

Primer for “Studying Gender and Sexuality”

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I created the “Studying Gender and Sexuality” interactive presentation in order to compensate for the overwhelming, lengthy research papers that are the foundation for the majority of academia. During my trip abroad, I was overjoyed at the prospect of studying outside of the traditional classroom. Personally, I find that learning through doing is considerably more meaningful than other, less-active methods of learning. Whether my distaste for conventional education is due to my mental health issues or not, the important thing to understand is that everyone learns in different ways. Additionally, at least in my ideal world, everyone is still deserving of an education, regardless of their ability or disability level. For these reasons, I told myself, enough is enough; I will create something that is truer to myself and accessible to more people than the published journal article ever can be. To accommodate even more people with disabilities, this presentation is also narrated and enabled for closed captioning.

This presentation centers around turning important messages into interactive, bold images and sounds. The user has options, none of which are considered right or wrong; they are purely difficult decisions that have to be made. It was also important for me to discuss the very real danger that people face when choosing to learn about marginalized groups. The general public speculates about those who study gender and sexuality, questioning us and drawing conclusions about our personal lives more than with any other type of academic. That being said, feminist and queer scholars who are more privileged than their peers are in less danger from oppressors, and they also have their opinions taken more seriously. I made sure to address this power structure in my presentation, especially drawing input from Jonathan Katz, who spoke about the sexism, racism, and homophobia in supposedly-liberal, creative areas of study. With my intentions in mind, I encourage you to enjoy the presentation while thinking carefully about any choices I ask you to make.