

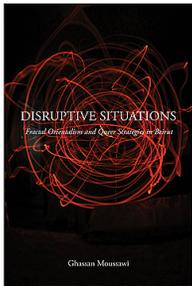


Gender and Sexualities Workshop

“Digital Book Club” Meetings

winter 2021 | All meetings this quarter will take place digitally over Zoom

The Sociology Department’s Gender and Sexualities Workshop is a group of faculty and graduate students who meet regularly to present and discuss new research.



Disruptive Situations:
Fractal Orientalism and Queer Strategies in Beirut
(Temple University Press, 2020)

Friday, February 5 @ 1:00-2:30pm PST
Zoom link to be provided

Ghassan Moussawi
Assistant Professor of Gender and Women’s Studies and Sociology,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

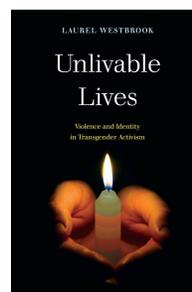
Disruptive Situations challenges representations of contemporary Beirut as an exceptional space for LGBTQ people by highlighting everyday life in a city where violence is the norm. Ghassan Moussawi uncovers the underlying processes of what he calls “fractal orientalism,” a relational understanding of modernity and cosmopolitanism illustrating how transnational discourses of national and sexual exceptionalism operate on multiple scales in the Arab world. Featuring the voices of women, gay men, and genderqueer individuals in Beirut to examine how queer individuals negotiate life in this uncertain region, Moussawi examines “*al-wad*,” or “the situation,” to understand the practices that form these strategies and to raise questions about queer-friendly spaces in and beyond Beirut. Moussawi argues that the daily survival strategies in Beirut are queer—and not only enacted by LGBTQ people—since Beirutis live amidst an already queer situation of ongoing precarity.



Unlivable Lives:
Violence and Identity in Transgender Activism
(University of California Press, 2021)

Friday, March 5 @ 1:00-2:30pm PST
Zoom link to be provided

Laurel Westbrook
Associate Professor of Sociology, Grand Valley State University



Anti-violence movements rooted in identity politics are commonplace, including those to stop violence against people of color, women, and LGBT people. *Unlivable Lives* reveals the unintended consequences of this approach within the transgender rights movement in the United States. It illustrates how this form of activism obscures the causes of and lasting solutions to violence and exacerbates fear among members of the identity group, running counter to the goal of making lives more livable. Analyzing over a thousand documents produced by thirteen national organizations, Westbrook charts both a history of the movement and a path forward that relies less on identity-based tactics and more on intersectionality and coalition building. Provocative and galvanizing, this book envisions new strategies for anti-violence and social justice movements and will revolutionize the way we think about this form of activism.

“Digital Book Club” talks are organized by Tristan Bridges (tbridges@soc.ucsb.edu) and Catherine Taylor (catetaylor@soc.ucsb.edu). If you’re a member of the UCSB community, you can also request access to our list serv at “SOC genderandsexuality” for updates on our group activities.