

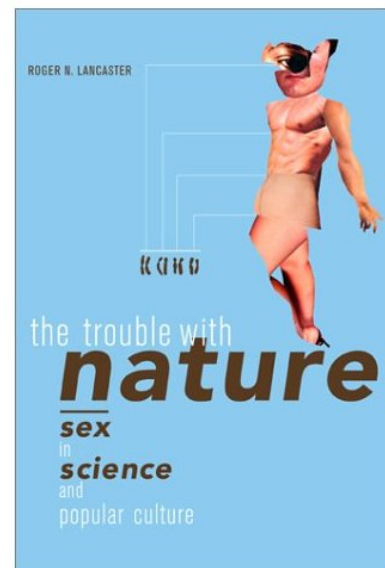
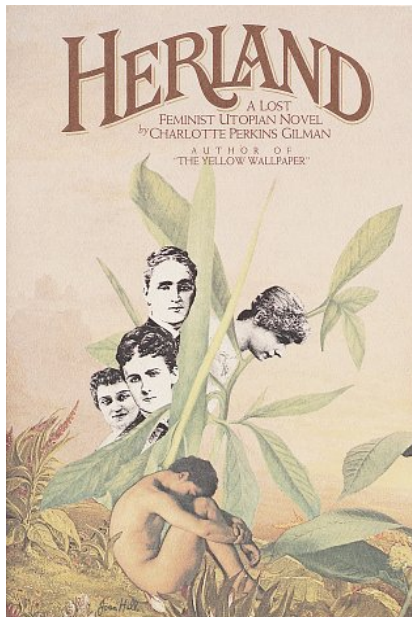
**Hist 487: Gender, Sex and Science in Popular Culture**  
Tuesday/Thursday 12.40-3.30  
107 Ernst Bessey Hall

Contact Info

Dr. Georgina M. Montgomery  
403 Morrill Hall  
montg165@msu.edu

Office Hours: 1.30-2.30 on Wednesdays at Espresso Royale or by appointment

Note: ANGEL will be used to provide you with PDF documents of assigned readings (except those from the class textbooks) and class announcements. Dr. Montgomery will use excel for the grade book. You can email Dr. Montgomery at anytime for an update on your grade.



Course Description

This course will use works of literature, film and popular science to explore how science intersects with beliefs about gender and sexuality. We will begin by examining the various ways scientific and/or pseudo-scientific theories have impacted constructions of gender and sexuality in seventeenth to twentieth century Europe and North America. The rest of the class will focus on contemporary debates concerning “scientific” explanations of gender and sexuality that have gained traction in popular culture.

Note: This course usually has greater international content but some material had to be cut due to the condensed nature of the summer semester. However, you are encouraged to look at gender, sex and science outside of Europe or North America for your final research project if desired.

### Assignments

- Participation in class discussion is an essential part of any 400-level History course. Our classes will be conducted in a seminar format with a significant part of each class consisting of discussion of the readings. There will also be small group activities, short lectures, and film. Participation in the form of thoughtful comments and questions about assigned readings and class topics is worth 20% of your grade. *Any comments that fail to demonstrate thoughtful reading of assigned material will not count towards your participation grade.*
- Reading Response Papers: 4 x 2 page (Single-Spaced) reading response papers. These papers will be critical responses to the assigned readings and should demonstrate a thoughtful reading of the material. The papers must be handed in at the start of the class for which the reading(s) is assigned. If more than one article/chapter is assigned for that class, your response should include discussion of each assigned reading, preferably focusing on the connections between the texts. (4 x 5% = 20%)
- Student Expert Team: Once during the course of the semester, you will work with a partner to lead a presentation introducing the class to 2 additional readings relating to the topic for that day's class. You find these sources yourself. After presenting the material in a mini-lecture for 7-10 minutes presentation you lead a 30 minutes discussion activity based on the readings you have presented and their connections with that day's assigned readings. (10%)
- 4 page double spaced paper analyzing Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland*. (10%).
- Handout / Reflection on Class Field Trips to the MSU Museum and a Local Toy Store (2 x 2% = 4%)
- Gilman Museum Exhibit In-Class Exercise (1%)
- Presentation on Final Research Paper: This 5-7 minute PowerPoint presentation should communicate the thesis of your final research paper and some of the primary and secondary evidence you will be using to support your argument. The presentation will be graded on depth of content and research and presentation style. (5%)

- Final Research Paper: Your paper *must* engage with primary and secondary sources and pursue a topic related to the course. You are encouraged to use the popular culture and/or radicalism sections of the Special Collections at the MSU library. You may choose a topic of particular interest to you in consultation with Prof. Montgomery. The 10-page paper (double-spaced) is worth 30% of your grade.

**Note: The Chicago Manual of Style should be used for all citations in all written assignments. See Citation Guidelines at**

**<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocChicago.html> and/or Chicago Notes Citation Guidelines on the MSU library website for further information**

### Writing Resources

~ Everyone should read "A Brief Guide to Writing the History Paper." This document was produced by the Writing Center at Harvard College and is available on ANGEL.

~ For assistance with your writing make an appointment with the Writing Center:  
<http://writing.msu.edu>

~ The following are useful online resources for developing skills specific to writing history papers:

- [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/soc\\_sciences/history.shtml](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/soc_sciences/history.shtml)
- <http://falcon.arts.cornell.edu/prh3/257/classmats/papertip.html>

### Grade Points and Percentages

4.0 = 92% to 100%

3.5 = 86% to 91%

3.0 = 80% to 85%

2.5 = 74% to 79%

2.0 = 68% to 73%

1.5 = 62% to 67%

1.0 = 56% to 61%

0 = less than 56%

*Please refer to the grading rubric on the last page of the syllabus. This rubric will be used for all written assignments.*

### Academic Honesty

Your own arguments and ideas are valuable. Your assignments should be your own work. Use of primary and secondary sources, including quotes and paraphrasing, must be appropriately cited. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. If you have questions or concerns, speak to Prof. Montgomery.

### Use of Email

You must use your MSU email account. You are also responsible for regularly checking your MSU email and ANGEL for class announcements.

### The Nature of Summer Classes

We have a lot to cover in short amount of time. You will need to read an average of 2 scholarly articles per class period. For most of our classes, we will do jigsaw readings when some students have read one pair of readings, others a different pair. We will then teach each other the content of the articles we have read.

**I expect you to have done all the reading and to make notes so you can make meaningful contributions to class discussion.**

The class period is longer than normal. Feel free to bring food or beverages. Try to avoid food that is loud to eat. We will take a break each class.

### Course Objectives

- To increase your understanding of how science has and does intersect with beliefs about gender and sexuality
- To gain in-depth knowledge of contemporary debates concerning gender, sex and science in popular culture and the historical backdrop for these debates
- To develop a scholarly research paper based on research of primary and secondary sources. Engagement with the sources in MSU Special Collections is strongly encouraged when completing this objective.
- To develop your ability to communicate your ideas and arguments verbally through seminar discussion and formal presentation of your work
- To develop your ability to communicate your ideas and arguments in written form through critical reading response papers and a final research paper
- To foster awareness of how scientific ideas and authority impact the images and articles **you** read and see on a daily basis

### Course Texts

You should purchase the following books. All other readings will be available on ANGEL

Roger N. Lancaster, *The Trouble with Nature: Sex in Science and Popular Culture* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003). Available at the MSU bookstore.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland* (1915) – Cheap, paperback copies of this book can be found online and in many used bookstores. Available at the MSU bookstore.

Week 1: Introductions, Overview of the Course and Introducing Key Concepts in the History of Science

**Tuesday May 15: Introductions, Syllabus Review, Discussion of Final Research Projects and discussion of some class terminology and ideas drawing on today's assigned readings.**

Note: Second half of class will consist of a library tutorial tailor-made by Mike Unsworth for our class to help you get a jump-start on your research projects.

**Reading:** "Introduction: Culture Wars, Nature Wars" and "The Science Question: Cultural Preoccupations and Social Struggles" in *The Trouble with Nature* (pp.1-32 and 71-80) (ANGEL)

**Thursday May 17: Learning to See Science in Film, Textbooks, Museums and on TV**

**Jigsaw Reading: Pair A** ~ Emily Martin, "The Egg and Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles" *Signs* (1991) 16:3 and Robert A. Jones, "How Many Female Scientists Do You Know?" *Endeavour* 29: 2 (2005) 84-88; **Pair B** ~ James Krasner, "Ape Ladies' and Cultural Politics: Dian Fossey and Biruté Galdikas" in Barbara T. Gates and Ann B. Shteir (eds.), *Natural Eloquence: Women Reinscribe Science* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997) and Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, "Nature by Design: Masculinity and Animal Display in Nineteenth-Century America" in Ann B. Shteir and Bernard Lightman, eds., *Figuring It Out: Science, Gender and Visual Culture* (Dartmouth, 2006) (ANGEL)

**Class Activity: Walk over to the MSU museum to see if we can see evidence of the kind of gendered exhibits Kohlstedt discusses and/or evidence to the contrary.**

Week 2: A Long History: The Science of Sex Difference in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Europe

**Tuesday May 22: Biology, the Body and Beauty**

**Reading: All the class will read** "Biological Beauty and the Straight Arrow of Desire" in *Trouble with Nature*; **Half the class will read** "More than Skin Deep: The scientific search for sexual difference" in Londa Schiebinger, *The Mind has No Sex: Women in the Origins of Modern Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1989); **Half the class will read** "The Anatomy of Difference" in Londa Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006)(ANGEL)

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**Thursday May 24: Gender and Race and Spectacle in Science**

**Readings:** "Theories of Gender and Race" in Londa Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press,

2006) Janet Browne and Sharon Messenger, "Victorian Spectacle: Julia Pastrana, the Bearded and Hairy Female" *Endeavour* 27, 4 (2003); and Evelyn Hammonds, "New Technologies of Race" in Jennifer Terry and Melodie Calvert (eds.) *Processes Lives: Gender and Technology in Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 1997) (ANGEL)

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**In-Class Screening:** *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman*

Week 3: The Evolution of Women in Popular Culture ~ Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century North America

**Tuesday May 29:** The Descent of Woman

**Reading:** **Half the class will read** Evelleen Richards, "Darwin and the Descent of Woman" in D. Oldroyd and I. Langham, eds., *The Wider Domain of Evolutionary Thinking* (Boston: Kluwer Press, 1983), 57-111; **Half the class will read** Rosemary Jann, "Revising the Descent of Woman: Eliza Burt Gamble" in Barbara T. Gates and Ann B. Shteir (eds.), *Natural Eloquence: Women Reinscribe Science* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997); **All the class will read** Danielle Peck's biography on Gamble on [www.womeninscience.history.msu.edu](http://www.womeninscience.history.msu.edu)

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**In-Class Activity:** Design a museum exhibit on Eliza Burt Gamble

**Thursday May 31:** *Herland*

**Reading:** Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland*.

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Week 4: Science, Sex and Sexuality in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Europe and North America

**Tuesday June 5:** Sex and Sexuality as an Illness

**Reading:** Read 4 (your choice) of the primary sources in "Science and Sexuality" in Mathew Kuefler (ed.), *The History of Sexuality Sourcebook* (New York: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 265-290 (ANGEL) and Rachel Maines, "Situated technology: Camouflage" in Nina Lerman, Ruth Oldenziel and Arwen P. Mohun (eds), *Gender and Technology: A Reader* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003) (ANGEL).

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**In-Class Screening:** *Power and Passions*

**Thursday June 7:** Cave Man and Coy Woman

**Reading:** **All the class will read** "Sexual Selection: Eager, Aggressive Boy Meets Coy, Choosy Girl" in *The Trouble with Nature*; **Half the class will read** Ruth Bleier "Sociobiology, Biological Determinism and Human Behavior" Mary Wyer et al, eds., *Women, Science and Technology: A Reader in Feminist Science Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 175-193; **Half the class will read** Sarah Hrdy, "Empathy,

Polyandry and the Myth of the Coy Female” in Janet Kourany, ed., *The Gender of Science* (Upper Saddle River N.J: Prentice Hall, 2002) (ANGEL)

**In-Class Activity:** Sociobiology in *Playboy*

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 5: The Science of Parenting

#### **Tuesday June 12: Parenting, Science and Expertise**

**Reading:** Marga Vicedo, “The Father of Ethology and the Foster Mother of Ducks: Konrad Lorenz as Expert on Motherhood” *ISIS* 100 (2009): 263-291; Julia Grant, “Bringing Up Boys: Science, Popular Culture and Gender, 1890-1960” in Barbara Betty, Emily Cahan and Julia Grant (eds.), *When Science Encounters the Child: Education, Parenting and Child Welfare in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005); **and 1 of the following 2 readings:** Julia Grant, “Caught Between Common Sense and Science: The Cornell Child Study Clubs, 1925-1945” *History of Education Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 4 (1994): 433-452; Rima D. Apple, “‘Training’ the Baby: Mother’s Responses to Advice Literature in the First Half of the Twentieth Century” in Barbara Betty, Emily Cahan and Julia Grant (eds.), *When Science Encounters the Child: Education, Parenting and Child Welfare in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005) (ANGEL)

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**In-Class Screening:** *Grief: A Peril of Infancy*

#### **Thursday June 14: Gender at Play**

**Reading: Two of the following 3 readings:** Ruth Oldenziel, “Boys and Their Toys: The Fisher Body Craftsman Guild, 1930-1968, and the Making of a Male Technical Domain” in *Technology and Culture* 38: 1 (1997): 60-96; Jacqueline Urla and Alan C. Swedlund, “The Anthropology of Barbie: Unsettling Ideals of the Feminine Body in Popular Culture” in *Deviant Bodies* and Suzanne de Castell and Mary Bryson, “Retooling Play: Dystopia, Dysphoria and Difference” in *From Barbie to Mortal Kombat: Gender and Computer Games*

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Class Field Trip to a Toy Store**

### Week 6: Biography and The Big Screen

#### **Tuesday June 19: What Biography Can, and Cannot, Do**

**Reading:** James H. Capshew, Matthew H. Adamson, Patricia A. Buchanan, Narisara Murray and Naoko Wake, “Kinsey’s Biographers: A Historiographical Reconnaissance” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* vol. 12, no. 3 (2003): 465-486; Mott Greene, “Writing Scientific Biography” *Journal for the History of Biology* (2007) 40: 727-759

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**Thursday June 21:** In-class screening of *Kinsey*. No Reading.

Week 7: The Gay Gene, Evolutionary Psychology and Other On-Going Debates in Pop Culture

**Tuesday June 26: Looking Towards Gender, Sex and Science in Pop Culture Today**

**Reading:** “Venus and Mars at the Fin de Siècle: Evolutionary Psychology and the Modern Art of Spin” and “Permutations on the “Nature” of Desire: The Gay Brain, the Gay Gene, and Other Tales of Identity” in *Trouble with Nature* and **1 of the following**

**3 readings:** Simon LeVay, “A difference in Hypothalamic Structure between Heterosexual and Homosexual Men” *Science*, vol. 253, 1991; William Byne, “The Biological Evidence Challenged,” *Scientific American*, May 1994; and/or “Lesbian Reptiles Act Like Males” *Time*, February 1980

**Expert Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**In-Class Activity:** Peer Review of Paper Drafts

**Thursday June 28: Research Presentations and Submit Final Papers**