

LGBTQIA History in the United States

21:512:204:01

Tuesday/Thursday: 4-5:20 p.m.

Conklin Hall 342

Instructor: Christopher Adam Mitchell

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Office Hours: Thursday, 2:30-3:30 and by appointment

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### Course Description

The emergence of people who use the language and identities we associate with contemporary queer and trans social and political movements are historically recent, even if gender variability and diverse erotic practices are a feature of all human history. Moreover, 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. More recently, scholars have begun to more seriously explore the ways in which people can also be agender and asexual. Historians and scholars of the past have begun to draw our attention to the ways in which gender identity and sexuality are not ever-present, unchanging, or simply “natural” concepts. Rather, these historically recent terms were used to found and police the boundaries between the “queer” and the “normal” in everyday life, particularly through the development of psychology, psychiatric institutions, and the policing of public spaces. More importantly, they have begun to take seriously the activists, intellectuals, and ordinary people who created cultures and ways of living that affirmed desires and identities that contradict compulsory heterosexuality and strict adherence to a gender binary, often at great personal cost.

This course situates the history of LGBTQIA people and social movements in the history of the United States, beginning with the emergence of distinctively queer urban subcultures in the late nineteenth century and the simultaneous growth of psychiatry and modern policing, both of which viewed “homosexuality” and gender “inversion” as problems to be quarantined or eliminated. Our readings and discussions follow the development of visibly queer subcultures in the 1920s and 1930s in bohemian and African-American neighborhoods in the urban north and west, strategies of resistance and secrecy sometimes known as “the closet” that followed in the 1940s and 1950s, the post-war development of queer political organizations, as well as the Gay, Lesbian, and Trans Liberation Era of the late 1960s and 1970s. This course concludes with the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s, as well as the growth of transgender, intersex, and marriage equality movements in the past two decades. In addition to gender and sexuality, this course explores the centrality of race and class to LGBTQIA history, as well as the larger context of historical events in the United States, including the Great Migration, the First and Second World Wars, the Cold War, the African-American Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, Women’s Liberation, the conservative counter-revolution of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the post-9/11 “War on Terror.” We will also explore the importance of disability activism and scholarship to queer and trans scholarship.

In this class, we will explore LGBTQIA 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.”

### Learning Objectives

Through a combination of student-facilitated classroom discussion, interactive lectures, and written assignments, students will encounter some of the most important concepts, events, people, and events in LGBTQIA history and the broader history of sexuality. While 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 journal reflecting on the class readings, by writing a thesis-centered essay on a specific topic of the student’s choosing, and by completing a comprehensive examination. In addition to the themes and concepts relating to LGBTQIA 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 LGBTQIA 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](tel:9733535375) or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting [odsnewark@rutgers.edu](mailto: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

*Email.* Please reach out to the professor identifying your **full name** as well as the **name and section of your class** (I teach multiple classes) any time you have questions or need clarifications about an assignment, reading, or class expectations. You may also email the professor any time to make an appointment to meet outside of normal office hours. If you notice a broken link on Blackboard, you should also notify the professor as soon as possible. Please read and listen thoroughly to avoid asking questions that are answered in the syllabus, assignment prompts, or during in-class announcements. Please **do not** email the professor for any of the following reasons: to be excused for absences, to inform the professor that you will be late to class, or to inform the professor that an assignment has been handed in late. Only emails addressed to [chmitche@icloud.com](mailto:chmitche@icloud.com) or [chmitche@rutgers.edu](mailto:chmitche@rutgers.edu) you will be answered. On most weekdays, students should expect the instructor to email you in 24-36 hours.

*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 excuse absences with proper documentation, and all students who miss classes must meet with the instructor briefly before class in order to receive an excuse. 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 fourth unexcused absence. Students who miss eight 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.** Because we only meet once a week, students will read an average of 80-100 pages per class meeting. Although on a handful of days we will exceed that limit, many days will consist of only 20-40 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 a handful of brief 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 should familiarize themselves with the document, “Guidelines for Journal Writing” posted under the Supplementary Materials page of the Course Blackboard.** Students will complete reading journals in response to at least one of the readings each week. **Students will complete at least one journal entry per week, and no more than one journal entry per week. Students who write more than one journal entry per week will not earn credit.** 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 during the first five minutes of class, journal entries will be checked by the instructor for a *quantitative* credit, assessed automatically at a 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 from the**

**week it appeared from the syllabus.** Students will hand in reading journals twice during the semester for qualitative evaluation, the first on **October 19** and the second on **December 12**. At this time, students will label, organize, and proofread their journal entries. Students should have no fewer than five entries for each evaluation, or they will not earn full credit. For each qualitative evaluation, journals will be assessed a grade based on averaging quantitative versus qualitative grades. On-time journal entries (those shown to the instructor within two weeks of the date they appear on the syllabus) are automatically assessed a 95 for quantitative credit and weighted against the qualitative assessment, the requirements for which can be found on the “Guidelines for Journal Writing.”

*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, November 16 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 scheduled by the University.

### Calendar of Readings

## **PREFACE: Historical Theories of Homophobia, Trans\*phobia, and the Social Construction of Queer Identities**

### *Week 1*

September 5	Jewelle Gomez, “The Event of Becoming”
September 7	Peiss, ed., “Sexuality in History” from <i>Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality</i> : 1-25

### *Week 2*

September 12	John D’Emilio, “Capitalism and Gay Identity”
September 14	1) Martha Vicinus, “‘They Wonder to Which Sex I Belong’: The Historical Roots of Modern Lesbian Identity;” 2) Earl Lind, “The Riddle of the Underworld” [ <a href="http://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/earl-lind">outhistory.org/exhibits/show/earl-lind</a> ]

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

### *Week 3*

September 19	1) Eric Garber, “A Spectacle in Color;” 2) Richard Bruce Nugent, “Smoke, Lilies, Jade”
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September 21 Kevin Mumford, "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the Gay," *American Quarterly* 48:3 (1996): 395-414

*Week 4*

September 26 1) Patricia Yaeger, "Editor's Note: Bulldagger Sings the Blues," *PMLA* 124:3 (2009): 721-726; 2) Cookie Woolner, "'Woman Slain in Queer Love Brawl': African American Women, Same-Sex Desire, and Violence in the Urban North, 1920-1929," *Journal of African-American History* 100:3 (2015):406-427; 3) Joan Nestle, "'I lift my eyes to the hill': The Life of Mabel Hampton as Told by a White Woman": 23-29 (only the first six pages)

September 28 1) Joan Nestle, "'I lift my eyes to the hill': The Life of Mabel Hampton as Told by a White Woman": 29-48; 2) Madeline Davis and Elizabeth Lapovksy Kennedy, "'I could hardly wait to get back to that bar': Lesbian Bar Cultures in the 1930s and 1940s," from *Boots of Leather Slippers of Gold*: 29-38

*Week 5*

October 3 1) Madeline Davis and Elizabeth Lapovksy Kennedy, "'I could hardly wait to get back to that bar': Lesbian Bar Cultures in the 1930s and 1940s," from *Boots of Leather Slippers of Gold*: 38-66; 2) Allan Bérubé, "Marching to the Beat of a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II": 383-394

October 5 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)

*Week 6*

October 10 1) Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press: Historical Notes on Transsexuality in the United States, 1930-1955," *GLQ* 4:2 (1998):159-187; 2) Christine Jorgenson, from *A Personal Autobiography*: 55-67

October 12 1) Jorgenson, from *A Personal Autobiography*: 67-75; 2) Harry Benjamin, from *The Transsexual Phenomenon*: 45-52; 3) Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex Research at the Borders of Gender: Transvestites, Transsexuals, and Alfred C. Kinsey," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 75 (2001): 72-90

***UNIT 2: The Politics of the Homophile Movement and Gay Liberation***

*Week 7*

October 17 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

October 19 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

*Week 8*

October 24 David K. Johnson, "Physique Pioneers: The Politics of 1960s Gay Consumer Culture," *Journal of Social History* (2010): 867-892  
Short film: "Scorpio Rising" (dir. Kenneth Anger)

October 26 Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity," *RHR: 100* (2008): 144-157  
Film: "Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria" (dir. Susan Stryker and Victor Silverman)

*Week 9*

October 31 1) Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp;" 2) Rosalyn Regelson, "Up the Camp Staircase," *New York Times* March 3, 1968

November 2 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"

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

*Week 10*

November 7 1) Esther Newton, "Role Models" from *Margaret Mead Made Me Gay*: 14-29; 2) Jessi Gan, "Still at the Back of the Bus': Sylvia Rivera's Struggle," *CENTRO Journal* XIX: 1 (2007): 124-139; 3) Marsha P. Johnson, "Rapping with a Street Transvestite Action Revolutionary" from *Out of the Closets*: 112-120

November 9 Christina Hanhardt, "Butterflies, Whistles, and Fists: Gay Safe Street Patrols and the New Gay Ghetto, 1976-1981," *RHR* 100 (2008): 60-85

*Week 11*

November 14 1) Anne Enke, "Smuggling Sex through the Gates: Race, Sexuality, and the Politics of Space in Second-Wave Feminism," 1-33; 2) Merle Woo, "Letter to Ma;" 3) The Combahee River Collective Statement: 1-7; 4) Gayle Rubin, "Samois," *Leather Times* (2014): 3-12

November 16 1) Jeffrey Escoffier, "Sex in the 70s: Gay Porn Cinema as an Archive for the History of American Sexuality," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 26:1 (2017): 88-113; 2) Jack Stevenson, "From the Bedroom to the Bijou: A Secret History of American Gay Sex Cinema," *Film Quarterly* 51:1 (1997): 24-31

*Week 12*

November 21 1) Larry Kramer, "1,112 and Counting," *New York Native*; 2) The Denver Principles;" 3) Jan Zita Grover, "AIDS: Keywords," *October* (1987): 17-30

November 23 *No classes scheduled*

*Week 13*

November 28 1) Sandy Stone, "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto": 150-168; 2) Lou Sullivan, "A Transvestite Answers a Feminist": 159-164; 3) Patrick Califia, "Manliness"  
Short Film: "Max" (dir. Monika Treut)

November 30 1) Jan Zita Grover, "Visible Lesions: Images of the PWA": 354-381; 2) Allan Bérubé, "Resorts for Perverts: A History of Gay Bathhouses": 67-81

*Week 14*

December 5 1) Marlon Riggs, "Black Macho Revisited: Reflections of a SNAP! Queen," *Black American Literature Forum* 25:2 (1991): 389-394; 2) Charles Nero, "Why are the Gay Ghettos White?";

December 7 1) Keith Boykin, "Remembering Sakia Gunn;" 2) Richard Fung, "Looking for My Penis: The Eroticized Asian in Gay Video Porn": 181-198

*Week 15*

December 12 Cheryl Chase, "Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism," *GLQ* 4:2 (1997): 189-211

**TBD**

**FINAL EXAMINATION**