

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES**  
**GSWS 3315G: Blood, Breath, and the Black Body**  
**Winter 2023**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

**Instructor:** Cornel Grey  
**Class Time:** Wednesdays, 10:30 AM- 1:30 PM  
**Location:** UCC-63  
**Office:** Lawson Hall 3270K  
**Phone:** TBA  
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**Office Hours:** TBA

This upper-year seminar draws on Black feminist and queer theories to think through questions of health, risk, and care. We will consider some of the ways Black people have been depicted as non-human, vectors of disease and a problem for public health. Students will engage Black Studies scholars and artists whose critical interventions push us to think differently and expansively about what health science data can do for Black people, but also to imagine models of care that account for the multiple dimensions of Black peoples' lives. Possible topics include the politics of blood donation in Canada, blackness and fatphobia, anti-Black racism and pandemics, sexual risk and pleasure, and environmental racism.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate and contextualize examples of anti-Black racism and its effects on Black peoples' health
- Apply an intersectional lens to explain how and why particular groups of Black people experience barriers to care and/or are more likely to experience poor health outcomes
- Appreciate strategies employed by marginalized communities to support the health and wellbeing of their members

### **ASSESSMENTS**

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1. Participation 15%
2. Journal Entries (3 online posts, 750-1000 words each) 30%
3. Film Response (1500-2000 words) 20%
4. Action Plan 35%
  - a. Project Proposal (10%)
  - b. Creative Output (25%)

## ASSIGNED READINGS

### Jan 11-Black Feminist Interventions in Health Studies/Science

- Bailey, Moya, and Whitney Peoples. 2017. 'Articulating Black Feminist Health Science Studies'. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 3 (2): 1–27.
- Dryden, OmiSoore H. 2022. 'Who Gets To Do Medicine: Black Canadian Studies and Medical Education'. *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 44 (April): 159–74.
- Smith, Beverly. 1982. 'Black Women's Health: Notes for a Course'. In *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies*, edited by Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, 103–14. Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press.

### Jan 18-Documenting Cancer

- Gumbs, Alexis Pauline. 2012. 'The Shape of My Impact'. *The Feminist Wire*. 29 October 2012. <https://thefeministwire.com/2012/10/the-shape-of-my-impact/>.
- Lorde, Audre. 1980. *The Cancer Journals*. 1st ed. Argyle, N.Y: Spinsters, Ink.
- Guest Speaker: TBA

### Jan 25-The Black Body as Excess

- 'Fat Liberation'. 1988. *Our Lives: Canada's First Black Women's Newspaper* 2 (4): 4, 10.
- Harrison, Da'Shaun L. 2021. 'Black, Fat, and Policed'. In *Belly of the Beast: The Politics of Anti-Fatness as Anti-Blackness*, 47–68. Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books.
- Strings, Sabrina. 2019. *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia. Fearing the Black Body*. New York University Press. ("Fat, Revisited" and "Epilogue")
- Guest Speaker: TBA

### Feb 1- Sex, Risk, Pleasure

- Bailey, Marlon M. 2020. 'Black Gay Men's Sexual Health and the Means of Pleasure in the Age of AIDS'. In *AIDS and the Distribution of Crises*, edited by Jih-Fei Cheng, Alexandra Juhasz, and Nishant Shahani, 217–35. New York: Duke University Press.
- Douglas, Debbie, Gabrielle Micallef, V Tape, and Trinity Square Video. 1990. *AnOther Love Story: Women & AIDS*. Toronto: V Tape.
- Walcott, Rinaldo. 2019. 'Black Cumjoy: Pleasure and a Racist Virus'. In *RAW: PrEP, Pedagogy, and the Politics of Barebacking*, edited by Ricky Varghese. Regina, Saskatchewan: University of Regina Press.

### Feb 8- Black Queer Art in the Age of HIV/AIDS

Readings TBA

Guest Speaker: TBA

### Feb 15- Banned/Black/Blood

- Chinn, Sarah E. 2000. "'Liberty's Life Stream": Blood, Race, and Citizenship in World War II'. In *Technology and the Logic of American Racism: A Cultural History of the Body as Evidence*, 93–142. London and New York: Continuum.
- Dryden, OmiSoore. 2020. 'It's in Us to Give: Black Life and the Racial Profiling of Blood Donation'. In *Until We Are Free: Reflections on Black Lives Matter in Canada*, edited by Rodney Diverlus, Sandy Hudson, and Syrus Marcus Ware. Regina, Saskatchewan: University of Regina Press.

Tran, Nathalie Y.L., Johanne Charbonneau, and Valeria Valderrama-Benitez. 2013. 'Blood Donation Practices, Motivations and Beliefs in Montreal's Black Communities: The Modern Gift under a New Light'. *Ethnicity & Health* 18 (6): 508–29.

## READING WEEK

### March 1- **Guest Speaker, TBA (Gender, Race, and Food)**

#### March 8- Politics of Disability

Meera, Sonia, Idil Abdillahi, and Jennifer Poole. 2016. 'An Introduction to Anti-Black Sanism'. *Intersectionalities: A Global Journal of Social Work Analysis, Research, Polity, and Practice* 5 (3): 18.

Neal, Sarah. 1998. 'Embodying Black Madness, Embodying White Femininity: Populist (Re)Presentations and Public Policy - The Case of Christopher Clunis and Jayne Zito'. *Sociological Research Online* 3 (4): 54–63.

Schalk, Sami. 2022. 'Empowerment through Wellness: Black Disability Politics in the National Black Women's Health Project'. In *Black Disability Politics*, 81–109. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

#### March 15- Environmental Racism

Daniel, Ian, and Elliot Page. 2019. *There's Something in the Water*. Documentary. 2 Weeks Notice.

Waldron, Ingrid. 2018. 'Re-Thinking Waste: Mapping Racial Geographies of Violence on the Colonial Landscape'. *Environmental Sociology* 4 (1): 36–53.

**Guest Speaker: TBA**

#### March 22- Birth, Motherhood, and Reproduction

Nash, Jennifer C. 2021. 'In the Room-Birthwork by Women of Color in a State of Emergency'. In *Birthing Black Mothers*, 69–102. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Ritchie, Andrea. 2017. 'Policing Motherhood'. In *Invisible No More: Police Violence against Black Women and Women of Color*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Davis, Brenda, dir. 2013. *Sister: Working to Improve Global Maternal Health*. Collective Eye Films. <https://www.kanopy.com/en/uwo/video/245219>.

**Guest Speaker: TBA**

#### March 29- Cultures of Care

Arnold, Emily A., and Marlon M. Bailey. 2009. 'Constructing Home and Family: How the Ballroom Community Supports African American GLBTQ Youth in the Face of HIV/AIDS'. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services* 21 (2–3): 171–88.

Maynard, Robyn, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. 2022. *Rehearsals for Living*. Toronto: Knopf Canada. (excerpts)

Potorti, Mary. 2017. "'Feeding the Revolution": The Black Panther Party, Hunger, and Community Survival'. *Journal of African American Studies* 21 (1): 85–110.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12111-017-9345-9>.

**Guest Speaker: TBA**

#### April 5- Care Collective

Class Presentations