

**English 9166A The Woman/Queer Question in Postcolonial Fiction:  
Seminar Room UC 4415 Time: Wednesday: 9.30-12.30**

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**Office Hours: Tuesday 13.00-15.00 Thursday 14.00-16.00**

**Description:**

Although scholars in postcolonial literary studies have long studied the representations of gender and sexuality in the novel, recent fiction has inspired new conceptual approaches to the entanglements of literature with debates on constructions of gender and sexual orientation. Historically, permutations of this entanglement were studied under numerous incarnations of “the Woman question” or “Gender and the Nation” adapted to different places and times. The emergence of non-normative sexualities in postcolonial literatures has prompted scholarship on “the Queer question.” Focusing on the twenty-first-century, students in ENG 9166A will study reiterations and intersections of the “Woman question” and the “Queer question” in the postcolonial novel. The objective is to take stock of and explain how interjections of sex, sexual orientation, gender constructions and the erotic into recent novels produce difficult attachments, complex identifications, unexpected visions of emancipation, and unpredictable forms of complicity and affiliation. In so doing, students are invited to debate how such complex erotic affiliations complicate early models of sexuality and gender in postcolonial literary studies. Discussions in class will focus on relations between such difficult attachments and literary form. The seminar will be based on discussions of novels and some secondary literature on sexuality and literary form.

**Reading List (in the order of seminar discussions).**

Tagore, Rabindranath. *The Home and the World*.  
Umrigar, Thrity. *The Space Between Us*.  
Martin, Valerie. *Property*.  
Levy, Andrea. *The Long Song*.  
Hadeed, Saleem. *Guapa*.  
*Inxeba*. Dir. John Trengove. 2017.  
Iweala, Uzondinma. *Speak No Evil*.  
(*Get Out*)



10. November 14

Hadeed, Saleem. *Guapa*.

Puar, Jasbir K. "Queer times, Queer Assemblages." *Social Text* 23.3-4 (84-85) (2005): 121-139.

Puar, Jasbir. 'I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess' Intersectionality, Assemblage, and Affective Politics.

**Participation:**

Cooppan, Vilashini. *Worlds Within: National Narratives and Global Connections in Postcolonial Writing*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2009.

Levine, Caroline. *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2015.

Ray, Sangeeta. *En-Gendering India: Woman and Nation in Colonial and Postcolonial Narratives*. Durham: Duke UP, 2000.

**Some Questions for Discussions:**

**1. Woman and Women:**

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novels as the attachments change according to different variables. Please consider the setting (time and place) of each novel and ask how time and place effect different configurations of our problematic. Why does the United States recur in these novels? How is the colonial metropolis deployed? How do discourses about women's questions and the queer question change across different terrains? How do novels replicate difficult entanglements? Which of the critical essays/book chapters did you find useful and why? What was missing for our readings and discussions? Please rethink our first class and your reading of "The Shivering." How would you modify your analysis now? Which theoretically framework would you use to write about it or teach it?

The following articles and book chapters could be consulted as you prepare your research articles. You are also welcome to draw on them for your presentations.

- Brenda Cossman, 'Continental Drift: Queer, Feminism, Postcolonial', *Jindal Global Law Review* 4:1 (2012), 17-35. <http://www.jgls.edu.in/JindalGlobalLawReview/CurrentIssue.htm>.
- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 'Introduction: Axiomatic'.
- Michael Warner, 'Introduction', in *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*, ed. Michael Warner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota P5 1 Tf 4 ( 7 (e) -3, 1) -12 9'.