

LGBT History
21:512:204:01
Tuesday/Thursday: 4-5:20 p.m.
Conklin Hall 342

Instructor: Christopher Adam Mitchell
Office hours: Tuesday, 5:30-6:30 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.

Before you continue reading this syllabus, please understand the following:

- 1) **This syllabus is akin to a contract between student and instructor, and you need to read it carefully in order to understand the expectations of each role.** The student is responsible for attending to the coursework and maintaining the reading and assignment schedule listed in the syllabus, while the instructor is tasked with insuring that the class keeps up with the reading and assignments schedule. The instructor is responsible for providing assignments, podcasts, and supplementary materials with clear instructions, guidelines, and goals. If necessary, the instructor must also upload readings to Blackboard in a timely manner. Students must download, borrow, purchase or otherwise obtain all required readings listed on the syllabus. Additionally, students are responsible for following all written directions on prompts for assignments and supplementary materials. Students are also responsible for reviewing rubrics used to evaluate assignments. If the syllabus needs to be altered for any reason, the instructor will inform you specifically in writing. Otherwise, it is your responsibility to read the syllabus and stay on top of the calendar of readings and assignments.
- 2) **Make sure that you understand and participate in the digital components of class, especially Blackboard, especially if this is an on-line course.** Check your email on a regular basis so that announcements and messages from the instructor reach you in a timely manner. If you need to communicate with the instructor via email, please make sure that you state your full name, the class in which you are enrolled, and whatever question or issue you need the instructor to address. If you

- have a problem that cannot be addressed over email, then you need to come into the instructor's office hours.
- 3) **Please do not, under any circumstances, email me coursework for this class and expect it to be accepted as an official submission. All work must be posted to Blackboard and/or through Turnitin.com. Your email will be deleted and you will not earn credit for that assignment.** Included in your coursework are quizzes, shorter assignments, papers, journals, and/or take-home exams, all of which must be submitted through Turnitin and/or Blackboard or, where appropriate, turned in as a hard copy. Again, students will not earn credit if they email assignments or submit them in any way other than the instructions require. *You may, of course, email me if you have questions about any assignment, but please do not expect to be graded for submissions sent to my inbox.*
 - 4) **Unless directed by the instructor or the assignments, please do not use sources not listed on the syllabus or from outside of podcast material and podcast notes.** If you are required to do research, assignments will give you specific directives and the instructor will go over standard research methods. **If this is not a class with a research paper or another assignment that asks you to look for outside sources, then please do not, under any circumstances, use sources from outside of the class.** The course materials were selected with great care, and the vast majority of undergraduate students (and even many graduate students) may not know how to select the best sources for papers, exams, and other assignments without extensive instruction. The purpose of the class is, in part, for you to critically read and respond to the readings, and if you are using outside sources you will not be able to do this. If this course has a research component, then only include sources from outside the class that are required by specific assignments. *The use of Wikipedia.com or any other on-line encyclopedia as well as Sparknotes, Shmoop, or any other study guide website as a source on an assignment will result in automatic failure of any assignment and a request to resubmit the work at a late penalty.*
 - 5) **Grades are generally assessed according to a rubric, and students who attend to the prompt and demonstrate the greatest knowledge and analysis of the details in the readings and podcasts will obviously do better.** Please make sure that you read all assignments carefully, since the rubric will be generated from the questions and expectations stated on all assignments. The instructor may not always have time to comment extensively on essay assignments, so students should avail themselves of the rubric in order to understand how they earn and lose credit on assignments. The instructor will always be available for consultation about any evaluation in class for any reason, and rubrics are generally viewable via Blackboard and/or Turnitin.

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 will receive an unexcused absence for every four documented instances of tardiness.** 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 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. In order to ensure a prompt response from the instructor, please familiarize yourself with the document, *FAQs about E-mails and Instructor Availability*, located on the Syllabus and Course Information Page.

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 (40%). Students will complete writing assignments throughout the semester over the readings. All writing assignments will be submitted to 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, December 2 at 11:59 p.m.**

Final exam (30%). Students will complete a final exam consisting of a take-home question (or set of questions) as well as an in-class written examination on Tuesday, December 20, at 3:00 p.m.

Calendar

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

September 6 Jewelle Gomez, "The Event of Becoming"

September 8 Peiss, ed., "Sexuality in History" from *Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality*: 1-25

September 13 Weeks, "Movements of Affirmation: Sexual Meanings and Homosexual Identities," *Radical History Review* 20 (1979): 164-179

September 15 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" [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

September 20 1) Eric Garber, "A Spectacle in Color;" 2) Richard Bruce Nugent, "Smoke, Lilies, Jade;" 3) Excerpts from *Sex Variants*, ed. George W. Henry (1941, 1948)

September 22 1) Hazel Carby, "'It Jus' Be's Dat Way Sometime;" 2) Joan Nestle, "'I lift my eyes to the hill': The Life of Mabel Hampton as Told by a White Woman;" 3) Excerpts from *Sex Variants*, ed. George W. Henry (1941, 1948)

September 27 Kevin Mumford, "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the Gay," *American Quarterly* 48:3 (1996): 395-414

September 29 1) Madeline Davis and Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, "Oral History and the Study of Sexuality in the Lesbian Community in Buffalo, New York, 1940-1960;" 2) Excerpts from *Sex Variants*, ed. George W. Henry (1941, 1948)

October 4 Allan Bérubé, "Marching to the Beat of a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II;" 2) Excerpts from *Sex Variants*, ed. George W. Henry (1941, 1948)

October 6 1) Donald Webster Cory, *The Homosexual in America* (excerpt); 2) James Baldwin, from "Preservation of Innocence;" 3) Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp"
Film: "Fireworks" (dir. Kenneth Anger)

October 11 Ann Aldrich, *We, Too, Must Love and We Walk Alone*

October 13 1) Harry Benjamin, from *The Transsexual Phenomenon*; 2) Christine Jorgenson, from *A Personal Autobiography*

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

October 18 1) Esther Newton, "Role Models;" 2) Gayle Rubin, "Of Catamites and Kings"

- October 20 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
- October 25 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 27 Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinary," *RHR: 100* (2008): 144-157
Film: "Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria" (dir. Susan Stryker and Victor Silverman)
- November 1 1) Terrance Kissack, "Freaking Fag Revolutionaries: New York's Gay Liberation Front, 1969-1971," *RHR* 62 (1995): 105-134; 2) Donn Deal, *The Gay Militants* (excerpt); 3) Martha Shelley, "Gay is Good" from *Out of the Closets*
- November 3 1) Jessi Gan, "Still at the Back of the Bus': Sylvia Rivera's Struggle," *CENTRO Journal XIX: 1* (2007): 124-139; 2) 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**
- November 8 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
- November 10 Christina Hanhardt, "Butterflies, Whistles, and Fists: Gay Safe Street Patrols and the New Gay Ghetto, 1976-1981," *RHR* 100 (2008): 60-85
- November 15 1) Allan Bérubé, "The History of Gay Bathhouses;" 2) The Denver Principles
- November 17 Zita Grover, "Visible Lesions: Images of the PWA"
- November 22 1) Jennifer Brier, "'Save Our Kids, Keep AIDS Out: Anti-AIDS Activism and the Legacy of Community Activism in Queens, New York," *Journal of Social History* 39:4 (2006): 965-987; 2) Dan Royles, "Taking it to the Streets: AIDS, Race, and Protest in Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Legacies* 16:1 (2016): 26-31
- November 24 **UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY**
- November 29 1) David Valentine, "I went to bed with my own kind once;" 2) Lou Sullivan, "A Transvestite Answers a Feminist"
Film: "Max" (dir. Monika Treut)
- December 1 Marlon Riggs, "Black Macho Revisited: Confessions of a SNAP! Queen"

Film: "Non, je ne regrette rien" (dir. Marlon Riggs)

December 2 FINAL ESSAY DUE

December 6 1) Charles Nero, "Why are the Gay Ghettos White?"; 2) Darnell Moore, Beryl Satter, Timothy Stewart-Winter, and Whit Strub, "A Community's Response to the Problem of Invisibility: The Queer Newark Oral History Project;" 3) Keith Boykin, "Remembering Sakia Gunn"

December 8 1) Justin Chin, "Monster;" 2) Pauline Park, "My Life as a Transgender Korean Adoptee;" 3) JeeYeun Lee, "Toward a Queer Korean American Diasporic History"

December 13 Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai, "Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots"

December 20 FINAL EXAMINATION: 3-6 P.M.