The Politics of Gender and Sexuality:
French - American Comparisons

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The class meets twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:20 to 8:50 pm, starting Tuesday, March 20, until Tuesday, May 1. Unfortunately, due to my absence, two sessions (April 17 and 19) will be cancelled, and rescheduled in agreement with all the students enrolled in the class (e.g., one on Thursday, May 3).

N.B. : This course is taught in English, but some of the readings may only be available in French.

Work requirements:
1. Readings in preparation for each session.
2. Active participation in class discussions.
3. An oral presentation (of either required or additional readings).
4. A written examination (Friday, May 4 : date TBC) : 25% of the final grade.
5. A research paper (10 to 20 pages) ; topic to be defined by mid-April (please hand in a one-page description and bibliography) : 50% of the final grade.

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The politics of gender and sexuality are sometimes studied regardless of national context, at the risk of implicitly universalizing specific national experiences, or sometimes, on the contrary, with explicit emphasis on national culture, at the risk of culturalizing experiences that may have nothing specific. The purpose of this course is to make systematic use of comparisons between France and the United States — not only because this might correspond to the interests of American students of France, but also because this comparison plays a historical role, on both sides of the Atlantic.

The first section of the course will be devoted to discussions of French and American
democratic cultures, in so far as both are defined not only in abstract terms of universality, but also through gender and sexuality, in a double logic of inclusion and exclusion.

The second section will concentrate on the analysis of order and disorder, both at home and at work, from the New Woman to reactions against this sexual modernity, through the control of reproduction and homosexuality.

The third section of the course will address contemporary politics of feminism and homosexuality, both in France and in the United States, from 1970s feminism to the contrast between the E.R.A. and “parité”, and the parallel debates on same-sex unions. Finally, the fourth section will focus on the concepts at work throughout the course — analyzing their theoretical and political meanings in historical context, i.e. in their contemporary French and American national settings: difference and domination, gender and sexuality.

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Democratic cultures

1. Nation

Readings:

Additional readings:

2. Citizenship

Readings:
Pierre Rosanvallon, Le sacre du citoyen (Gallimard, 1992).
Linda K. Kerber, No constitutional right to be ladies (Hill & Wang, 1998).

Additional readings:
Geneviève Fraisse, Muse de la raison (Gallimard, 1995 [1989]).

3. Race
Readings:

Additional readings:

**Order and Disorder**

### 4. The New Woman

Readings:

Additional readings:
Christine Bard, ed., *Un siècle d’antiféminisme* (Fayard, 1999).

### 5. Interwar homosexuality

Readings:
George Chauncey, *Gay New York, 1890-1940* (Basic, 1994)

Additional readings:
Didier Eribon, *Réflexions sur la question gay* (Fayard, 1999).

### 6. Women and Reproduction

Readings:

Additional readings:

7. **Women and Production**

   **Readings:**

   **Additional readings:**

**Politics**

8. **Feminists and Lesbians**

   **Readings:**

   **Additional reading:**

9. **Parité and E.R.A.**

   **Readings:**
   Philippe Bataille and Françoise Gaspard, *Comment les femmes changent la politique* (La Découverte, 1999).

   **Additional reading:**

10. **PaCS and same-sex marriage**

    **Readings:**


**Additional reading :**


**Concepts**

**11. Difference**

**Readings :**


**Additional reading :**


**12. Domination**

**Readings :**


**Additional reading :**

Nicole-Claude Mathieu, “Quand céder n’est pas consentir”, *L’anatomie politique* (Côté-femmes, 1991).

**13. Gender and Sexuality**

**Readings :**


**Additional reading :**

Joan W. Scott, “Gender : A Useful Category of Historical Analysis”, *Gender and the Politics of History*
(Columbia U.P., 1988).