

GAY AND LESBIAN IDENTITIES IN THE MODERN WORLD

GS 321

SPRING 2009

ESTHER ROTHBLUM





Class Meeting Times: Tuesday, Thursday 9:30-10:45 a.m.
Classroom: LS 365

Professor: Esther Rothblum
Office: AL 317
Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-11:30 am
Telephone: 594-6662
Email: 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: Jenna Stephenson
Office: Arts and Letters 316
Email: jstephen@rohan.sdsu.edu

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 that will take effect at SDSU beginning fall 2009.

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 20th 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 electronic course reserve.

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, 3rd 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.



Instructions for accessing course readings electronically

- Get on the website ecr.sdsu.edu
- Click on “electronic reserves and reserve pages”
- You can then search for this course under instructor name or course number
- Click on “Course reserve pages by instructor”
- Scroll down to “Rothblum” and click “search”
- Click on this course number, which is GS321
- It will ask for the password, which is “character”
- Enter the password and then click on “accept”
- You will get a list of all course readings
- For most of the readings, you can just click on the symbol to the left and then click again, and you will be in the adobe acrobat version of the article. You can read it on line, print it out, etc.
- A few of the articles have a funny symbol of a globe to the left. When you click on those articles, you first get a page called “document info.” Click on the place that says “click here for more information.” When you get the next page, wait a few seconds, and the article will appear. If it doesn’t, look for a place that says “pdf full text” and click on that.
- Some students have found that articles with the globe symbol can only be accessed while on campus, not off campus, so be sure to plan ahead.
- Let me know if you find any missing pages or have difficulty reading the articles.



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 two 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 (40% 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 3. For example, three journal entries (3 pages total) are due on February 3, about chapters 13 and 38 in the *Columbia Reader* and an 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 40 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 trading emails with 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 20% 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 26 (20% of total grade), April 7 (20% of total grade), and May 19 (20% 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. Exams will be graded as a percentage and each exam will count as one fifth of your final grade.

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 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.

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 LGBT Resource Center plus paper: 2 points of extra credit. Resource Center Director Benny 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. 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 LGBT Resource Center 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 12 (the last class of the semester).



TIMETABLE

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

Tuesday, February 3: 3 journal entries due about identities readings

Tuesday, February 10: 3 journal entries due about history readings

Tuesday, February 17: 4 journal entries due about unity and diversity readings
AND coming out readings

Tuesday, February 24: 3 journal entries due about sexuality in the Judeo-Christian tradition

Thursday, February 16: EXAM I

Tuesday, March 3: 3 journal entries due about sexuality and the body readings
AND sexuality and Islam reading

Tuesday, March 10: 3 journal entries due about same-sex marriage readings

Tuesday, March 17: 3 journal entries due about biology of sexuality readings

Tuesday, March 24: 3 journal entries due about mental health readings

Tuesday, April 7: EXAM II

Thursday, April 9: 2 journal entries due about queer youth readings

Tuesday, April 14: 4 journal entries due about law readings
AND global identity readings

Tuesday, April 21: 4 journal entries due about the lesbian/gay athlete readings
AND economics of sexuality readings

Tuesday, April 28: 3 journal entries due about sex, love and relationship readings

Tuesday, May 5: 2 journal entries due about popular culture

**Tuesday, May 12: 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 19, 10:30-12:30: EXAM III



SYLLABUS

Thursday, January 22
Tuesday, January 27

INTRODUCTION AND COURSE DESCRIPTION

Film: After Stonewall

Thursday, January 29
Tuesday, February 3
Thursday, February 5

IDENTITIES: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Columbia Reader: 13. To Be Or Not To Be, by Leslie Feinberg

38. Imagine a Lesbian, a Black Lesbian, by Jewelle Gomez

Electronic Reading:

Hermaphrodites With Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism, by Cheryl Chase (2006). In S. Stryker and S. Whittle (Ed.). *The Transgender Studies Reader*. NY: Routledge.

Guest Speaker: Carrie Sakai, SDSU Counseling and Psychological Services

Film: Intersex

Tuesday, February 10
Thursday, February 12

HISTORY: WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

Columbia Reader: 3. Categories, Experience and Sexuality, by John Boswell

5. A Worm in the Bud: The Early Sexologists and Love Between Women, by Lillian Faderman

Electronic Reading:

Country People, by Richard Hall (1994). In Irene Zahava (1994). *Lavender Mansions: 40 Contemporary Lesbian and Gay Short Stories*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Film: Before Stonewall

Guest Speaker: Professor Matthew Kuefler, SDSU Department of History



Tuesday, February 17

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

Columbia Reader:

11. *Strangers at Home: Bisexuals in the Queer Movement*,
by Carol Queen

103. *Blacks and Gays: Healing the Great Divide*, by
Barbara Smith

Thursday, February 19

COMING OUT

Columbia Reader:

37. *Closets in the Museum: Homophobia and Art History*,
by James Saslow

41. *A Lesson in Tolerance*, by David Ruenzel

Tuesday, February 24

SEXUALITY IN THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Columbia Reader:

15. *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral
Care of Homosexual Persons*, by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

17. *Biblical Verse: Is It a Reason or an Excuse?* By Deb Price

Electronic Readings:

A Prayer, by Tony Kushner (1995). In Kushner's *Thinking About the Longstanding
Problems of Virtue and Happiness*. Theatre Communications Group.

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

Thursday, February 26

EXAM 1



Tuesday, March 3 BODIES: LOOKING QUEER

Electronic Readings:

Beauty on the borderland: On being Black lesbian and beautiful, by Jennifer Lyle et al. (1999). *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 3(4), 45-53.

Interlude: Nuts and Bolts, by Kate Bornstein (1995). In Kate Bornstein *Gender Outlaw*. Vintage Books.

Thursday, March 5 SEXUALITY AND ISLAM

Electronic Reading:

Muhammad and Male Homosexuality, by Jim Wafer (1997). In S.O. Murray and W. Roscoe (Eds.). *Islamic Homosexualities*. NY: New York University Press.

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

Tuesday, March 10 THE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE DEBATE

Thursday, March 12

Columbia Reader: 96. Here Comes the Groom: A (Conservative) Case for Gay Marriage, by Andrew Sullivan

98. When Is Marriage a Path to Liberation? By Paula Ettelbrick

Electronic Reading:

Is Gay Marriage Racist? By Marlon Bailey, Priya Kandaswamy & Mattie Udora Richardson (2004). In Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore) *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (pp. 87-93). Brooklyn, NY: Soft Skull Press.

Film: I Can't Marry You



Tuesday, March 17
Thursday, March 19

BIOLOGY OF SEXUALITY

Columbia Reader: 28. Studying the Biology of Sexual Orientation Has Political Fallout, by David Jefferson

Electronic Readings:

A sex difference in the specificity of sexual arousal, by Meredith Chivers, Gerulf Riegers, Elizabeth Latty & J. Michael Bailey (2004). *Psychological Science*, 15(11), 736-744.

The Missing Vagina Monologue...and Beyond, by Esther Morris Leidoff (2006). *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy*, 10, 77-92.

Guest Speaker: Professor Annalisa Berta, Department of Biology

Tuesday, March 24
Thursday, March 26

PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH

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

Electronic Reading:

Blue Portraits: Queer Stories, by Kimeron Hardin and Marny Hall (2001). Chapter 4 in *Queer Blues: The Lesbian and Gay Guide to Overcoming Depression*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.

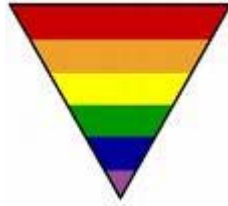
Guest Speaker: Dr. Diane Pendragon

Tuesday, March 31
Thursday, April 2

NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, April 7

EXAM 2



Thursday, April 9

QUEER YOUTH

Electronic Readings:

Memories of Childhood and Early Adolescent Sexual Feelings Among Gay and Bisexual Boys: A Narrative Approach, by Ritch Savin-Williams (1996). In R. Savin-Williams and K.M. Cohen (Eds.) *The Lives of Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

“Having a girlfriend without knowing it”: Intimate friendships among adolescent sexual-minority women, by Lisa Diamond (2002). *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 6(1), 5-16.

Guest Speaker: Jenna Stephenson, Graduate Student in Women’s Studies, SDSU, and graduate teaching assistant of our course.

Tuesday, April 14

LAW

Columbia Reader:

30. Crime Story, by Sten Russell

31. Public Policy and Private Prejudice: Psychology and Law on Gay Rights, by Gary Melton

Guest Speaker:

Robert DeKoven, J.D.

Thursday, April 16

GLOBAL IDENTITIES

Electronic Readings:

Women in Lesotho and the (Western) Construction of Gender, by Kendall (1999). In Evelyn Blackwood & Saskia Wieringa (Eds.) *Same-Sex Relations and Female Desires: Transgender Practices Across Cultures*. NY: Columbia University Press.

Women’s Sexuality and the Discourse on Asian Values: Cross-Dressing in Malaysia, by Tan ben hui (1999). In Evelyn Blackwood & Saskia Wieringa (Eds.) *Same-Sex Relations and Female Desires: Transgender Practices Across Cultures*. NY: Columbia University Press.



Tuesday, April 21

THE LESBIAN/GAY ATHLETE

Guest Speaker:

Professor Susan Cayleff, Department of Women's Studies

Electronic Reading:

Becoming 100% Straight, by Michael Messner (2005). In M. B. Zinn, P.H. Sotelo, and M.A. Messner (Eds.). *Gender Through the Prism of Difference*. NY: Oxford University Press.

A Sportswriter's Dream: Beautiful Sports, Manly Sports, and Muscle Molls, by Susan Cayleff (1996). In S. Cayleff *Babe: The Life and Legend of Babe Didrikson Zaharias*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Tuesday, April 23

ECONOMICS OF SEXUALITY

Columbia Reader: 40. The Gay and Lesbian Publishing Boom, by William Mann

Electronic Reading:

Imperial Desire/Sexual Utopias: White Gay Capital and Transnational Tourism, by M. Jacqui Alexander (1998). In Ella Shohat (Ed.) *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.



Tuesday, April 28
Thursday April 30

SEX, LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS

Columbia Reader: 9. Gay Men, Lesbians, and Sex: Doing It Together, by Pat Califia

82. Looking For My Penis: The Eroticized Asian in Gay Video
Porn, by Richard Fung

Electronic Reading:

A Long Journey Towards Polyamorous Bliss, by Cynthia Deer (1999). *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 3(1/2), 165-174.

Tuesday, May 5
Thursday, May 7

POPULAR CULTURE

Columbia Reader: 47. Old Strategies for New Texts: How American
Television is Creating and Treating Lesbian Characters, by
Marguerite Moritz

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

Film: Further Off the Straight and Narrow: New Gay Visibility on Television

Guest Speakers: Chelsea Oldenburg recent SDSU undergraduate student
Professor William Eadie, SDSU Department of Journalism
and Media Studies



Tuesday, May 12 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.

May 19, 10:30-12:30: FINAL EXAM (20% OF TOTAL GRADE)