GASP 174a: Music, Gender, and Sexuality

Course Description: Can you hear gender? How are ideals of masculinity and femininity expressed in music and how have these ideals changed over time? In what ways do musicians and composers communicate sexuality in sound or in performance? This interdisciplinary seminar explores these questions and more by considering a variety of musics from the art, popular, and folk traditions. We'll talk about the relationships between music, gender and sexuality from a variety of analytical perspectives including music studies, media studies, women and gender studies, and queer theory. This course is reading, listening, and discussion intensive. Class discussions will push all of us to challenge our assumptions about music, gender, and sexuality. Students will be expected to undertake a major research project in which they will apply what they have learned to a musical tradition that interests them.

Course Learning Outcomes:
After taking this class, students should be able to:
• 1. Read, interpret, and critique scholarly writing on music, gender and sexuality
• 2. Describe aural texts in sophisticated terms—both theoretical and technical
• 3. Analyze musical and visual texts within their historical and conceptual contexts
• 4. Understand the role played by music in society, particularly as it pertains to gender and sexuality
• 5. Research and write a convincing argumentative paper

These CLOs satisfy the following GASP Program Learning Outcomes:
1. Describe visual and aural texts in technical and theoretical terms. (CLO 2)
2. Analyze cultural, visual, aural and spatial procedures within their historical and conceptual contexts. (CLOs 3 and 4)
3. Apply theoretical models from multiple schools of thought in art history/visual studies and musicology/ethnomusicology. (CLO 1)
4. Conduct research specific to critical studies of the arts. (CLO 5)

These CLOs also fulfill the following guiding principles for general education:
#3. Communication: To convey information to and communicate and interact effectively with multiple audiences, using advanced skills in written and other modes of communication (CLOs 1, 2, and 5);
#4. Self and Society: To understand and value diverse perspectives in both the global and community contexts of modern society in order to work knowledgeably and effectively in an ethnically and culturally rich setting (CLOs 3 and 4);
#7. Aesthetic Understanding and Creativity: To appreciate and be knowledgeable about human creative expression, including literature and the arts (CLOs 1, 2, 3, and 4)

Required Text, Recordings, and CatCourses Readings:
• Spotify, online digital music application (the $4.99/month version is recommended and gets you an ad-free unlimited subscription)
• Most Assigned Readings available as pdfs or links on CatCourses under the Resources tab
• Other assigned readings will be available through the UC Merced Library's catalogue of online books. You will need the UC Merced VPN for off campus access.
(See here: http://library.ucmerced.edu/tech/vpn)
• Please arrive to class on-time and stay for the duration of the class; these are good manners and the best way to learn.
• Talking during lecture is distracting to me and to your classmates. Please be respectful when others are speaking. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and students may be asked to leave.
• Throughout its history, music has excited controversy because of its ability to emotionally impact its listeners and because of its frank portrayals of sexuality and drug use, explicit lyrics, and political messages. Please be advised that we may occasionally read, view or listen to potentially offensive material. If you have concerns about this, please don’t hesitate to talk to me.

Tips for Success:
• Come to class and take good notes.
• Do the assigned reading and listening before the class in which they will be discussed.
• Listen to the assigned pieces again after class. Concentrate your listening on what was discussed in the assigned reading and in class.
• See me during office hours if you feel lost or behind. I am happy to meet with you during regularly scheduled office hours. If you have a course conflict with the regularly scheduled time, please feel free to email me to request an appointment at another time.
• Seek assistance at the Calvin E. Bright Success Center, if necessary, before submitting writing assignments.

Evaluation:
Participation, Preparation, and Attendance 15%
I will spend some time presenting material, but this is a seminar, which means you will be expected to speak up in class. Your voice is vital to the success of this course! Come to class having read, listened to, and thought about the assigned reading and listening, and be ready to share your thoughts. Details on preparation posted on CatCourses.

You may miss ONE class, for whatever reason, without penalty. (In other words, there are no “excused” or “unexcused” absences.) Each additional absence will reduce your attendance and participation grade by one-third of a letter. Whatever the reason for an absence, you are responsible for handing in all work due on or before the due date, and for getting notes from a classmate.

Weekly Discussion Board 10%--Due every Thursday by 6pm
Each week you are responsible for posting reading/listening responses to the CatCourses discussion board. Your responses should be substantive and analytical, and should touch on each of the assigned reading for that day. I encourage you also to respond to each other’s postings. Please write clearly and intelligibly, with proper grammar, usage, and spelling (this means proofread!).

Music Discussion Leadership 5%
During the semester, you and one of your fellow students will lead the class discussion on a piece of music related to the weekly readings. Expect to lead discussion for about twenty minutes. I will be there to help facilitate.
Article Discussion Leadership 5%
During the semester, you and one of your fellow students will lead the class discussion on one of the assigned readings. You will be expected to pose questions and lead the discussion for about twenty minutes. I will be there to help facilitate.

Scavenger Hunt 5%
This library assignment is designed to familiarize you with research skills in music studies and issues of bibliographic style.

Annotated Bibliography 10%
You will compile a list of seven secondary scholarly sources on subjects related to your final paper, and list them in alphabetical order using citation guidelines from *The Chicago Manual of Style*. You will write brief one-paragraph summaries of each of these sources. This means you will need to have collected—interlibrary loan, in some cases—and read your sources well before this due date.

Paper Prospectus 5%
At midterm, you will complete a brief (350-500 word) prospectus paper outlining your plans for the final paper. Your prospectus should contain a proposed thesis statement, which should be underlined.

Drafts of Final Papers and Comments on Peer Drafts 15%
Students will write a complete draft of their final paper that will be evaluated by one of your colleagues. This paper should be about 6-8 pages in length. Each student will also provide substantial comments on the draft of one of their peers. Please bring a printed copy of your paper to class on this date.

Final Paper 20% (8-10 pages)
Your final paper will be an argumentative essay that satisfies the following criteria:
- It should have some discussion of musical sound.
- It should incorporate the comments you received from your colleague and from the instructor.
- The paper should cite at least two of the assigned readings for this class and three scholarly secondary sources that we have not read in this class. Use the *Chicago Manual of Style* for citations and bibliography.

Final Presentation 10%
You will present the findings of your paper for class in a presentation of approximately 10-15 minutes during the last two weeks of classes.

Grading Scheme:

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<th>Grade</th>
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Welcome and Introduction to Music Studies

LISTEN AND WATCH:

• Salt ‘n’ Pepa, “Let’s Talk About Sex”
• Meghan Trainor and Charlie Puth, “Marvin Gaye”
WEEK TWO

Gender, Sexuality, and the Canon

**READ:**

**LISTEN:**
- Cécile Chaminade, *Concertstück*, Opus 40
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwZQRcYHmGg

**WATCH:**
- Miley Cyrus, “Wrecking Ball”

WEEK THREE

Technology, Castrati, and Masculinity

**READ:**

**LISTEN:**
- “Lascia ch’io pianga” and “Cara Sposa” from *Rinaldo*
- Alessandro Moreschi, “Ave Maria”

WEEK FOUR

The Blues and Black Female Sexuality

**READ:**

**Listen:**
• Selections by Clara Smith, Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Ethel Waters, Ida Cox, Speckled Red, and Sapphire—The Uppity Blues Women

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**Week Five**

Sounding Gay Compositional Identity

**Read:**
• Jonathan Katz, “John Cage’s Queer Silence or How to Avoid Making Matters Worse”

**Listen:**
• Franz Schubert, *Moment Musical*, no. 6 (1824)
• John Cage, Concerto for Prepared Piano
• Aaron Copland, “Burlesque” from *Music for the Theatre*

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**Week Six**

Musicals and Queer Identity

**Read:**
• D. A. Miller, “At the Bar” from *A Place for Us*
• Excerpts from Stacy Wolf, *A Problem Like Maria: Gender and Sexuality in the American Musical*

**Listen:** “The Origin of Love,” “Midnight Radio” and “Wig in a Box” from *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*

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**Week Seven**

Rock, Masculinity, and Power

**Read:**
• Excerpts from Out of the Vinyl Deeps: Ellen Willis on Rock Music

**LISTEN:**

### WEEK EIGHT

**Opera, Sexuality, and Exoticism**

**READ:**
• Catherine Clement, Prelude to Opera: The Undoing of Women, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 3-23.
• Excerpts from Mary Ann Smart, Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera (2000)

**LISTEN:**
• Excerpts from Puccini’s Manon Lescaut and Madame Butterfly

### WEEK NINE

**Riot Grrrl and Third Wave Feminism**

**READ:**
• “Riot Grrrl Manifesto”
WEEK ELEVEN

In-class Peer Review of Paper Drafts

WEEK TWELVE

Sexuality and Sexism in Hip Hop

READ:


WEEK THIRTEEN

No Class (see schedule for individual paper meetings)

WEEK FOURTEEN

Gaga Feminism

READ:


LISTEN: Lady Gaga, “Born this Way” and “Telephone”; Cyndi Lauper, “Girls Just Want to Have Fun”

WEEK FIFTEEN

Class Presentations

WEEK SIXTEEN

Class Presentations