

GeNDeR Studies Program

Faculty Research Workshop



Biased Evaluative Terms

Presenter: Sara Bernstein



In 2008, Joseph Biden called Barack Obama “an African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy.” In the present day, democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, an openly gay married man, is often complimented in the press on how “traditional” he is said to be. Trans actress Laverne Cox is often described as “feminine” by well-meaning celebrity journalists. Though “articulate,” “clean,” “traditional,” and “feminine” are intended as compliments, arguably they would not be applied in contextually similar situations to people in different, more privileged social categories—that is, if Barack Obama were not African-American, if Pete Buttigieg were not gay, and if Laverne Cox were not trans. Such biased evaluative terms—roughly, terms whose apparently positive surface meanings are inflected with implicitly biased content—are the focus of this project.

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Friday, September 13—Noon
339 O’Shaughnessy Hall

LUNCH INCLUDED

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