

# GAY AND LESBIAN IDENTITIES IN THE MODERN WORLD

GS 321

SPRING 2011

ESTHER ROTHBLUM



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Class Meeting Times: Tuesday, Thursday 9:30-10:45 a.m.  
Classroom: PSFA 325

Professor: Esther Rothblum  
Office: AL 317  
Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-11:30 am  
Telephone: 594-6662  
Email: [erOTHBLU@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:erOTHBLU@mail.sdsu.edu)

The best way to reach me is via email--I am happy to reply to emails any time. You can also talk to me before or after class.

Teaching Assistant: Hillary Flocke  
Office: Arts and Letters 316  
Email: [Hillary.flocke@gmail.com](mailto:Hillary.flocke@gmail.com)

The teaching assistant will be grading the weekly journal entries and will also be involved in grading the exams. Please contact her with questions about points and grades.

**GS 321 fulfills the following General Education requirement: Explorations, Category B, Social and Behavioral Sciences (Cultural Diversity)**

**This course is also required for the new minor in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies.**

This course introduces the student to the field of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Studies with an emphasis on social, political, and legal institutions as well as the development of personal identity. The course will begin with an overview of the gay and lesbian liberation movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From there, we will address scientific and psychological explanations of LGBT identities; the institutions of law and government, education and the workplace, family and healthcare, and the media. We will finish by looking at local and international LGBT movements in the current day. Throughout the course, we will carefully consider the full range of genders, sexualities, races, ethnicities, classes, physical abilities, religions, and political persuasions that characterize current LGBT movements and communities.



Required texts available at KB Books and Aztec Books:

Gross, L. & Woods, J. (Eds.). (1999). *The Columbia Reader on Lesbian and Gay Men in Media, Society and Politics*. NY: Columbia University Press.

All additional readings are available on Blackboard.sdsu.edu under Course Documents.

Student Learning Goals and Objectives:

At the end of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the way that societies across national boundaries have constructed sexuality and gender identity
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the ways that the lives of lesbian, gay male, bisexual, and transgender people are shaped by social institutions
3. Evaluate multiple perspectives about LGBT lives and identities from the perspectives of history, psychology, politics, and cultural studies.
4. Write and speak articulately about LGBT lives and identities, and demonstrate critical thinking skills

Students With Special Needs

Students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations for which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at 619-594-6473 (Calpulli Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 3101), please do so before making an appointment to see me.

Academic Misconduct

Section 41301 of Title V of the California Code of Regulations defines academic misconduct as “Cheating or plagiarism in connection with an academic program at a campus.” According to the SDSU Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, “Examples of cheating would include using unauthorized notes or study guides during an exam, unauthorized collaboration on coursework, stealing course examinations or materials, falsifying records or data, and intentionally assisting another individual in any of the above.” Some examples of plagiarism include submitting work that was written by someone else or using someone else’s ideas without referencing that source in a footnote or bibliography. When using exact quotes, be sure put these quotes within quotation marks.



## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### I. Class attendance and participation

It is important to develop the ability to critically evaluate material and to communicate your ideas to others. In addition, this course depends on collective discussion and interpretation of the readings. Finally, the exams will focus heavily on class lectures, films, and material by guest speakers. Thus it is important that you come to class regularly.

### II. Weekly journals (25% of total grade)

The readings are an important part of this course. You will be required to submit a journal entry each week that consists of a brief (about 1 page, typed, double-spaced) evaluation of each reading for that week.

Journal entries are due at the beginning of each class starting on Tuesday, February 1. For example, two journal entries (2 pages total) are due on February 1, about chapter 13 in the *Columbia Reader* and one electronic reading.

For each journal entry, please do the following:

1. When you read the article, find two main points that you think the author emphasizes. Main points would be ones you would use if you were to describe the purpose of the article to others.
2. Write one paragraph about each main point. Even if the author uses technical language, describe the main point in such a way that it is easy to understand.
3. Then write one paragraph that evaluates the article. What was your reaction and why?
4. Remember that you will need to know main points about the readings for the exams.

Points: 1 for each reading (there are 25 readings in all during the semester).

Points will be taken off if the entries do not cover all readings for that week, if the entries are not related to the above questions, or if the entries do not indicate you have done the readings.

The teaching assistant will deduct one point if you hand in journal entries within the first 15 minutes of class; after that, journal entries will not be accepted because we will be discussing the main points of readings in class. You can avoid late entries by handing in journal entries during the class before they are due, or emailing the entries to a classmate so that he/she can print out your journal entries when you can't come to class. You cannot email journal entries to the instructor or teaching assistant.



### Required Exams (each worth 25% of total grade)

The purpose of the exams is to demonstrate that you can integrate the course material (readings, films, lectures, and class discussions) in a comprehensive and meaningful way.

There will be three required exams in this course, scheduled for February 24 (25% of total grade), April 7 (25% of total grade), and May 17 (25% of total grade). Each exam will consist of multiple choice items covering about one third of the course material. Please bring a narrow red parscore exam and a pencil with an eraser to each exam.

### Make-up Exam

You can miss any one exam (exam 1, exam 2, or the final exam) during the regularly scheduled time, but in that case you will need to take that exam as a make-up exam. The day for any missed exams is May 10, the last day of class. Make-up exams are essay only, so you will need to study for larger concepts than you would for multiple-choice exams. Be sure to leave a message for the teaching assistant, letting her know that you will be taking an in-class exam as a make-up at the end of the semester.

### Extra Credit (up to 5% added to final course grade)

There are two opportunities for extra credit assignments in GS321, for a total of up to 5 points added to students' final grades:

1. Volunteer at the SDSU Pride Action Committee Resource Office plus paper: 2 points of extra credit. Ben Cartwright will pass around sign-up sheets in class at the beginning of the semester. If you did not sign up for this activity, please email him at [bcartwright@cox.net](mailto:bcartwright@cox.net). He will email you back a short form to complete. In order to get credit for this assignment, you must (1) volunteer for at least four hours at the Pride Action Committee Resource Office which is located in Aztec Student Center (Benny will be emailing me lists of students who have completed this part of the assignment) and (2) write a two-page paper that describes the experience for you and that links your experience to one class reading.
2. Extra journal entries: Up to three points of extra credit. You can select up to 3 readings in the course textbook that are not on the syllabus as course readings and write a one-page journal entry about each of them.

These assignments cannot be handed in any later than 9:30 am on May 10 (the last class of the semester)



### TIMETABLE

In all cases, assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Tuesday, February 1: 2 journal entries due about identities readings

Tuesday, February 8: 2 journal entries due about history readings

Tuesday, February 15: 2 journal entries due about coming out readings

Tuesday, February 22: no journal entries due

### **Thursday, February 24: EXAM I**

Tuesday, March 1: 2 journal entries due about sexuality in the Judeo-Christian tradition

Tuesday, March 8: 2 journal entries due about biology of sexuality readings

Tuesday, March 15: 2 journal entries due about same-sex marriage readings

Tuesday, March 22: 2 journal entries due about queer bodies readings

Tuesday, April 5: 2 journal entries about economics of sexuality readings

### **Thursday, April 7: EXAM II**

Tuesday, April 12: 2 journal entries due about global identity readings

Tuesday, April 19: 2 journal entries due about psychology and mental health readings

Tuesday, April 26: 1 journal entry due about popular culture reading

Tuesday, May 3: 4 journal entries due about sex, love and relationship readings AND  
homophobia in athletics readings

**Tuesday, May 10: Day for students to take make-up exams if they have missed an  
in-class exam**

**AND deadline for all extra credit papers**

**Tuesday, May 17: EXAM III (8-10 a.m.)**



## SYLLABUS

Thursday, January 20  
Tuesday, January 25

### INTRODUCTION AND COURSE DESCRIPTION

Film: After Stonewall

Thursday, January 27  
Tuesday, February 1  
Thursday, February 3  
Tuesday, February 8

### IDENTITIES: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 13. To Be Or Not To Be, by Leslie Feinberg
- b. Electronic Reading: Hermaphrodites With Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism, by Cheryl Chase

Guest Speaker: Dr. Carrie Sakai, SDSU Counseling and Psychological Services  
and Cynthia Johnson

Film: Intersex

Thursday, February 10  
Tuesday, February 15

### HISTORY: WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 5. A Worm in the Bud: The Early Sexologists and Love Between Women, by Lillian Faderman
- b. Electronic Reading: Country People, by Richard Hall

Film: Before Stonewall

Guest Speaker: Professor Walter Penrose, SDSU Department of History



Thursday, February 17            COMING OUT  
 Tuesday, February 22

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 37. Closets in the Museum: Homophobia and Art History, by James Saslow
- b. Columbia Reader Chapter 41. A Lesson in Tolerance, by David Ruenzel

Film: Save Me

Thursday, February 24            EXAM 1

Tuesday, March 1                SEXUALITY IN THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 15. Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons, by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger
- b. Electronic Readings: A Prayer, by Tony Kushner

Guest Speaker: Professor Rebecca Moore, SDSU Department of Religious Studies

Thursday, March 3                SEXUALITY AND ISLAM

Guest Speaker: Professor Khaleel Mohammed, SDSU Department of Religious Studies



Tuesday, March 8                      BIOLOGY OF SEXUALITY  
 Thursday, March 10

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 28. Studying the Biology of Sexual Orientation Has Political Fallout, by David Jefferson
- b. Electronic Readings: The Missing Vagina Monologue...and Beyond, by Esther Morris Leidoff

Guest Speaker:              Professor Annalisa Berta, Department of Biology

Tuesday, March 15                      THE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE DEBATE  
 Thursday, March 17

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 96. Here Comes the Groom: A (Conservative) Case for Gay Marriage, by Andrew Sullivan
- b. Columbia Reader Chapter 98. When Is Marriage a Path to Liberation? By Paula Ettelbrick

Film: I Can't Marry You

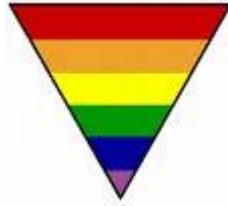
Tuesday, March 22                      LAW

Guest Speaker:                      Robert DeKoven, J.D.

Thursday, March 24                      BODIES: LOOKING QUEER

- a. Electronic Reading: Beauty on the borderland: On being Black lesbian and beautiful, by Jennifer Lyle et al.
- b. Electronic Reading: Interlude: Nuts and Bolts, by Kate Bornstein





Tuesday, April 19

PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 21. Homosexuals in Uniform, from Newsweek
- b. Columbia Reader Chapter 23. The Psychologist—Dr. Evelyn Hooker, by Eric Marcus

Thursday, April 21

POPULAR CULTURE

Tuesday, April 26

Thursday, April 28

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 48. Culture Stays Screen-Shy of Showing the Gay Kiss, by Frank Bruni

Guest Speakers:

Professor William Eadie, Journalism and Media Studies

Film: Radical Harmonies

Tuesday, May 3

SEX, LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS

- a. Columbia Reader Chapter 9. Gay Men, Lesbians, and Sex: Doing It Together, by Pat Califia
- b. Electronic Reading: A Long Journey Towards Polyamorous Bliss, by Cynthia Deer

Thursday May 5

HOMOPHOBIA IN ATHLETICS

- a. Electronic Reading: Homonormativity and the Politics of Race: Reading Sheryl Swoopes, by Samantha King
- b. Electronic Reading: Becoming 100% Straight, by Michael Messner



Tuesday, May 10      MAKE-UP EXAMS ONLY

You can miss any one exam (exam 1, exam 2, or the final exam) during the regularly scheduled time, but in that case you will need to take that exam as a make-up exam. The day for any missed exams is May 12, the last day of class. Make-up exams are essay only, so you will need to study for larger concepts than you would for multiple-choice exams. Be sure to leave a message for the teaching assistant, letting her know that you will be taking an in-class exam as a make-up at the end of the semester.

**Tuesday, May 17, 8-10 a.m.: FINAL EXAM (25% OF TOTAL GRADE)**