

WST 220 – GENDER, CULTURE, AND SCIENCE  
Fall 2014, MWF 9:10 – 10am, Todd Hall Room 307

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*Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with the truth.*  
~Simone de Beauvoir (1970)

How objective is objectivity? Who determines “the facts” and what forces might be tacitly or quietly influencing the perspectives of those who do? Are science, technology, and medicine always completely objective and free of any kind of bias? These kinds of questions lay at the heart of this course as it maps out the rise of “Western” science and the deep imprint of shifting notions of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and nationality over time on the production of knowledge. The sometimes barely perceptible influences of these categories – often conveyed through the seemingly static idea of “nature” – are visible in scientific discourses, the shape and practice of professional medicine, technological developments, and many other “objective” fields. The impact of these influences are most obviously manifested in the continued underrepresentation of women in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as well as the erasure of their many contributions to these fields in the historical record. Through lectures, readings, in-class discussions, and multimedia sources like documentaries and films, students will grapple with these slippery questions in global, national, and historical contexts. We will also contemplate arenas in which solutions to these deeply embedded biases and limitations are (or can be) articulated like educational policies and representations of women in the sciences in film and media. But we will also explore, particularly through film, the ambiguous genre of science fiction – known at once for its creative capacity to unsettle rigid ways of thinking about the world but also as a site where gender, sexuality, and science continue to come together in problematic ways.

NOTE: *This syllabus and the course schedule below are subject to change based on necessary adjustments made by the professor; your continued enrollment in the course signifies your acceptance of the terms of the syllabus.*

### OBJECTIVES

This course has three primary objectives. First, it seeks to build on and expand students’ basic understandings of how categories like gender, race, and sexuality are socially-constructed and change over time. Second, by exploring the history and politics of science and the construction of scientific knowledge, it encourages students to think critically about the importance of contextualization and the meaning of “objectivity.” Third, the course will assess students’ ability to recognize and articulate their understanding of how gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality influenced the production of scientific knowledge in different historical eras and what the concrete consequences of this trajectory are that continue to echo in contemporary times.

## COURSE POLICIES

Attendance/Participation: In order to succeed in this class students must be present and prepared (all assigned readings completed as specified on the course schedule). Students can miss THREE classes without penalty (it is NOT necessary to contact your professor about these first three absences). Each absence beyond these three will result in deductions from your attendance score.

STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT THEY LEGIBLY WRITE THEIR OWN NAME ON THE SIGN-IN SHEET EACH CLASS PERIOD. NO ONE WILL BE “ADDED” TO THE SIGN-IN SHEET AFTER THE CLASS PERIOD IS OVER. IF STUDENTS ARE DISCOVERED ADDING NAMES TO THE LIST FOR OTHERS IN THE CLASS THEY AND THEIR FRIEND(S) WILL RECEIVE A ZERO ATTENDANCE SCORE FOR THE ENTIRE COURSE.

Tardiness: Please ensure that you arrive on time to class. If you occasionally cannot avoid being late, please enter the room quietly so as to not distract classmates or interrupt lecture. Habitual tardiness will be penalized.

Cellphones, Laptops, and other Electronic Devices: Please ensure that cellphones are turned off or silenced before the start of class. Students do not have permission to use their phones, computers or other devices to surf the internet, check Facebook or other forms of social media, etc. during class time. Laptops may be used IF students are typing notes. If students are discovered using their laptops for other purposes, the professor reserves the right to ask them to no longer use them in class. **\*\*ALSO PLEASE NOTE:** No student, under any circumstances, can videotape or otherwise record Dr. Barclay or her lectures and any other class content without her express written permission.

Late work: Written work and other assignments (with the exception of the final paper/project) may be turned in for up to two weeks after the due date with the following stipulations: if it is submitted in the first week after the due date it will be docked 25%; if submitted during the second week after the due date, it will be docked 50%.

Submitting assignments via email: Emailed work will ONLY be accepted in extreme cases and if the student secures permission from the professor in advance. It is the student’s responsibility to turn in a hard copy of their work when it is due.

\*\*\*Students should retain all written work that the professor grades and returns to them in the event that their final grade for the course is contested in any way.

Mid-term Exam Make Up: The professor will make reasonable accommodations for students to make up the mid-term exam ONLY if they are forced to miss it because of significant reasons. The exam make-up MUST take place within one week of the date that it was originally administered and it is the *student’s* responsibility to coordinate this re-scheduling with the professor.

Final class meeting: It is the student’s responsibility to be present for the last class meeting during the final exam time to turn in the final paper/project – do not buy plane tickets or make arrangements to leave campus prior to the final class meeting.

Plagiarism: According to WSU’s Student Standards of Conduct, plagiarism is defined as “Presenting the information, ideas, or phrasing of another person as the student's own work without proper acknowledgment of the source. This includes submitting a commercially prepared paper or research project or submitting for academic credit any work done by someone else. The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or academic materials” (<http://conduct.wsu.edu/policies/standards-of-conduct/>)

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND IMMEDIATE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE. THIS CAN RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE ASSIGNMENT, FAILURE OF THE ENTIRE COURSE, OR EVEN DISCIPLINARY ACTION AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL. DO YOUR OWN WORK!

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center.

Assignments and Evaluations:

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	15%
MID-TERM EXAM (MONDAY OCTOBER 6)	25%
CRITICAL RESPONSE ESSAY 1 (MONDAY OCTOBER 20)	20%
CRITICAL RESPONSE ESSAY 2 (MONDAY NOVEMBER 3)	20%
FINAL PROJECT (FRIDAY DECEMBER 19 AT 8AM)	<u>20%</u>
	100%

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

*Critical Response Essays (2)*

Students will be required to write a total of two 4-5 page essays on *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* and *The Protest Psychosis*. These essays MUST:

- (1.) Demonstrate a critical engagement with each text (not simply a basic summarization of it).
- (2.) Clearly identify and articulate the major argument(s) of the text being analyzed.
- (3.) Place the text in conversation with other course materials (lectures, previous readings, etc.)
- (4.) Explain, using specific examples, how the text informs, challenges, and/or expands your understanding of the intersections of gender, race, sexuality, and medical science.

Essays must be a MINIMUM of 4 full pages (no more than 5 pages) in length, typed (in 12-point font), double-spaced, with standard 1” margins. They must also be free of grammatical errors/typos and use proper citation techniques specific to your discipline (if this is unknown, please use parenthetical references similar to MLA-style – please consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab for examples <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/> or raise your concerns with your professor in class so that this technique can be briefly reviewed).

DUE DATES FOR CRITICAL RESPONSE ESSAYS

MONDAY OCTOBER 20 – Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

MONDAY NOVEMBER 3 – Jonathan Metzl, *The Protest Psychosis*

*Final Project - Film analysis OR Poster*

In lieu of a final exam, students are required to submit a final project. They can choose to:

- (1.) Write a 4-6 page critical analysis of the 2009 science fiction film *Splice* (which will be viewed and discussed in class) that assesses how some of the many themes from this course appear in the film and takes a position on the extent to which these representations reflect a feminist perspective, OR
- (2.) Create a poster about a specific theme, topic, event or person encountered in this course or related to gender, race, sexuality, culture, and science broadly conceived. While students have license to be as creative as they wish in developing their poster, it will be required to contain essential elements that include things like: a title, two significant quotes (one derived from a piece of notable scholarship on your subject and one from a primary – historical – source), a series of images, a typed list of the images used with references, and a typed 1-2 page explanation the theme/issue addressed, how it relates to the course, and what readings/course materials informed your project.

Please note that the above descriptions are basic. Further details and instructions about both of these projects will be distributed after the mid-term. The final projects will be DUE FRIDAY DECEMBER 19 AT 8:00 AM.

Required books:

Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (Random House, 2010)

Jonathan Metzler, *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease* (Beacon Press, 2011).

Grading Scale:

93-100 A	83-85 B	73-75 C	60-65 D
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	0-59 F
86-89 B+	76-79 C+	66-69 D+	

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

WEEK ONE:

Aug 25 Introduction

Aug 27 How many Sexes?

Reading: Anne Fausto-Sterling, Chapter 3 “Of Genders and Genitals: The Use and Abuse of the Modern Intersexual” in *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Constructions of Sexuality* (Basic Books, 2000), 45-77. [ANGEL]

Aug 29 Continued...

Reading: Suzanne J. Kessler, “The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants,” *Signs*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Autumn 1990): 3-26. [ANGEL]

## WEEK TWO

Sep 1 LABOR DAY – NO CLASS

Sep 3 Gender and sexualities: innate or imposed?

Reading: Judith Lorber: “Night to His Day: The Social Construction of Gender” [ANGEL]

Sep 5

Reading: Fausto-Sterling, Anne. “Gender Systems: Toward a Theory of Human Sexuality” in *Sexing the Body*, 233-55. [ANGEL]

## WEEK THREE

Sep 8 Scientific Transformations in Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

Sep 10 continued...

Reading: Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860” *American Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Part I (Summer 1966): 151-174. [ANGEL]

Sep 12

Reading: Londa Schiebinger, Chapter 7 “More than Skin Deep: the Scientific Search for Sexual Difference” in *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science* (Harvard University Press, 1989), 189-213. [ANGEL]

## WEEK FOUR

Sep 15 Gender, Race, and Nation – the Case of Sara Bartman

Sep 17 Continued

Reading: Ann Fausto-Sterling, “Gender, Race, and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of ‘Hottentot’ Women in Europe, 1815-1817” in Jennifer Terry and Jacqueline Urla, eds. *Deviant Bodies: Critical Perspectives on Difference in Science and Popular Culture* (Bloomington: IUP, 1995). [ANGEL]

Sep 19 Race and Biology

Viewing: Race: The Power of an Illusion

## WEEK FIVE

Sep 22 Gender, Race, and Nation: American Perspective on the Natural Order

Sep 24 Continued

Reading: Stephen Jay Gould, “American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin: Blacks and Indians as Separate, Inferior Species” in Sandra Harding, ed. *The ‘Racial’ Economy of Science* (Bloomington: IUP, 1993), 84-115. [ANGEL]

Sep 26 Continued

Reading: Excerpts from Samuel Cartwright, “The Peculiarities of Negroes” [ANGEL]

## WEEK SIX

- Sep 29 Where Spectacle and Medical Science Converge: 19<sup>th</sup> c Freak Shows
- Oct 1  
Reading: Benjamin Reiss, Chapter 7 “Spectacle” from *The Showman and the Slave: Race, Death, and Memory in Barnum’s America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 126-140. [ANGEL]
- Oct 3 Mid-term review  
**\*\*Begin reading Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*\*\***

## WEEK SEVEN

- Oct 6 MID-TERM
- Oct 8 Late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Pseudoscience: Eugenics
- Oct 10  
Reading: R.C. Lewontin, Steven Rose, and Leon J. Kamin. “IQ: The Rank Ordering of the World,” in Sandra Harding, ed. *The ‘Racial’ Economy of Science*, 142-60. [ANGEL]

## WEEK EIGHT

- Oct 13 Eugenics, conclusion; Discussion, paper writing
- Oct 15 Discussion, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*  
Reading: Skloot, Prologue, Parts I and II (pp. 1- 176)
- Oct 17 Discussion, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*  
Reading: Skloot, Part III – afterword (pp. 179-328)

## WEEK NINE

- Oct 20 Hysteria...  
**\*\*\*Paper One due on *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*\*\*\***
- Oct 22 ... and Freud  
Reading: Rachel Maines, “Socially Camouflaged Technologies: The Case of the Electromechanical Vibrator” [ANGEL]
- Oct 24 In class viewing – Freud: Analysis of A Mind  
**\*\*Begin reading Jonathan Metzl, *The Protest Psychosis*\*\***

## WEEK TEN

- Oct 27 Background on the Civil Rights Era and the Further Pathologization of Race
- Oct 29 In-class discussion of Metzl, *The Protest Psychosis*  
Reading: Metzl, Preface – Part IV (pp. ix-130)
- Oct 31 In-class discussion of Metzl, *The Protest Psychosis*  
Reading: Metzl, Parts V and VI (pp. 131-212)

### WEEK ELEVEN

- Nov 3            Masculinity, “Objectivity,” and STEM  
Viewing:        Bill Moyer interview with Evelyn Fox Keller from “A World of Ideas”  
                    **\*\*\*Paper Two due on *The Protest Psychosis*\*\*\***
- Nov 5            The Mis-Education of Women
- Nov 7            Continued  
Reading:        Sue Zschoche, “Dr. Clarke Revisited: Science, True Womanhood, and Female Collegiate Education” in *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Winter 1989): 545-69. [ANGEL]

### WEEK TWELVE

- Nov 10           Women as Anomalies in STEM  
Viewing:        “Einstein’s Wife: The Life of Mileva Maric Einstein”
- Nov 12           Gender disparities in STEM education and careers  
Reading:        Amy Sue Bix, “‘Engineeresses’ to ‘Girl Engineers’ to ‘Good Engineers’: A History of Women’s U.S. Engineering Education,” *NWSA Journal*, 16, Vol. 1 (Spring 2004): 27-49. [ANGEL]
- Nov 14           Continued Gender Disparities in STEM education  
Reading:        Meghan O’Rourke, “Don’t Let Larry Summers Off the Hook Yet,” *Slate* [ANGEL]  
                    Corinne A. Moss-Racusin, et al, “Science Faculty’s Subtle Gender Biases Favor Male Students” [ANGEL]

### WEEK THIRTEEN

- Nov 17           Continued Gender Disparities in STEM careers  
Reading:        Aimee Sands, “Never Meant to Survive, A Black Woman’s Journey: An Interview with Evelyn Hammonds” *WSTR*, 31-39. [ANGEL]  
                    Christine Wenneras and Agnes Wold, “Nepotism and Sexism in Peer Review,” *WSTR*, 50-56. [ANGEL]
- Nov 19           Feminism and STEM initiatives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Nov 21           NO CLASS

**\*\* THANKSGIVING BREAK NOV 24-28 \*\***

### WEEK FOURTEEN

- Dec 1            Women, Science, and Pop Culture  
Viewing:        The Big Bang Theory, “The Contractual Obligation Implementation”
- Dec 3            Women, Science and Pop Culture cont.  
Reading:        Jocelyn Steinke, “Cultural Representations of Gender and Science: Portrayals of Female Scientists and Engineers in Popular Films,” *Science Communication*, Vol. 27, No. 27 (2005): 27-63. [ANGEL]

Dec 5            Feminism and SciFi  
Reading:        TBA  
Discussion:     Film analysis/poster project

WEEK FIFTEEN

Dec 8            FILM VIEWING: *Splice* (2009)

Dec 10            *Splice* (2009)

Dec 12            Finish *Splice* (2009) – discussion

**\*\*FILM REVIEW/POSTER PROJECT – DUE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19 AT 8:00am\*\***