



ENGL 26 - Queer Film and Literature

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course examines representations of "queer" sexuality and identity in films and literary texts ranging from turn-of-the-century works that encode homosexuality in an assortment of ways to contemporary works that explore a variety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, ally and pansexual (LGBTQ+) identities. This course emphasizes the diversity of perspectives on homosexuality and gender that may be found in 20th and 21st century film and literature, and highlights how texts by self-identified LGBTQ+ authors have responded and contributed to U.S. culture and history. Graded only.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Analyze and compare ideas across course texts.
2. Form and support an argument using evidence from multiple texts.
3. View literary works through (or interpret literary works through) different lenses that may include political, socioeconomic, geographical, ethnic, cultural, ecological, psychoanalytical, historical, gender, sexuality, or genre development.
4. Identify and evaluate major works of literature and film by self-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and ally (LGBTQ+) authors.
5. Critically evaluate both sides of the debate concerning the role of nature versus nurture in the construction of queer identity as represented by text and film.
6. Analyze and discuss the ways different texts reflect the historical construction of gender- and sexuality-based identities in a variety of cultures and time periods.
7. Assess the role of literature and film by self-identified queer authors in the larger movement for queer visibility.
8. Analyze the historical development of LGBTQ+ literature and relate the contribution of LGBTQ+ texts to U.S. history and culture.
9. Analyze and evaluate the ways contemporary beliefs about queer identity are complicated by writings of authors who have been read as representing homosexual desire in their works, yet who would not have identified themselves as such.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
<u>Lecture</u>	
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Lec Hrs</u>
The Power of Queering the Constructs that Support Historical, Systemic, and Institutional Racism	9.00
Read: Selected Harlem Renaissance poems on Poetry.org, Kenneth Jones and Tema Okune's "White Supremacist Cultural Norms", excerpts from <i>Brother to Brother</i> , The Combahee River Collective Statement, and Audre Lorde's "The Uses of Erotic as Power"	
Watch: <i>Brother to Brother</i> and <i>Moonlight</i>	
Trans Representation and Liberation in Cinema	9.00
Read: Excerpts from <i>New Cinema and Despite All Diversity</i> and excerpts from <i>Fiebre Tropical</i> , and begin reading <i>Detransition, Baby</i>	
Watch: <i>Drunktown's Finest</i> (2015) and <i>Tangerine</i> (2015)	
Introduction to the Concept of Queer as Both Noun and Verb	6.00
Read: Excerpts from Vito Russo's <i>Celluloid Closet</i> and B. Ruby Rich's "What's a Good Gay Film?" from <i>The New Queer Cinema: The Director's Cut</i> , and "The Vito Russo Test"	
Watch: <i>The Celluloid Closet</i> and clips from <i>Disclosure</i>	
Queer Liberation, Religion, and Backlash	9.00
Read: Masha Gessen's "Coming Out...", Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's "Epistemology of the Closet", excerpts from Mel White's "What the Bible Says About Homosexuality", and David Sedaris' "I Like Guys"	
Watch: <i>After Stonewall</i> , <i>The Life and Death of Marsha P. Johnson</i> , and <i>Latter Days</i>	
From AIDS, to the Opioid Crisis, to COVID: The Impacts of Epidemics on Queer America	9.00
Read: Excerpts from Randy Shilts' <i>And the Band Played On</i> , Hemphill's <i>Brother to Brother</i> , Ocean Vuong's <i>One Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous</i> , and Brian Broome's <i>Punch Me Up to the Gods</i>	
Watch: Clips from <i>And the Band Played On</i> film adaptation, <i>Paris is Burning</i> , and <i>Philadelphia</i>	

Topics

Lec Hrs

Queering Marriage and Family

9.00

Read: *Detransition, Baby*

Watch: *El Canto del Colibri* and *The Kids Are Alright*

Total Hours: 51.00

Methods of Instruction

- A. Collaborative Group Work
- B. Discussion
- C. Guest Speakers
- D. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- E. Lecture
- F. Multimedia Presentations
- G. Reading Assignments

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Oral Presentation
- B. Journal
- C. Group Participation (Inactive)
- D. Written Assignments
- E. Essays and research papers
- F. Class Discussion

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read the work assigned by your instructor, choose two quotations from the work, analyze the meaning of the quote and explain to the class how you think it connects to the main themes or points in the work as a whole.
2. Evaluate one of your classmates' analyses, and offer suggestions for deepening the analysis. Think about the ways your own reading differed from your classmate's and offer these different perspectives and use additional quotes from the reading to question, debate, or add to your classmate's analysis.

Writing Assignments

1. Form a specific question that has emerged from your choice of one or a comparison of two reading assignments, and use that question to help you formulate a thesis. Then support and develop that thesis in a three to four page formal essay, consistently synthesizing specific details from your chosen readings and outside research and come to a logical conclusion that develops the implications of your thesis for your audience and share with the class.
2. Choose one of the following topics: the biological versus the socially constructed, the primacy of religious or social codes for heteronormativity, the potential benefits and detriments of categorizing, the potential benefits and detriments of queering identities, or the potential benefits and detriments of resisting heteronormative views of marriage and family. Write a five to seven page essay, using examples from specific readings and films we've discussed, that supports and develops your own, specific thesis within one of these topics. Share your findings with the class.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Attend one of the recommended theater performances, art shows, local LGBTQ+ events, or film screenings announced by the instructor. In a two to three page report, explain and assess the statements you think the event makes about queer identities, heteronormativity, and categorization. Share your findings with the class.
2. Choose one of the following topics: the biological versus the socially constructed, the primacy of religious or social codes for heteronormativity, the potential benefits and detriments of categorizing, the potential benefits and detriments of queering identities, or the potential benefits and detriments of resisting heteronormative views of marriage and family. Research and locate at least five outside sources, and create an annotated bibliography. In your bibliography, you should list these sources alphabetically, summarize their major arguments and explanations, and explain how they help you answer your specific question in your research topic. Include key quotations for each source that directly illustrate and support your summary of that source's major arguments. Submit to your instructor.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Essex Hemphill, ed. (2007). *Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men*. RedBone Press, n/a. 978-0978625115.

Catriona Rueda Esquibel. (2009). *With Her Machete in Her Hand: Reading Chicana Lesbians*. University of Texas Press, n/a. 978-0292712751.

Lorde, Audre. (2001). *The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*. Kore Press, n/a. 978-0918314093.

Rich, B. Ruby. (2013). *New Queer Cinema: The Director's Cut*. Duke UP, n/a. 978-0-8223-5428-4.

Delgado, Julian. (2020). *Fiebre Tropical*. Amethyst Press, Bilingual Edition. 978-1936932757.

Broom, Brian. (2022). Punch Me Up to the Gods. *Mariner Books*, n/a. 978-0358695257.
Vuong, Ocean. (2021). On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous. *Penguin Books*, n/a. 978-0525562047.
Shilts, Randy. (2007). And the Band Played On. *St. Martin's Griffin, Revised Edition*. 978-0312374631.
Peters, Torrey. (2022). Detransition Baby. *Serpent's Tail, Main Edition*. 978-1788167222.
Lima-Hincampie, Andres, and Castillo, Debra A. (2016). Despite All Adversities: Spanish American Queer Cinema. *Paperback Reprint Edition*. 978-1438459103.

Other Learning Materials

Films: Barry Jenkins, *Moonlight* (2016), Sydney Freeland *Drunktown's Finest* (2014), and *Tangerine* (2015)

Minimum Qualifications

English (Masters Required)

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