

Engaging Assignment #1

On August 19, 2009, Caster Semenya won the gold medal for the 800 meter World Athletics Championship. In the midst of this victory, there was rampant speculation over whether Semenya was a "he or a she" and Semenya was required to undergo gender identification testing by the [International Association of Athletics Federations](#). The case of Caster Semenya dominated mainstream news media for weeks at the end of that summer and into the fall of 2009.

In your first engaging assignment, you should do a brief analysis of the media coverage of this case and its relevance for our discussions thus far on the politics of sex. **Find 3 different news entries/articles from mainstream media outlets (FOX, ABC, NBC, CBS, MSNBC, CNN, UKGuardian, BBC) about Caster Semenya and the World Championships controversy from August-November 2009.** You can find these through a google search online.

In your brief analysis, first **answer these questions for each of the three items:**

- How do each of the news items that you selected describe the case of Caster Semenya?
- How do they define "sex" and "gender"? Does sexuality ever get discussed?
- How do the images of Semenya that they use shape our understandings of who Semenya is?

Now, **put all three of your items in conversation** with each other, and with **at least one of our course readings**, by reflecting on these questions:

- What are these articles teaching us about sex and gender (and sexuality?) and how they are meaningful in society?
- What can we learn from analyzing the media representation of this case of Caster Semenya?

Make sure to cite the news items that you are analyzing **and** the class reading that you discuss at the end of this assignment.

Your analysis should be roughly 300-350 words total. It is worth 50 points. You should type it up in 11 or 12 point font, print it out, clearly mark your name/section number on it, staple it and hand it in on Friday, March 25th.