

Issues in Women's Studies:
WST 394: Queer Studies

#1006 Section 01

Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:45 Liberal Arts Rm 204

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Women's Studies Office: Ashurst 101 and 102

Office Hours: Tues. 12:45-1:30 and Thurs. 12:45-2:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This interdisciplinary course is designed to introduce students to the academic field of Lesbian and Gay Studies. Throughout the semester we will examine the history, politics, theories, culture, art, and community of those who identify as lesbian, bisexual, gay, transsexual, and queer. Through texts, discussion, films, and class presentations, we will briefly explore a variety of subjects dealing with homosexuality and its position and contributions to our human experience. We will also examine theoretical arguments and themes that exist historically and currently within the field of Lesbian and Gay Studies. Queer Studies is a course which addresses important facets of human social organization. Its thematic focus is *Valuing the Diversity of Human Experience*.

This course is designed to broaden the student's awareness of the human experience. By examining the lives, contributions, and concerns of gay and lesbian people, students will gain a greater appreciation for the diverse world in which we all live, and move on to foster a more tolerant and accepting society. In addition, this course will also challenge students to improve their academic skills of critical reading, writing, and thinking. This course is intended to encourage an open intellectual dialogue; therefore an attitude of tolerance will be maintained and discussed throughout the semester. The aim of this course is to create an environment that promotes personal growth, academic achievement, and the joy of learning!

Course Objectives:

1. Students will gain a better understanding of the issues surrounding the gay and lesbian culture, theory and community as it relates to the society as a whole, and be able to articulate their understanding in critical discourse.
2. Students will have the opportunity for analytical and/or empirical exploration of gay and lesbian patterns of interaction, behavior, and social structure, and be able to analyze and contrast these patterns with those of the dominant society.
3. Students will be exposed to the cultural diversity of the gay and lesbian community through comparing essays that explore cultural and social biases regarding homosexuals, while developing their critical writing skills in essays that evaluate these biases..
4. Students will be able to define major theoretical explanations of homosexuality, such as socialization theories, essentialism, queer theory, and standpoint theory while analyzing the links between individual experience and a larger social context by using

concepts of socialization, culture, self, differentiation, social control, stratification, and deviance.

5. Students will learn the value of diversity in the human experience, and be able to converse with others about many gay and lesbian human rights issues. The goal is to not only develop their academic skills but the joy of learning.

Course Structure and Approach:

This course involves several primary learning components: reading, discussion, group work, papers, presentations, lectures, and films. Students are expected to complete assigned readings prior to the class for which they are assigned, attend classes, participate in large and small group discussions as well as formal and informal presentations, with the expectation of increasing student participation and performance. Students should feel free to speak their minds, but not at the expense of other's opinions and beliefs.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Duberman, Martin. *A Queer World: The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. New York University Press, 1997.

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality..* Basic Books, 2000.

Books are available at Aradia Books (across the street from Macy's on Beaver St.)

Also required is:

Bernstein, K. *My Gender Workbook*. Routledge, 1998.

Students will be responsible for ordering this book on their own - it is not required until after the first paper.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION METHODS:

Participation - 15%: This includes attendance, participation in discussions, group work, and class presentations. Attendance is required.

1st, 2nd and 3rd Writing Assignments and Paper Workshops - 15% each: Critical analysis of each section of readings, films, and discussions. This analysis will pay specific attention to your organization, punctuation and content, as well as your analytical skills.

5 pgs. ~ MLA style ~ with bibliography

The paper is worth 10% and participation in the paper workshop and copies for the rest of your group is worth 5%. You must attend class on workshop days. No late papers will be accepted, and you cannot make up participation pts.

Multicultural Research Paper - 20%: The objective of this assignment is to give students a chance to research, discover and explore homosexuality in other countries and cultures and provide information in their essay from outside the course texts. I will be evaluating all of the critical writing skills we have been developing throughout the course of the semester. This can be a group research project and presentation, as long as you turn in individual papers. **8 pgs.** MLA style w/bibliography. You will need at least **3** outside sources! It is also required to make **connections** to concepts from our texts, incorporating quotes from both books.

Presentation - 5%: Each student is responsible for a 8-10 minute presentation of their research project. Visual aids are required. Be as creative as possible for your presentation. You are free to write a song and play it, do a painting and tell why it explains your research project, do a group thing?, a skit, or present your paper using a power point presentation. It's up to you, so think about this when you are choosing a topic for your research project! Make it fun, with lots of color and visual aids!?!!!!!

Final Exam - 15%: This is a take home essay. The final will be a combination and rewrite of your first three essays from the paper workshops. I will be paying specific attention to how much your writing skills have improved over the course of the semester, focusing on analysis, critical reading and thinking skills, organization, and depth of content. It will address all the readings, films, discussions, and class notes for the semester. **12 pgs.**

Grading System: It will be a 100 point system, 90-100 is an A, etc. Only extremely exceptional work can earn an A.

SUMMARY OF POLICIES:

Attendance is mandatory. After 2 free absences you will 2 points off your attendance/participation grade for each additional absence. We will also adhere to practices of human to human consideration by avoiding tardiness (excessive tardies will count as absences), splinter discussions and so forth.

All reading assignments should be completed by the date on which they are scheduled. It is **required to bring the text to class** that the readings are in. Come **prepared to discuss** the readings! You are responsible for knowing all assignment due dates and schedule changes.

No late papers will be accepted.

You cannot make up any in class group work credit we do, or any participation points. Do the readings, come to class, participate, and hand you papers in on time!!! Have fun!

COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1: Aug. 26 and 28

Introductions

Video: *The Celluloid Closet*

Week 2: Sept. 2 and 4

Sexing The Body:

“Dueling Dualisms” p.1

Videos: Excerpts from *Sex and Gender* and *The Pinks and the Blues*

Week 3: Sept. 9 and 11

Queer:

Part One: Mapping Identities: Gender and Sexuality

#2 “The Event of Becoming” p.17

#4 "Latina Lesbians" p.35

#7 "The Hijras of India" p. 82

#8 "Are Modern Western Lesbian Women and Gay Men a Third Gender?" p.87

Video: *Treyf* 1998 55" VT 7053

Week 4: Sept. 16 and 18

Queer:

Part Two: The Terrains of History

#13 "Homosexual and Heterosexual: Questioning the Terms" p.177

On Reserve in Cline:

Jennings, K. *Becoming Visible*. Chapter 13 "Stonewall and the Dawning of a New Day"
pp.195-214

Video: *Before Stonewall*

Week 5: Sept. 23 and 25

First essay due! (15%) PAPER WORKSHOP! Critical analysis of the first group of readings, discussions and films. You will be evaluated on content, development of main ideas, critical thinking, organization, punctuation, citations, and grammar (5 pgs.).
10 pts. for the paper and 5 pts. for participation and bringing copies of your paper.

Begin working on *My Gender Workbook*

Week 6: Sept. 30 and Oct. 2

Sexing the Body:

"That Sexe Which Prevaileth" p. 30

"Of Gender and Genitals" p.45

Video: *Normal*

Week 7: Oct. 7 and 9

Sexing the Body:

"Should There Be Only Two Sexes?" p. 78

Queer:

#12 "Creating Good-Looking Genitals in the Service of Gender" p. 153

Video: *Mariposas en el Andamio* 74"

Week 8: Oct. 14 and 16

Queer:

Part Three: Mind/Body Relations: Science and Psychology

#23 "Creating Natural Distinctions" p.309

#26 "Difference and Diversity: Gay and Lesbian Couples" p.345

Film: *If These Walls Could Talk 2*

Week 9: Oct. 21 and 23

Paper due! (15%) Paper workshop! Critical analysis of second section of readings, discussions, and films. 5 pgs.

Week 10: Oct. 28 and 30

Queer:

Part Four: Laws and Markets

#29 "Homosexual Identity and Gay Rights" p.399

#32 "Colin Powell's Reflection: Status, Behavior, and Discrimination" p. 431

Video: *Coming Out Under Fire*

Recommended Readings -

#50 "AIDS and Adolescence" p. 649

#51 "Women and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa" p. 663

Week 11: Nov. 4 and 6

Queer:

#37 "Economic Identity/Sexual Identity" p. 502

#38 "The Different Dilemmas of Lesbian and Gay Professionals" p. 508

#39 "The Growth of the Gay and Lesbian Market" p. 514

Video: *Gay and Lesbian Identity - But I was a Girl*

Week 12: Nov. 11 and 13

Research Paper Topics Due!

Queer:

Part Five: Sexual Policies, Sexual Politics

#42 "Teenage Narratives of Lesbian Desire" p. 549

#44 "One Generation Post-Stonewall: Political Contests over Lesbian and Gay School Reform" p. 572

#47 "The Virtual and Actual Identities of Older Lesbians and Gay Men" p. 615

Video: *Out: Stories of Lesbian and Gay Youth / When Paris Was a Woman / Golden Threads*

Week 13: Nov. 18 and 20

Sexing the Body:

"Gender Systems: Toward a Theory of Human Sexuality" p. 233

Summary of semester!

Paper Due and Last Paper Workshop! (15%)

Week 14: Nov. 25 and 27

Research Paper due Tues. after Thanksgiving break. Dec. 2 (20% for paper, 5% for presentation of paper (refer to syllabus for requirements and guidelines). Visual aids (plural) are required! No class!

Week 15: Dec. 2 and 4

RESEARCH PAPERS DUE and PRESENTATIONS!!!

Week 16: Dec. 8-11 Finals Week!

Final essay due in my office no later than 11:00 on Tues. morning, Dec. 9, 2003!!!

