LMC6749/PUBP6749: Feminist Theory and STS
Prof. Lisa Yaszek
Class time and place: TR 2-3:15 pm ET, Skiles 343
Online Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3 pm and by appointment

Overview:

This course explores the productive intersections of feminist theory and Science, Technology, and Society (STS). Feminist theory can help to foreground attention to gender and other structures of inequality, while STS examines the development of science and technology in social, cultural, and historical context. Together, these two fields of inquiry produce "Feminist Science and Technology Studies" (FSTS), a transdisciplinary field of research that explores gender and science and technology as mutually co-constructed categories.

We will begin our class by examining the foundations of FSTS in relation to the revival of progressive politics in the 1960s and 1970s, as feminists began to explore why women were both excluded from and the of targets of patriarchal science and technology. Next, we will study how FSTS became a unique scholarly discipline in the 1980s and 90s, as feminist critics mapped the limits of patriarchal science and technological determinism, proposing that reality is multiple rather than fixed and prioritizing situated knowledges over universal scientific objectivity. Finally, we will explore how the new feminist materialisms of the twenty-first century have inspired new directions in FSTS, particularly in relation to both the rise of data feminism and the proliferation of queer, Indigenous, and Black FSTS perspectives. In each unit, we will enhance our understanding of FSTS by exploring stories, films, and games from those feminist science fiction artists who are, as pioneering FSTS scholar Donna Haraway puts it, some of our best "theorists for cyborgs" and others interested in hacking the relations of science, society, and gender.

Learning Outcomes

- To understand foundational concepts in Feminist Science and Technology Studies (FSTS)
- To understand the emergence and development of FSTS as a field
- To understand the cultural contexts in which FSTS emerges and operates
- To communicate effectively and persuasively about FSTS issues, both orally and in writing
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Class Texts

- Most of the required texts for this class (essays, stories, films, and video games) are available to students free of charge. You can get to them by clicking through the appropriate link on the course schedule of assignments below and/or by downloading them from Canvas/LMC 6749/Files.

Assignments. Your grade will be determined by your class participation, your weekly discussion posts, and your end of the semester project, as follows:

- Participation: 30%

- Weekly Posts: 30%
- Final Project: 40%

Grade Policy and Criteria
- Professor Yaszek uses a standard Georgia Tech grade scale (100-90=A; 89-80=B; 79-70=C; 69-65=D; 64-0=F)
- You can find Professor Yaszek's grading criteria in the "Files" section of our Canvas site.
- You will have ample opportunity to discuss all assignments with Professor Yaszek, with your peers, and with trained tutors from the Georgia Tech Comm Lab before they are due; thus, ALL GRADES FOR THIS COURSE ARE FINAL.
- The professor will provide more detailed evaluation of your work upon request, but she will not debate the assignment, your interpretation of it, or your grade after the fact.
- Failure to complete any major component of the course will result in failure of the course as a whole. Having said all that; everyone here in LMC wants you to succeed; if you encounter difficulties meeting class requirements, talk to Professor Yaszek immediately so she can provide timely and fair help.

Class Participation
This course is designed as a seminar in which active participation from all students is necessary; the benefits of this class come from talking as much as listening. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in depth, and to devote engaged attention to classmates' contributions.

Weekly Reading Responses
Once a week, each student will write one entry responding to the readings for that day in the appropriate Canvas Discussion. The weekly responses should be ~500 words and should be posted by noon (12 pm ET) on the day they are due. Each entry must: (1) demonstrate having done the reading and (2) note topics and questions that you would like to discuss in class.

Final Project
Each student will complete one end of the semester project that demonstrates they can use the FSTS concepts they have learned in this class accurately and persuasively in an original analytic or creative project. All projects should be the equivalent of about 10 pages (~2500 words) of typed, double-spaced writing. Please note that even if you choose the creative option, you will still produce a short (~500 word) artist's statement that analytically assesses how your project engages specific FSTS concepts and critiques.

Late Assignment Policy:
- All weekly responses and final projects must be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59 pm ET of their assigned due dates for students to receive full credit.
- Students who turn in responses and/or assignments late will have one (1) point deducted from their participation grade for each day each assignment is late (all students begin with 100 participation points, for 10% of their total grade).
- Professor Yaszek will leave all quizzes and assignments open until the last day of classes, which Tuesday, December 3, 2024. Students may complete quizzes and turn in projects up until 11:59 pm ET of December 3, 2024.

- Please note that Professor Yaszek wants you all to succeed in the university setting, so she will gladly work out alternate deadlines with students who contact her in a timely fashion and who provide appropriate documentation from the Dean of Students' Office.Links to an external site.
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Students with Disabilities and/or Accommodations should self-report to the Office of Disability Services online. or in person at 353 Ferst Drive, 404.894.2563.
If you already have accommodations in place for any reason or any kind of class, let the professor know asap so she can work with you most effectively.

Scholastic Dishonesty and Academic Misconduct:
All the writing you submit for this course must be your own. If Professor Yaszek suspects you of plagiarizing any part of a project, she will submit your name and project to the Office of Student Integrity, which will then take the appropriate disciplinary action. The Georgia Tech honor code defines academic misconduct as:

- Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay… or other assignment included in an academic course.
- Unauthorized collaboration with a student in the commission of academic requirements.
- False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the claimant.
- Deliberate falsification of a written or verbal statement of fact to a member of the faculty so as to obtain unearned academic credit.
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any institute document relating to the academic status of a student.

AI Policy. The goal of this class is to demonstrate that you, as a student, can learn and use the specialized, disciplinary terminology of science fiction studies as it is taught to you by the professor without the aid of external tools. This means that:
- You may not use ChatGPT or any other AI tool to write your papers for this class or to otherwise complete any assignment.
- You must submit your projects through Turnitin.com, which assesses each project for AI generated text.
- If 20% or more of your project is flagged as AI-generated, you will receive a "0" for the project and lose 10 points from your participation grade.
- You will then have one week to revise the project and resubmit it to Turnitin.com. Once your project passes the AI text scan, the professor will happily provide you with a grade.
- There is one exception to the class AI policy: the professor *will* allow you to use AI to generate art as part of the creative project. All students who take this option must ask for Professor Yaszek's permission in writing at least 48 hours before the project in question is due, and all students who take this option must still write their artist's statements in their own words, without the help of AI.
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Comm Lab: The Georgia Tech Comm Center is in Clough Commons 447. The Center's trained professional and peer tutors can work with you on everything from understanding assignment prompts and brainstorming ideas to polishing multimodal projects and graduate school applications. You can learn more and make appointments at http://www/commlab.gatech.edu.

Inclusion and Diversity: The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Miscellaneous note from the professor: Ultimately this is *your* class, so if you have suggestions for readings, films or activities that you think might supplement our studies, please do share them with me! Every semester I try to shape the course in accordance with the needs of that class, so I really do value your input.

Schedule of Assignments 1.0

T 8/20 Syllabus and introductions; Defining FSTS and FSF

R 8/22 Continue class overview discussion of FSTS and FSF
- Judy Wajcman, "Feminist Theories of TechnologyLinks to an external site." (2010)
- Samatha Mills, "Rabbit TestLinks to an external site." (2023)
- Optional: Sharon Crozier-De Rosa, "What Are the Four Waves of Feminism? And What Comes NextLinks to an external site.? (2024); Harald Rohracher, "History of Science and Technology Studies" (2015)

T 8/27 The Roots of FSTS, 1960s-70s
- **Discussion post 1 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex, Chapter 1Links to an external site. (1970)
- Francoise D'Eaubonne, *Feminism or Death*; Read "The Time for Ecofeminism," pp. 128-148 (1974)
- Ruth Schwartz Cowan, "The 'Industrial Revolution' in the Home: Household Technology and Social Change in the 20th Century" (1976) (Essay on Canvas)

R 8/29 Continue Firestone, D'Eaubonne, and Cowan

T 9/3 FSTS and Feminist Activism, 1960s-70s
- **Discussion post 2 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- Boston Women's Health Book Collective, *Our Bodies, Our Selves* (1973): Read the overview and history hereLinks to an external site.; read the Preface hereLinks to an external site. and the Introduction hereLinks to an external site.
- Sherna Gluck, The Feminist History Project, "A Less Reliable Form of Birth Control: Miriam Allen DeFord Describes Her Introduction to Contraception in 1914" (1973);
- Aysha Sadak, "50 Years On: The Legacy of the Chipko Andolan MovementLinks to an external site.." Earth.org, 2024.
- "Interview with Bali DeviLinks to an external site.." Mountain Shepherds, 2004.
- Optional: Sherna Gluck, The Suffragists: From Tea Parties to Prison (1975, read pp. 1 and 9-12 of the pdf file: the introductory materials and the interview with de Ford); and

the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, *Our Bodies, Our Selves* (1973): Overview of all 9 editions, plus links to selections hereLinks to an external site.)

R 9/5 FSTS and Feminist Science Fiction (FSF), 1960s-70s
- **Discussion post 3 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- James Tiptree, Jr. "Houston, Houston, Do You ReadLinks to an external site." (1976)
- Joanna Russ, "When It ChangedLinks to an external site." (1972)
- Vonda McIntyre, "Of Mist, and Grass, and SandLinks to an external site." (1973)
- Optional: Miriam Allen deFord, "A Way Out" (1973)

T 9/10 FSTS, 1980s-90s
- Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial PerspectiveLinks to an external site."(1988)
- Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is Strong ObjectivityLinks to an external site.?" (1993)

R 9/12 Continue Haraway and Harding

T 9/17 FSTS and Intersectionality
- **Discussion post 4 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- Patricia Hill Collins. (1986). "Learning From the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought." *Social Problems*. 33.6 (1986): S14-S32
- Chela Sandoval, "US Third World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World" (1991);
- Optional: Evelyn Fox Keller, "Gender and ScienceLinks to an external site." (1985); Anne Fausto-Sterling, "Dueling DualismsLinks to an external site." (2000); Hilary Rose, "Hand, Brain, and Heart: A Feminist Epistemology for the Natural SciencesLinks to an external site." (1983)

R 9/19 **Interlude: *Spacefunk!* Event**
- Please be prepared to attend the *Spacefunk!* Event in the Crossland Library today at 11 am. We will meet on the inside Library steps, near the colored windows.
- No regular class meeting today.

T 9/24: FSTS and Intersectionality: Continue Collins and Sandoval

R 9/26 FSTS and Feminist Activism, 1980s-90s
- Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg ManifestoLinks to an external site." (1985)

T 10/1 FSTS and Feminist Activism, 1980s-90s
- **Discussion post 5 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- VNS Matrix, "Cybermanifesto for the Twenty-First CenturyLinks to an external site." (1991)
- Kathleen Hanna, "Riot Grrrl ManifestoLinks to an external site." (1991)

R 10/3 FSTS and Feminist Science Fiction, 1980s-90s

- **Discussion post 6 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- John Varley, "The Persistence of Vision" (1979)
- Octavia Butler, "BloodchildLinks to an external site." (1984) or "The Evening and the Morning and the Night" (1987)
- Optional: Pat Murphy, "Love and Sex Amongst the Invertebrates" (1990); Nnedi Okorafor, "The Palm Tree BanditLinks to an external site." (2000)

T 10/8 New Directions in FSTS, 2000-present
- Karen Barad, "Transmaterialities: Trans*/matter/realities and queer political imaginingsLinks to an external site.." (2015)

R 10/10 New Directions in FSTS, 2000-present
- **Discussion post 7 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- Greta Gaarde, "Toward a Queer EcofeminismLinks to an external site." (1997)
- Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren Klein, "Introduction: Why Data Science Needs FeminismLinks to an external site." (2020)
- Optional: Lisa Nakamura, "Indigenous Circuits: Navajo Women and the Racialization of Early Electronic ManufactureLinks to an external site." (2014)

T 10/15 **Fall break: No class**
R 10/17 **No Class: Independent reading/viewing/playing day**

T 10/22 Continue discussing Barad, Gaarde, and D'Ignazio and Klein

R 10/24 New Directions in FSTS and Feminist Activism, 2000-present
- **Discussion post 8 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- Wangari Maathai, Nobel Lecture videoLinks to an external site.or transcriptLinks to an external site. (2004)
- Vandana Shiva, "Indigenous KnowledgeLinks to an external site. (2011)
- "The Gamer Girl ManifestoLinks to an external site.(2013)
- The Cybertwee Collective, "The Cybertwee ManifestoLinks to an external site." (2014)

T 10/29 New Directions in FSTS and FSF (print), 2000-present
- **Discussion post 9 due online by 2 pm ET today.**
- Nnedi Okorafor, *BintiLinks to an external site.* (2015)
- Regina Kanyu Wang, "A Cyber Cuscuta ManifestoLinks to an external site." (2020)
- Optional: Lauren Ring, "(emetLinks to an external site.)" (2023)

R 10/31 New Directions in FSTS and FSF (visual), 2000-present
- Wanuri Kahiu, "PumziLinks to an external site." (2009)
- Nanobah Becker, "The Sixth WorldLinks to an external site." (2012)
- Elizabeth La Pensee, "Thunderbird StrikeLinks to an external site." (2017)
- Shawennati, "She Falls For AgesLinks to an external site." (2017)

T 11/5 Election Day: no class, go vote!

R 11/7 No class: professor out of town but can answer questions by email; work on Discussion Post #10 (your final project proposal)

T 11/12 No class: professor out of town but can answer questions by email; work on Discussion Post #10 (your final project proposal)
R 11/14 Unit TBD/Final Projects
- Discuss final project proposals together

Final Unit: Reproductive Technologies
T 11/19 FSTS and Reproductive Technologies
- Michelle Murphy, "Introduction: Feminism in/as Biopolitics" in: *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2012), pp. 1-25.
- Sophie Lewis, "AmniotechnicsLinks to an external site.," *The New Inquiry* (blog), January 25, 2017.
- Eliza Dumas, "The Is What the Future of the Pill Looks Like.Links to an external site." Refinery 29 18 October 2024.
- Kem-Laurin Lubin & Randy Allen Harris, "Sex after Technology: The Rhetoric of Health Monitoring Apps and the Reversal of *Roe v. Wade.*" Rhetoric Society Quarterly, 13 June 2024.
- Lauren Oaks, "Feminist Fertility Awareness? Sexual and Reproductive Knowledge in a Post-Roe World." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, volume 49, number 4, Summer 2024.

R 11/21 Continue discussion of Murphy, Lewis, Dumas, Lubin and Harris, and Oaks

T 11/26— Conclude discussion of FSTS and Reproductive Technologies; Discuss Final Projects in Class; Class CIOS

W 11/27: Last chance to make an appointment with Professor Yaszek for your final projects

R 11/28 No class: Thanksgiving break

T 12/3—Last day of classes: Celebrate What We've Learned; Class CIOS; Final Chance to Discuss Final Projects and FSTS in general

R 12/5: All Final Projects are due on Cavas today by 11:59 pm ET. (As per the GT Final Exam MatrixLinks to an external site.)