

HIST 31001

GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN MODERN AFRICA

Dr Steven Pierce



source: http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/10/27/african_advances_in_gender_equality

Course content:

This module considers histories of gender and sexuality in sub-Saharan Africa during the colonial and post-colonial periods, roughly from 1880 until the present. During the past twenty-five years, scholars have argued that gender is less a matter of biological fact than a historically and culturally contingent construction. Institutions like woman-woman marriage and various gender-transgressive identities suggest that many African cultures do not divide people into “men” and “women” in the same way Western cultures have done. At the same time, the wide-ranging political and economic transformations of the last century have had profound implications for gender and sexuality, causing changes in the sexual division of labor and in domestic life. We will therefore consider gender and sexuality in Africa both as a set of identities and practices and as part of wider questions of work, domesticity, and social control.

The course will introduce students to key debates in gender history and theory. It will also provide students with an overview of modern African history through the lens of gender studies. It will underscore the importance of gender to political-economic approaches to history, while providing a survey of a number of different African societies across the past 125 years.

Assessment:

2 assessed essays (due weeks 5 and 12, worth 45 and 55% final mark)

Indicative Topics:

Gender theory
Gender in Africa
Law and the state
Slavery and abolition
Homosexualities
Reproduction and fertility
Masculinities
Modern girls and moral questions
Prostitution

I supervise dissertations on any topic having to do with the history of sub-Saharan Africa. Projects are limited by the feasibility and coherence of the project; that is, it must be appropriate in scope so that it can be successfully researched by an undergraduate across one academic year. Sources must be accessible, and they must be in languages in which you are proficient.

Recent dissertations include:

- Football and Nigerian Corruption
- Landscape for a Good Ugandan Asian Family
- The Many Trials of Steve Biko
- The Blurred Memory of Canaan Banana and His Homosexual Sex Scandal
- The PMLA Mobilisation of Angola, 1965-75
- Women Veterans of Zimbabwe's War of Liberation
- Semen-Stealing Lesbians in Abuja: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Postcolonial Nigeria
- Life History among Rwandan Refugees
- Reconstructing Gendered Embodiment in Mozambique

Online office hour consultation on the 12th June 2023 at 3:00 p.m. The Zoom link for it is <https://zoom.us/j/92659153750>