

Honors American History: LGBTQ Newark History

Rutgers-Newark, Fall 2018

21:512:391, sec. 61

Tuesday 6-9pm

Hahne's 322

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Office hours: Tuesdays 3-5pm, and by appointment (I'm on campus most afternoons)

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Newark's LGBTQ history is rich, fascinating, and full of everything from humor to tragedy, oppression to resistance. And yet it is less familiar than the LGBTQ histories of such cities as New York or San Francisco. And so in this course we will do two things: first, study this history using the limited material scholars have already written and then oral histories and archival documents that help us unearth otherwise lost stories—and then second, use this exploration to think critically (“historiographically,” we might say) about historical method itself: how do we research, analyze, and write elusive LGBTQ histories in Newark? And how does this local history enrich our broader understandings, of LGBTQ history, Newark history, US history, and historical methodology itself?

This will be an experimental, participatory course, and we will shape parts of it together. It should be an exciting adventure!

Required Texts

Our readings will be on Blackboard and online. You are expected to **print and bring to class** the readings for each given meeting; see laptop policy below.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Punctuality: You are expected to attend every class, from start to finish. Attendance is mandatory. Your overall course grade will be lowered by one half letter for each unexcused absence beginning with the fourth one. More than eight absences for any reason will result in a loss of credit for the course. Only *documented* emergencies and medical occasions, or officially school-sanctioned activities, will qualify as excused absences.

Class Participation. All students are required to participate in the discussions during class. As a result, you must arrive at class having completed that day's reading assignment and prepared to talk about it. A valuable part of discussions is the posing of questions; no one is expected to grasp perfectly the significance of all the readings. Engaged questions are just as important as comments. Your participation grade will reflect both the frequency of your participation and the quality of your comments and questions. Note that participation also includes active *listening*; sleeping, texting, side conversations, and other forms of non-listening will be met with punitive measures on the participation front.

Journal: You are expected to keep a journal of your reflections on our readings and other assignments. These reflections can be **informal**, and should range from a few paragraphs to a page; an entry should be written for each class meeting, in advance of class. You can type or write by hand, but hard copies should be kept on hand and brought to class each meeting; they will be collected irregularly, and you receive credit only for those that are turned in when collected.

Here's what they should contain: your thoughts, observations, analyses, reflections, critiques, of the assigned materials. DON'T summarize the material; rather, assume you're writing for someone who's also read it, and write about what interests, surprises, offends, delights, or challenges you.

Short paper: You will complete one short analytical paper (4-5 pages), about oral history and historical methodology. This will be due in class, October 9

Midterm: We will have one exam, to test your knowledge of course materials.
Midterm: October 30, in class.

Creative project: You will undertake a creative project involving the history, documents, spaces, or artistic production of LGBTQ Newark history, and briefly present it to the class. Deadline will be on a rotating basis, and we will discuss further in class.

Final project: This will be an oral history-related project involving either conducting an oral history and writing an analytical paper about it, or writing a longer paper using course materials and some outside research. We will hash out the details as a group.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance/participation: 15%

Journals: 10%

Short writing assignment: 15%

Creative project: 10%

Midterm: 25%

Final project: 25%

Grading Guidelines

A: work of exceptional quality, showing profound and meaningful engagement with the materials in question, thoughtful and comparative analysis, superior writing—and most importantly, containing a clear, inventive, and persuasive thesis.

B: work that is above average—shows knowledge and/or contains a thesis, but does not develop it as strongly as it could.

C: adequate work that fulfills the assignment—often based on summarizing rather than thesis or analysis.

D: subpar work that falls short of fulfilling the assignment but deserves some credit.

F: work that fails to earn credit for the assignment, including plagiarism.

Late assignments will not be accepted. Extensions may be negotiated under extenuating circumstances (which do *not* include computer-related issues), with some grade deductions, *before* the due date.

No incompletes will be granted unless the matter has been discussed with me in advance.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)

You are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy, available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>. All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any use of the ideas or words of another person without proper acknowledgment of credit will result in penalties up to and possibly including a course grade of F. Likewise for cheating on exams; these are behaviors for which I have no sympathy, and should they occur, they will be handled in a suitably draconian manner.

Note that the uncited usage of uncopyrighted material such as Wikipedia entries still constitutes plagiarism.

Policy on Disabilities (Statement from the Office of Disability Services)

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.

Policy on Classroom Courtesy

Do not bring food, active cell phones, or other communications devices into the classroom. If you mistakenly do bring an active phone and it rings, silence it immediately; answering will constitute an egregious violation of this course's basic social contract. Texting in class will also result in drastic penalties to your total course grade.

In class discussions, I expect universally respectful interactions. In examining our texts, there may be differing perspectives, disagreements, and debates. This is fine; through such dialogue comes greater understanding. When challenging someone else's perspective, though, refrain from personal attacks or blistering scorn. If someone makes what you consider an offensive or disrespectful comment, note that this does not absolve you of adhering to the iron-clad rule of respect in responding to it.

Failure to abide by these rules may result in a lowered course grade, or removal from the classroom.

Laptop policy: Research shows that open laptops detract from learning environments, both for their users and those around them. This will be a *qualified laptops-closed* classroom: open laptops during lecture material for note-taking, closed during class discussions. You must print the reading materials, though if you have a flat reading device, that is also acceptable.

I am aware that some students have special needs, and I will absolutely work with you if that pertains; please speak with me immediately, and we can make arrangements. If you see another student with an open laptop, please understand that it is for a good reason, and does not confer permission for others to do the same.

Policy on Office Hours

My office hours are for you. Stop by with any questions you have about assignments, readings, classroom discussions, other pertinent topics, or just drop by to say hello. The only thing I discourage is visiting to cover material from a missed class period; for that, consult fellow classmates. All else is warmly welcomed. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, we can set up an appointment at a mutually agreeable time.

Content notice

Some of the material in this course will deal with charged issues of race and sexuality, and some material will include coarse language, scenes of violence, and depictions of sexuality, including sexual abuse. I will try to alert you to anything that might be potentially upsetting in advance, but know that throughout, the course features adult content. If you are concerned about specific triggers, please speak with me early, and I will work with you.

Tentative syllabus of readings

Week 1: Sept. 4: Introductions

- get acquainted
- go over syllabus
- “field trip” to Conklin Hall for Queer Newark exhibit

Week 2: Sept. 11: Beginning to Document LGBTQ Newark History

- Darnell Moore, Beryl Satter, Timothy Stewart-Winter, and Whitney Strub, “A Community's Response to the Problem of Invisibility: The Queer Newark Oral History Project,” *QED* 1.2 (2014): 1-14 (through library website)

--Queer Newark exhibit by Stewart-Winter and Strub, at <http://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/queer-newark>

-QNOHP interviews:

- Gail Malmgreen (first ten min)
- Amina Baraka (first ten min)
- John (whole first interview)

-*Autobiography of Amiri Baraka*, brief selection (on Blackboard)

Week 3: Sept 18 Bars and Clubs: Toward a Visible Gay Culture

-Alcoholic Beverage Control reports, selection (Blackboard)

-Gary Jardim, *Blue: Life, Art and Style in Newark* selection

Marc Campbell, "Club Zanzibar and Newark's Dance Revolution." *Dangerous Minds* (2011): https://dangerousminds.net/comments/club_zanzibar_and_newarks_dance_revolution

-mini-Queer Newark walking tour (this week or next, depending on weather/timing)

Week 4: Sept 25 **The Ballroom Scene**

-Karen McCarthy Brown, "Mimesis in the Face of Fear: Femme Queens, Butch Queens, and Gender Play in the Houses of Greater Newark" (Blackboard)

-Kysheif "Scooda" DeGraffenreid, QNOHP interview

Week 5: October 2 **Toward Trans Visibility**

Featuring guest speaker Angela Raine

-Angela Raine, QNOHP interview

-Pucci Revlon, QNOHP interview

-Pucci Revlon photo collection

Week 6: Oct 9 **HIV/AIDs in Newark**

***Short Paper due in class**

-Aaron Frazier, QNOHP interview

-Peter Savastano, QNOHP (selection)

-selected documents from Newark Community Project for People with AIDS records, Newark Public Library Digital Collections

Week 7: Oct 16 **Religion**

-Peter Savastano, "St. Gerard Teaches Him That Love Cancels Out': Devotion to St. Gerard Maiella among Italian American Gay Men in Newark, New Jersey," *Gay Religion*, eds. Scott Thumma and Edward Gray (AltaMira Press, 2005), 181-202.

-Aryana Bates, "Liberation in Truth: African American Lesbians Reflect on Religion, Spirituality, and Their Church," *Gay Religion*, 221-238

-Darnell Moore, QNOHP interview

Week 8: Oct 23 Violence and Resistance

-Zenzele Isoke, "Can't I Be Seen, Can't I Be Heard? Black Women Queering Politics in Newark, New Jersey," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 21.3 (2014): 353-369

-Sakia Gunn, DeFarra Gaymon, and Eyricka Morgan readings

-Renata Hill QNOHP interview

Week 9: Oct 30 MIDTERM EXAM / Gentrification

-first half of class: midterm

-second half: Arlene Stein, "What's the Matter with Newark? Race, Class, Marriage Politics, and the Limits of Queer Liberalism," *The Marrying Kind? Debating Same-Sex Marriage within the Lesbian and Gay Movement*, eds. Mary Bernstein and Verta Taylor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013)

Week 10: November 6 Latinx Newark

- Yamil Avivi, "Queering Political Economy in Neoliberal Ironbound Newark: Subjectivity and Spacemaking among Brazilian Queer Immigrant Men," *Diálogo* 18.2 (2015): 105-118

-Julio Roman, QNOHP interview

Week 11: Nov 13 Lesbian entrepreneurship

-Kristyn Scorsone: "Invisible Pathways: Entrepreneurship by Women of Color in Newark" (MA thesis, 2017)

-QNOHP selection, to be determined

Weeks 12-15 (Nov 20, 27, Dec 4, Dec 11): to be determined according to class input on themes/topics/etc.

Final project due December 20 by 8pm