

History 205: Queer Histories
MWF 12:00-12:50 p.m., 220 Buckman Hall
Spring 2013
Rhodes College

Lecturer: Ariel Eisenberg
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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m., 210 Buckman Hall

What are “queer histories”? And how does one “queer” history? This course is an introduction to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) history and methods. Focusing on the nineteenth and twentieth century United States, we will examine historical constructions of non-normative genders and sexualities, and the evolution of LGBTQ identities and communities. Looking at history from a “queer” perspective—one in which we question conventionally-held knowledge and categories of identity—will reveal how ideas about gender and sexuality change over time, and how they are linked to issues of race, class, nationality, and citizenship. U.S. history is, as we will find, pretty darn queer.

In general, this course will follow a Monday/Wednesday lecture, Friday discussion schedule. However, there are some exceptions to this rule: please be sure to regularly check the syllabus so that you know what to expect in class!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your success in this class depends upon your attendance, participation, and completion of all assignments and exams.

Required Readings

Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (The Crossing Press, 1982).

One additional memoir of your choosing (see list at end of syllabus).

ADDITIONAL READINGS AVAILABLE ON MOODLE COURSE WEBSITE.

- You are required to print these readings and have them on hand in class for discussion days.

Attendance

Attendance in this class is required and essential for our community learning process. Each absence above two (2) per semester will result in a five (5) point reduction of your semester grade (e.g. a 90 semester grade will be reduced to an 85 semester grade for three (3) absences, an 80 semester grade for four (4) absences, etc.). Any time you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain lecture and discussion notes from your fellow classmates, and to visit me during my office hours if you require further assistance.

Participation and Class-time Assignments

You will earn participation points for coming to class well-prepared, engaging in a lively discussion of class topics, doing in-class assignments and group work, responding thoughtfully and generously to your classmates, and demonstrating that you have completed all reading assignments. Participation grades begin at an 85 (B), and can be increased or decreased based on the criteria above.

Weekly Discussion Posts

Discussion posts are where you can begin to process your thoughts about the week's readings, and to engage in dialogue with others in the class. You may write these posts as critical-analysis observations or questions; your post may also be a thoughtful response to someone else's post. A critical analysis observation or question is one that leads to further discussion, debate, or even more questions, rather than a definitive and easily accessed answer. For example:

THIS IS a critical analysis question: *In "Dueling Dualisms," Anne Fausto-Sterling argues that we must complicate dualistic categories of knowledge like male-female, woman-man, and homosexual-heterosexual. I see what she's saying, but I'm not sure I agree with her. Doesn't our way of understanding sex, gender, and sexuality serve some purpose or reflect some sort of reality? What would our world look like if we tried to change these categories?*

THIS IS NOT a critical analysis observation/question: *What are the "dueling dualisms" that Anne Fausto-Sterling discusses?*

You will post a thought-provoking question or observation on our course website most weeks of the semester. You will have a total of twelve (12) opportunities to post ten (10) times; please see the course syllabus for the weeks these discussion posts are due. Discussion posts must be submitted by 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays (unless otherwise noted in syllabus); late discussion posts will not receive credit.

Current Event Analysis

Over the course of this semester, I encourage you to follow LGBTQ issues (in the broadest sense) in the media. At some point over the course of the semester, conduct an analysis of one article (print or internet) or television news report on an LGBTQ issue. In a paper that is no longer than two pages, double-spaced, consider the following questions:

- What is the issue? (If at all possible, please clip or print and attach the article to your essay; if not, please fully cite the article or report in your essay.)
- What does it have to do with LGBTQ history, identity, or theory?
- How does the author (or reporter) present the issue?
- What can this article or report tell us about the ways people think about sex, gender, and sexuality in contemporary society?

- If you were to choose one reading we've done for this course to help "explain" the article or report to someone, which would it be and why?

Exams

A short vocabulary terms exam, consisting of matching terms and/or short answers, will be given on Monday, February 11. A midterm exam consisting of a take-home essay question will be distributed on Monday, March 4 and will be due at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, March 22.

Final Essay

For your final essay, you will be asked to read one memoir (choose from list at end of syllabus, or propose an alternate memoir to me), and write an essay no longer than 7 pages, double-spaced, in which you analyze the memoir in the context of the theories, themes, and histories we've discussed this semester. More information to come in a separate handout.

The final essay will be due on Wednesday, May 1, at 10:00 a.m. in my History Department mailbox.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Over the course of the semester, opportunities may arise for you to attend events that are of topical relevance to this class. I will announce these events in class as they become known to me, and will post them on our Moodle site when time permits. Should you choose to take advantage of these opportunities, you may attend and hand in a one (1) paragraph summary of the event, and will receive one (1) percentage point onto your final participation grade for doing so.

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance: 10%

Participation: 20%

Discussion Posts: 10%

Vocabulary Terms Exam: 10%

Midterm Essay: 20%

Current Event Analysis: 5%

Final Essay: 25%

COMMUNICATION

Email

I will make every effort to respond to your emails within 24 hours of receiving them, Monday through Friday. Please be aware that I will not generally respond to emails received on a Saturday or Sunday until the following Monday. Emails are fine for short, specific questions, but to discuss readings, papers, exams, and grades, it is necessary to meet in person.

Office Hours

I will hold office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m. During office hours, I will speak with you on a first come, first serve basis; there is no need to make an appointment. If you are unavailable to meet during my office hours, please contact me about making an appointment, and I will make every effort to accommodate you. I strongly encourage you to visit me during office hours; it is a way for us to get to know each other better, and for me to help you to reach clarity on any course topics that may need further explanation. Especially if you feel uncomfortable speaking publicly during class, your presence at my office hours will help demonstrate to me that you are participating and engaged in the course.

During office hours, I am happy to review questions you might have from lectures and readings, as well as to talk about writing assignments for the course and look at outlines and notes you may have. However, I will not be able to read drafts of your essays during my office hours. If you would like me to read a draft, please email it to me no fewer than FIVE (5) days before you plan to talk with me about the draft in person. I will provide verbal, but not written, comments on drafts, and will only do so during an in-person meeting.

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Conduct

Please respect your fellow students' right to a quiet, non-distracting, and respectful learning environment. Cell phones and iPods are strictly prohibited during class time, as is Internet usage. If you are observed talking on the phone, listening to music, texting, or using the Internet during class, you will be marked as "absent" for that day. Repeat offenses may lead to a private conversation about whether or not you may remain in this class.

In most classes, people will have differences of opinions, as well as different points of knowledge and personal experience. In class and in online discussion postings, please treat such differences as opportunities to debate and to learn from one another. Do question and challenge your classmates (and me), but do not berate, ridicule, or silence anyone for their attempts to participate meaningfully in discussion. As we will discuss in class, the notion of "safe space" is subjective and difficult to reach consensus upon; but we can and must strive to make the classroom a place where everyone feels able to participate and engage. Sometimes, discussion might feel uncomfortable or tense; ideally, and with your effort, these moments will be productive and enlightening. Do not fear discomfort—embrace it!

Statement on Accessibility

It is very important to me to fully include all students with disabilities, chronic health issues, or learning differences in this course. Please let me know as early in the semester

as possible if you need any accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order to enable you to participate fully.

Late Assignment Policy

All assignments must be turned in on the stated due date and time. Late discussion posts will not be accepted. Late papers will automatically receive a five (5) percentage point deduction, and will then receive an additional five percentage point deduction for each subsequent 24-hour period after their due date.

Academic Misconduct

All work for this course is to be completed in accordance with Rhodes' Honor Code. You are expected to be familiar with the requirements of the Code and to act accordingly in all classroom matters. **To demonstrate your commitment, you must write “pledged” and sign your name on every written assignment.**

The work that you turn in for this course is expected to be fully and uniquely your own. All sources to which you refer in essays, exams, discussion posts and presentations must be properly cited. Cheating and plagiarizing will result in a zero (0) grade for the assignment in question. Examples of unacceptable activity include:

1. Cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation.
2. Paraphrasing from the web or written texts without crediting the source.
3. Using notes in an exam when such use is not allowed.
4. Using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own.

If you have any questions, please contact me and/or consult the “Guide To Effective Paper Writing” published by the Rhodes College Writing Center. *It is your responsibility to understand the specifics of what constitutes misconduct and what does not.*

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SECTION ONE: DOING QUEER HISTORY

Week 1: Introduction to Queer Histories

January 9: Course introduction and syllabus review.

January 11: Student introductions and discussion.

Week 2: Queering the Past

January 14: Historicizing Gender and Sexuality

January 16: Doing Queer History

January 17: DISCUSSION POST #1 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

January 18: Discussion.

Reading: David M. Halperin, “Is There a History of Sexuality?” 257-274.

Week 3: Theorizing Bodies

January 21: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day; no class.

January 23: Breaking Down Binaries: The Body in Science and Society

January 24: DISCUSSION POST #2 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

January 25: Discussion.

Reading: Anne Fausto-Sterling, "Dueling Dualisms," 1-29.

Week 4: The Queer History of Race in the United States

January 28: Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Modern Identity Categories

January 29: DISCUSSION POST #3 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

January 30: Discussion.

February 1: Class visit: Jonathan Cole, Chair, Tennessee Equality Project.

Reading: Lisa Duggan, "Girl Slays Girl," 9-31; F.L. Sim, "Alice Mitchell and the Murder of Freda Ward," 53-58.

SECTION TWO: IDENTITY, COMMUNITY, AND MOVEMENTS

Week 5: Cities and Sexualities

February 4: Urban Space and the Rise of "Gay" Identity

February 6: Policing Vice: Race, Class, and Sex in Urban Spaces

February 7: DISCUSSION POST #4 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

February 8: Discussion.

Reading: George Chauncey, "Introduction," "The Bowery As Haven and Spectacle," "The Fairy as an Intermediate Sex," and "Trade, Wolves, and the Boundaries of Normal Manhood," 23-97.

Week 6: Challenging the Urban "Gay" Narrative: Who/What is Missing?

February 11: VOCABULARY TERMS EXAM; Love Between Women

February 13: Rural Sexualities

February 14: DISCUSSION POST #5 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

February 15: Discussion.

Reading: Jack (Judith) Halberstam, "Perverse Presentism: The Androgyne, the Tribade, the Female Husband, and Other Pre-Twentieth Century Genders," 45-73.

Week 7: The Rise of "The Homosexual"

February 18: Lesbians and Gays in World War II

February 20: The Pink Menace: Sex and Gender Deviance in the Cold War Era

February 21: DISCUSSION POST #6 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

February 22: Discussion.

Reading: Audre Lorde, *Zami*, 3-103.

Week 8: Identities Across Borders (Part I)

February 25: Policing National Borders: The Immigration Act of 1952

February 27: Making Transsexual Identity

February 28: DISCUSSION POST #7 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

March 1: Discussion.

Reading: Audre Lorde, *Zami*, 104-176.

Week 9: Movements

March 4: Homophile Organizing

March 6: Bars, Beaches, and House Parties: Queer Social Space in the 1960s

March 7: DISCUSSION POST #8 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

March 8: Discussion.

Reading: Audre Lorde, *Zami*, 177-256.

Week 10 (March 9-17)

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 11: Stonewall and Beyond

March 18: The Stonewall Riot

March 20: Screening: *Screaming Queens*

March 22: MIDTERM ESSAY DUE BY 12:00 P.M.

Reading: Sylvia Rivera, "Queens in Exile, The Forgotten Ones," 67-85.

Week 12: Identities Across Borders (Part II)

March 25: Feminism and the Boundaries of Womanhood

March 26: DISCUSSION POST #9 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

March 27: Discussion.

March 29: Easter Recess; no class.

Reading: Combahee River Collective Statement

(<http://circuitous.org/scrap/combahee.html>); excerpts from Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* and Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*.

Week 13: AIDS and the Rise of Queer Politics

April 1: The Early Crisis

April 3: ACT UP and the "Queering" of AIDS

April 4: DISCUSSION POST #10 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

April 5: Discussion.

Reading: Sarah Schulman, "That Incredible Exhilaration: An Interview with Jim Eigo from the ACT UP Oral History Project," 237-248; peruse ACT UP oral history clips (<http://www.actuporalhistory.org/interviews/index.html>).

Week 14: LGBTQ Rights Into the 21st Century (Part I)

April 8: Queer Domesticities: The Public-Private Space of Home

April 10: Queer Domesticities: Same-Sex Marriage

April 11: DISCUSSION POST #11 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

April 12: Discussion.

Reading: Martha Acklesberg and Judith Plaskow, "Why We're Not Getting Married" (<http://www.commondreams.org/views04/0601-10.htm>); Andrew Sullivan, "My Big Fat Straight Wedding" (<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/09/my-big-fat-straight-wedding/306931/#>); Marlon M. Bailey, et al, "Is Gay Marriage Racist?" 113-119.

Week 15: LGBTQ Rights Into the 21st Century (Part II)

April 15: Homophobic and Transphobic Violence

April 17: Class visit: Kal Rocket, Trans Activist and MGLCC organizer

April 18: DISCUSSION POST #12 DUE BY 7:00 P.M.

April 19: Discussion.

Reading: Justin Anton Rosado, "Corroding Our Quality of Life," and Benjamin Sheppard, "Sylvia and Sylvia's Children: A Battle for a Queer Public Space," 123-140 and 317-328.

Week 16: LGBTQ Identity Into the 21st Century

April 22: Born This Way? Contemporary Discourses on Queer Acts and Identities

April 24: Discussion.

Reading: Manalansan, "Introduction: Points of Departure," 1-18.

FINAL PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 10:00 A.M., IN MY HISTORY DEPARTMENT MAILBOX.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ASSIGNED READINGS (ordered by appearance in syllabus)

David M. Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?" *History and Theory* 28 (1989), 257-274.

Anne Fausto-Sterling, "Dueling Dualisms," *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (Basic Books, 2000), 1-29.

Lisa Duggan, "Girl Slays Girl," *Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence, and American Modernity* (Duke University Press, 2000), 9-31.

George Chauncey, "The Bowery As Haven and Spectacle," "The Fairy as an Intermediate Sex," and "Trade, Wolves, and the Boundaries of Normal Manhood," *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (Basic Books, 1995), 33-97.

Jack/Judith Halberstam, "Perverse Presentism: The Androgyne, the Tribade, the Female Husband, and Other Pre-Twentieth Century Genders," *Female Masculinity*, (Duke University Press, 1998), 45-73.

Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name: A Biomythography* (The Crossing Press, 1982).

Sylvia Rivera, "Queens in Exile, The Forgotten Ones," in Joan Nestle, et al, ed., *Genderqueer: Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary* (Alyson Books, 2002), 67-85.

Combahee River Collective Statement, April 1977
(<http://circuitous.org/scraps/combahee.html>).

- Gloria Anzaldúa, "The Homeland, Aztlán" and "Movimientos de rebeldia y las culturas que traiciones," in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (Aunt Lute Books, 1987).
- Audre Lorde, "Poetry Is Not A Luxury" and "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action," in *Sister/Outsider* (The Crossing Press).
- Sarah Schulman, "That Incredible Exhilaration: An Interview with Jim Eigo from the ACT UP Oral History Project," in Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore, ed., *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull Press, 2004), 237-248.
- Martha Acklesberg and Judith Plaskow, "Why We're Not Getting Married," *Common Dreams*, June 1, 2004 (www.commondreams.org/views04/0601-10.htm).
- Andrew Sullivan, "My Big Fat Straight Wedding," *The Atlantic*, September 2008 (<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/09/my-big-fat-straight-wedding/306931/#>).
- Marlon M. Bailey, Priya Kandaswamy, and Mattie Udora Richardson, "Is Gay Marriage Racist?" in Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore, ed., *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull Press, 2004), 113-119.
- Justin Anton Rosado, "Corroding Our Quality of Life," in Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore, ed., *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull Press, 2008), 317-328.
- Benjamin Sheppard, "Sylvia and Sylvia's Children: A Battle for a Queer Public Space," in Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore, ed., *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull Press, 2008), 123-140.

MEMOIR OPTIONS FOR FINAL ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006).
- Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation* (South End Press, 1999).
- Samuel Delany, *The Motion of Light in Water* (Masquerade Books, 1993).
- Thea Hillman, *Intersex (For Lack of a Better Word)* (Manic D. Press, 2008).
- Karla Jay, *Tales of the Lavender Menace: A Memoir of Liberation* (Basic Books, 2000).
- Kevin Jennings, *Mama's Boy, Preacher's Son: A Memoir of Growing Up, Coming Out, and Changing America's Schools* (Beacon Press, 2006).
- Paul Monet, *Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir* (Harvill Press, 1988).
- Cherríe Moraga, *Loving in the War Years* (South End Press, 2000 (first ed. 1983)).
- Connie Panzarino, *The Me in the Mirror* (Seal Press, 1994).