

FEMINIST, QUEER, & TRANS PERFORMANCE



Astrid Hadad at GlobalFEST – NYC 2016

Tufts University, Drama & Dance

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Spring 2018, Mondays 1:30 – 4:30pm | Office hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

If gender and sexuality, as embodied social categories, significantly inform how we become legible, how and to what ends do performers use bodies and their environments to transform, question, obscure, and expand what we understand as human, or even a body? This class draws on critical race, disability, indigenous, and postcolonial scholars who ask how power, pleasure, and violence are distributed and accessed via the management of gender and sexuality. It pairs these critical texts with artistic works to examine how queer, trans, and feminist theories are made in the flesh.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

- * To introduce students to feminist, queer, and trans studies
- * To understand the relationships between these fields and performance studies
- * To make clear how minoritarian subjects, especially artists, use performance to critique, work, make pleasure, and survive
- * To apply theories learned in class to contemporary artists / artworks
- * To make theories learned in class useful to students' own research projects
- * To provide an opportunity for students to invest in and explore the oeuvre of a contemporary artist

READINGS AND VIEWINGS

All required readings are in the Trunk Resources folder as PDFs; in some cases, the PDFs of “further readings” are also available. Viewings will be available as links on the Trunk syllabus. For each week, I have kept readings to approximately 150 pages, though this does fluctuate so check the syllabus and prepare accordingly; please look closely at the syllabus as I’ve indicated specific page numbers to read on some texts. In addition to the texts, I’ve assigned two to three art works / artists to explore in relation to the texts. The “further readings” will be especially helpful if you decide to write your research paper using the themes from a given week.

COMMUNICATION

If you have any problems concerning the course, if there are particular topics you are excited by and want to talk more about, if you want to better prepare for assignments, or for any other issues related to this class, please don’t hesitate to schedule an appointment. I want to make sure you get the most out of this class.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, TECHNOLOGY

Attendance is mandatory at all classes; please let me know in advance if you plan to be absent otherwise your absence will affect your overall grade. This is a discussion-based class, and so I expect active participation from all of you. Also note that there is no in-class photography, video, or audio recording permitted without my permission. Laptops are permitted in the classroom for the purposes of referencing assigned materials, and taking notes. Please do not use phones while in class except in cases of emergency.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The classroom is a place for dialogue across intellectual and identitarian difference; I am committed to making sure that all students can pursue their interests and engage with materials in an environment that is supportive. I ask us to respect each other’s identities and also grant each other grace to make mistakes. I also ask us to be aware of how we

take up space and time in the class; be sure to share airtime and to direct your comments and questions to your peers and not just to me.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Your writing should consist of *your* own ideas, words, and information you have collated. When you are quoting or referencing a resource other than your own work, please make this is evident using citations. You are expected to be familiar with the **Tufts University academic integrity guidelines: <https://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy>**

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

If the reading or writing assignments prove to be challenging (and they should be!) I want to encourage you to seek help. There's always room to grow and skills to be learned, and there should be no stigma attached to getting support. You're always welcome to talk to me about these things, and also know that there is an Academic Resource Center available to you: <https://students.tufts.edu/academic-advice-and-support/academic-resource-center/>

ACCOMMODATIONS

We each arrive to the classroom with different learning needs and it is my intention to create as supportive an environment as possible. If you do need accommodations based on disability, please meet with me as soon as possible, and also visit the Student Accessibility Services Office and website for further support: <https://students.tufts.edu/student-accessibility-services>.

ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly: Response paper (1-2 pages double-sided, double spaced)

Due Sunday before class by 5pm

Your response does not need a central thesis, however it should be elegantly written, and thoroughly proofread.

Your response should detail:

readings or ideas you find useful to your research

ideas and concepts that are new or difficult for you

examples of how the texts and performances speak to each other

Body manifesto: A performance staging the politics of your/a/the "body"

5 - 10 mins

you will also be asked to serve as a critic and interviewer of one of your colleague's works following their performance

there will be an opportunity for re-performance later in the semester

Artist profile + research paper:

Thurs Feb 22: Artist funding proposal (Using the Diversity Fund template)

Fri Mar 16: Close reading of art work

Mon Mar 26: Artist interview transcript (20 - 30 min interview)

Mon Apr 16: Final conference paper abstract + bibliography (5 sources)

Mon Apr 30: Final conference length paper with supporting presentation: 8 - 10 pages, double spaced, the research paper should focus on the work(s) of one artist to demonstrate how you understand and apply the critical texts encountered in this class. It is also the opportunity to explore the work of a contemporary performance artist and explore their aesthetic trajectories.

Mon Mar 7: Final portfolio consisting of revised versions of: funding proposal, close reading, interview transcript, conference paper, and presentation.

GRADING SCHEME

WEEKLY RESPONSES x 10: 25%

CLASS PARTICIPATION: 25%

BODY MANIFESTO: 15%

ARTIST PROFILE & PAPER: 35%

CALENDAR

WEEK 1: JAN 22

DISCIPLINE: FOUNDATIONS, INTERVENTIONS, AND INTERSECTIONS

Barbara Christian: *The Race for Theory*

Jennifer Nash: *Home Truths on Intersectionality*

Judith Butler: *Critically Queer*

Susan Stryker: *Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin*

David Roman: *Introduction to Acts of Intervention*

Nando Messias: *Sissy that Walk*

Saba Mahmood: *Agency, Gender, and Embodiment*

130 pages

FURTHER READING

E. Patrick Johnson: *Quare Studies*

Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant: *Sex in Public*

Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant: *What Does Queer Teach us About X*

Heather Love: *Queer (in TSQ)*

Roderick Ferguson: *Administering Sexuality*

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick: *Introduction: Axiomatic*

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick: *Queer and Now*
Judith Butler: *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution*

WEEK 2: JAN 29

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL: CRITICISM, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND METHOD

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick: *Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading*
Tavia Nyong'o: *Desire*
Audrey Lorde: *Uses of the Erotic*
Lyndon Gill: *In the Realm of our Lorde*
Clare Croft: *Feminist Dance Criticism and Ballet*
Clare Croft: *Dancing Toward Queer Horizons*
Amber Musser: *Queering Sugar*
Lucas Crawford: *A Transgender Poetics of the Highline Park*
119 pages

Marlon Riggs: *Tongues Untied*
Amahl Khouri: *No Matter Where I Go*

FURTHER READING

Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley: *Songs for Ezili*
Jennifer Devere Brody: *The Returns of Cleopatra Jones*
Iván Ramos: *Slow Encounters*
Gayle Rubin: *Thinking Sex*

WEEK THREE: FEB 5

BORN NAKED: MASCULINITIES AND FEMININITIES

Sue Ellen Case: *Toward a Butch/Femme Aesthetic*
Deborah Paredes: *Como La Flor* reprised
Javon Johnson: *Manning Up*
Matt Richardson: *Make me Wanna Holler*
Marcia Ochoa: *Introducing... the Queen*
Nicole Fleetwood: *Excess Flesh*
Malik Gaines: *The Cockettes, Sylvester, and Performance as Life*
141 pages

Rashaad Newsome
The Aggressives

FURTHER READING

David Gere: *29 Effeminate Gestures*
Royster: *Fela!*
Nell Haynes: *Kiss With a Fist*

Stacy Wolf: Wicked Divas
Deb Vargas: Rita's Pants
Kadji Amin: Spectral Mourning
Shante Smalls: Eating Popcorn with Chopsticks
Lamonda Horton Stallings: Punked for Life
Amber Musser: pinups
Nayan Shah: Oriental Depravity
Imani Kai Johnson: From Blues to B-Girls
Uri McMillan: Nicki-aesthetics

WEEK FOUR: FEB 12

CATEGORY IS: IDENTITY, SUBJECTIVITY, AND KNOWLEDGE

Michel Foucault: Technologies of the Self
C. Riley Snorton: A New Hope: The Psychic Life of Passing
Matt Richardson: Good and Messy
David Valentine: The Categories Themselves
Cathy Cohen: Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens (452-62)
Tavia Nyong'o: The Unforgivable Transgression of Being Caster Semenya
Thomas DeFrantz: Bone Breaking
Lawrence La Fountain Stokes: Trans/Bolero/Drag/Migration
Kareem Khubchandani: Staging Transgender Solidarities
104 pages

The Wildness
Vivek Shraya: Trisha

FURTHER READING

Michel Foucault: The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom
Robert Diaz: The Limits of *Bakla* and Gay
Jeff Roy: Translating Hijra into Transgender
Rinaldo Walcott: Boyfriends with Clits and Girlfriends with Dicks
Jack Halberstam: Trans*

FEB 19: PRESIDENT'S DAY, NO CLASS.

WEEK 5: FEB 22 (THURSDAY)

(OTHER) BODIES: Disability, Animality, and Technology

DUE: Artist funding proposal.

Dossier: Theorizing Queer Inhumanisms
Cristina León: Forms of Opacity

Leon Hilton: The Horse in my Flesh
Joshua Williams: Going Ape
Mel Chen: Animals Without Genitals
Patrick McKelvey: Choreographing the Chronic
Shaka McGlotten: Zombie Porn
Michel Foucault: The Utopian Body
157 pages

Sins Invalid
Xandra Ibarra: Ecdysis

FURTHER READING

Donna Haraway: Awash in Urine
Kyla Tompkins: Introduction: Eating Bodies
Judith Hamera: Feeling with Fish
Dean Spade: Mutilating Gender
Tavia Nyong'o: Queer Ecologies

WEEK SIX: FEB 26

I'm away. Work on your body manifesto!

WEEK 7: MAR 5

(WORLD)MAKING: LABOR, COMMUNITY, AND CREATIVITY

Juana Maria Rodriguez: Introduction to *Sexual Futures*
Mireille Miller Young: Putting Hypersexuality to Work
Saidiya Hartman: Belly of the World
Gregory Mitchell: Hustle and Flows
Jane Ward: Gender Labor
Marlon Bailey: Ain't Nothing Like a Butch Queen (45 – 55)
Scott Herring: Out of the Closets, Into the Woods
Justin Torres: In Praise of Latin Night at the Queer Club
The Combahee River Collective Statement
Alicia Garza: A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement
141 pages

Still Here
Paris Is Burning
Astrid Hadad

FURTHER READING

Xavier Livermon: Queer(y)ing Freedom
Xavier Livermon: Soweto Nights

Scott Morgensen: Arrival at Home
Miranda Joseph: The Perfect Moment

WEEK 8: MAR 12

BODY MANIFESTO PERFORMANCES

MAR 14: Talk by Malik Gaines at MFA

MAR 15: DUE: Close reading of artwork

WEEK 9: SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10: MAR 26

EMBODIED HISTORIES: ARCHIVES, EVIDENCE, AND TEMPORALITY

DUE: Artist interview transcript.

Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley: Black Atlantic Queer Atlantic
Elizabeth Freeman: Turn the Beat Around
Christina Sharpe: Kara Walker's Monstrous Intimacies
Martin Manalansan: The "Stuff" of Archives
Brian Herrera: Billy's World
Anna Martine Whitehead: Expressing Life Through Loss
José Esteban Muñoz: Evidence as Ephemera (5-12)
137 pages

Cheryl Dunye: The Watermelon Woman
Tarell Alvin McRaney: The Secret of Sweet

FURTHER READING:

Halberstam: *Introduction: A Queer Time & Place*
Jennifer Row: The Beads of Versailles
Laura Kina: Queering Japanese American History
Halberstam: Perverse Presentism

WEEK 11: APR 2

QUEER NATIONS: BORDERS, DISPLACEMENT, AND DECOLONIZATION

Queer Nation Manifesto
Decolonizing Transgender
Ann Stoler: Making Empire Respectable
Joseph Massad: Re-orienting Desire
Thomas DeFrantz: Blacking Queer Dance
Lucy Burns: Your Terno's Dragging

Dredge Kang: Idols of Development
Laura Gutierrez: Gender Parody, Political Satires, and Postmodern Rancheras
145 pages

Nao Bustamante: Indigurrito
Circus Amok: Home Land Security
Kent Monkman
Qwo Li Driskill: Map of the Americas

FURTHER READING

Eve Tuck and K Wayne Yang: Decolonization is not a Metaphor
Sarah Ahmed: Problematic Proximities
Tavia Nyong'o: I've got you under my skin
Jasmine Johnson: Queens' Diaspora
Sean Metzger: Patterns of Resistance
Robin Bernstein: I'm Very Happy to be in the Reality Based
Community
Gayatri Gopinath: Queer regions
Gayatri Gopinath: Queer Diaspora
Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewal: Warrior Marks + Global
Identities
Scott Morgensen: Settler Homonationalism

FRI APR 6

F Words: Flesh, Fantasy, & Fugitivity – Symposium at Boston University

WEEK 12: APR 9

CRUEL OPTIMISMS: RELATIONALITY, FUTURITY, AND NEGATIVITY

Lauren Berlant: Cruel Optimism
Sarah Ahmed: Killing Joy
Lee Edelman: The Future is Kid Stuff
David Getsy: Queer Relations
Summer Kim Lee: Alive With You
Jose Esteban Muñoz: Introduction to *Cruising Utopia*
Michel Foucault: Friendship as a Way of Life
97 pages

Young Jean Lee: Untitled Feminist Show
El Amor en Tiempos de Trump

FURTHER READING

Sara Ahmed: Interview with Judith Butler
Kareem Khubchandani: Aunty Fever

T. L. Cowan: Transfeminist Kill/Joys
Donna Haraway: Making Kin
Jill Dolan: Utopia in Performance

WEEK 13: APR 16

CAMPUS HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

DUE: Abstract + bibliography

WEEK 14: APR 23

TOUCHING, FEELING: FLESH, AFFECT, SENSATION

Saidiya Hartman: Redressing the Pained Body
Ronak Kapadia: Up in the Air and on the Skin
Audre Lorde: The Uses of Anger
Ann Cvetkovich: Depression is Ordinary
Karen Shimakawa: Young Jean Lee's Ugly Feelings
Kantara Souffrant: Circling Dantò's Daughter
Deborah Vargas: Ruminations on *Lo Sucio*
Marlon Bailey: Black Gay (Raw) Sex
Amber Musser: Introduction (1-3)
122 pages

Sunil Gupta: Sun City
Ron Athey: Solar Anus
Xandra Ibarra: Tapatio

FURTHER READING:

Judith Butler: Beside Oneself
Elizabeth Son: Trojan Women
Natasha Bissonauth: Zanele Muholi's Affective Appeal to Act
Takeo Rivera: Do Asians Dream of Electric Shrieks?
Sue Ellen Case: The Emperor's New Clothes
José Esteban Muñoz: Feeling Brown Feeling Down
Ariane Cruz: Techno Kink
Lilian Mengesha: Defecting Witness
Ann Cvetkovich: Drawing the Archive

WEEK 15: APR 30

Body manifesto re-performances, conference papers, and wrap up.