

LGBT History
21:512:204:01
Thursday: 2:30-5:20 p.m.
Hill Hall 204

Instructor: Christopher Adam Mitchell
Office: 337 Conklin Hall
Office Hours: Thursday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and by appointment
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Course description

Few aspects of contemporary life have produced as much anxiety, controversy, and debate as the cultural significance, socioeconomic position(s), and political legitimacy of intersex, transgender, and transsexual people; bisexuals; lesbians; and gay men. In addition to the LGBT/queer rights movement and the historically recent emergence and visibility of distinctively hetero/homosexual and cis/transgender identities, scholars have drawn attention to the ways in which categories of gender identity and sexuality are used to found and police the boundaries between the “queer” and the “normal” in everyday life. This course explores these and other problems and issues in the study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (or “Queer”) History. We will explore LGBT/queer history through literature, culture, and social life by reading and discussing classic and contemporary writings in the field as well as artistic and visual images, literary texts, memoirs, and fiction and documentary film. In this course, students will have the opportunity to learn some of the key concepts, terms, and debates that have animated the scholarly inquiry of LGBT studies, queer theory, and feminist theories of sexuality in order to explore the changing definitions of the “queer” and the “normal.”

Approach to teaching and learning

The course readings are organized thematically, and we will focus the ways in which LGBT life has been shaped by two major historical periods: first, the experiences of stigmatization (being labeled sick, criminal, etc.) and the culture, social life, and history of the closet from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century; and secondly, the culture and politics of “coming out” from the Gay, Lesbian-Feminist, and Trans* Liberation Era to the present. Throughout this course, we will be attentive to the dynamics of race and class, as well as the various meanings and experiences of “liberation” for queer people of color, working-class queer people, and other people who are often overlooked in narratives of gay or queer history.

Learning objectives

Through a combination of student-facilitated classroom discussion, interactive lectures, and written assignments, students will encounter some of the basic concepts in LGBT/queer history and the history of sexuality. While the readings will focus primarily on the United States, in-class lectures will also contextualize the readings in a larger comparative and transnational framework. Students will learn to define and discuss critical issues from this historical field through in-class discussion, by maintaining a regular schedule of short writings both in class and on Blackboard, and by writing both a

thesis-centered essay as well as a take-home written examination. In addition to the themes and concepts relating to LGBT/queer history and the history of sexuality, students will also learn how to distinguish between primary and secondary source evidence as well as how to evaluate the primary and secondary arguments presented by historians and other scholars of LGBT/queer life.

Disability Statement

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973)353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

Gender Pronouns

This class affirms all forms of gender expression and identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your gender pronoun or if you don't use a gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Classroom policies

Attendance and absences. **Attendance is mandatory.** The instructor will use lecture time to contextualize and explain readings. Many lectures will introduce students to film clips, images, music, and other primary source media that cannot be obtained outside of class. Occasional illness (including illness of a child, parent, or other dependent), serious injury, transportation delays, and bereavement are inevitable. **However, it is not the instructor's responsibility to "catch you up."** **If you must miss a class meeting, please assume personal responsibility for work missed. Exchange contact information with a classmate to help you keep up with your lectures.** Given the time constraints and other classmates' needs, students should not expect the instructor to repeat or summarize a lecture via e-mail or during office hours.

Be on time. Students who are repeatedly late may be documented, which may result in the penalization of the attendance/participation grade. Students who are more than half an hour late to class will not be marked present. Tardiness will only be excused with proper documentation.

Stay the entire time. The instructor may mark as absent all students who leave the class and do not return before its conclusion. Students who do so may only be excused in case of a

medical emergency or with proper documentation.

The instructor will only excuse absences with proper documentation, and all students who miss classes must meet with the instructor during office hours in order to receive an excuse regardless of documentation. Students who simply e-mail the instructor or provide no documentation will not be excused. Furthermore, students will lose half a letter grade (5 percentage points) of their FINAL COURSE GRADE after the second unexcused absence. Students who miss four or more classes through any combination of excused or unexcused absences will not earn credit for the course. Such students should withdraw from the course.

E-management, organization, and podcasts. Students must participate in all aspects of the course, including Blackboard assignments. Students must have a working Rutgers username and password, as well as the coordination of e-mail and Blackboard usage. The instructor will frequently send e-mail reminders and assign material on Blackboard. In the event that the instructor cannot hold a physical class meeting—typically due to inclement weather or conflict with an academic conference—the instructor will post a podcast and lecture slides. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with podcasts and lecture slides just as they are responsible for attending in-class lecture. Podcasts and lecture slide material may be used for written assignments, quizzes, and exams.

Students are responsible for keeping up with and contributing to any on-line components of the class. Please do not contact the instructor if you have a problem with Blackboard access. If students have e-management issues, students should immediately contact the Newark Computing Services Help Desk, located in Hill Hall 109 at 973-353-5083.

Student conduct. Please be respectful of your peers, your instructor, and the university setting. Students may be asked to leave the class for the following reasons: cell phone use and texting during class (except for students with children and/or other dependents), using laptops to surf social media and other irrelevant websites, sleeping in class, persistently talking or whispering while the instructor or other students are speaking, blatant disruptions, and ad hominem attacks on other students or the instructor, including attacks couched in racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, discrimination based on ability, and religious intolerance.

Course readings. Students must complete the readings before each class meeting, prepared to bring questions and comments for class. Students must purchase or otherwise obtain copies of the required texts. All other texts will be available on the course blackboard page. **Students are required to bring the readings to class in order to reference page numbers and other references to the readings in lectures.** Students will read an average of 40-45 pages per class meeting. Although on a handful of days we will exceed that limit, many days will consist of only 15-20 pages of readings. Some students may find the amount of reading difficult, and such students should make plans to dedicate extra hours in order to successfully complete the course readings. **The instructor suggests that students schedule or otherwise dedicate 3-6 class hours per week reading and studying for this course. The instructor expects students to complete all the assigned readings before the date they appear on the calendar, and students should expect the instructor to call on them and ask questions about the readings at any time. In addition to the readings listed on the course calendar, students are**

responsible for reading all supplemental materials, including the syllabus, the writing guide, and all prompts.

Late policy. Late work submitted without documentation will be accepted only at the discretion of the instructor. Late work submitted without a documented excuse may be assessed up to a **50-point penalty**.

Statement on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

If you plagiarize, you will at a minimum fail the assignment, and you may possibly fail the course. Students will submit all written work to Turnitin, and students must sign the University honor pledge when submitting any in-class assignments. Any student who commits plagiarism or other acts of academic dishonesty will be asked to withdraw from the course. Violations will be reported to the appropriate university authorities and may result in further disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes unauthorized collaboration on homework assignments and, of course, cheating on in-class assignments.

All work electronic work must be submitted to the Turnitin module on the course Blackboard page. All in-class and electronic work must include the following pledge: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment.”

****From the University’s Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students:**

“Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source stored in print, electronic or other medium is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged.

In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.”

Course requirements

Participation (10%). One of the most critical aspects of this course is in-class participation. **Students should come to class each day with the assigned readings,**

prepared to discuss specific questions and issues raised by the readings. Students who refuse to discuss the reading materials, repeatedly take the class discussion off-topic or engage in other disruptions, or who fail to bring the readings into class risk harming their participation grade.

Short Take-home Writing Assignments and In-class Quizzes (10%). Students will complete writing assignments throughout the semester over the readings. All writing assignments will be submitted to Blackboard, and all in-class assignments will take place at the beginning of class time.

Reading journals (30%). Students will complete reading journals in response to each of the reading. **Students will complete at least one journal entry per week, and no more than one journal entry per week. Journal entries should be no fewer than 300 words,** although students may write as much as they want on the reading journals. **Students must complete at least 10 journal entries before the conclusion of the course,** which means that students may miss or skip up to four journals without penalty. Journal entries will be assessed both quantitatively, as well as qualitatively. Once a week, journal entries will be collected and checked by the instructor for a *quantitative* credit (95). Students may not earn quantitative credit if the journal entry looks too short or fails to adequately refer to the readings. **Students will earn quantitative credit for any journal that covers a reading the previous two weeks, but will not earn credit for any journal entry older than two weeks.** At the end of the semester, students will label, organize, and proofread their journal entries before submitting a final copy with no fewer than ten journal entries for qualitative evaluation. The quantitative and qualitative grades will be averaged together. Students should familiarize themselves with the document, “Guidelines for Journal Writing” posted under the Supplementary Materials page of the Course Blackboard.

Essay (20%). Students will write a thesis-centered essay analyzing no fewer than two sources introduced in the course readings and no fewer than three sources from outside the class. The three outside resources may not be internet-based sources unless those sources are properly vetted primary sources. Only books, peer-reviewed articles, and properly vetted primary sources are acceptable for this assignment. Students will receive a more detailed prompt to be posted on Blackboard. **The essay should be no fewer than 1,200 words and will be submitted to the Course Blackboard page no later than Friday, April 21 at 11:59 p.m.**

Final exam (30%). Students will complete a final exam consisting of a take-home question (or set of questions) to be completed by 11:59 p.m. and uploaded to Turnitin on the date of the final examination.

Calendar

PREFACE: Homophobia, Trans*phobia, and the Social Construction of Queer Identities

- January 19 1) Jewelle Gomez, "The Event of Becoming;" 2) Peiss, ed., "Sexuality in History" from *Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality*: 1-25
- January 26 1) John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity"; 2) Martha Vicinus, "They Wonder to Which Sex I Belong': The Historical Roots of Modern Lesbian Identity;" 3) Earl Lind, "The Riddle of the Underworld" [outhistory.org/exhibits/show/earl-lind]

UNIT 1: From the Underworld to the Closet: Stigma and Cultural Resistance from the Great Migration to the Post-war Era

- February 2 1) Eric Garber, "A Spectacle in Color;" 2) Richard Bruce Nugent, "Smoke, Lilies, Jade;" 3) Patricia Yaeger, "Editor's Note: Bulldagger Sings the Blues," *PMLA* 124:3 (2009): 721-726; 4) Cookie Wollner, "'Woman Slain in Queer Love Brawl': African American Women, Same-Sex Desire, and Violence in the Urban North, 1920-1929;" 5) Joan Nestle, "'I lift my eyes to the hill': The Life of Mabel Hampton as Told by a White Woman"
- February 9 1) Kevin Mumford, "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the Gay," *American Quarterly* 48:3 (1996): 395-414; 2) Madeline Davis and Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, "Oral History and the Study of Sexuality in the Lesbian Community in Buffalo, New York, 1940-1960;" 3) Allan Bérubé, "Marching to the Beat of a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II;" 4) Excerpts from *Sex Variants*, ed. George W. Henry (1941, 1948)
- February 16 1) Donald Webster Cory, *The Homosexual in America* (excerpt); 2) James Baldwin, from "Preservation of Innocence;" 3) Ann Aldrich, *We, Too, Must Love and We Walk Alone*
Short Film: "Fireworks" (dir. Kenneth Anger)
- February 23 1) Harry Benjamin, from *The Transsexual Phenomenon*; 2) Christine Jorgenson, from *A Personal Autobiography*; 3) Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex Research at the Borders of Gender: Transvestites, Transsexuals, and Alfred C. Kinsey"

UNIT 2: The Politics of the Homophile Movement and Gay, Lesbian-Feminist, and Trans* Liberation

- March 2 1) Martin Meeker, "Behind the Mask of Respectability: Reconsidering the Mattachine Society and Male Homophile Practice, 1950s and 1960s," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10:1 (2001): 78-116; 2) Lauren Jae Gutterman, "'The House on the Borderland': Lesbian Desire, Marriage, and the Household, 1950-1979," *Journal of Social History* 46:1 (2012): 1-22; 3) Christopher Agee, "Gayola: Police Professionalization and the

Politics of San Francisco's Gay Bars," *Journal of the History of Sexuality*
15:3 (2006): 462-489

- March 9 1) David K. Johnson, "Physique Pioneers: The Politics of 1960s Gay Consumer Culture;" 2) Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity," *RHR: 100* (2008): 144-157
Short Film: "Scorpio Rising" (dir. Kenneth Anger)
Film: "Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria" (dir. Susan Stryker and Victor Silverman")

SPRING RECESS

- March 23 1) Esther Newton, "Role Models;" 2) Gayle Rubin, "Of Catamites and Kings;" 3) Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp;" 4) Rosalyn Regelson, "Up the Camp Staircase," *New York Times* March

- March 30 1) Terrance Kissack, "Freaking Fag Revolutionaries: New York's Gay Liberation Front, 1969-1971," *RHR* 62 (1995): 105-134; 2) Craig Alfred Hanson, "The Fairy Princess Exposed;" 3) Martha Shelley, "Gay is Good" from *Out of the Closets*; 4) Jessi Gan, "Still at the Back of the Bus": Sylvia Rivera's Struggle," *CENTRO Journal* XIX: 1 (2007): 124-139; 5) Marsha P. Johnson, "Rapping with a Street Transvestite Action Revolutionary" from *Out of the Closets*

UNIT 3: Local Politics and National Agendas: LGBTQ Life and Activism from the 1970s to the Present

- April 6 1) Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (excerpt); 2) Barbara and Beverly Smith, "Across the Kitchen Table;" 3) Merle Woo, "Letter to Ma;" 4) The Combahee River Collective Statement; 5) Christina Hanhardt, "Butterflies, Whistles, and Fists: Gay Safe Street Patrols and the New Gay Ghetto, 1976-1981," *RHR* 100 (2008): 60-85

- April 13 1) Craig Alford Hanson, "The Fairy Princess Exposed;" 2) Gayle Rubin, "The Catacombs: Temple of the Butthole," from *Deviations*: 224-240; 3) Martin Levine, *Gay Macho* (excerpt); 4) Harvey Milk, "The Hope Speech"
Film: "The Times of Harvey Milk" (dir. Rob Epstein)

- April 20 1) Larry Kramer, "1,112 and Counting," *New York Native* 1) Allan Bérubé, "The History of Gay Bathhouses;" 2) The Denver Principles; 3) Zita Grover, "Visible Lesions: Images of the PWA;" 4) David Leavitt, "The Way I Live Now," *New York Times* July 9, 1989; 5) Karin Timour, ACT UP Oral History Project Interview (excerpt)
Short Film: "Non, je ne regrette rien" (dir. Marlon Riggs)

April 21 ***FINAL ESSAY DUE***

April 27 1) Sandy Stone, "The Empire Strikes Back;" 2) Lou Sullivan, "A Transvestite Answers a Feminist;" 3) Marlon Riggs, "Black Macho Revisited: Confessions of a SNAP! Queen;" 4) Richard Fung, "Looking for My Penis;" 5) Charles Nero, "Why are the Gay Ghettos White?"
Short Film: "Max" (dir. Monika Treut);
Short Film: "Tongues Untied" (dir. Marlon Riggs)

TBA ***Final Examination***