Grading Standards for Written Work” below. Due Sunday, June 28th at 11:59pm.

Due dates are always final; late work will not be accepted. However, if you anticipate trouble meeting a deadline, please email me beforehand. In addition, you are fully responsible for avoiding any scheduling conflicts with this class.

Grading Standards for Written Work:

All out-of-class papers should be polished work, i.e. free of mistakes, typos, spelling and grammatical errors in addition to expressing your thoughts as clearly as possible.

Proofread your work and have a friend or classmate proofread it for you. Papers that fall short of, or go over, the assigned length will be marked down.

→ **FORMAT:** MLA format (including your name, my name, course number, date) with correct citations, double-spaced, last name and page # in upper right-hand corner, 1 inch margins all around, 12 pt. Times New Roman font. **For help, see:**
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

An “A” paper has a unique argument (thesis) to make on the topic, an organized structure, and evidence to support all claims. It has no significant errors in spelling, grammar, MLA format or general presentation. The overall format of the essay includes an essay title, an introduction, well-developed paragraphs, and a conclusion. Active voice is apparent. The writing engages the reader and inspires them to contemplate the subject further. All quoted material is properly documented and cited, and the paper does not overuse quotations.

A “B” paper makes an argument on the topic and has a structure and evidence to support claims, but it may have sections where the structure becomes confusing or ineffective, or the evidence to support claims is deficient. In addition, it may contain some errors in spelling, grammar, MLA format and/or general presentation. Quotations may be slightly overused, but they are properly cited in most cases.

A “C” paper has an argument to make on the topic with some viable claims. However, there may be serious deficiencies in the evidence provided and a notable absence of structure, as

well as several errors in spelling, grammar, MLA format and/or general presentation. Quotations may be overused and/or fail to be properly cited in a few cases.

A “D” paper has no real argument to make and deficiencies in every area.

An “F” paper has no argument and fails to reach the minimum requirements, or is a paper that is not turned in, or is a paper that has one or more plagiarized ideas or sections.

Grading System:

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| A: 95-100 | B-: 80-83 | D: 60-69 |
| A-: 90-94 | C+: 77-79 | F: 0-59 |
| B+: 87-89 | C: 74-76 | |
| B: 84-86 | C-: 70-73 | |

COURSE SCHEDULE⁵

“[T]he hierarchy between thought/emotion [...] clearly translates into a hierarchy between subjects: whilst thought and reason are identified with the masculine and Western subject, emotions and bodies are associated with femininity and racial others.”⁶

Unit 1: CULTURAL STEREOTYPES, SUBVERSIONS & REAPPROPRIATIONS

May 26: **{ Man = Culture, Mind, Reason/Woman = Nature, Body, Emotion }**
Introduction to course and syllabus; Presentation sign-up
Sherry B. Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” (1972) [BB]
Julie Holland, “[Medicating Women’s Feelings](#)” (2015)
In-class: Alice Guy [Blaché], “Madame’s Cravings” (1907)
Recommended: Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, “An Inventory of Shimmers” [BB]

⁵ The schedule and/or materials covered are subject to change. Please check Blackboard regularly for updates under “Announcements.”

⁶ Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*. 170.

- May 28: **{ Outlaw Emotions; Affects vs. Emotions vs. Feelings }**
Alison Jaggar, "Love & Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology"
 (1989) [BB]
Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, from *Touching, Feeling* (2003)
In-class: Agnès Varda, *Vagabond* (1985)
Recommended: Carolyn Pedwell & Anne Whitehead, "Affecting Feminism:
 Questions of Feeling in Feminist Theory" (2012) [BB];
Sandy Flitterman-Lewis, from *To Desire Differently: Feminism and the French
 Cinema* (1996) [BB]
- June 2: **{ Shame & the Laughing Feminist }**
Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1975) [BB]
Elsbeth Probyn, from *Blush: Faces of Shame* (2005)
Recommended: Sara Ahmed, "Shame Before Others" (*PCE*)
- June 4: **{ the "Angry Black Woman"; the "Angry Feminist," etc. }**
Audre Lorde, from *Sister Outsider* (1984) [BB]
Barbara Tomlinson, from *Feminism and Affect at the Scene of Argument:
 Beyond the Trope of the Angry Feminist* (2010) [BB]
Jessica Valenti, "[Why Are Feminists So Angry?](#)" (2013)
Recommended: bell hooks, "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory"
 (1984) [BB];
 <http://feministkilljoys.com>;
 <https://theangryblackwoman.wordpress.com>;
Short Paper: due Saturday, June 6th by 11:59pm [BB]
Essay Proposal: due Sunday, June 7th by 11:59pm (email)
- June 9: **{ Affective Solidarity }**
Sara Ahmed, "Introduction: Feel Your Way" & "Feminist Attachments" (*PCE*)
Clare Hemmings, "Affective Solidarity: Feminist Reflexivity and
 Political Transformation" (2012) [BB]

Recommended: Hemmings, “Invoking Affect: Cultural Theory and the Ontological Turn” (2005) [BB]

June 11: **{ from Private Trauma to Public Culture }**

Ann Cvetkovich, from *An Archive of Feelings* (2003) [BB]

Sianne Ngai, from “Animatedness” & “Envy” in *Ugly Feelings* (2005) [BB]

In-class: Sini Anderson, from *The Punk Singer* (2013)

Recommended: Kristyn Gorton, “Theorizing Emotion & Affect: Feminist Engagements” (2008) [BB]

Cvetkovich, from *Depression: A Public Feeling* (2012) [BB]

June 16: **{ Affect as Physical; Embodiment; Corporeality }**

Elizabeth Grosz, from *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (1994) [BB]

Teresa Brennan, from *The Transmission of Affect* (2004) [BB]

Writing Workshop: Bring 2 hard copies of your first draft to class.

Unit 2: TRANSNATIONAL THEORIES OF AFFECT & EMOTION

June 18: **{ Transnational Feminism; (Post)colonial Theory }**

Inderpal Grewal & Caren Kaplan, “[Postcolonial Studies & Transnational Feminist Practices](#)” (2000)

Ahmed, “The Organisation Of Hate” (*PCE*)

Humaira Saeed, “Moving Feminism: How to ‘Trans’ the National” (2012) [BB]

In-class: Gurinder Chadha, from *Bend it Like Beckham* (2002)

Recommended: Frantz Fanon, from *Black Skins, White Masks* (1952) [BB]

Essay First Draft: due Friday, June 19th at 11:59pm.

June 23: **{ Multiculturalism, Immigration, Precarity, Cruel Optimism }**

Ahmed, “Multiculturalism & the Promise of Happiness” (2007) [BB]

Lauren Berlant, from “After the Good Life: An Impasse” in *Cruel Optimism*

(2011) [BB]

In-class: Laurent Cantet, from *Human Resources* (1999)

Recommended: Ahmed, "Melancholic Migrants" from *The Promise of Happiness* (2010) [BB];

Stephen Frears & Hanif Kureishi, *My Beautiful Launderette* (1985)

June 25: **{ Affective Labor, Care Work, "Women's Work" }**

Barbara Ehrenreich & Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Introduction" (2002) (*GW*)

Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, "The Care Crisis in the Philippines: Children and Transnational Families in the New Global Economy" (2002) (*GW*)

Michelle H. S. Ho, "Desiring the Singapore Story: Affective Attachments and National Identities in Anthony Chen's *Ilo Ilo*" (2015) [BB]

In-class: Walter Salles & Daniela Thomas, "Loin du 16ème" from *Paris, Je t'aime* (2006); Anthony Chen, from *Ilo Ilo* (2013)

Recommended: Michael Hardt, "Affective Labor" (1999) [BB]; Barbara Ehrenreich & Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Introduction" to *Global Woman*

Essay Final Draft: due Sunday, June 28th by 11:59pm

June 30: **{ Fear & the "Angry Arab" }**

Joan Scott, "Racism" from *The Politics of the Veil* [BB]

Ahmed, "The Affective Politics of Fear" (*PCE*)

In-class: Michael Haneke, *Caché* (2005)

Recommended: Ahmed, "In the Name of Love" (*CPE*)

July 2: **{ from Eurocentrism to Polycentrism⁷ }**

Sneja Gunew, "Subaltern Empathy: Beyond European Categories in Affect Theory" (2009) [BB]

Laura Marks, "Thinking Multisensory Culture" (2008) [BB]

⁷ From Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2014.

In-class: Carlos Motta, "[Nefandus](#)" (2013)

Recommended: Ahmed, "Queer Feelings" (*CPE*)

University Policies

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS): If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room 128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

*****The University Conduct Code can be found at:**

<http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/jud/conduct.shtml>

Statement of Principle Regarding Academic Dishonesty

Intellectual honesty is a cornerstone of all academic and scholarly work. Therefore, the faculty view any form of academic dishonesty as a very serious matter. The AJC and CEAS-CASA are responsible for the establishment of general guidelines for dealing with academic dishonesty in the colleges and for the consideration of individual complaints as outlined below. Further information regarding functions of the committees is available from the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Undergraduate Student Office in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

- **Definition**

Academic dishonesty includes any act that is designed to obtain fraudulently, either for oneself or for someone else, academic credit, grades, or other recognition that is not properly earned or that adversely affects another's grade. The following represents examples of this and does not constitute an exhaustive list:

- Cheating on exams or assignments by the use of books, electronic devices, notes, or other aids when these are not permitted, or by copying from another student.
- Collusion: two or more students helping one another on an exam or assignment when it is not permitted.

- Ringers: taking an exam for someone else, or permitting someone else to take one's exam.
- Submitting the same paper in more than one course without permission of the instructors.
- Plagiarizing: copying someone else's writing or paraphrasing it too closely, even if it constitutes only some of your written assignment, without proper citation, even instructor notes & presentation slides.
- Falsifying documents or records related to credit, grades, status (e.g., adds and drops, P/NC grading, transcripts), or other academic matters.
- Altering an exam or paper after it has been graded in order to request a grade change.
- Stealing, concealing, destroying, or inappropriately modifying classroom or other instructional material, such as posted exams, library materials, laboratory supplies, or computer programs.
- Preventing relevant material from being subjected to academic evaluation.
- Presenting fabricated excuses for missed assignments or tests.
- Unauthorized clicker use: using someone else's clicker, falsifying attendance roster, signing in for someone.

Plagiarism is simply the use of others' words and/or ideas without clearly acknowledging their source. As students, you are learning about other people's ideas in your course texts, your instructors' lectures, in-class discussions, and when doing your own research. When you incorporate those words and ideas into your own work, it is of the utmost importance that you give credit where it is due. Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is considered academic dishonesty and all instances will be reported to the Academic Judiciary. To avoid plagiarism, you must give the original author credit whenever you use another person's ideas, opinions, drawings, or theories as well as any facts or any other pieces of information that are not common knowledge. Additionally quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words or a close paraphrasing of another person's spoken or written words must also be referenced. Accurately citing all sources and putting direct quotations of even a few key words in quotation marks are required.

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT: Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn.

Appendix: Assignment Prompt: “Show and Tell” Presentation: further instructions

When it is your turn to present: Presentations will be held at the start of every lesson. Ensure that you are not only punctual, but also ready to go when we begin class promptly. Plan to come to class at least ten minutes before it starts so you will have time to set up. Prepare your materials in advance. If you are using any kind of electronic media, you can either email me your items in advance or bring your own laptops to class. You are responsible for the slot you have signed up for. Failure to turn up for presentations without a valid reason will automatically result in an F grade. If you know you are going to be absent (only for valid reasons, such as illness), email me to give me a heads up.

Choice of material: Any text, in the general sense, which *must* be relevant to our course themes (see the syllabus). This includes but is not limited to: literature, art, clips from films/television/other visual media, websites, blogs, comics, and magazines. Note that texts should not be discriminatory or offensive in any way. If in doubt, run your ideas by me before you present (either via email or in person). Otherwise, be as creative as you can!

Making sure your “show and tell” succeeds: You should not just “show” the class your text, but more importantly, “tell” us how it is related to the course themes. In other words, you need to take apart your text, draw connections to the course and/or the readings, and convince everyone how your text is *the* text for trying to understand the issues brought out in class.

As a guide, consider the following questions:

1. Briefly contextualize your selected text for your classmates. In other words, give them a bit of background on it.
2. How is your selected text relevant to our course themes, readings, and/or classes? Identify a few main key points and explain your rationale.
3. Why did you choose this text (and not others)? What is it about this text that caught your attention in the first place?

Grading

This is what I will be looking for:

1. Creativity of material and/or presentation (4 points)
2. Relevance to course themes and/or class material, such as readings (4 points)
3. Timeliness and preparation for presentation, including your ability to be punctual and to keep time for your presentation (2 points)