

AIDS, Politics and Culture (GWS/HIST 462)  
Tuesday and Thursday 9:30-10:45  
305 Lincoln Hall  
Spring 2012

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 11-12:00pm, and by appointment

Welcome to *AIDS, Politics and Culture*. This course is designed to introduce you to the study of AIDS as a medical, social, political and cultural construction. Using texts from a wide range of disciplines we will explore the historical epidemiology of AIDS, the politics of state response to AIDS as well as how activists across the world have addressed state (in)action, and the evolving representations of AIDS in the media. Over the course of the semester we will question how, and to what extent, ideas about AIDS have changed over the last two and half decades. We will attempt to answer these questions transnationally, by focusing our attention on the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa and the United States. This will help us concretize what it means to talk about AIDS as a global pandemic.

### Required Texts

All texts are available at the UIC Bookstore. If you cannot purchase the books, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make alternative arrangements.

- Jennifer Brier, *Infectious Ideas* (UNC, 2011)
- Paul Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation, Updated Edition* (California, 2006)
- Amy Hoffman, *Hospital Time* (Duke, 1997)
- Vihn-Kim Nguyen, *The Republic of Therapy* (Duke 2010)
- Mark Padilla, *Caribbean Pleasure Industry* (Chicago, 2007)
- Jesus Ramirez-Valles, *Compañeros* (Illinois, 2011)
- Articles on the schedule marked with (BB) are available on blackboard. You should arrange to print out the articles and bring them to class.

Graduate students taking this class will need to read an additional three books and lead a class discussion on one of them. I have not ordered these books at the bookstore, so please let me know if you cannot locate them.

- Cathy Cohen, *Boundaries of Blackness* (Chicago, 1999)
- Deborah Gould, *Moving Politics* (Chicago, 2009)
- Didier Fassin, *When Bodies Remember* (California, 2007)

### Course Mechanics

*Attendance/Class Participation:* This course is based entirely on class discussions. For our conversations to work in a class of this size, everyone must come to class, carefully do the reading, regularly engage in class discussions, and respect the ideas of people with different opinions. Because I run the class as a seminar, it is my hope that we can sustain a rich

conversation about AIDS and politics over the course of the semester. **Class participation will be worth 25% of the final grade.**

*Writing Assignments:*

**For undergraduates (except those fulfilling the 400-level History Department research requirement):**

You will write three papers in this class.

The first paper will require you to critically analyze a popular magazine or newspaper from the early 1980s and one from the present. You should consider if and how media representations of AIDS have changed over the last thirty years. You will learn the research skills needed for this paper on January 30<sup>th</sup>. **The paper should be 3-5 pages and will be worth 20% of your final grade.**

For the second paper you will critically engage a week's worth of reading. One way to do this to compare and contrast the readings, another way is to think about how the authors might respond to each other's work. Either way, summary, alone, will not receive a passing grade. **The paper should be 3-5 pages and will be worth 20% of your final grade.**

The final assignment has two parts, leading class discussion with several of your fellow classmates, and writing your own short research paper of **no more than 10 pages**. You will be broken into five groups, with each group investigating an AIDS activist group or AIDS Service Organization chosen from the list below. As part of your research, you will need to select two articles or book chapters to assign as reading on the day you lead class discussion at the end of the semester. **The presentation and paper will be worth 35% of your final grade.**

#### Organization/Activist List

ACT UP  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Health Gap Coalition  
Housing Works  
Lesbian AIDS Project  
Partners in Health  
Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN)  
Treatment Action Campaign (TAC)  
UNAIDS

I will consider other organizations or activist groups, but you must present me with convincing reasons to do so.

**For History majors fulfilling the 400-level research requirement:**

You must do all the reading and attend class, but have different writing assignments and due dates. You must notify me by January 19<sup>th</sup> if you plan to undertake the research paper option. The final research paper will be worth **75% of your grade**.

**For graduate students:**

You are expected to do all the reading, plus the three additional books listed above. I also want you to lead class discussion one day during the semester. Ideally, those days will correspond with the additional books so that you can use those texts to provide more context to the undergraduates.

Book review for the three additional books (**15% each**).

Regular class participation and leading class discussion (**25%**).

Literature review on a topic of your choosing related to class themes and due at the end of class (**30%**).

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course should register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and determine what services are available to them. [http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/disability\\_resources/services.html](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/disability_resources/services.html)

*Academic Integrity:* Please read the University policy on academic integrity at [www.uic.edu/depts/sja/integrit.htm](http://www.uic.edu/depts/sja/integrit.htm). If you have any questions about this policy or about proper citations, please ask me in class. Plagiarism is punishable under University policy, and any form of academic dishonesty will endanger your standing in the class and at UIC. Beyond plagiarism, I believe academic integrity requires us to have a shared understanding of our roles in this academic community. First and foremost, everybody needs to respect our classmates' ideas by not belittling positions we disagree with in class discussion, attending class regularly and on time, and following the semester long conversation by carefully doing the reading. When writing, you cannot take someone else's idea as your own without proper credit, nor can you be careless about editing your work. In practice this means, in addition to submitting papers on time, you must carefully read and edit your papers before handing them in to me. In return, I will give you constructive criticism and return them to you within two weeks of receiving them. Throughout the semester, we will talk more about academic integrity, and its role in making a better university.

## SCHEDULE

- January 10**                    **Introductions**
- January 12**                    **Frames: Sex and Theory in an Epidemic**  
Treichler, “AIDS, Homophobia, and Biomedical Discourse” (BB)  
“Sex in an Epidemic” (view)
- January 17**                    **When AIDS Began, Part 1**  
Farmer, Preface-Part I
- January 19**                    **When AIDS Began, Part 2**  
Brier, Chapter 1  
Cochrane, Chapter 3 (BB)  
“Sex in an Epidemic” (finish viewing)

**Graduate students** submit first, second, and third choices for leading class discussion.

**History 400 students:** Notify me of your intent to do the research paper.

- January 24**                    **AIDS takes hold in Haiti**  
Farmer, Parts II and III
- January 26**                    **AIDS takes hold in the US**  
Brier, Chapter 2  
Wallace, “A Synergism of Plagues,” *Environmental Research*, v. 47  
(1988) (BB)
- January 31**                    **AIDS through Primary Sources**  
Bérubé, selections (BB)  
Library lecture
- February 2**                    **“African HIV/AIDS”: A Case Study in Contextualizing Epidemiology**  
“AIDS in Africa: Regional Perspectives,” from Ezekiel Kalipeni, et. al.,  
eds., *HIV and AIDS in Africa: Beyond Epidemiology*(Blackwell, 2003)  
(BB)  
Fierreck, “Epidemiological Disjunctures” (BB)

**Graduate students** read *When Bodies Remember*. Submit book review.

**History 400 students:** submit a 2-3 page proposal for research project, including a discussion of the primary sources you plan to consult for your paper and at least three secondary sources on your subject.

- February 7**            **AIDS and Accusation**  
Finish Farmer
- February 9**            **From Domestic Policy to American Foreign Policy**  
Brier, Chapter 3
- February 14**          **Intersections, Part 1**  
*Black Is... Black Ain't* (86mins)

**Paper One due**

- February 16**          **Where are the Women?**  
Brier, Chapter 4  
Patton and Kelly, Making It: A Woman's Guide to Sex in the Age of  
AIDS (Firebrand, 1988) (BB)  
Susser and Stein, "Culture, Sexuality and Women's Agency in the  
Prevention of HIV/AIDS in Southern African" (BB)
- February 21**          **The Gender Politics of Emotions**  
Hoffman, *Hospital Time*, entire book

**Graduate students** read *Moving Politics*. Submit book review.

- February 23**          **Where are the Lesbians?**  
Hollibaugh, selections (BB)  
Matebeni, "Sexing Women" (BB)  
Diana's Hair Ego (view)
- February 28**          **The Political Economy of Global Sex Tourism, Part 1**  
Padilla, Intro-Chapter 2
- March 1**                **The Political Economy of Global Sex Tourism, Part 2**  
Padilla, Chapter 3-4
- March 6**                **The Political Economy of Global Sex Tourism, Part 3**  
Finish Padilla
- March 8**                **Contemporary South Africa**  
Decoteau "The Struggle for Life in South Africa's Slums" (BB)  
Visit from Professor Claire Decoteau

**History 400 students:** Outline of research paper, with thesis statement

- March 13**              **Transnational Activism**  
Brier, Chapter 5 and Epilogue

Geffen et al, "Mobilising Gay and Lesbian Organisations to Respond to the Political Challenges of the South African HIV Epidemic" (BB)

**March 15**            **Drugs into Bodies?**  
*It's My Life* (view)

**Paper 2 due**

**Submit choice of organization/activist group for presentation and final paper**

**March 20 and 22**    **Break**

**March 27**            **Intersections, Part 2**  
Ramirez-Valles, *Compañeros*, through page 80.  
Juana María Rodríguez, "Activism and Identity," from *Queer Latinidad*  
(NYU Press, 2003) (BB)

Graduate Students read *Boundaries of Blackness*. Submit book review.

**March 29**            **Intersectio, Part 3**  
Complete Ramirez-Valles  
Visit from Professor Jesus Ramirez-Valles

**History 400 students:** Submit first draft of research paper

**April 3**              **What's After Drugs into Bodies? Part 1**  
Nguyen, Intro –Chapter 4

**Attend "Angels in America" at the Court Theatre (opens March 30). We will plan a class trip, but you can also see it on your own, if you prefer.**

**April 5**              View: *Pills, Profits, Protest* (60 mins)

**All readings for the final five classes must be submitted electronically.**

**April 10**            **What's After Drugs into Bodies? Part 2**  
Finish Nguyen

**April 12**            **Class Presentations**

**April 17**            **Class presentations**

**April 19**            **Class Presentations**

**April 24**            **Class Presentations**

**April 26**            **Class Presentations**

**Final paper due for all students.**