

## LESBIAN AND GAY HISTORY



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Hist 466/WS 466  
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This course will explore both "classic" and more recent writings on the history of sexuality, focusing on the experiences, ideas, and conflicts that have shaped modern gay and lesbian identities. It will explore such questions as: What is the lesbian and gay past? How have historians recovered the stories of lesbians and gay men who lived in societies and eras vastly different from our own? What can we learn from history about gender and sexuality, repression and resistance, deviance and acceptance, identity and community? We will use films, primary and secondary readings, discussions, and written assignments to begin to answer these and other questions.

The success of this course depends on **everyone's informed presence**. Therefore, attendance and active participation in class will be a major part of your grade.

**Class meets on Tuesdays, from 3:35-6:35 in 109 Boucke. Please be prompt.**

The following books are required reading. All are in paperback and should be available used. Readings marked with an asterisk (\*) are on **electronic reserve** and are also required.

George Chauncey, Gay New York  
Leslie Feinberg, Stone Butch Blues  
Radclyffe Hall, The Well of Loneliness  
Kathy Peiss, Major Problems in the History of  
American Sexuality  
David Savage, The Kid  
Mab Segrest, Memoir of a Race Traitor

## **WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to expanding our knowledge of lesbian and gay history, this course will stress critical reading, research, and writing skills. The following are the assignments for undergraduate and graduate students.

### **I: UNDERGRADUATES**

Each undergraduate student will write **six 2-3 page** response essays on a particular week's readings (5% each), a **3-5 page** book, lecture, or film review (15%), and a **10-15 page** final paper (25%). All **due dates** are listed below.

### **II: GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Each graduate student will, in addition to the six response papers, write a **20-25 page** research paper based on primary and secondary sources. The following schedule will be **strictly observed**:

1. Consultation with me on your research idea by Feb. 3.
2. A typed proposal, including the central questions, a plan for research, and a preliminary bibliography, due March 2.
3. A draft of the paper, due April 6.
4. Presentations at our final class on April 27.
5. A final paper (due during finals week)

Grades will be based on class participation and on the written assignments. Only outstanding effort and quality work (clear, insightful, sophisticated, and error-free) will get you an A in this course. Late assignments will be graded down. **You must complete all the work to pass the course.**

Other info: OutHistory.org, a new website based at City University of New York and directed by Jonathan Katz, is sponsoring a contest for online exhibits in local lgbt history. If anyone wants to take on such a project as a final assignment, please consult the website and talk to me early in the semester. [http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/Main_Page)

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASSES:**

Jan. 12:           **INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

FILM: "BEFORE STONEWALL"

Jan. 19:           **WHAT IS LESBIAN AND GAY HISTORY?**

Jeffrey Weeks, "The Social Construction of Sexuality," in Peiss, Major Problems, 2-9  
 Rictor Norton, "Essentialism and Queer History," in Peiss, Major Problems, 10-16  
 \*John Boswell, "Revolutions, Universals, & Sexual Categories," Hidden from History, 17-36  
 \*David Halperin, "Sex Before Sexuality: Pederasty, Politics, and Power in Ancient Athens," Hidden from History, 37-53

**Paper #1 due**

Jan. 26:           **PREINDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES**

Kathleen Brown, "'Changed ... into the Fashion of Man,'" in Peiss, Major Problems, 80-92  
 Richard Godbeer, "Sodomy in Colonial New England," in Peiss, Major Problems, 92-105  
 \*Randolph Trumbach, "The Birth of the Queen," Hidden from History, 129-140

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 70-80

Feb. 2:           **THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: SEX AND DOMESTICITY**

Nancy Cott, "Passionlessness," in Peiss, Major Problems, 131-141  
 Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual," in Peiss, Major Problems, 201-214  
 Karen Hansen, "An Erotic Friendship Between Two African-American Women," in Peiss, Major Problems, 214-228  
 \*Martin Duberman, "'Writhing Bedfellows,'" Hidden from History, 153-168

**Paper #2 due**

Feb. 9: **THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: REDEFINITIONS**

Jonathan Ned Katz, "The Invention of  
Heterosexuality," in Peiss, Major Problems,  
348-356

\*George Chauncey, "From Sexual Inversion to  
Homosexuality," Salmagundi Fall 1982/Winter  
1983: 114-146

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 109-17, 188-  
201, 338-48

Feb. 16: **THE MAKING OF A GAY MALE WORLD**

George Chauncey, Gay New York

**Paper #3 due**

Feb. 23: **"WILLFUL WOMEN": ROLES, REPRESSION, & REBELLION**

Radclyffe Hall, The Well of Loneliness

\*Esther Newton, "The Mythic, Mannish Lesbian,"  
Hidden from History, 281-293

Mar. 2: **ODD GIRLS AND TWILIGHT LOVERS**

\*Shari Benstock, "Paris Lesbianism and the  
Politics of Reaction," Hidden from History,  
332-346

\*Estelle Freedman, "Miriam Van Waters and the  
Burning of Letters"

**Paper #4 due**

**GRADUATE STUDENTS' PROPOSALS DUE**

Mar. 9: **SPRING BREAK**

Mar. 16: **WORLD WAR II AND WARS AT HOME**

\*Allan Berube, Coming out Under Fire, chaps. 5 & 6, pp. 128-174

\*Margot Canaday, "Building a Straight State," Journal of American History (2003): 935-957

Jeffrey Escofier, "Popular Sociology, Reading, and Coming Out," in Peiss, Major Problems, 393-403

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 368-381

FILM: "COMING OUT UNDER FIRE"

**Paper #5 due**

Mar. 23: **WOMEN'S LIBERATION, GAY LIBERATION, AND IDENTITY**

Leslie Feinberg, Stone Butch Blues

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 381-84, 406-422

Mar. 30: **PASSOVER: NO CLASS**

Apr. 6: **GAY COMMUNITIES, GAY POLITICS**

Mab Segrest, Memoir of a Race Traitor

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 406-422

FILM: "THE TIMES OF HARVEY MILK"

**Undergraduates' Review Essays Due**

**GRADUATE STUDENTS' DRAFTS DUE**

Apr. 13: **THE REAGAN ERA: SEXUAL MINORITIES and AIDS**

Ronald Bayer, "AIDS and the Bathhouse Controversy," Peiss, Major Problems, 471-483

Michael Specter, "The Vaccine"

[http://www.michaelspecter.com/ny/2003/2003\\_02\\_03\\_vaccine.html](http://www.michaelspecter.com/ny/2003/2003_02_03_vaccine.html)

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 446-460

**Paper #6 due**

Apr. 20:           **BACKLASH AND ASSIMILATION**

Chauncey, et al., "The Historians' Case Against  
Gay Discrimination" (2003)

<http://hnn.us/articles/1539.html>

Kath Weston, "Gay Families as the 'Families we  
Choose,'" Peiss, Major Problems, 497-505

David Savage, The Kid

Documents: Peiss, Major Problems, 485-492

Apr. 27:           **FINAL CLASS: PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSION**

**FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE DURING FINALS WEEK.**