

**Relating Against the State:
Decolonial and Anti-Imperialist Approaches to Gender/Sex/uality In/Justice
Summer 2021- June 10th -July 29th
Meetings: Thursdays, 1-3 EST**

Zoom Link for Meetings (see last page)

Facilitator: Adria Kurchina-Tyson
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Course description:

“Relating Against the State: Decolonial and Anti-Imperialist Approaches to Sexuality and Gender” addresses de/colonial and anti/imperialist thinking and approaches to sexuality and gender, approaching sexuality and kinship through an anti-racist lens. Participants in this seminar will learn about the epistemic roots of contemporary Western studies of sexuality and gender in colonial violence, anti-Indigeneity, and anti-Blackness. Participants from Psychology and Sexuality Studies backgrounds will learn to challenge colonial doctrines of sexuality and gender, and to re-think sexual categories, gender, and kinship practices. Students with prior knowledge in Indigenous Studies, anti-racism, sexuality, and/or decolonization will leave the course equipped to identify and challenge how colonial structures of sexuality and gender inform studies of colonialism and anti-racist politics.

We will begin by reviewing preliminary critiques of colonialism and epistemic imperialism, including Indigenous and 2Spirit critiques of the colonial structuring of gender. Then, we will examine the relationships between sexual pathologies and racism. Finally we review critically anti-racist and sex-positive theories of kinship and desire that challenge prescriptive approaches to consent and decolonization.

Learning Outcomes:

Participants will learn to distinguish—and to challenge—colonial and imperialist conceptions of gender and sexuality. Participants will grasp colonial politics of sexuality and gender as a structure of violence. In so doing, participants will also gain some literacy of Indigenous kinship vis a vis the colonial categories of sexuality and gender.

Location of Course Materials

All required readings and course materials will be available through [Google Drive](#) (organized by week in accordance with the section below) and Microsoft Teams. To access Microsoft Teams, please accept the Teams invite that you received over email after your confirmation of attendance. If you have not received an invite to join our Teams group, or the invite does not work for you, please contact vananders.labcoordinator@queensu.ca. All materials in Teams are organized by week and section; click on “Files” at the top of the Teams app to access them. If you are new to Teams or are trying to troubleshoot a specific issue, this [resource](#) is a good place to start!

Participant expectations:

Preparation and Attendance:

While reading course materials is foundational and necessary, most of our learning in this course will be done in the seminar/discussion setting. Having reviewed course materials *prior to* each session, participants will have the opportunity to share their varying interpretations of the reading materials, as well as to critique and contextualize said texts, in seminars. As such, it is expected that participants do their best to attend each session.

Reflections:

Participants are expected to demonstrate their engagement throughout the course through the sharing of thoughtful reflections. A minimum of two reflections should be brought to class by each participant throughout the course. Reflections can be prepared for any two (or more) weeks of choice, prior to class, and may take the form of written prose, video, audio, etc. Participants may offer alternatives to conventional reflection exercises based on access and ability. Reflections should show engagement with reading materials, including their connections to each other and the broader themes of the course.

Presentations:

The final week of the course (week 8, July 29th) will be dedicated to discussing applications of theory to work and/or everyday life. Participants will be asked to share how their thinking has transformed throughout the course, and how the course has inspired directions in future work. This assignment is flexible both in content (i.e. from academic research to personal and community initiatives) and in format (much as with the shorter written reflections, participants may choose to express themselves through writing, speaking, any art form, powerpoint presentation, etc.). The timing of each presentation will be decided based on the number of participants, after the course begins. Doing a presentation is optional.

Discussion Protocols/Conduct:

Guidelines for discussion will occur in the first meeting; in advance, participants should know that expectations include:

- Understanding that this is a space for learning and growth from quite varied starting positions and that some participants may be experts in some topics discussed but not others, many if not most topics, or none at all.
- This course is not a fix-all, but rather a space of learning and unlearning that is ongoing.
- Thinking carefully about space and airtime, taking the space they deserve *and* making space for others.
- Ensuring voices with lived experiences of oppression are centered, especially in relation to the axes of oppression discussed in the Summer Session.
- Not expecting anyone to speak for or represent a minoritized group; people can choose to speak from experience but should not be expected to do so.
- Listening to Adria (and, if necessary, Sari) and supporting their steering (e.g., if they signal we need to move on from someone or that we have heard a lot from someone and need to hear others, accepting this positively or at least without negativity).
- Pointing out if something someone said is problematic and doing so from a place of educating and inviting in rather than shaming, and endeavouring to hear concerns in the same spirit.
- Acknowledging there are power differentials in the room that cannot be erased but, especially for those in positions of power, being thoughtful about how this plays out for others.

We will use “they” for everyone unless they have pronouns indicated on their zoom name or indicate a preference to us in another way.

Schedule/Sections:

Section 1: preliminary critiques—colonialism, anti-Blackness (June 10)

Kelley, Robin D.G. “The Rest of Us: Rethinking Settler and Native.” *American Quarterly* 69 (2), 2017. 267-276.

Walcott, Rinaldo. “The Problem of the Human: Black Ontologies and ‘the Coloniality of Our Being’.” *Postcoloniality — Decoloniality – Black Critique: Joints and Fissures*. Sabine Brock-Sallah and Carsten Junker, Eds. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2015.

Beze Gray and Shane Camastro. “Speaker Series: Native Youth Sexual Health Network.” *YouTube*. <https://youtu.be/oJUPKdt21sA?t=1>

Section 2: colonial systems of sex and gender (June 17)

Stallings, L.H. “Marvelous Stank Matter: The End of Monogamy, the Marriage Crisis, and Ethical Slutting.” *Funk the Erotic: Transaesthetics and Black Sexual Cultures*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015. 122-148.

De Beauvoir, Simone. “The Data of Biology.” *The Second Sex*. 33-64.

Fausto-Sterling, Ann. “Dueling Dualisms.” *Sexing the Body*. New York: Basic Books, 2000. 1-29.

Tallbear, Kim. “Yes, your pleasure! Yes, self-love! And don’t forget, settler sex is a structure.” *The Critical Polyamorist*. 04 22 2018.

<http://www.criticalpolyamorist.com/homeblog/category/critical%20theory>

Section 3: 2Spirit critiques (June 24)

Waters, Anne. “Language Matters – A Metaphysic of Nondiscreet Nonbinary Dualism.” *American Indian Thought*. Ed. Anne Waters. Minnesota: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. 97-115.

Wesley, Dana. “Introduction: Finding Two-Spirit Youth.” “Reimagining *Two-Spirit Community*: Critically Centering Narratives of Urban Two-Spirit Youth.” Queen’s University, 2015. 1-32.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. “Indigenous Queer Normativity.” *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. 119-144.

Section 4A: sexual pathologies and white supremacy (July 1) *If you cannot make it due to Canada Day, that’s ok. Notes will be shared.*

Somerville, Siobhan. “Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body.” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 5 (2), 1994. 243-266.

Kauanui, J. Kehaulani. “‘Savage’ Sexualities.” *Paradoxes of Hawaiian Sovereignty: Land, Sex, and the Colonial Politics of State Nationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. 153-193.

Weiss, Margot. Excerpt: “Beyond Vanilla: Public Politics and Private Selves.” *Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM and the Circuits of Sexuality*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 143-186.

Tallbear, Kim. “Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sexualities.” *YouTube*. 2016.

<https://youtu.be/zfdo2ujRUv8?t=1>

Section 4B: sexual pathologies and white supremacy (July 8)

- Belcourt, Billy-Ray, George Dust, and Kay Gabriel. "Top or Bottom: How do we desire?" *The New Inquiry*, August 18, 2017. <https://thenewinquiry.com/top-or-bottom-how-do-we-desire/>
- Dryden, OmiSoore H. "'A Queer Too Far': Blackness, 'Gay Blood,' and Transgressive Possibilities." *Disrupting Queer Inclusion: Canadian Homonationalisms and the Politics of Belonging*. Dryden, OmiSoore H., and Suzanne Lenon, eds. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 116-132.
- Khan, Ummni. "Introduction." *Vicarious Kinks: S/M in the Socio-Legal Imaginary*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. 10-25.

Section 5A: kinship, desire (July 15)

- Cruz, Ariane. "Introduction: Speaking the Unspeakable." *The Color of Kink: Black Women, BDSM, and Pornography*. New York: NYU Press, 2016. 1-28.
- Driskill, Qwo-Li (2004) 'Stolen From Our Bodies: First Nations Two-Spirits/Queers and the Journey to a Sovereign Erotic' *Studies in American Literatures* 16(2): 50-64.
- Kurchina-Tyson, Adria. "Decolonizing Kink: Nishinaabeg stories as critical engagements with power." *Journal of Critical Race Inquiry*, 7 (1), 2020. 84-92.
- "Mapping Your Sexuality: From Sexual Orientation to Sexual Configurations Theory" Zine. Sari van Anders, ed. <https://www.queensu.ca/psychology/van-anders-lab/SCTzine.pdf>

Section 5B: kinship, desire (July 22)

- Nelson, Melissa K. "Getting Dirty: The Eco-Eroticism of Women in Indigenous Oral Literatures." *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies*. Ed. Joanne Barker. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017. 229-260.
- Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Health Network. "When Relatives are Violenced." *Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies*, Chapter 2, p. 20-30.
- Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. "Nishnaabeg Anticapitalism." *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017. 71-82.

Recommended:

- Royal, Dorothée Sophie. "SERVE: Lyla June Johnston on Reciprocity with Nature." *Moonwise Podcast*. Guest speaker: Johnston, Lyla June. Ep. 34. Google Podcasts, 2020 05 05. <https://anchor.fm/moonwise/episodes/SERVE-Lyla-June-Johnston-on-Reciprocity-with-Nature-Ep--34-eptdst>

Section 6: Applications (July 29)

- Presentations
General (closing) discussion(s)