

DRAFT – Subject to Change

Place, Community, and Public Humanities

26:050:545 / 26:510:565

Mondays, 5:30pm-8:10pm

Online

Instructor Information:

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Description:

Since 2011, the Queer Newark Oral History Project (queer.newark.rutgers.edu) has been collecting the stories of LGBTQ Newarkers through oral history interviews. Growing out of a partnership between the LGBTQ community in Newark and faculty and staff based at Rutgers University-Newark, Queer Newark seeks to raise the visibility of this diverse community, which has not otherwise been documented in the historical record in any consistent or accessible way. Through life history interviews, our narrators tell their stories—of daily life, school, work, leisure, spirituality, sex, love, and, at times, tragedy. Using this born digital archive, students in this class will collaboratively create digital interpretations of LGBTQ life and history in Newark.

To create our public digital humanities projects, we will contextualize these oral histories in Newark history, LGBTQ history, African American Studies, and women's and gender studies. Students will learn the history, theory, and methods of place-based public and digital history. Interpreting sophisticated scholarly analyses for and with the public will be our task this semester.

This is an experiential public history/humanities class. Public history is the co-creation of historical knowledge between historians and the public. We will collaboratively move through the process of undertaking a public history project, from audience analysis to research to writing to dissemination.

I look forward to engaging in this process with you.

Course Website:

We will use Canvas for this course. All readings, assignments, and discussion board questions and posts can be found there.

To access Canvas, go to: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/> . If you have any problems, please contact Canvas help at help@canvas.rutgers.edu .

Expectations:

This course will blend the theory and practice of public history with analytical readings in American Studies on place and social, political and cultural history. **You will be treated as both**

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graduate students who are expected to complete required readings and contribute thoughtfully to class discussions and as members of a project team who will work collaboratively to produce public history texts and materials. Collaborative work is a key skill for all public historians (and pretty much anybody who isn't a hermit). We will practice it throughout this course.

Because of the nature of our project, this syllabus is subject to change.

Community Advisors:

A unique aspect of this class is our work with community member advisors throughout the semester. Our community advisors include faculty, students, volunteers and narrators from the Queer Newark Oral History Project and community activists in Newark's LGBTQ Community Center. Our advisors will advise and critique the project along the way.

Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will have:

- Learned about Newark's history, particularly with regard to race, gender, sexuality and social justice movements in the mid-20th century;
- Learned about the history, theories, and methods of oral history as a scholarly field;
- Interpreted primary sources, especially oral histories;
- Synthesized secondary readings and interpreted primary sources into public-facing digital projects; and,
- Worked with community advisors.

Assignments:

- Participation, Attendance and Peer Review (15%)
- Reading Responses (10%): short responses to several readings
- Oral history presentation (10%): Present one (or two depending on number of students) oral histories to the class with one slide. Identify the key themes of the interview and connect with readings in class.
- Oral history analysis (20%): Paper analyzing the themes in at least two interviews relating them to readings from the class.
- Digital PH project analysis (20%): Paper analyzing curation, interpretation and digital tools used in a digital public history project on LGBTQ history and culture.
- Final Digital Public History Project (25%): In groups, students will devise their own digital public projects utilizing the Queer Newark archives.
 - Project proposal
 - Draft review
 - Class presentation
 - Final project submission

Attendance and Participation:

You will be expected to attend class having completed readings and assignments and be prepared to actively participate. Reading is more than just running your eyes over the pages. It means thinking about what the author is trying to say. Taking time to engage with the readings

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will make your class experience more fruitful. If you cannot attend class, please let me know at least 24 hours before class (except in the case of emergencies).

Participation can take several forms. Asking thoughtful questions is as important as making an analytical point about a reading. We are not here to prove to each other how smart we are, but to learn together.

You are required to check your email regularly and to respond to emails from me or your classmates in a timely manner. If you use a different email address than your Rutgers' one, I suggest that you either forward email from your Rutgers account to your other address or you make sure that I have your correct email address.

Late Assignments:

I expect assignments to be completed on the day they are due. If there are circumstances that prevent you from doing so, please contact me as soon as possible. Knowing when to expect papers to be submitted allows me to manage my time and be responsive to you.

Required Texts:

Buy or borrow these texts.

- Susan Ferentinos, *Interpreting LGBT History at Museums and Historic Sites* (ISBN-10: 075912373X)
- Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramirez, eds., *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History* (ISBN: 9780199742738)

Articles, films and other readings assigned are on Canvas. All oral history interviews can be found on the Queer Newark website, queer.rutgers.newark.edu.

Academic Integrity:

You will follow the University's Policy on Academic Integrity, which falls under the Code of Student Conduct. The policy and the consequences of violating it are outlined here: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/office-dean-student-affairs/academic-integrity-policy>.

I strictly follow the University's rules regarding plagiarism and other academic irregularities. Please consult me if you have any questions about what is and is not appropriate regarding the use of sources or citation.

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 the

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Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

Weekly Schedule:

Module 1: What is Oral History? What is Queer Oral History? What is the QNOHP?

Goal of module 1 is to introduce students to each other, building a sense of community in the class. They will also learn about QNOHP and, hopefully, meet members of the Newark LGBTQ community center community. With this background in the QN project, they will then delve more deeply into the scholarship on queer/oral history, learning its main concepts and theories, in order to situate the QN project and their own work.

Week 1: Jan. 25 Welcome to QNOHP

Readings:

Darnell Moore, Beryl Satter, Whitney Strub, and Timothy Stewart-Winter, “A Community’s Response to the Problem of Invisibility: The Queer Newark Oral History Project,” *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking*, 1.2 (2014).

Michael Frisch, “From a Shared Authority to the Digital Kitchen, and Back,” *Letting Go*.

In Class: Speakers from the Queer Newark Oral History Project

Week 2: Feb. 1 Thinking about Queer Oral History

Readings:

Boyd and Ramirez, Introduction and Part I, *Bodies of Evidence*

QNOHP Oral History

Week 3: Feb. 8

Readings:

Boyd and Ramirez, Part II and III, *Bodies of Evidence*

In Class: Student oral history presentations

Week 4: Feb. 15

Readings:

Boyd and Ramirez, Part IV and Conclusion, *Bodies of Evidence*

In Class: Listening session with LGBTQ community center members

Module 2: Making Queer Life Public History

In this module, we turn to queer and non-queer public history. We ask how historians, curators, artists, and others turned archives, oral histories, and artifacts into public history. We will also examine digital tools that students may use in their digital projects.

Week 5: Feb. 22 Exhibiting Queer History

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Readings:

Sue Ferentinos, *Interpreting LGBT History at Museums and Historic Sites*

At Home in Newark exhibit panels

Week 6: Mar. 1: *Place*

Readings:

Mark Tebeau, "Listening to the City: Oral History and Place in the Digital Era," *Oral History Review*, 40 (1): 25-35.

Monica Munoz Martinez, "Mapping Segregated Histories of Racial Violence," *American Quarterly*, 70 (3): 657-663.

QN Storymap and walking tour

Week 7: Mar. 8: *Storytelling*

Readings:

"Deer in the Footlights," *This American Life*. <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/482/lights-camera-christmas/act-two-8>

Humanities For All Typology: <https://humanitiesforall.org/essays/five-types-of-publicly-engaged-humanities-work-in-u-s-higher-education>

SPRING BREAK MARCH 13-21, NO CLASS ON MARCH 18

Module 3: The Newark Context

Goal of Module 2 is to ground students in Newark's specific social, political and cultural history especially as it pertains to the LGBTQ community. This will help them contextualize their projects geographically and historically. This module will introduce them to other primary sources about Newark for their projects and also their future work as researchers and two methodologies, archival research and ethnography.

Week 8: Mar. 22 – *Racializing and Queering Newark History*

Readings:

Timothy Stewart-Winter and Whitney Strub, "Queer Newark," *OutHistory*. <http://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/queer-newark/intro>

Zenzele Isoke, "Making Place in Newark: Neoliberalization and Gendered Racialization in a US City," *Urban Black Women and the Politics of Resistance*.

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Yamil Avivi, “Queering Political Economy in Neoliberal Ironbound Newark,” *Dialogo*.

In Class: Student oral history presentations

Week 9: Mar. 29 - *Black Lesbians in Newark*

Readings:

Isoke, “Mobilizing After Murder,” *Urban Black Women and the Politics of Resistance*.

Watch *Out in the Night* film (available through Rutgers library)

Kristyn Scorsone, “Invisible Pathways: Public History By Queer Black Women In Newark,” *The Public Historian*

In Class: Student oral history presentations

Week 10: Apr. 5 Pleasure and Community Formation

Readings:

Gary Jardim, excerpts from *Blue*.

Strub, “No Sex in Newark: Postindustrial Erotics at the Intersection of Urban and Adult Film History,” *JCMS: Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*.

Karen McCarthy Brown, “Mimesis in the Face of Fear: Femme Queens, Butch Queens, and Gender Play in the Houses of Greater Newark,” *Passing: Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race, and Religion*.

Peter Savastano, “St. Gerard Teaches Him That Love Cancels That Out,” *Gay Religion*.

In Class: Student oral history presentations

Module 4: Putting it All Together

Project Time (no class – group meetings with Dr. Rizzo)

Week 11: Apr. 12

Week 12: Apr. 19

Project Time (in class)

Week 13: Apr. 26

Readings: TBD

Week 14: May 3

Readings:

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Linda Shopes, “Oral History and the Study of Communities: Problems, Paradoxes and Possibilities.”

Michelle Caswell, “Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation,” *The Public Historian*.