HIST 490:004 Special Topics in American History: U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Histories
Spring 2012 • TuTh 3:30-4:45 p.m. • Peabody 204

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COURSE OVERVIEW
This course investigates the rise of modern lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender identities, politics, cultures, and communities in the United States. The first third of the course focuses on contested and evolving meanings of sexual “normality” and “deviance” and the formation of early LGBT communities from the colonial period through the mid-twentieth-century. The second two-thirds devote special attention to the formation of varied LGBT communities and aspirations for "liberation" advanced by different LGBT-identified people since the World War II. Throughout, we will explore the diverse meanings ascribed to being labeled or self-identifying as “lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual,” “transgender,” or a sexual minority by another name in the American past (and present). The semester-long research assignment will have students contribute to the website outhistory.org as part of a class project tentatively entitled, “LGBT Identities, Communities, and Resistance in North Carolina, 1945-2012.”

Major topics covered include:
- The shifting roles of medicine, science, technology, religion, and the state in defining categories of “normal” and “deviant.”
- The growth of the state and the implications for sexual politics.
- The diverse ways that women, men, and transgendered persons have built communities of resistance, and the varieties of reform and radical movements speaking on behalf of sexual minorities.
- The intersection of transgressive sexual and gender identities with racial, economic, religious, and regional difference.

Like any history course, this course seeks to develop basic skills used by historians in analyzing evidence, evaluating theories, and presenting ideas both orally and in writing. By the end of the semester, you should be able to:
- Critically analyze primary documents—including literary texts, medical case studies, music, and film—in light of the historical contexts in which they were written.
- Evaluate how different kinds of primary sources (like a film or a legal deposition) represent sexuality in different ways and require different interpretive strategies.
- Identify an author’s thesis and evaluate how well s/he supports it by analyzing the author’s evidence, research methods, and unstated assumptions.
- Write a logical and coherent argument of your own, developing a critical analysis of both historical writing and primary documentation.
- Conduct original research, linking your findings critically to readings and course themes.

Required Texts

• Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name – A Biomythology of Audre Lorde* (Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1982). (Listed as *Zami*)


• BLACKBOARD (Reading selections are denoted by a *)

**EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES**

1. **Written Assignments:**

   A. **Course Readings Notebook:**
   Throughout the semester you will maintain a course readings notebook which you will use to guide your reading and to help you prepare for class discussion and upcoming essay assignments. Your notebook will consist of a series of short entries in response to the assigned course readings. You are expected to provide one entry (roughly a paragraph in length each) per reading assignment.

   Each entry should:
   (a) provide a brief summary (maybe a sentence or two) of what the reading is about;
   (b) identify the author’s argument and why s/he is making that argument;
   (c) explain how the reading relates to items/themes/problems discussed in class and/or in other readings;
   (d) explain how the reading might pertain to your research project (if relevant);
   (e) respond critically to one or more of the posted questions in the corresponding prompt; reading prompts are located on blackboard under “reading questions.”

   Course reading notebooks could be maintained electronically, as a word document, or in the form of a paper notebook. Which format you choose is up to you provided that your entries are collated in one assessable location. Shorthand, abbreviations, and incomplete sentences are acceptable – as long as you meet the entry requirements stated above.

   Notebooks will be collected twice during the semester: first, when you submit the hard copy of your End-of-Unit II Essay (**Tuesday, February 21 at the start of class** – see below for details); second, when you submit your final essay (**Thursday, May 1**). You will receive an interim grade and brief comments on your first submission. Only the final submission will receive a formal grade; that evaluation will be based on the overall quality of your entries throughout the semester.

   B. **End-of-Unit Essays:**
   At the end of each of the first four units, you will be asked to write a short essay (roughly three to four double-spaced pages) in response to a prompt posted on blackboard. The prompt will ask you to reflect critically on major themes and historical problems from the concluding unit. Your essay should articulate and logically advance a defined central argument (thesis) in response to the prompt using relevant course material, including assigned readings and items discussed in class. Each essay must be typed and printed out as a hard copy with your name on top; hand-written essays will not be
accepted. You will have the option of completing an end-of-unit essay for the fifth unit; the grade for that assignment will be used to exempt the lowest of your previous four end-of-unit essays. You cannot exempt a zero.

Here are the due dates for each of the End-of-Unit Essays:

- **End-of-Unit I Essay**: email to me by 12:00 p.m. on **Monday, January 23**; submit hard copy at the start of class on **Tuesday, January 24**.
- **End-of-Unit II Essay**: email to me by 12:00 p.m. on **Monday, February 20**; submit hard copy at the start of class on **Tuesday, February 21**.
  - Reading journal submission also due at the start of class on **Tuesday, February 21**; details below.
- **End-of-Unit III Essay**: email to me by 12:00 p.m. on **Monday, March 19**; submit hard copy at the start of class on **Tuesday, March 20**.
- **End-of-Unit IV Essay**: email to me by 12:00 p.m. on **Monday, April 9**; submit hard copy at the start of class on **Tuesday, April 10**.
- **Optional End-of-Unit V Essay**: hard copy at the start of class on **Thursday, April 19**.

The designated prompt for each unit essay will be posted on blackboard under “assignments” five days before the essay is officially due.

Submission deadlines and guidelines will be strictly enforced. Failure to meet them will result in the loss of all credit for your work.

C. **Research Project:**

The research project consists of five parts, which are designed to allow you to systematically develop your project and link it to course themes and readings. You have considerable latitude in deciding what to write about. And, you are free – indeed, you are encouraged – to revise your project over the course of the semester. The only firm guidelines are threefold: 1) that your project relates to the theme “LGBT Identities, Communities, and Resistance in North Carolina”; 2) that it deals specifically with developments since World War II (post-1945); 3) that you select a specific person, place, or thing as the foundation of your project. I recommend that you select a topic that you could use to critically engage major course themes and at least five course readings in preparation for your final paper. A list of sample topics and resource links is posted under “topic suggestions” on blackboard.

The first part of the project, due at the start of class on **Tuesday, February 7**, will have you submit a one to two-paragraph research project proposal. The proposal should clearly identify (a) your topic (including intended scope of your project); (b) why you selected your topic; (c) what questions you plan to explore in your research; (d) how your proposed project is related to the theme “LGBT Identities, Communities, and Resistance in North Carolina, 1945-2010.” Your proposal will count towards your class participation average but will not receive a formal grade. You may be asked to redo or revise your proposal; these resubmissions are due at the start of class on **Tuesday, February 28**, along with the second part of the project.

The second part, due at the start of class on **Thursday, March 1**, will have you submit a one to two-page report (300-600 words) on your research findings since the submission of your proposal. Your report should clearly (a) indicate at least two relevant and specific primary sources (i.e., names of papers, periodicals, oral histories, press releases, and the like) from the Special Collections at Duke
Library and/or the North Carolina Collection at Wilson Library and explain how they are pertinent to your research topic; (b) discuss how your topic has changed or been refined – if at all. Your research findings report will count towards your class participation average but will not receive a formal grade. Unsatisfactory completion of this assignment or failure to meet the stated requirements will result in non-credit.

The third part, due at the start of class on **Tuesday, April 3, but with a greatly preferred submission due date of Tuesday, March 27**, will consist of a two to three-page double-spaced progress report (600-900 words) on your research. Your progress report begin with a discussion of the following: (a) a summary of your findings to date; (b) a brief explanation of any changes you made since submitting your research findings report; and (c) a discussion of your reason(s) for those changes. If you have not changed your research design, explain why you have kept your project as is based on your findings. Identify specific primary source records in your report with full citations. You must refer to and discuss the relevance of at least one primary source in your report. Devote a little bit of space in your report to briefly indicate how you might organize your outhistory.org entry (see below). Your progress report must conclude with an explanation of how your project relates to three different readings assigned this semester up to and including April 3, or March 27, if you are submitting your progress report on that (very much preferred) date. Each of these explanations should be about one to three sentences in length. Include and staple the marked copies of your research proposal and research findings report with your progress report (which should be on top). This assignment will receive a formal grade.

The fourth part, due at the start of class on **Thursday, April 19**, will have you contribute an original entry of 900-1500 words with at least one image and one research link on some specific person, place, or thing related to the theme “LGBT Identities, Communities, and Resistance in North Carolina, 1945-2010” to be added to the outhistory.org website. Entries should follow the Wikipedia format. More specific instructions to follow.

The fifth part, due at the start of class on **Tuesday, April 24**, will ask you to submit two hard copies of a rough draft of your final research paper. The final paper will have you place your entry in conversation with major course themes. Specifically, you will be asked to reflect critically on how your entry complicates/modifies/overturns/strengthens specific historical interpretations/narratives discussed during the semester. You must incorporate at least five course readings in the rough draft, just as you should for the final draft. Your rough draft must contain a beginning, middle, and end. Parts of the body of the essay may be outlined. Because this class session will serve as a writing workshop for the completion of your final draft, the more finalized your rough draft, the more you will benefit from this workshop. Your rough draft will count towards your class participation average but will not receive a formal grade.

The sixth part, due **Thursday, May 1** from 4:00-5:00 p.m. in Peabody 204, will require you to submit a final version of your research paper. Papers should be 9-13 double-spaced pages (2700-3900 words). Please attach your research proposal, progress report, outhistory.org entry, and marked-up rough draft to your final paper.

Your written work will be determined accordingly:

- **A: Excellent**  
  Writes insightful, coherent, original pieces; demonstrates concise, cogent critical engagement with course readings and other relevant course material.
B: Good  Writes authoritative but conventional pieces; engages assigned readings and other relevant course material but analysis warrants greater concision and/or depth.

C: Adequate  Writes competent pieces but of limited scope or insight; analysis is wanting and prone to generalization; might not answer all parts of the question(s) being asked.

D: Poor  Writes incoherent pieces that demonstrate a lack of understanding central concepts or course themes; might fail to answer basic components of the question(s) in the prompt.

F: Failing  Writes work that fails to meet the most basic requirements of assignments.

I encourage you to ask questions about these guidelines and to speak with me if they are unclear, or if you are confused or frustrated about an evaluation of your work. I am open to reconsidering a grade, though you must make a brief written argument for why I should do so.

2. Attendance: Participation in all regular class meetings is a crucial part of this course. Consequently, it is mandatory. Because there are always issues that arise, everyone is automatically granted three unexcused absences without penalty. If you should exceed this allowance, the consequences are serious: each class you miss after the third unexcused absence will result in a five point deduction from your final grade (thus, if you have attained four unexcused absences, the top grade you could receive if you received an A (95) on everything you turned in will be a 90 (A-). Six or more unexcused absences will result in failure of the course. No absences will be “excused” for any reason—except (a) if a serious illness prevents you from attending class and this condition is documented; or, (b) if you are prevented from attending class by a death in your family.

Two sessions are absolutely mandatory:

- **Saturday, February 11:** Class trip to the Special Collections at the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library / University Archives at Perkins Library located at the West Campus of Duke University. We will meet with Reference Librarian Kelly Wooten from 1:45-3:00 p.m. that afternoon. Do not be late. I highly recommend taking the Robertson Express Bus, which leaves every hour on the hour from the Morehead Planetarium on Saturdays. For more information on the Robertson Bus Schedule, click on the following link: http://www.robertsonscholars.org/index.php?type=static&source=68. You must notify me no later than by the start of class on Tuesday, January 24 if you could not attend this session. Alternate arrangements will be made for these special cases. **BE ADVISED:** You will lose five points from your overall final grade if you fail to attend this session. ALSO NOTE: I will end some normally scheduled classes before 4:45 p.m. to make-up for the time you spend for this class trip.

- **Tuesday, February 21:** Class trip to the North Carolina Collection at the Wilson Library at UNC. We will meet during our normally scheduled class period that day at the North Carolina Collection—not in Peabody 204. Again, you must notify me no later than by the start of class on Tuesday, January 24 if you could not attend this session. **BE ADVISED:** You will lose five points from your overall final grade if you fail to attend this session.

3. Class Participation: Interactive discussions are crucial to this course because they give you opportunities to work through problems, ask questions, evaluate answers, and learn from each other. Discussions will focus on analyzing
evidence, arguments, and theories and relating information and ideas from different sources. Naturally, to achieve these goals, we must all come to class prepared, share our ideas openly, and respond to each other with courtesy and respect.

NOTE: In order to be prepared for our meetings, you must bring the assigned readings with you to class. Assigned readings for the day listed on the syllabus should be completed prior to the start of class.

Your in-class participation grade will be determined accordingly:

A: Excellent  Makes creative contributions to discussions that demonstrate critical engagement with the readings.
B: Strong  Participates instructively in discussions and demonstrates a general understanding of readings and course content.
C: Fair  Participates superficially in discussions; comments fail to demonstrate comprehension of the readings.
D: Poor  Fails to participate in class and/or fails to come to class.
F: Failure  Does not attend class with any regularity.

GRADE BREAKDOWN
- Course Readings Notebook (10%)
- End-of-Unit Essays (28%)
  - Unit I Essay (7%)
  - Unit II Essay (7%)
  - Unit III Essay (7%)
  - Unit IV Essay (7%)
  - Optional Unit V Essay (Used to cancel the lowest of your previous end-of-unit essays, provided that it is not a zero)
- Research Project (47%)
  - Research proposal (included in class participation evaluation)
  - Research findings report (included in class participation evaluation)
  - Progress report (5%)
  - outhistory.org original entry post (12%)
  - Rough draft of final essay (included in class participation evaluation)
  - Final essay (30%)
- Class Participation  – includes research project preparation assignments, feedback on other students’ work, and mandatory visits to the Special Collections at Duke University and the North Carolina Collection at UNC in mid-February – in addition to in-class participation (15%).

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

It’s quite simple:
- Come to class every day
- Take thorough notes
• Keep up with the readings
• Follow instructions and listen to my suggestions – *I want you to succeed.*

**SNACK BREAK**
Each class, beginning in week two, two to three members of class will bring a small snack to keep the class lively. Everyone will be responsible for snack distribution twice during the semester. Please let me know of any financial constraints and we will find a suitable alternate arrangement. I will bring in food for the first week of class and for week 16.1.

**THE FINE PRINT**

**COMMUNICATION:** I hold office hours in order to speak to you in person about course or non-course related issues that require more than brief responses over email. If you would like to meet with me but have a schedule conflict, we can make an appointment at another time. Please write emails using accurate and appropriate language, as if you were working in a business rather than IMing your friends. I will respond to emails but not always immediately; if your question requires a lengthy reply or a conversation, I will ask you to see me during office hours. My office is a safe space for people of all backgrounds; all conversations there will be kept confidential.

**DEADLINES:** In most cases of serious family or personal crisis, it is best to consult the dean about an appropriate accommodation. In any case, you must contact me and 1) request an extension and 2) propose an alternate due date *BEFORE* the assignment is due. Assignments handed in late without a pre-authorized extension will be marked down five points per day.

**BLACKBOARD AND TRACKING GRADES:** Blackboard contains valuable course information, including valuable course announcement, a copy of this syllabus (in its most updated form), important dates for success in this course, course readings, topic suggestions for your research project, research links, reading questions, and unit essay prompts. You may also track your grades using under “my grades.” You will receive a “0” under the designated class session if you are absent that day or a “.5” for being five to ten minutes late to class. Please hold onto your graded assignments in case I record one of your grades incorrectly. It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Intellectual integrity is a fundamental ideal in American education and professional life. You should carefully study the Carolina honor code and guidelines about plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Note that penalties generally *begin* with failure. The basic principle is that you should always present as your own only work you have actually done yourself. You may not copy another writer's exact words without using quotation marks around them and citing their source. Nor may you use the ideas or information of another without citing their source in a reference (a footnote or endnote). You may not submit the already written papers of another or the research of another. Although you are encouraged to discuss the readings and your ideas with your classmates, you must develop, outline, and write your papers alone. Ask me if you have questions.

**CITATIONS:** In your written work you must give citations to identify the sources of quotations, paraphrased passages, ideas or information. Footnotes are the standard form of citation in the discipline of history should be used in essays and the final paper. For some situations where the work referred to is obvious, such as end-of-unit essays, parenthetical citations to page numbers are fine. For some examples of footnote formats, see those modeled in the schedule of readings below.
COURSE SCHEDULE

**Please note that the course schedule is subject to revision at my discretion; I will announce any major changes as soon as possible**

Week 1.1 Tuesday, January 10  
**Introduction: Course expectations**

Unit I  
Thinking About the LGBT Past

Week 1.2 Thursday, January 12  
**LGBT History and its Challenges**

***We will devote part of this class session to discussion of the semester-long research project and the outhistory.org website: its purpose; how to navigate through the site; its utility and limitations***

Week 2.1 Tuesday, January 17  
**Sexual Identities: Utility and Limitations**

Week 2.2 Thursday, January 19  
**The L, the B, and the T**
- **Read two of the following articles:**

Monday, January 23  
**End-of-Unit I Essay:** Email to me by noon; hard copy at the start of class on Tuesday, January 24.
Unit II
The (Latent) Emergence of Modern Sexual Identities, 1600-1960

Week 3.1 Tuesday, January 24 Same Sex Desires and Gender Identities in Early America


☞ Last opportunity to notify me if you cannot attend the mandatory class trips to the Special Collections at Perkins Library at Duke (Saturday, Feb. 11) or the North Carolina Collection at Wilson Library at UNC (Tuesday, Feb 21): Notify me by the start of class.

Week 3.2 Thursday, January 26 Identity Formation, Popular Culture and Science

- Read one of the following:

Week 4.1 Tuesday, January 31 Class, Gender, and the Making of the Gay Male World

- Chauncey, Gay New York, introduction and part I; skim chapter 1 and read the rest.
- * Earl Lind (Ralph Werther-Jennie June), The Riddle of the Underworld (1921), read all six sections http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/Earl_Lind_(Ralph_WertherJennie_June):_The_Riddle_of_the_Underworld_1921
  *provide separate entries for each of the four chapters and the selection from The Riddle of the Underworld*

***We will devote part of this class session to a discussion of the research proposal, which are due Tuesday, February 7 (Week 5.1)***

☞ Select a working topic/theme that you might like to explore for your proposal in preparation for this class session.

Week 4.2 Thursday, February 2 Gay Sex and Gay Cultures in the City: 1920s


Week 5.1 Tuesday, February 7 The Beginnings of the Closet

- Chauncey, Gay New York, Part III.

☞ Research proposal: Due at the start of class.
Week 5.2 Thursday, February 9  The “Science” and Experiences of Stigma


- **Read one of the following:**

☞ **Course Reading Journal:** Electronic submission for the journal will be accepted (hard copies needed for essay).

☞ Saturday, February 11  Class trip to Special Collections at the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library / University Archives at Perkins Library located at the West Campus of Duke University: 1:45-3:00 p.m.

Week 6.1 Tuesday, February 14  Sexual Science, the Media, and Transsexuality


- **Read one of the following:**

Week 6.2 Thursday, February 16  Early Postwar Movements for Freedom and the Specter of Homophobia


☞ Monday, February 20  **End-of-Unit II Essay:** Email to me by noon; hard copy at the start of class on Tuesday, February 21.
### Unit III: Defining Difference and Community, 1930 to 1990

#### Week 7.1  Tuesday, February 21
**Using the North Carolina Collections at Wilson Library**

- Begin reading *Zami*.

#### Week 7.2  Thursday, February 23
**The Experience of Difference**

- Finish Lorde, *Zami*.

#### Week 8.1  Tuesday, February 28
**A Gay Community, A Queer Community, Or Something Else?**


#### Week 8.2  Thursday, March 1
**(Queer?) Sites and Movements in Rural Mississippi**


  - **Research findings report**: Due at the start of class.
  - **Research proposal re-dos**: Due at the start of class (collated with your research findings report).

#### Week 9.1  Tuesday, March 6
**Spring Break**

#### Week 9.2  Thursday, March 8
**Spring Break**

#### Week 10.1  Tuesday, March 13
**Intersectional Identities I: An Introduction**


#### Week 10.2  Thursday, March 15
**Intersectional Identities II: Growing Up, “Coming Out,” and (Homo)sex Among Black Gay Men in the South**

- Johnson, *Sweet Tea* (Read the following):
  - Chapter 1 or Chapter 2 (select one).
  - Chapter 4 (required by all).

**Monday, March 19**

**End-of-Unit III Essay**: Email to me by noon; hard copy at the start of class on Tuesday, March 20.
Unit IV
Liberation: For Whom and for What?, 1945 to 2000

Week 11.1  Tuesday, March 20  Religion and LGBT Activism
• **Read one of the following:**
  o Johnson, *Sweat Tea*, Chapter 3.

Week 11.2  Thursday, March 22  Homoeconomics
• **Read one of the following:**

Week 12.1  Tuesday, March 27  Research Paper Workshop
☞ **Progress report:** Preferred submission date; hand in as a hard copy at the start of class.

Week 12.2  Thursday, March 29  Transgender Liberation

Week 13.1  Tuesday, April 3  Gay Liberation in the City and in the Country
☞ **Progress report:** Due at the start of class – if not submitted on Tuesday, March 27.

Week 13.2  Thursday, April 5  Lesbian Liberation
☞ Monday, April 9  **End-of-Unit IV Essay:** Email to me by noon; hard copy at the start of class on Tuesday, April 10.
Unit V
Virtually Queer, Virtually Normal, or Virtually Equal? LGBT(Q) Politics, 1980-2010

Week 14.1  Tuesday, April 10  Gay and Lesbian Institutions and Responses to AIDS
Choose either “A” or “B” as your group of selected readings for this session:

A. AIDS and the Politics of Identity
- Read one of the following (no, these Cohens are not related):
  o  * Cathy Cohen, TBA.

B. AIDS, Sexual Ethics, and Consumer Culture

Week 14.2  Thursday, April 12  Same-Sex Marriage: The Path to Freedom or Assimilation?
- Read one of the following from Sullivan’s Same-Sex Marriage:
  o  * Paula L. Ettelbrick, “Since When is Marriage a Path to Liberation?” 122-28.
  o  * Jonathan Rauch, “For Better or Worse?” 170-81.

Week 15.1  Tuesday, April 17  Mainstreaming and its Discontents
- SKIM: Vicki E. Eaklor, “Where Are We Now, Where Are We Going, and Who Gets to Say?” MAQH, Chapter 17.
Conclusions

Week 15.2    Thursday, April 19    Writing Workshop I: From Entries to Your Final Papers
☞ outhistory.org entry: Due at the start of class.
    Optional End-of-Unit Essay V: Due at the start of class.

Week 16.1    Tuesday, April 24    Writing Workshop II: Bringing It Altogether
☞ Rough draft of your final paper: Due at the start of class.

☞ Tuesday, May 1    Final Paper AND Course Reading Journal: Due 4:00-5:00 p.m. in Peabody 204.