

Fall 2016  
Queer Histories  
WGSS 3172

Professor Andrea Friedman  
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Office Hours: Wednesday 1-3; or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Queer history is a profoundly political project. Scholars and activists use queer histories to assert theories of identity formation, build communities, and advance a vision of the meanings of sexuality in modern life and the place of queer people in national communities. This history of alternative sexual identities is narrated in a variety of settings—the internet as well as the academy, art and film as well as the streets—and draws upon many disciplines, including anthropology, geography, sociology, oral history, literature, as well as history. This discussion-based course will examine the sites and genres of queer history in the United States, with particular attention to moments of contestation and debate about its meanings. Our aim will be both to become familiar with important themes in the history of non-normative sexuality in the United States, and to understand the political stakes of the ways that history is told.

**TEXTS**

Anne Balay, *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers\**

George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940\**

Rachel Hope Cleves, *Charity and Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America*

Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*

\*Also available as an ebook via Wash U library website.

Other required readings can be accessed through [Blackboard](#), usually via the Course Reserves tool. Films to be viewed before class are also available via course reserves. Instructions for streaming films are on the "Course Documents" tab on Blackboard. Web-based essays (designated CD on the syllabus) can also be found on the "Course Documents" tab on Blackboard or can be hyperlinked via the electronic version of the syllabus on the Blackboard page.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Class participation (worth 10 points). Class sessions will be organized around discussion of assigned readings. It is absolutely essential that you **carefully read assigned materials and think about them** prior to coming to class. Your participation grade will be determined by the quality of your contribution to class discussions, as well as your regular attendance. I gauge quality in two ways: are your comments responsive to and informed by the readings for the class? are you an attentive listener who engages in respectful and productive dialogue with other members of the class? If speaking up in class is difficult for you, please talk to me about strategies and alternative ways of participating.

- There may be in-class assignments (eg, participation in small discussion groups, reading summaries, free writes, others as necessary). These will be assessed as part of your participation grade.
  - More than three absences, for any reason, will lower your class participation grade. If extraordinary circumstances require that you miss more than three classes, please see me to discuss the possibility of a make-up assignment.
2. Course blog (worth 30 points). Each student will contribute to the class blog five times during the semester, posting an approximately 300 word response to a session's readings. There will also be a final blog post, due on the last day of class. See the assignment for more detail.
3. Papers (worth 30 points each). You will complete two essays of 1750-2000 words in which you use class readings to respond to a question. Due on September 30 and November 18. Late papers will be penalized by one letter grade for each 24-hour period past the due date.

ALL course requirements must be met to pass this course. For students who are taking the course pass/fail or credit/no credit, a passing grade is C-.

## ***COURSE POLICIES***

### ***ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY***

- Please do not use smart pens or otherwise record class sessions without prior permission.
- Please do not use in class electronic devices that can be connected to the internet without prior permission. My reasons for making this request are succinctly explained by Anne Curzan in "[Why I'm Asking You Not to Use Laptops.](#)" As she concludes, "if you need or strongly prefer a laptop for taking notes or accessing readings in class for any reason, please come talk with me, and I am happy to make that work. I'll just ask you to commit to using the laptop only for class-related work."

### ***ACADEMIC INTEGRITY***

Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity will result in a failing grade on the assignment, and may result in a failing grade for the course. Please review [Washington University's academic integrity policy](#). Here's a link to [a helpful guide to understanding plagiarism](#).

### ***INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS***

- ***CLASSROOM CULTURE:*** I believe strongly that the best classrooms are places where our assumptions, norms, and beliefs are challenged in respectful and productive ways. I am inspired by University of Iowa professor [Sherry K. Watt's idea of "brave spaces" in which "we understand that disagreement has value and we commit to sit with discomfort."](#) However, language or behavior that creates a hostile environment will not be tolerated. Examples range from simply interrupting or ignoring others while they are talking to overt harassment or intimidation with reference to race, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual identity, religion, ethnicity, nationality, ability, or political belief. Please be sure you know [Washington University's Policy on Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment](#). If you have any concerns about the classroom culture as the semester proceeds, or if there is anything that I can do to make the classroom a more productive and welcoming space for you, please let me know.
- ***DISABILITY:*** Washington University provides accommodations and/or services to students with documented disabilities. Students should seek appropriate documentation through the

[Disability Resource Center](#) which will approve and arrange any accommodations. Please feel free to speak to me at any time about your individual learning needs.

- *MENTAL HEALTH:* Mental Health Services' professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See [shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth](http://shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth)
- *BIAS REPORTING:* The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University's Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See [brss.wustl.edu](http://brss.wustl.edu)
- *CAMPUS RESOURCES ON SEXUALITY/GENDER IDENTITY:* If you have questions or are seeking information about sexual and gender identity issues, see <http://campuslife.wustl.edu/lgbtqia>
- *ACCOMMODATIONS BASED UPON SEXUAL ASSAULT:* The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb ([kim\\_webb@wustl.edu](mailto:kim_webb@wustl.edu)), Director of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource; however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to speak with the Title IX Coordinator directly, Ms. Kennedy can be reached at [\(314\) 935-3118](tel:3149353118), [jwkennedy@wustl.edu](mailto:jwkennedy@wustl.edu), or by visiting her office in the Women's Building. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to Tamara King, Associate Dean for Students and Director of Student Conduct, or by contacting WUPD at [\(314\) 935-5555](tel:3149355555) or your local law enforcement agency.

You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling [\(314\) 935-8761](tel:3149358761) or visiting the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Seigle Hall.

#### *MISCELLANY*

- If you ever have any questions or concerns about the course, please feel free to discuss them with me, sooner rather than later!
- All students are strongly encouraged to participate in the [online course evaluation system](#).

- This syllabus is a work-in-progress, and may be altered during the course of the semester.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **I. Defining the Subject**

#### **Week 1 Introduction**

Tu 8/30 Introduction

Th 9/1 Leila Rupp, Introduction to *A Desired Past*; Judith Bennett, "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms"

#### **Week 2 Continuity and change**

Tu 9/6 Safe Zones training

Th 9/8 John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity"; Chauncey, Introduction, *Gay New York*

#### **Week 3 The problem of evidence**

Tu 9/13 Estelle Freedman, "The Burning of Letters Continues;" Evelyn Hammond, "Black (W)holes and the Geometry of Black Female Sexuality"

Th 9/15 Tracy Brown, "'Abominable Sin' in Colonial New Mexico"

### **II. Coming Out Stories**

#### **Week 4 Creating a gay male world before Stonewall**

Tu 9/20 Chauncey, *Gay New York*, pp. 32-97

Th 9/22 Chauncey, *Gay New York*, pp. 98-127, 178-225, 244-67

#### **Week 5 Repression and resistance**

Tu 9/27 Chauncey, *Gay New York*, pp. 331-61

Th 9/29 View in class: *Stonewall Uprising*

### **PAPER 1 DUE FRIDAY, 9/30, 7 PM**

#### **Week 6 Mythmaking and its challenges**

Tu 10/4 Elizabeth A. Armstrong & Suzanna M. Crage, "Movements and Memory: The Making of The Stonewall Myth"; Andrea Friedman, "[Stonewall: Debating the Subject of History](#)" (CD)

View in class: selections from *Stonewall*

Th 10/6 **View before class:** *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria*  
Jessi Gan, "'Still at the Back of the Bus': Sylvia Rivera's Struggle"

#### **Week 7 Whose community?**

Tu 10/11 Thaddeus Russell, "The Color of Discipline"

**View before class:** *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*

Th 10/13 Horacio N. Roque Ramírez, "That's My Place"; Lourdes Torres, "Compañeras in the Middle"

**Week 8** Coming home

Tu 10/18 FALL BREAK

Th 10/20 Discuss *Zami* (entire)

**III. Geographies of the Past and Present**

**Week 9** Against metronormativity

Tu 10/25 Gray, "There are No Queers Here"; Henry, "Queering the American Frontier";  
Hommerding, ["This is Your Pasty"](#) (CD)

Th 10/27 Excerpts, *Sweet Tea* and *Men Like That*

**Week 10** Representing metronormativity

Tu 11/1 **View before class:** *Boys Don't Cry*

View during class: "The Brandon Teena Story"

Th 11/3 J. Halberstam, "The Brandon Teena Archive"; discuss essay and both films

**Week 11** Queer at work

Tu 11/8 Balay, *Steel Closets*, pp. 1-74

Th 11/10 Balay, *Steel Closets*, pp. 75-166

**Week 12** Local histories

Tu 11/15 Guest speaker, St. Louis LGBT History Project

Th 11/17 Community history project websites (tbd)

**PAPER #2 DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 7 PM**

**IV. Queer History and Contemporary Politics**

**Week 13** Historicizing same-sex marriage I

Tu 11/22 [The Obergefell Syllabus: Historicizing Same-Sex Marriage in the United States](#) (CD)

Th 11/24 *THANKSGIVING*

**Week 14** Historicizing same-sex marriage II

Tu 11/29 Cleves, *Charity & Sylvia*, pp. vii-100

Th 12/1 Cleves, *Charity & Sylvia*, pp.101-203

**Week 15** Historicizing the links between racism and homophobia

Tu 12/6 Jennifer Dominique Jones, ["More than Loving"](#); Gill Frank, ["Stalling Civil Rights"](#); Adam  
Shapiro, ["The Gay Jim Crow"](#) and T. J. Tallie's response, ["Disputing 'Gay Jim Crow'"](#)  
(all CD)

Th 12/8 Conclusion