Crucial Differences in the 21st Century

University College Maastricht

2017-2018, period 2

HUM3040

It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.

– Audre Lorde

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Retrieved from https://twitter.com/davidlagerlof/status/727364334704316416.

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INTRODUCTION

Crucial Differences in the 21st Century

1. Course coordinator

Dr. Louis van den Hengel is Assistant Professor of Gender Studies in the Department of Literature and Art at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Maastricht University. He holds an MA (cum laude) in Classics with a specialization in Classical Archaeology, and a PhD (cum laude) in Gender Studies with a specialization in feminist theories of materiality, embodiment, and subjectivity. His current research addresses the interrelations between affect, materiality, and time in contemporary performance art; his special focus in this research is the work of Serbian and New York-based artist Marina Abramovic. His most recent publications include contributions to journals such as *Criticism: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* and to edited volumes such as *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* (Routledge, 2017) and *Doing Gender in Media, Art and Culture* (Routledge, forthcoming 2018).

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2. Course description

Objectives
The main aims of this course are:

- To acquaint students with contemporary configurations of gender, sexuality race/ethnicity, class, age, and religion, and the way in which these and other 'crucial differences' structure contemporary cultural discourses and practices, as well as social and individual identities and institutions.
- To familiarize students with topical debates, themes and theories in contemporary gender and diversity studies.
- To teach students how multiple identities and experiences of difference and inequality interact, by familiarizing them with intersectionality as a critical theory and method.
- To provide students with the analytical skills to examine the dynamics of the continuous production and reproduction of identity and difference, inclusion and exclusion, equality and inequality.

Course description
This course considers a variety of contemporary perspectives on shifting configurations of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, class, age, religion, and other categories of difference. You will learn to examine the ways in which such 'crucial

differences' are constituted in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, as well as to analyze the ways in which they function on social, cultural, and symbolic levels.

The emergence of the various social movements during the 1960s and 1970s – including the women's movement, the civil rights movement, the free speech movement, and gay and lesbian liberation – serves as a historical and theoretical starting point of the course. In the first two tasks, we will examine how the contributions of these diverse movements have shaped and reshaped the form and content of the identity of racial or ethnic minorities, feminists, and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi, and trans) people on individual and collective levels. Special attention will be directed to the notion of intersectionality, which refers to the interaction between gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and other categories of difference in cultural, social, and individual practices, and the effects of these interactions in terms of power and inequality.

Subsequently, we will take a closer look at the complexity of multiple differences and inequalities, by tracing the entangled workings of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, age, class, age, and religion in a variety of topical cases. We will look at the way in which such categories realign in various contexts of crisis and conflict, ranging from the late twentieth century wars in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia to the complex force-fields of (neo-)nationalism, populism, and xenophobia today. We will examine the rapidly shifting status of the human body in technologically advanced societies, zooming in, for example, on the role of cosmetic surgery as a 'technology' of gender, race, and class. We will theorize and analyze the complex relations between norms of gender and sexuality in the structuring of contemporary performances of identity in a variety of social, cultural, and institutional environments. We will critically examine contemporary constructions of whiteness and the role of race in the construction of national identity. We will direct special attention to the emergence of sexual nationalisms across and beyond Europe today, focusing on the prominent place that women's sexual liberation and gay rights occupy in contemporary debates on Islam and multicultural citizenship.

Our cases draw on a variety of geographical and cultural locations and contexts. Diversity is also exemplified in the interdisciplinarity that characterizes gender and diversity studies as a scholarly field. The texts used in this course draw on theories and methods from disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, history, anthropology, and literary and cultural studies, as well as from the fields of feminist theory, postcolonial theory, and queer studies. Through critical inquiry into concrete cases as well as major texts – including modern classics in the field such as Judith Butler's *Gender trouble* and Joan Scott's *The politics of the veil* – this course dynamically re-conceptualizes the intersections between the categories of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, age, class, and religion by examining the multiple ways in which processes of identity and difference, inclusion and exclusion, equality and inequality are produced and reproduced in ongoing flows of negotiation and transformation.

3. Literature

There is no textbook for this course. Each task is accompanied by a list of required readings, followed by a specification of where this reading can be found:

'**E-reader**'	These readings can be downloaded from the E-reader, available through the online course environment on the Student Portal.
'**E-journal**'	These readings need to be downloaded from an electronic journal, which can be accessed either by following the link provided in the E-reader or through the UM library catalogue.
'**Reading Room**'	These readings are available for photocopying at the UCM Reading Room, in a folder that contains all required readings.
'**Online**'	These readings are freely available online. Follow the hyperlink provided in the E-reader or the course manual.

Hardcopies of all required readings can be found in a folder in the UCM Reading Room in the attic of the University College. If you use these for photocopying, please make sure to put the articles back into the folder as soon as you're done.

4. Lectures

This course will facilitate several lectures with the aim to deepen your knowledge of the themes under discussion. The themes of the lectures are directly connected to the tasks discussed in the following tutorial meeting. You need to attend at least 4 out of the 6 lectures in order to meet the attendance requirements.

Please note that the schedule may be subject to change. The Student Portal and your university email account will be the principal means of official communication and making announcements for this course. Make sure to check both the Student Portal and your university email regularly.

Course Week	Date	Lecturer	Title
1	November 1	Louis van den Hengel	Identity Politics and Beyond: Introductory Lecture
2	November 8	Louis van den Hengel	Un/doing Gender: Judith Butler Explained
3	November 15	Louis van den Hengel	Queer Ecologies of Belonging: From Homonationalism to Becoming-Earth
4	November 22	Joan van Geel	"If We Can Survive Here, We Can Survive Everywhere": The Impact

			of Crisis on African Migrants in Greece
5	November 29	Louis van den Hengel	Carnal Art and the Politics of Normalization
6	December 6	Ulrike Müller	Critical Whiteness Studies and the Case of Black Pete
7	**EXAM WEEK** (no lectures)		

5. Assessment

The assessment of each student will be based on the following:

- *Participation* in tutorial group meetings / performance as discussion leader (pass/fail). On what constitutes active participation see below under 'Attendance requirements.'
- A mid-term *take-home exam* consisting of open questions about the first five tasks of the course. The exam will be made available in the course environment on the Student Portal after the postdiscussion of task 5 (November 17).
  Deadline: Friday, November 24, 2017, 18.00.
  Upload your exam on SafeAssignment in the course environment on the Student Portal. You do not need to hand in a hardcopy.
  Weight: 40% of the final grade.
- A *research paper* of 3000-3500 words (excluding references and footnotes). (See Appendix I for more details)
  Deadline: Friday, December 15, 2017, 18.00.
  Upload your paper on SafeAssignment in the course environment on the Student Portal. You do not need to hand in a hardcopy.
  Weight: 60% of the final grade.

In addition, you must prepare a short (2 minutes maximum!) *oral presentation* for the final tutorial meeting, in which you outline your ideas about the topic, research question, and approach of your final research paper (see p. 45 of this course manual). This presentation will not be graded, but will be assessed with a pass or fail. A pass from your tutor is needed before you can effectively proceed with your research.

For a detailed overview of the paper assignment, including the grading criteria, see Appendix I in this course manual (pp. 46-48). Appendix II (pp. 49-52) gives an overview of the different steps to consider when drawing up a research design.

Resit policy
Students have passed the course when the final grade (i.e. the average of all partial results) is a 5.5 or higher. When the course has been passed, a resit cannot be taken. Students who failed the course or did not participate in one or more of the module's exams but who did pass attendance are eligible to take the resit exam. The resit

consists of the exam(s) failed by the student. The resit version of the midterm take home exam will contain new questions; the assignment of the research proposal and final paper remains unchanged, unless specified otherwise by the course coordinator.

6. Attendance requirements

Students must attend at least 85% of all tutorial meetings, which means that it is not allowed to miss more than two meetings. Attendance does not mean just being there, but actively participating in the group discussions (see below). Attendance also means being on time. If you are more than ten minutes late, your attendance for that meeting will not be counted. In addition, students must attend at least 4 out of 6 lectures in order to meet the attendance requirements.

Participation
This course will operate only through your consistent attendance and sustained, active participation in discussions. As noted above, your participation will judged with a pass or a fail. In order to pass, you have actively to participate during group meetings. Active participation means:

- to study the required readings and prepare for discussion.
- properly to fulfill your role as discussion leader and as note-taker.
- to contribute to class discussions in a spirit of constructive and engaging dialogue – i.e. by posing or answering questions, evaluating the literature, criticizing certain assumptions and arguments, etc.

Students who fail the participation requirements may be eligible to do an additional assignment.

Additional assignment because of insufficient attendance
Students who have failed to meet the attendance requirements, but who have not missed more than 30% of the group meetings, can qualify for an extra assignment to receive credits for the course. These students have to fill out the request form 'Additional assignment because of insufficient attendance' at the Office of Student Affairs and make sure to the coordinator/tutor that their absence was justified by a valid reason. The course coordinator decides if the student will be given an additional assignment.

7. Tutorial method

During this course the tutorial groups will follow the standard method of Problem Based Learning (PBL) as taught at UCM, in which each of the tasks in this course manual is treated according to the 'seven-step approach.' The tasks and exams are made with this model in mind. The approach is summarized below.

First meeting – Pre-discussion

1. Clarifying concepts; make sure that you do not only take the text of the task that is posed into account in your pre-discussion, but also the titles of the readings that are listed.
2. Defining the problem of the task (outcome: one 'umbrella' problem statement).
3. Analyzing the problem: brainstorming.
4. Systematic classification (what belongs to what, B is a sub-question of A etc.).
5. Formulating learning objectives.

Between meetings

6. Self-study: finding answers to learning goals and preparation by presenters.

Next meeting – Post-discussion

7. Reporting (post-discussion).

Tutorial group meetings (with the exception of the first) follow a standard format:
Post-discussion. In the first hour, students discuss the literature on the basis of learning objectives formulated in group discussions in the previous meeting.
Pre-discussion. In the second hour, the group deals with a new task by formulating a problem statement that provides the input for a brainstorming session. This discussion is concluded by formulating learning objectives that provide the basis for the presentations in the following meeting.

This format for instruction and learning requires students to fulfill three roles. Each meeting requires a discussion leader who serves as a chairperson, and a note-taker who takes notes on the whiteboard. The *discussion leader* should not only establish an agenda and keep order, but also guide the discussion, stimulate students to participate, summarize important conclusions, and make sure that the literature is well understood by everybody. The *note-taker* jots down points for clarification and learning objective(s) for further study on the whiteboard. *Ordinary group members* have read the literature and have thought about the learning objectives. They are required to contribute to the discussion on the basis of this preparation. In order to fulfill these roles effectively, students must be *well* prepared. Finally, students are personally responsible for making their own minutes of the pre- and post-discussion. Discussion leader and note-taking roles will be distributed during the first meeting.

8. Centre for Gender and Diversity

This course has been developed by the Centre for Gender and Diversity at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University. In case you are interested in enriching your education and life with other courses in the field of Gender and Diversity Studies, Literary Studies or Cultural Studies, we offer the following courses at UCM:

HUM1003	Cultural Studies I: Doing Cultural Studies
HUM1012	Pop Songs and Poetry: Theory and Analysis
HUM1014	Great Novels: 1850-present
HUM2003	The Making of Crucial Differences
HUM2018	Cultural Diversity in a Globalizing World
HUM2031	Cultural Studies II: Visual Cultures
HUM2056	Cultural Remembrances
HUM3036	Narrative Media
HUM3040	Crucial Differences in the 21st Century
HUM3050	A Cultural Critique of our Aging Society

TASKS

Task 1
Identity Politics in the 1960's and 70's

Come gather 'round people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you is worth savin'
Then you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'. (Bob Dylan)

Make love not war (hippie slogan)

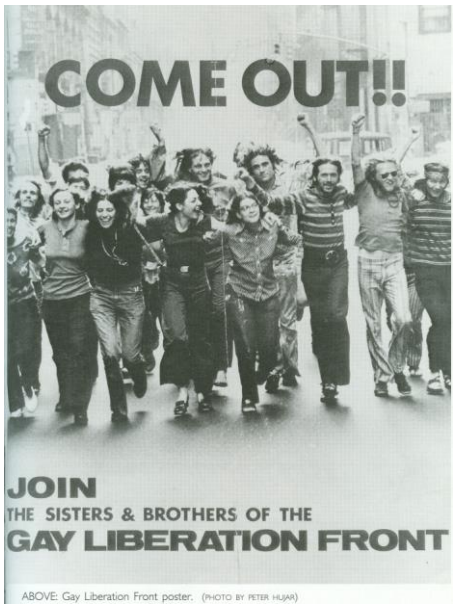
If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem
(slogan Black Panther Party)

The personal is political (feminist slogan)

A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle (feminist joke)

* * *

The second half of the twentieth century has witnessed the rise of many social movements in Western culture such as the women's movement, the black civil rights movement, the Free Speech Movement, Native American movements, and gay and lesbian liberation. During the 1960s, students campaigned for more democracy at their universities. The Vietnam-war was opposed by many young people, who resisted the draft and organized peace-marches, adding a political dimension to the consumerist and hedonistic youth culture of the time. The left was also revived in Europe, as Marxism acquired a new life among young intellectuals and feminists.



A Gay Liberation Front poster of the 1970s

March during the Women's Strike for Equality, 1970

A wide variety of events have become defining moments in the history of the social and political emancipation of different minority groups. For example, on June 28, 1969, the violent demonstrations that followed a police raid at the Stonewall Inn, in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City, marked the start of the gay rights movement in the United States and beyond. And on August 26, 1970, close to 50.000 women (and men) marched in New York during the Women's Strike for Equality.

The Free Speech Movement originated in student protests at the University of California, Berkeley, in the academic year of 1964-1965. In protests of unprecedented scope the students urged the university administration to lift the ban on campus political advocacy, and insisted on their right to free speech and academic freedom. Also in California, the Black Panther Party, an African-American revolutionary leftist and anti-racist organization, was founded in 1966. Through their confrontational and often militant tactics against the police, the Black Panthers became iconic for the counterculture of the 1960s.

Free Speech Movement, University of California, Berkeley, 1964

These diverse movements all practiced an 'identity politics,' claiming that specific groups (blacks, women, homosexuals, students) in society are oppressed and should liberate themselves. They resisted social inequalities and the negative images and stereotypes commonly associated with the identity of minority groups. At the same time, these movements started to raise consciousness in order to reformulate and (re)claim their own identity.

The interests of the different groups that were in the process of re-discovering and re-creating their identities, however, repeatedly clashed. The student movements and the Black Liberation Movement were very sexist at times, as was youth culture more generally. Feminism and the New Left were largely white and ignored black

perspectives, and almost everyone outside of the gay and lesbian movement showed signs of homophobia.

The conceptual and political struggles over identity have been especially pronounced in the gay and lesbian liberation movement. Early gay and lesbian activists emphasized the fixed and essential nature of their sexual identity, on individual and collective levels. But from the late 1980s and 1990s onwards, the *queer* movement started to shake the ground on which gay and lesbian politics had been built:

> [Queer politics aimed at] taking apart the ideas of a 'sexual minority' and a 'gay community,' indeed of 'gay' and 'lesbian' and even 'man' and 'woman.' It builds on central difficulties of identity-based organizing: the instability of identities both and individual and collective, their made-up yet necessary character. . . This debate, and other related debates in lesbian and gay politics, is not only over the *content* of collective identity (whose definition of 'gay' counts?), but over the everyday viability and political usefulness of sexual identities (is there and should there be such a thing as 'gay,' 'lesbian,' 'man,' 'woman'?) (Gamson, 2003, p. 335).

By contesting fixed sexual labels like 'gay,' 'lesbian,' or 'straight,' queer activists challenged the central principles of gay and lesbian identity politics. Is this challenge simply destructive, or could it also be beneficial to gay and lesbian emancipation?

Assignment
Mobilize what you know about this era. Did the revolutions of the sixties and seventies happen in your country of origin, or not? If so, how? Try to find out how the different movements can be situated in time, and how they constituted and influenced each other. To what kind of world did these movements respond? What has become of them? And what would be the social and cultural relevance of these movements today?

Required readings

• Heyes, C. (2012). Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 'Identity Politics,' 1-14. URL: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-politics/. **(Online)**

• Seidman, S. (1995). Deconstructing queer theory or the under-theorization of the social and the ethical. In Linda Nicholson & Steven Seidman (Eds), *Social postmodernism. Beyond identity politics* (pp. 116-141). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **(Reading Room)**

• Cohen, B. (1985). Berkeley Free Speech Movement. Paving the way for campus activism. *OAH Magazine of History*, 1(1), 16-18. **(E-journal)**

• The Combahee River Collective (1979). A black feminist statement. In Zillah R. Eisenstein (Ed.), *Capitalist patriarchy and the case for socialist feminism* (pp. 362-372). New York: Monthly Review Press. **(E-reader)**

Documentary film

• *Berkeley in the sixties*, dir. Mark Kitchell (1990)

Parts of this documentary film will be shown during the opening lecture. A link to the full documentary will be provided during the course, for optional viewing.

Reference

Gamson, J. (2003). The dilemmas of identity politics. In Jeff Goodwin & James M. Jasper (Eds), *The social movements reader. Cases and concepts* (pp. 335-344). Malden/Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Task 2
Multiple Identities: Intersectional Theory

We have seen how many social movements of the 1960s and 70's were grounded in an identity politics that served to fight against the oppression of a certain group while aiming for individual and collective empowerment of its members. But identity and difference, equality and inequality, are not uniform concepts, and the question of who exactly belongs to a certain collective, and who is to be included in its politics, is not always easily settled.

Can you imagine what kind of debates emerged *among* the members of different movements, such as the women's movement or the Black Power movement? What would be their criteria for inclusion? Does emancipation have to be based on shared experiences of oppression? Are some identities or experiences more important than others? Could such debates also take place within one individual? Think about your own social and personal identity: is it singular, or is it multiple and layered? How are the different dimensions of your 'self' interrelated?

According to Kimberlé Crenshaw (and many others), one of the problems that comes with identity politics is that it 'frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences.' Furthermore, she points out that ignoring differences *within* groups can also contribute to tension *among* groups. White feminists, for example, have often focused on the experiences of 'women' per se, without taking into account the specific experiences of women of color. According to Crenshaw, this is problematic because racism and sexism intersect in the lives of real people: 'And so, when those theories and practices expound identity as "woman" or "person of color" as an either/or proposition, they relegate the identity of women of color to a location that resists telling' (Crenshaw, 2005, p. 533).

Crenshaw has coined the concept of *intersectionality* as a way out of the problems of identity politics. 'Intersectionality' refers to 'the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power' (Davis, 2008, p. 68). For Crenshaw, intersectionality mediates 'the tension between assertions of multiple identity and the ongoing necessity of group politics' (Crenshaw, 2005, p. 539).

Intersectionality is one of the most important concepts within contemporary feminist theory, and it is increasingly used in gender and diversity studies, sociology, and economics. Political practice and policy making, in contrast, only seldom refer to the intersection of multiple inequalities when trying to address the needs of an increasingly diverse population. This is unfortunate because, as Mieke Verloo (2006, p. 221) points out, 'different inequalities are dissimilar because they are differently framed.' What exactly does this mean?

Required readings

• Crenshaw, K. (2005). Intersectionality and identity politics: learning from violence against women of color. In W. Kolmar & F. Bartkowski (Eds), *Feminist theory. A reader* (pp. 533-542). New York: McGraw-Hill. **(E-reader)**

• Verloo, M. (2006). Multiple inequalities, intersectionality and the European Union. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13(3), 211-228. **(E-journal)**

• Rahman, M. (2009). Queer as intersectionality. Theorizing gay Muslim identities. *Sociology*, 44(5), 944-961. **(E-journal)**

Reference

Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword. A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, 9(1), 67-85.

Task 3
Doing Gender

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir published one of the foundational texts of contemporary feminism. *Le deuxième sexe* (*The second sex*) gives a detailed account of women's oppression and subordination. At the same time, the book creates room for transformation: the 'situation of woman,' as De Beauvoir calls it, is not fixed but open to change. Indeed, as its most famous line goes:

> One is not born a woman, but rather becomes one (*On ne naît pas femme: on le devient*) (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 285).

By indicating that being female is not determined by biology, but that femininity is socially and culturally constructed, De Beauvoir makes a distinction that would later become known as the difference between 'sex' and 'gender.' The sex/gender distinction became one of the most fundamental assumptions in feminist gender theory from the 1970s onwards.

The sex/gender pair seems to have the same logical structure as nature/culture, invariable/variable, fixed/flexible. But how 'natural' is sex? How stable and fixed are sexed bodies? Historically, definitions of 'sex' have always been subject to change, and theories of sex differences never simply reflect the 'biological facts':

> Sex differences [just like gender differences] are not simply given either. The biological theories, which purport to give an account of them, are the products of particular historical and culturally specific moments of production. This raises the prospect that cultural assumptions about gender differences condition theories about biological sex (Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon, 2002, p. 30).

Thomas Laqueur (1990), for example, has shown how during the eighteenth century the category of 'sex' itself was constructed in medical and biological texts and cultural discourses. What remains, then, of the sex/gender distinction?

* * *

Since the 1990s, the sex/gender distinction has been increasingly challenged, especially under the influence of American queer theorist Judith Butler. In her book *Gender trouble* (1990), which has become a modern classic, she writes:

> If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all (Butler, 1990, p. 7).

Resisting all naturalizing accounts of sex and gender, Butler instead argues that gendered and sexual identities are a kind of performance, a 'doing' rather than a 'being.'

Butler, moreover, explains that we perform masculinity or femininity according to certain cultural scripts and social norms. She focuses especially on how norms of sexuality shape the cultural construction of gender. Here, she draws on the work of Monique Wittig, who states: 'The category of sex is the political category that founds society as heterosexual' (Wittig, 1992, p. 5). What does this mean?

Judith Butler, Maxine Elliot Professor of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature, University of California, Berkeley

* * *

Norms of gender and sexuality shape social interactions, and the way in which these interactions are viewed or framed, in fundamental and sometimes violent ways. Consider the following news story about the murder of Chrissey Johnson, a transgender woman who was killed in Baltimore in 1993:

> *Man charged in death of transvestite*
> A Baltimore man has been arrested for killing a 29-year old man whom he had brought home believing the victim was a woman. The police said that Allen E. Horton, 22, went into a rage Saturday night when he discovered Marvin Johnson, who was dressed as a woman, was really a man, a police spokesman said yesterday (*Washington Times* 1993).

Required readings

• Alsop, R., Fitzsimons, A. & Lennon, K. (2002). Judith Butler: 'The queen of queer.' In *Theorizing gender* (pp. 94-113). Cambridge: Polity. **(E-reader)**

• Butler, J. (1988). Performative acts and gender constitution. An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory. *Theatre Journal*, 40(4), 519-531. **(E-journal)**

• Schilt, K. & Westbrook, L. (2009). Doing gender, doing heteronormativity. 'Gender normals,' transgender people, and the social maintenance of heterosexuality. *Gender & Society*, 23(4), 440-464. **(E-journal)**

References

Beauvoir, S. de (1949). *Le deuxième sexe* (vol. 1). Paris: Gallimard.

Butler, Judith (1990). *Gender trouble. Feminism and the subversion of identity*. London/New York: Routledge.

Laqueur, T. (1990). *Making sex. Body and gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press.

Wittig, M. (1992). *The straight mind and other essays*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Task 4
The Dark Side of Identity

The claiming of an identity is not an entirely unproblematic or fully positive practice, as we have seen, even if it is a necessary step in the liberation and emancipation of various minority groups. Attaching value to an identity that is perceived as inferior may be an illuminating moment for subjects who can finally shake off their internalized feeling of inferiority, but it also has consequences for social power structures. Evidently, fixed identity categories can be the basis for empowerment and oppression at the same time.

Some forms of proclaiming identities are obviously problematic – White Power-extremism, neo-Nazism, and football-hooliganism, for example. Ethnic wars also often start with the creation of vicious images of the 'enemy.' Thus, practices of social and cultural identity-formation preceded the ethnic genocides in Yugoslavia or Rwanda. These conflicts were partly grounded in the claiming of an identity, and the violent exclusion of people with other identities. The need arose to invent one's being *different* from members of other groups. Self-definition by negation became a common practice: one stated one's identity by vilifying the other: 'we are unlike them.'

In both cases – the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda – the differences between the groups that demonized and killed each other once seemed to be small, sometimes even insignificant. Yet the systematic violence amounted to genocide.

> Nationalism does not simply 'express' a preexistent identity: it 'constitutes' a new one. It would be false to the history of this part of the world [the Balkan] to maintain that ethnic antagonisms were simply waiting, like the magma beneath a volcano, for a template to shift, a fissure to split open. It is an abuse of anthropological terminology to call Serbs and Croats ethnic groups at all: they speak more or less the same language; they are from the same racial stock of the south Balkan Slavs. . . In crude terms, you cannot tell them apart. Even if we allow ourselves to call them ethnic groups, the kind of Serb this man [the 'Serbian' soldier the author is talking to here] believes himself to have been before the descent into war is not the kind of Serb he became after the war. Before the war, he might have thought of himself as a Yugoslav or a café manager or a husband rather than as a Serb. Now. . . there are men two hundred and fifty yards away who would kill him. For them he is only a Serb, not a neighbor, not a friend, not a Yugoslav, not a former teammate at the football club. And because he is only a Serb for his enemies, he has become only a Serb to himself (Ignatieff, 1998, p. 38).

How does 'the transformation of brothers into enemies' (Ignatieff, 1998, p. 46) *work*? In order to explain this, Michael Ignatieff draws upon the work of Sigmund Freud, who observed that 'it is precisely the minor differences in people who are otherwise alike that form the basis of feelings of strangeness and hostility between them' (Freud, 1918, p. 199).

If Ignatieff's theory of 'the narcissism of minor differences' examines how neighbors are turned into strangers, an emphasis on intersectionality makes the analysis of 'ethnic hatred' even more complex. The systematic rape of women as a weapon of war, for example, points to the specific role of female sexuality in the definition and controlling of the boundaries of an 'ethnic group.' As Dubravka Zarkov argues:

> Naturalised definitions of 'ethnic purity' which allow for membership of the group to be defined only through 'pure blood,' i.e. through birth into the community, are inevitably concerned with both 'the Other' and with the sexuality-as-danger that comes from 'the Other' (who is, of course, gendered) (Zarkov, 1995, p. 112).

Required readings

• Swaan, B. de (1997). Widening circles of disidentification. On the psycho- and sociogenesis of the hatred of distant strangers. Reflections on Rwanda. *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 14(2), 105-117. **(Reading Room)**

• Ignatieff, M. (1998). The narcissism of minor difference. In *The warrior's honor. Ethnic war and the modern conscience* (pp. 34-72). Toronto: Penguin. **(Reading Room)**

• Zarkov, D. (1995). Gender, Orientalism and the history of ethnic hatred in the former Yugoslavia. In H. Lutz, A. Phoenix & N. Yuval-Davis (Eds), *Crossfires. Nationalism, racism and gender in Europe* (pp. 105-120). London: Pluto Press. **(E-reader)**

Reference

Freud, S. (1918). The taboo of virginity. In James Strachey (Ed.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XI (1957) (pp. 191-208). London: Hogarth Press.

Task 5
The Politics of Sexual Nationalism

Islam and multiculturalism are subjects of heated debate across Europe today. Gender and sexuality occupy a prominent place in many of these debates. As the organizers of a 2011 conference on 'sexual nationalisms' explain:

> In the past decade of European history, the rise of new nationalisms has been inextricably linked to a refashioning of the politics, identities and imaginaries of gender and sexuality. . . Feminist demands and claims of (homo)sexual liberation have moved from the counter-cultural margins to the heart of many European countries' national imaginations. The languages of women's and lesbian/gay rights have played pivotal roles in discourses and policies redefining modernity in sexual terms, and sexual modernity in national terms. 'Europe' itself is being re-imagined in terms of sexual democracy and gender equality. (Conference program 'Sexual Nationalisms,' 2011)

In the context of growing neo-nationalist populism and the rise of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim politics, there is an urgent need to analyze how sexual liberation and emancipation are used to frame Europe as the 'avatar of both freedom and modernity' (Butler, 2008, p. 2).

Consider the following cases in this light. What do they tell us about the relations between gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, and citizenship today?

France
In 2004, the French government instituted a ban on the wearing of 'conspicuous signs' of religious affiliations in public schools. Article 1 of the new law states:

> In public elementary, middle and high schools, the wearing of signs or clothing which conspicuously manifest students' religious affiliations is prohibited. Disciplinary procedures to implement this rule will be preceded by a discussion with the student (Quoted in Scott, 2007, p. 1).

In addition, the law makes a clear distinction between acceptable and unacceptable signs:

> The clothing and religious signs prohibited are conspicuous signs such as a large cross, a veil, or a skullcap. Not regarded as signs indicating religious affiliation are discreet signs, which can be, for example, medallions, small crosses, stars of David, hands of Fatima, or small Korans (Quoted in Scott, 2007, p. 1).

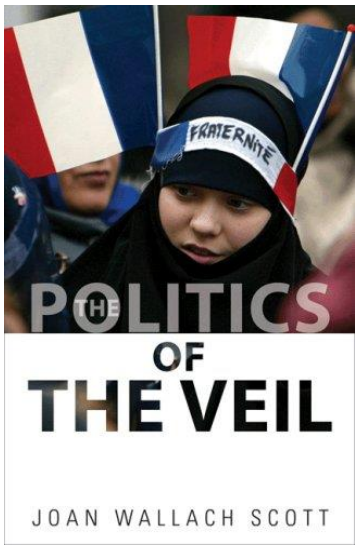
Although the ban in principle applies to everyone, it is aimed at Muslim girls wearing headscarves. The *hijab* or headscarf – which was soon referred to almost exclusively as the 'veil' (*voile*) – was considered by supporters of the law as 'inimical to French custom and law' (Scott, 2007, p. 2). In her book *The politics of the veil* (2007) Joan Scott – one of the pioneers of gender and diversity studies – asks: why the headscarf? What is it exactly about the headscarf that makes it the 'conspicuous sign' of something intolerable?

The Netherlands

In recent years, the Netherlands has witnessed fierce controversies surrounding multiculturalism in general and around Islam and gay politics in particular:

> In no other country have discourses on gay rights and sexual freedom played such a prominent role, as witnessed by the narratives that unfolded after the dramatic murders of the openly gay right-wing populist politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002 (by an environmentalist) and of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004 (by a young Dutch-Moroccan Islamist). Both Fortuyn and Van Gogh were notorious for their opposition to multiculturalism: they expressed disgust towards the cultural habits and religious convictions of Muslim citizens, and argued that Dutch cultural and sexual freedoms were under attack (Mepschen, Duyvendak & Tonkens, 2010, p. 963-964).

Already in 1997, Fortuyn wrote in his pamphlet *Against the Islamization of our culture* that the liberation of women and gays is 'the greatest mental and cultural achievement after the creation of the welfare state in the modern history of mankind' (Fortuyn, 1997, p. 69-70). Similar sentiments surface in the Election Program of the Dutch populist Party for Freedom (PVV), which states that 'Islam does not bring cultural enrichment, but sharia-fatalism, jihad-terrorism, and hate against homosexuals and Jews' (Verkiezingsprogramma PVV, p. 6).



Cover of Joan Scott's book (2007)

Portrait of the Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn (1948-2002)

In 2009, PVV leader Geert Wilders suggested to institute a tax on wearing headscarves, under the pejorative name 'kopvoddentax' ('head rag tax'). According to this (unsuccessful) proposition, the money generated by the tax would be used to finance women's shelters. In September 2011, the PVV requested a parliamentary debate about anti-gay violence, after several widely publicized cases of gay couples who were forced to move from their house after extensive harassment by immigrant-community youths. And in August 2016, Wilders – who was then still leading in the

polls to become the next prime minister – released a preliminary election program calling for a radical 'de-islamization' to make 'The Netherlands ours again'.

In these contexts, we could echo Scott's question about the headscarf, and ask: why homosexuality? What is it exactly about homosexuality that allows it to be so effectively used in neo-nationalist discourses? And what happens to 'homosexuality' when it is so repeatedly contrasted with Muslim culture and ethnicity?

Required readings

• Bracke, S. (2012). From 'saving women' to 'saving gays'. Rescue narratives and their dis/continuities. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 19(2), 237-252. **(E-journal)**

• Scott, J.W. (2007). Introduction. In *The politics of the veil* (pp. 1-20). Princeton: Princeton University Press. **(E-reader)**

• Scott, J.W. (2007). Sexuality. In *The politics of the veil* (pp. 151-174). Princeton: Princeton University Press. **(Reading Room)**

• Dudink, S.P. (2011). Homosexuality, race, and the rhetoric of nationalism. *History of the Present: A Journal of Critical History*, 1(2), 259-264. **(E-reader)**

References

Butler, J. (2008). Sexual politics, torture, and secular time. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 59(1), 1-23.

Conference program 'Sexual Nationalisms. Gender, Sexuality, and the Politics of Belonging in the New Europe'. University of Amsterdam, January, 2011.

Fortuyn, P. (1997). *Tegen de Islamisering van onze cultuur. Nederlandse identiteit als fundament*. Utrecht: Bruna.

Mepschen, P., Duyvendak, J.W. & Tonkens, E. 2010). Sexual politics, Orientalism and multicultural citizenship in the Netherlands. *Sociology*, 44(5), 962-979.

Verkiezingsprogramma PVV 2010-2015, *De agenda van hoop en optimisme*, see http://www.pvv.nl/images/stories/Webversie_VerkiezingsProgrammaPVV.pdf.

Task 6
Google Babies

Some of you may be taking contraceptive pills – in fact, birth control pills are currently used by more than 100 million women worldwide. Other women do just the opposite: they rely on reproductive technologies such as IVF in order to get pregnant. The advancement of contemporary reproductive technologies (such as artificial insemination by donor, superovulation, in vitro fertilization, embryo transfer, surrogate motherhood, and sex predetermination) has certainly widened the range of available choices.

Code	Identity-Release®	Status	Ethnicity	Complexion	Hair Color, Texture	Eye Color	Height	Weight	Blood Type
690	Yes	Limited washed inventory/ No sibling inventory	African American (50%), German, Irish	Olive	Dark brown, curly, coarse	Dark brown	6'	196	O+
1376	Yes	Available washed & unwashed inventory	English, German, Lithuanian Jewish (1/4)	Medium	Dark brown, straight, fine	Dark brown	5' 11"	193	A-
1595	No	Available washed & unwashed inventory	Korean	Fair	Dark brown, straight	Brown	5' 6"	150	B+
3265	Yes	**NEW** Waiting list open for April release	English (50%), German, French, Scottish, Irish, Alsatian, Dutch	Olive	Medium brown, straight, fine	Blue	5' 9"	160	A+
3267	Yes	**NEW** Available washed inventory	French/Creole	Fair, creamy	Ash blond, straight, fine	Blue	6'	155	A+

Catalogue of The Sperm Bank of California (Reproductive Technologies, Inc.)
See http://www.thespermbankofca.org.

These new technologies, which were originally meant to be assistant reproductive technologies, have stirred much controversy in the last decades. Modern reproductive technologies allow us to control the timing and quantity of the children women bear. At the same time, the relation between age and motherhood has

become the topic of heated discussions. In the Netherlands, for example, the pregnancy of the 63-year-old Tineke Geessink, who gave birth to a baby girl in March 2011, sparked debates about the ethics of late motherhood. Geessink was treated by the controversial Italian fertility expert Severino Antinori, who implanted a donated egg fertilized by donated sperm. The age limit for such treatments in the Netherlands is 45.

Other ethical concerns arise from the combination of new reproductive technologies with prenatal genetic or sex testing. An example is a sperm donor bank where you can select your favorite sperm. The 'catalogue' shown here comes from a sperm bank in California. If the donor agrees to reveal his identity, you can view more detailed personal data, including educational attainment, physical characteristics and family medical history, as well as a 'donor narrative' about his personality, special talents, and ambitions.

* * *

Modern reproductive technologies can play an important role in perpetuating existing gender-discriminatory practices. Sex selection in favor of males and abortion of female fetuses are examples of forms of gender discrimination that may 'begin even before conception and continue until after birth,' and which have extensive demographic and social consequences (Gupta, 2011, p. 42).

Critics point out that it is mainly privileged men and women who are able to profit from such reproductive technologies. Lower class, minority or Third World women's bodies, in contrast, have become objects for scientific experiments or 'harvesting' purposes. Consider the 'outsourcing' of surrogate motherhood to developing countries such as India as way to lower prices: Western clients select the preferred genetic material and purchase sperm and eggs online, after which multiple embryo's are produced, frozen, packed, and shipped by air to India, where they are implanted into the wombs of local surrogates (Brand Frank, 2009; Twine, 2011).

In an age of rapid globalization and advanced technological developments, 'making babies' has not only turned into an act independent of sex, but becomes a global business:

> Egg donation and surrogacy are certainly not new, but there is no doubt that the market for 'reproductive outsourcing' has expanded in recent years due to a number of technological, legal and economic developments. Differences in national legislation, a thriving assisted conception industry (particularly in developing countries like India. . .), and the growth of the Internet and medical tourism, have stimulated a market in reproduction. . .
>
> Academics have tended to approach these issues from two positions. Some argue women provide reproductive services for financial and personal reasons and are meeting a legitimate demand on the part of commissioning parents. Others consider that, like sex tourism, fertility tourism is immoral and exploitative. However, proponents on both sides tend to agree that it is not wise to seek to ban these practices because legal solutions to the problem cannot be easily coordinated across

national borders. Furthermore, outlawing practices in one country is liable to stimulate the practice elsewhere (Kerr, 2011).

Amrita Pande (2009), a sociologist who has studied commercial surrogacy in India, focuses on the role that surrogates play as wage earners for their families. She describes the phenomenon as 'sexualized care work,' a new type of reproductive labor that resembles existing forms of care work but is stigmatized in the public imagination.

Required readings

• Friese, C., Becker, G. & Nachtigall, R.D. (2008). Older motherhood and the changing life course in the era of assisted reproductive technologies. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 22, 65-73. **(E-journal)**

• Gupta, J.A. (2011). Unwanted daughters. Discrimination and elimination of the girl child in India. *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies*, 14(3), 42-57. **(Reading Room)**

• Pande, A. (2009). Not an 'angel', not a 'whore'. Surrogates as 'dirty' workers in India. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 16(2), 141-173. **(E-journal)**

Required viewing

• *Google baby*, dir. Zippi Brand Frank, Israël, 2009. **(Online; check course environment on Student Portal)**

References

Kerr, A. (2011). Google Baby: A lesson in global capitalism. *BioNews,* 614, http://www.bionews.org.uk/page_99995.asp.

Twine, F.W. (2011). *Outsourcing the womb. Race, class, and gestational surrogacy in the global market*. London/New York: Routledge.

Task 7
Racism, Xenophobia and Crisis

'I didn't know about racism. I didn't know what it was, how it felt. In our country, I can say I think in Africa, we do not have it like here. . . I didn't know how it felt when people are covering their mouth in the bus, I didn't know that people can beat you up for the colour of your skin' [sic] (Conversation with Suleyman, Sierra Leone. Thesis Joan van Geel).

'When I came there [the house where she worked as a cleaning lady]*, and I drank coffee or I was offered food, I always had everything in plastic: plastic plate, plastic cup, everything plastic! In the beginning I didn't know why, but after a while I realised that when I used it, the woman would throw everything away'* [sic] (Conversation with Lisbeth, Kenya. Thesis Joan van Geel).

* * *

Postmodernist scholars have argued that racism is a flexible, context-specific phenomenon that has historical roots and is expressed in a variety of ways in different societies. Mullings defines it as 'a set of practices, structures, beliefs and representations that transforms certain forms of perceived differences, generally regarded as indelible and unchangeable, into inequality' (Mullings, 2005, p. 684). Specifically, racism is approached as a social and political construct, meaning that people *ascribe* inferior qualities to 'others' based on supposedly physical or cultural characteristics. People integrate these ideologies into their daily lives, leading to what Philomena Essed (1991) has called *everyday racism*. Governments, in turn, translate these ideals into discriminating policies. Given the interplay between differently constructed social and historical contexts, racism produces universal as well as situated experiences among those subjected to intolerance and for those who project racial difference onto 'others.'

Contemporary European societies are diversifying rapidly as migrants from all over the world aspire, for different reasons, to build their lives abroad. We are all familiar with images of overcrowded rickety fisher-boats entering the shores of Lampedusa (Italy) and Mitilíni (Lesbos). In their attempts to reach European territory, these migrants risk their lives at the Mediterranean waves. Once they reach Southern Europe, lengthy and complex legislative procedures await them. While uncertain about their legal status, these migrants establish themselves in society through participation in the labor market, sport clubs, and social activities. At this point, they come into contact with the native population, which is not always a pleasant experience.

Since 2007, Greece has gone through one of the deepest economic crises that it has ever known. To prevent a monetary disaster that would hit the entire European Union the *Trojka* (International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank and European Commission) profoundly interfered in Greece's state finances. As a result, the Greek government was forced to implement deep austerity measures that caused mass-unemployment, rising costs of daily life, and constant cutbacks in salaries (Mitsopoulos & Pelagidis, 2011). These changes are tangible and visible in Athens, a

city that nowadays is covered in graffiti, has spooky streets lined with dilapidated buildings, and hosts an increasing number of homeless people and drug addicts.

Athens is also residency to a growing amount of migrants, whose number is estimated at 1.000.000 to 1.500.000 (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012). Simultaneous with the crisis, the frequency and severity of racist experiences has intensified. The increasing popularity of *Chrysí Avgí* ('Golden Dawn') indicates the presence of complex forms of intolerance in Greek society. The supporters of this extreme right-wing political party are repeatedly involved in violent actions against migrants and their property (Ellinas, 2013). *Xénios Zeús*, a sweeping operation during which migrants are randomly stopped, asked for papers, and detained without legal grounds, shows the harsh governmental response to its own dysfunctional migration policies.

Daily interactions between migrants with 'ordinary' Greek citizens are characterized by covert, almost hidden gestures of intolerance or by explicitly racist expressions like spitting, denial of access to public space, and addressing people of color as '*mávro*' ('blacks').

Cheikh Babacar Ndiaye, a 37-year-old Senegalese street vendor, died when the police intensively harassed him. African migrants organized a demonstration, February 2013.
Photo: Joan van Geel.

When considering the case of African migrants in Athens, what are the signifiers of racialization? Which social hierarchies are reflected in the inferiorization of African migrants in Greece? What is your opinion about the role of the crisis in this context? Do you think it has triggered xenophobic reactions, and if so, why? Or can you find indicators of an established 'pre-crisis' infrastructure of intolerance in Greek society? And what does the (un)concealed racism in contemporary Greek society tell us about racism more generally?

Plattía Áttiki is covered in white-blue flags and graffiti stating 'ELLAS' ('Greece') and swastika's, signaling the intimidating presence of *Chrýsi Avgí* and other self-claimed 'protectors of Greek territory.' The message unambiguously tells migrants to avoid this type of squares. Photo: Joan van Geel.

Required readings

• Lazaridis, G. & Koumandraki, M. (2001). Deconstructing naturalism. The racialisation of ethnic minorities in Greece. In R. Kind (Ed.), *The Mediterranean passage. Migration and new cultural encounters in Southern Europe* (pp. 279-301). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. **(Reading Room)**

• Doxiadis, A. & Matsaganis, M. (2012). *National populism and xenophobia in Greece*. Counterpoint. URL: http://counterpoint.uk.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/507_CP_RRadical_Greece_web-1.pdf. **(Online)**

• Essed, P. (2002). Everyday racism. In D. T. Goldberg & J. Solomos (Eds), *A companion to racial and ethnic studies* (pp. 202-216). Malden: Blackwell. **(E-Reader)**

Required viewings

• Into the fire: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMOnuD0SQJs

• The Battle of Attiki square: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPl9PW7ONIQ

Credits: This task has been developed by Joan van Geel

References

Ellinas, A. A. (2013). The rise of Golden Dawn. The new face of the far right in Greece. *South European Society and Politics,* 1(2), 1-23.

Essed, P. (1991). *Understanding everyday racism. An interdisciplinary theory* (Vol. 2). California: SAGE.

Mitsopoulos, M., & Pelagidis, T. (2011). Understanding the Greek crisis. Unlocking the puzzle of Greek banks' deteriorating performance. *World Economics,* 12(1), 177-193.

Mullings, L. (2005). Interrogating racism. Towards an antiracist anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 34, 667-693.

Triandafyllidou, A., & Maroukis, T. (2012). *Migrant smuggling. Irregular migration from Asia and Africa to Europe*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Task 8
Surgical Selves: The Politics of Normalization

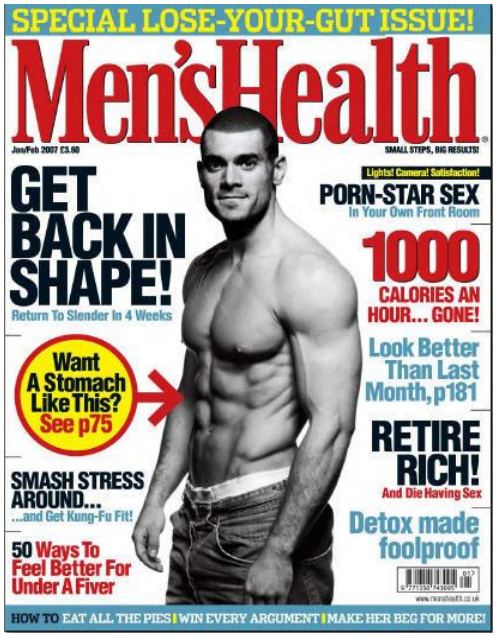
In the early twenty-first century, the human body is increasingly becoming a site of amplified technological transformation. Instead of viewing the body as a natural 'given,' contemporary consumer culture takes the body as a subject to be constantly changed, cured, or controlled. Cosmetic procedures such as facelift surgery or liposuction have become routine practices in Western societies, while double eyelid surgery is one of the most popular aesthetic procedures in South Korea and other parts of East Asia.

'Before' and 'after' pictures of a double eyelid surgery or 'Asian blepharoplasty'

Body practices like these are closely linked to issues of identity and personal choice or agency. In an increasingly individualistic society, we seem to have the choice to obtain the body that we want to have and, consequently, to become who we want to be. In this cultural context,

> cosmetic surgery is increasingly presented as neutral technology, ideally suited to altering the body in accordance with an individual's personal preferences. This can include enhancing femininity or eradicating physical features associated with ethnicity or 'race'. . . Cosmetic surgery promises a different body, but this time, a body that has nothing to do with normative constraints associated with gender or 'race' or nationality (Davis, 2003, p. 6-7).

But if we consider cosmetic surgery as an attempt to conform more closely to cultural norms of beauty, to what extent are body manipulations the effect of free choice? Is everyone equally able to shape and reshape their body, and to fashion a new 'self'?



A 2007 *Men's Health* cover

A web advertisement for skin whitening powder

Some theorists refuse to see the women (and men) who opt for cosmetic surgery as victims of ideological manipulation or internalized sexism or racism, and emphasize the importance of personal agency instead. Others, in contrast, argue that contemporary beauty practices are major forms of gendered and racialized oppression. Sheila Jeffreys, for example, states that 'no liberation is possible for women in a world in which inequality is sexy' (Bindel, 2005).

In this context, Jeffreys points to the Western bias of the United Nations concept of 'harmful cultural practices,' which points to discriminatory and damaging practices directed against women, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation. Until recently, such 'harmful cultural practices' were primarily related to cultural norms and traditions from the global South. Jeffreys, in contrast, argues that Western beauty practices – from makeup to labiaplasty – also fit the criteria to be included in the UN understanding of harmful cultural practices.

Required readings

• Heyes, C.J. (2007). Normalisation and the psychic life of cosmetic surgery. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 22(52), 55-71. **(E-journal)**

• Holliday, R. & J. Elfving-Hwang (2012). Gender, globalization and aesthetic surgery in South Korea. *Body & Society*, 18(2), 58-81. **(E-journal)**

• Jeffreys, S. (2005). Harmful cultural practices and Western culture. In *Beauty and misogyny. Harmful cultural practices in the West* (pp. 28-45). London/New York: Routledge. **(E-reader)**

References

Bindel, J. (2005). The ugly side of beauty. *The Guardian*, Saturday, July 2.

Davis, K. (2003). Surgical stories. Constructing the body, constructing the self. In *Dubious equalities and embodied differences. Cultural studies on cosmetic surgery* (pp. 73-85). Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Task 9
Queer Nature: Two Sexes Are Not Enough

In task 3, we have seen how gender is produced and performed as a social, cultural, and personal variable. Many feminist theorists argue that 'sex' too should be considered as a sociocultural construction. This does not mean that the body should be seen as merely the effect of cultural processes, but rather that strict boundaries between 'nature' and 'culture' cannot be maintained. The medical practices surrounding intersex bodies illustrate how culture mediates our understanding of nature and vice versa, while also exposing the limits of the extent to which nature can or should be shaped to the demands of culture.

'Intersex' can be described as the presence of intermediate combinations of physical features that usually distinguish male and female bodies. It is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not seem to fit the typical definition of 'female' or 'male.' Intersexuality is not as rare as we might suppose: it has been estimated that 1.7% of all human births are intersex, which means that 17 out of every 1000 people challenge the common assumption that everyone is either male or female (Fausto-Sterling, 2000).

As American biologist and historian Anne Fausto-Sterling points out, the existence of intersex bodies has always been known. She mentions the example of Levi Suydam, an intersex person living in the 1840s who had a penis and testicles, but whose right to vote was questioned because 'he' also had a vaginal opening and menstruated regularly. The story conveys the social and political value attached to ascertaining a person's 'correct' sex, and the confusion that arises when this cannot be clearly determined:

> European and American culture is deeply devoted to the idea that there are only two sexes. Even our language refuses other possibilities; thus to write about Levi Suydam . . . I have had to invent conventions – s/he and h/er to denote individuals who are clearly neither/both male and female or who are, perhaps, both at once. Nor is the linguistic convenience an idle fancy. Whether one falls into the category of man or woman matters in concrete ways. For Suydam – and still today for women in some parts of the world – it meant the right to vote. It might mean being subject to the military draft and to various laws concerning the family and marriage. In many parts of the United States, for example, two individuals legally registered as men cannot have sexual relations without breaking antisodomy laws.
>
> But if the state and legal system has an interest in maintaining only two sexes, our collective biological bodies do not. While male and female stand on the extreme ends of a biological continuum, there are many other bodies, bodies such as Suydam's, that evidently mix together anatomical components conventionally attributed to both males and females. The implications of my argument for a sexual continuum are profound. If nature really offers us more than two sexes, then it follows that our current notions of masculinity and femininity are cultural conceits (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, p. 30-31).

In light of the *natural* variability of sex, Fausto-Sterling argues that human sexuality should be understood not as a dichotomy, but as a continuum. Similarly, the Intersex Society of North America compares the sexual continuum to the color spectrum:

> Intersex is a socially constructed category that reflects real biological variation. To better explain this, we can liken the sex spectrum to the color spectrum. There's no question that in nature there are different wavelengths that translate into colors most of us see as red, blue, orange, yellow. But the decision to distinguish, say, between orange and red-orange is made only when we need it – like when we're asking for a particular paint color. Sometimes social necessity leads us to make color distinctions that otherwise would seem incorrect or irrational, as, for instance, when we call certain people 'black' or 'white' when they're not especially black or white as we would otherwise use the terms.
>
> In the same way, nature presents us with sex anatomy spectrums. Breasts, penises, clitorises, scrotums, labia, gonads – all of these vary in size and shape and morphology. So-called 'sex' chromosomes can vary quite a bit, too. But in human cultures, sex categories get simplified into male, female, and sometimes intersex, in order to simplify social interactions, express what we know and feel, and maintain order (Intersex Society of North America, http://www.isna.org/faq/what_is_intersex).

The 'order' of a two-sex system today is maintained by modern surgical techniques. It is still common practice to operate on newborn babies whose sex is unclear or 'deformed', in order to create a clear-cut distinction between boys and girls. What could be the advantages and disadvantages of this practice, for parents, for babies, and for society as a whole? Some intersex people regret the surgery that was performed on them at birth, and would like to live as the other sex rather than the one assigned to them. Others prefer to live as they were born: as an intermediate sex.

Required readings

• Fausto-Sterling, A. (2000). Should there be only two sexes? In *Sexing the body. Gender politics and the construction of sexuality* (pp 78-115). New York: Basic Books. **(Reading Room)**

• Butler, J. (2004). Doing justice to someone. Sex reassignment and allegories of transsexuality. In *Undoing gender* (pp. 57-74). London/New York: Routledge. **(E-reader)**

• Hird, M. (2004). Naturally queer. *Feminist Theory*, 5(1), 85-89. **(E-journal)**

Task 10
Invisible Race? The Matter of Whiteness

Start your discussion with a personal reflection. Who among you in this group identify as 'white'? What makes you think that you are white? What does 'whiteness' or being 'white' mean to you? What do terms like 'white privilege' and 'white supremacy' mean to you? What kind of relation, and what kind of history, do you have with matters of 'whiteness?

* * *

Critical whiteness studies grew out of the realization that an inherent part of racial thinking in Western culture is the universality of the 'white (male) person' as not having a race (or a gender):

> The invisibility of whiteness as a racial position in white (which is to say dominant) discourse is of a piece with its ubiquity. . . In fact for most of the time white people speak about nothing but white people, it's just that we couch it in terms of 'people' in general. . . Whites are everywhere in representation. Yet precisely because of this and their placing as norm they seem not to be represented to themselves *as* whites, but as people who are variously gendered, classed, sexualized, and abled. At the level of racial representation, in other words, whites are not of a certain race, they're just the human race (Dyer, 1997, p. 3).

It is therefore important to realize that 'any system of differentiation shapes those on whom it bestows privilege as well as those it oppresses. White people are "raced," just as men are "gendered." And in a social context where white people have too often viewed themselves as nonracial or racially neutral, it is crucial to look at the "racialness" of white experience' (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 1).

* * *

In the Netherlands, the concepts of race and nation are intertwined with histories of colonialism in ways that remain largely unacknowledged in dominant narratives of Dutch identity. Take, for example, the debates that surround the character of Zwarte Piet (Black Pete), arguably the most popular folkloric figure in the Netherlands. Zwarte Piet is a jolly Moorish 'servant' who, often in a team, assists a white gift-giving bishop called Sinterklaas ('Saint Nicholas') who is said to hail from Spain or Turkey. Black Petes are typically incarnated by white men and women in blackface, with thick red lips, gold earrings and Afro wigs, often donning a quasi-Surinamese accent.

Most Dutch people see the celebration of Sinterklaas and Zwarte Piet as an age-old custom and innocent children's holiday. Critics, in contrast, consider the figure of Zwarte Piet an invented tradition rooted in colonial histories of Dutch racism (Essed and Hoving 2014). Anti-Zwarte Piet protests have been going on in the Netherlands since the late 1960s, and have risen to unprecedented public prominence in the past decade. Racism and xenophobia can erupt violently in these now year-round debates.

When in 2008 two white artists critically interrogated the Zwarte Piet phenomenon through a project called *Read the masks: Tradition is not given*, they received so much hate mail and threats of violence that a scheduled protest march had to be cancelled.

And yet, surveys show that only 1% (in some surveys 3% at most) of the Dutch population thinks that Zwarte Piet might pose a racist problem (Wekker, 2016, p. 142). What does this tell us about the hegemonic sense of self in the Netherlands? What does it reveal about the meaning of Dutch whiteness in the postcolonial present?

Black Pete figure

For a society that prides itself on being a tolerant, small and harmless nation, 'race' evokes remarkably hostile sentiments among the white population. In her book *White innocence*, social and cultural anthropologist Gloria Wekker draws attention to this paradox of Dutch culture: the passionate denial of racism and racial discrimination coexisting alongside virulent forces of racism and xenophobia in everyday life in the Netherlands.

Ida Danewid, in turn, uses Wekker's notion of 'white innocence' to think through recent responses to the Mediterranean refugee and migrant crisis. Whereas anti-immigrant, xenophobic and racist discourses routinely present migrants and refugees as a form of danger, pro-refugee activism often mobilizes narratives of shared vulnerability to call for empathy, hospitality and solidarity with the fate of strangers, and to mourn the many lives lost at sea. How do these different responses bear on the politics of whiteness in Europe?

Required readings

• Garner, S. (2017). Whiteness. In *Racisms. An introduction* (second edition) (pp. 217-237). London: SAGE. **(E-reader)**

• Wekker, G. (2016). '…For even though I am black as sooth, my intentions are good'. The case of Zwarte Piet/Black Pete. In *White innocence. Paradoxes of colonialism and race* (pp. 139-167). Durham/London: Duke University Press. **(Reading Room)**

• Danewid, I. (2017). White innocence in the Black Mediterranean. Hospitality and the erasure of history. *Third World Quarterly*, 38(7), 1674-1689.

References

Dyer, R. (1997). *White* (pp. 1-40). London/New York: Routledge.

Essed, P. and I. Hoving (Eds) (2014). *Dutch Racism*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters. The social construction of whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix I
The Term Paper

For the final assignment of the course, you are asked to write a research paper.

Length: **3000-3500 words** (excluding references and footnotes).

Format: 1.5 line-spacing, 12-point font, 2.54 cm (1 inch) margins, with a title page, references, and page numbers throughout. **Follow APA-style**.

Deadline: The deadline for submitting the term paper is **Friday, December 15, 2017, 18.00**. Please upload your paper on SafeAssignment in the course environment on the Student Portal. You do not need to hand in a hardcopy.

Weight: **60%** of the final grade.

Topic

Your paper has to relate to the general theme of the course: contemporary configurations of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, class, age, religion, and the way in which these (and/or other) 'crucial differences' interact. Consequently, **your paper has to written from an intersectional point of view**. The topic of your paper should clearly present a tension or contestation arising from the interrelation of two or more of these categories of difference. The assignment requires you to examine, in thorough detail, in which ways such axes of difference interact with each other in your chosen case.

You need to incorporate relevant literature from this course into your paper, as well as additional academic sources. You should frame a question that 1) is of personal and/or academic interest to you, 2) requires library research (books and scientific journals) to answer, and 3) covers but can also go beyond the themes and learning goals discussed in class. All students are encouraged to speak with their tutor about the development of their paper.

Appendix II gives an overview of the different steps to consider when drawing up a research design.

Examples

Paper topics chosen by previous students from this course include:

- The racialization of Muslims in France and its effect upon Muslim women (focus on race/ethnicity, religion, and gender)

- Identity formation, rape, and the Rwandan genocide (focus on gender/sexuality and race/ethnicity)
- The accessibility of IVF-treatment in the UK (focus on sexuality and class)
- Xenophobic violence in South Africa (focus on gender, class, and nationalism)
- The medicalization of intersexuality (focus on gender and sexuality)
- Gypsy women: An intersectional analysis of their status in Eastern Europe (focus on gender and race/ethnicity)
- Indigenous women in postwar Peru: Crucial differences in the film *La teta asustada* (focus on gender/sexuality and race)

Paper proposal/presentation

Prior to your paper, you must prepare a short (2 minutes maximum!) oral presentation for the final tutorial meeting, in which you outline your ideas about the topic, research question, and approach of your paper. This presentation will not be graded, but will be assessed with a pass or fail. A pass from your tutor is needed in order effectively to proceed with your research.

Your presentation must include the following:
• A formulation of your problem statement c.q. the research question of your paper, and a short explanation of its social and/or academic relevance (see the section 'The selection of a subject' and 'The formulation of a problem statement' in Appendix II);
• An indication of how you plan to approach the proposed topic from an intersectional perspective.

Grading criteria

The following list gives an overview of the basic grading criteria. It may also serve as a checklist of things to keep in mind when writing this (or any other) paper.

Formal requirements
• Does the paper have an appropriate length?
• Does the paper have a cover page?
• Is the text (font size, margins, line spacing, etc.) formatted correctly?
• Are the quotations, footnotes, and in-text references formatted according to APA guidelines?
• Is the bibliography formatted according to APA guidelines?
• Has the paper been uploaded before the deadline?

Research problem
• Is the topic of this paper sufficiently focused?
• Is there a clear research question that helps to direct the research and writing process?
• Is the wider significance (or rationale) of the research question made clear?
• Is the research problem well positioned vis-à-vis the general theme of this course?

Structure
• Does the paper have an introduction, body and conclusion?
• Is it made clear in your introduction what the paper/presentation is going to be about and what your aim is?
• Does the conclusion return to the research problem (present the main findings and their significance)?
• Does the text consist of coherent parts, which are well connected to each other and presented in a logical sequence?

Data collection and analysis
• Does the selection of empirical data/primary sources help to answer the research question?
• Does the paper provide insight in the use of methods for data collection and/or analysis?
• Does the paper make use of theory and/or analytical concepts?
• Does the paper present an intersectional analysis?
• Tip: beware that your analysis does not become a random patchwork of observations.

Argumentation
• Does the paper defend a central claim/provide a main answer to the research question?
• Is the main claim or thesis supported by good reasons and reliable evidence?
• Tip: do not make sweeping statements that you cannot support with arguments.
• Tip: do not use abstract expressions which you are not able to explain or understand yourself.

Language
• How is the quality of spelling, grammar, and punctuation?
• How is the quality of sentence structure, transition between sentences, and paragraph development?
• Does the paper have an appropriate (i.e. academic) tone of voice?
• Tip: construct complete and grammatically correct sentences.
• Tip: ask someone to proofread your paper.

Appendix II
How To Design A Research Paper

When embarking on a research project of some depth, it is worthwhile to produce a good research design first. In order to draw up a research design, you are advised to go through the following steps:

1. The selection of a subject

The first step of embarking on a research project is the selection and delimitation of a manageable subject. The subject should not be too broad or too vague (i.e. 'Anthony Giddens,' 'racial discrimination in the United States,' or 'the historical development of migratory flows'). If the subject is too large, you run the risk of 'drowning.' Try to delineate your subject by means of geographical, historical and or thematic specifications. The topic 'the historical development of migratory flows' is too large indeed, but 'Forced migration to the Netherlands since 1990: The case of the construction sector' is a manageable subject. In other words, apply a series of topical questions (when? where? who? what?) to your subject, in order to delimit it.

2. The formulation of a problem statement

This is probably the most difficult step in the production of a research design. It is also highly determinative of the eventual success of any research project. After you have staked out your subject, you need to provide yourself with a specific angle, point of view, or question from which you can tackle your object of study. It always helps to brainstorm about the subject you have selected: what do you already know about it? After that, it may be useful to make a first acquaintance with some background information about the subject at hand: a newspaper article, a review, a website, just something that will get your thought going. However, be careful that you will not begin collecting and studying research materials at this point, for as long as you do not have a clear-cut problem statement at your disposal, you will lack a means of selecting between relevant and irrelevant data!

By formulating a research question or problem statement, you add purpose and direction to the field of inquiry you have just staked out. A problem statement does not have to be definitive. In other words, you do not formulate it once and for all. On the contrary, it is quite common that you reformulate your research question as you go along. But a well-defined problem statement gives you a trajectory for traveling through your field of research: it indicates what exactly you want to find out about your subject.

To give an example: you may decide that you want to do something with the phenomenon of migrants in Europe. After brainstorming about this field, you delimit your subject to 'human rights of migrants in the Netherlands.' At this point, there are still a lot of options open for you: you could draw up a list of migrants'

categories you can think of (in terms of their immigration status, their occupational profile, etc.) and find out which group you are most interested in; you could look into the involvement of NGO's in migrants' human rights; you could inquire into different discourses that NGO's and migrants themselves employ to enhance migrants' status; you could identify what policies are drafted which explicitly and implicitly have had an impact on migrants' rights; to what extent these policies have certain assumptions about gender and race; what role religion has played in it, etc.

An effective problem statement meets the following criteria:

- It implies a real, analytical question and not just a statement that you can only answer with 'yes' or 'no,' or a question that you already know the answer to.
- It should not be too easy to answer the question, that is to say, the treatment of the problem statement should require in-depth research and argumentation.
- The problem statement or research question has to be relevant to the subject and it should have innovative potential. In other words, it should be conducive to formulating new insights.

Some examples of subjects and problem statements (note that these are problem statements taken from other courses):

- Subject: 'The diagnosis and treatment of neurasthenia in Dutch psychiatry, 1870-1895.' Problem statement: 'A Foucauldian analysis of the diagnosis and treatment of neurasthenia in Dutch psychiatry, 1870-1895.'
- Subject: 'Dutch political theatre, 1960-1970.' Problem statement: 'Which policy did the Dutch government develop vis-à-vis subsidizing political theatre in the sixties?'
- Subject: 'A cross-cultural comparison of German and English fin-de-siècle Gothic Fiction.' Problem statement: 'How did German and English Gothic Novels represent the imperialist expansion of empire around the previous turn of the century?'

3. The subdivision of the problem statement

Your research question can always be subdivided into smaller questions all pertaining to the problem at hand. This subdivision will help you to tackle the issue under study.

Take, for example, the problem statement: 'How did German and English Gothic Novels represent the imperialist expansion of empire around the previous turn of the century?' This problem statement begs the following (sub)questions:

- How did the German respectively the British colonial empires expand during the late nineteenth century?
- What tactics and strategies were employed for imperialist and colonial expansion?

- How were these tactics and strategies legitimated in contemporary political discourse?
- Were these tactics and strategies controversial or largely taken for granted?
- How do late nineteenth-century Gothic novels represent colonialism and imperialism?
- Which literary conventions of the Gothic novel are mobilized to represent the subject at hand?
- How does the literary discourse about imperialism and colonialism relate to the political discourse?

And the list could go on. The subdivision of the problem statement indicates the various steps you will have to take in order to attain the final goal, i.e. the formulation of a well-reasoned answer to your research question. These steps may also give you a clue to the various sections your research paper could consist of.

4. The selection of an appropriate theoretical framework

After you have selected a subject and formulated a problem statement, you still need to clarify the theoretical framework and concept(s) you want to employ in order to deal with your research question. Theoretical/conceptual articulateness is one of the distinctive features of scholarly discourse, as compared to, for instance, journalism or fiction. A theoretical framework basically consists of two interrelated ingredients: first, it is a particular way of looking at the topic at hand, and second, it is a (set of) specific approach(es) for analyzing the object of your research.

In this course, we (will) have read theories from the fields of gender and sexuality studies, critical race studies, and diversity studies more generally. In your paper, you will have to be explicit about the ways in which you apply a certain theoretical framework and particular analytical concepts to the subject of your choice.

5. The selection of relevant information

This step entails bibliographical inquiry into appropriate secondary literature. If you are interested in human rights, gender and migration in the Netherlands today, you need to find out which books and articles have been devoted to this subject. You could also profit from case studies at the European level and possibly from secondary literature on such case studies, as well as from work by black feminists, gender and migration scholars.

It is your research problem that guides the selection and search for specific information. Scroll through this and/or other relevant course manuals, follow bibliographical trails, look for information online, and most importantly, explore the library and its electronic databases. If you are not sure how to use the database, ask the librarians for assistance.

A few words of caution:

- You do not need to aim for completeness, neither in the collection, nor in the perusal of secondary literature. Select materials that are recent and as directly relevant to your field of interest as possible.
- Begin by provisionally formulating your own ideas about your research question before you start reading secondary materials. If you first try to get as far as you can on your own, it will be easier for you to make a critical and selective use of the secondary literature.