



## WGSS327: Perspectives in LGBT(Q) Studies

### Overview

Many people feel pressured to conform to particular gendered norms. This course is designed to help us think critically about gender, gender non-conformity, and trans\* identity. This course will explore some of the cultural and political issues transgender, transsexual, and gender variant people face in the U.S. We will explore these issues in contemporary culture, and we will also look at these issues historically, examining how they have changed over the last century. A large part of our continuing focus will be on issues of gender non-conformity, a topic that affects everyone. This class is open and welcome to all.

### Goals

Our goals for the semester:

- To gain an introduction to the study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans\* & Queer theory and concepts.
- To understand the links among systems of gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, and ethnicity.
- To distinguish between individual attitudes and institutionalized forms of discrimination and oppression facing LGB, trans\*, and gender non-conforming individuals and communities.
- To understand how seemingly “different” forms of domination interconnect – and to think through various responses to this domination.
- To apply the concepts and theories of class topics to lived experience and recognize how these issues touch each of our lives.

### Requirements

1. Attendance: You are required to attend class. Missing more than 7 classes will result in a failing grade. You may miss up to 3 classes without any penalty. After 3 classes, ½ letter grade will be deducted for each class you miss.
2. Participation: You are required to engage in the material (read the assigned readings) and come to class prepared. I also require you to participate in class discussion.
3. Respect: This semester we will be discussing sensitive and controversial topics. We will discuss in the first two weeks what the guidelines will be for class discussion.
4. Communication: Please be in communication with me if something is happening outside of class that is preventing you from doing your work. The day before the final paper is due is NOT the time to e-mail me with concerns.

University of Kansas

Spring 2014 :: Blake 212  
[Tues/Thurs 1:00-2:15]

Instructor: Liam Oliver Lair  
E-mail: liam.lair@ku.edu  
Office: Blake Hall 307 (Mlbx 318)  
**Office Hours:** T 2:30p-4p & R 11a-12:30p

### Materials

#### Recommended Texts:

\* Vicki L. Eaklor, *Queer America: A People's History of the United States* New York: The New Press, 2008.

**All readings will be available on BB.**

### Important Dates

#### Library Work Days

Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014

#### LGBTQ Life Assignment

Title/Abstract: 2.18.14

Ann. Bib/Research Log: 3.6.14

Draft/Display Mock-up: 4.1.14

Final Paper: 4.22.14

Display Board: 4.24.14

## THE BUSINESS PART

### ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT / PLAGIARISM

As a student registered and enrolled for courses at KU, you are presumed to be familiar with all university policies relating to plagiarism, academic misconduct, and related topics. That means that “I didn’t know” and “I wasn’t sure” are not excuses. **If you are unsure about whether something counts as academic misconduct, cheating, or plagiarism, don’t do it and/or ask beforehand!**

**Plagiarism** is turning in someone else's work (including online websites) as **your** work and/or quoting another person's work or statement without proper citation or acknowledgement. If you do not know what plagiarism is, read the following guide from the KU Writing Center guide on "Avoiding Plagiarism": “Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words or work as your own. Plagiarism applies to material taken from another person without properly citing your sources. Paraphrasing another writer, substituting words, or rearranging sentences from the work of another also constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is easily detected with databases and search engines. Plagiarism is academic misconduct and is a violation of rules and regulations of the University of Kansas. Penalties for academic misconduct range from an automatic failure of the assignment, failure in the course, academic suspension with a flag on your Arts Form, to expulsion from the University.”

**Cheating** can mean getting answers on exams from someone else or from some help that is not in your own brain (e.g., iPods, cell phones). And finally, Section II.6.2.6.1 of the Rules and Regulations of the Kansas University Senate tells us that “[a]cademic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments [= cheating]; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work [= plagiarism]; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.” WGSS and the University consider these to be very serious offenses, and any violations will be handled following the procedures set forth by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. At the very least, you will fail the offending assignment and I will file an academic misconduct charge with the Office of Academic Services. You’ll then have the opportunity to contest the charge and to accept or appeal the punishment. If the student has committed prior offenses or if I judge the academic misconduct severe enough, a harsher punishment (e.g., failure of the course or suspension or expulsion from the University) may be imposed.

### SPECIAL NEEDS, RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES, ETC

If you have **special needs or conditions** (physical, learning, or otherwise) that need to be addressed, Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) / Disability Resources (DR) arranges accommodations and services for students who are eligible. It is your responsibility to contact the SSD or other appropriate KU office in a timely manner (that means sooner rather than later!); otherwise accommodations will be unreasonable.

If you have **recognized religious observances or recognized university obligations** or if **unforeseen circumstances** arise that conflict with course events or requirements you must let me know immediately, so that we can discuss and arrange a reasonable accommodation before the course is underway.

### HOW TO “ATTEND” CLASS

This class is discussion-based, so all of us must come to class ready to engage the texts (both written and visual) and each other critically. **“Critically” means** being able to point out and discuss strengths and weaknesses in texts and conversations, thinking about what assumptions or rhetorical strategies a speaker/writer uses, being able to compare and contrast texts, and being able to take a stand and support it with reason and reference to the texts (even if you don’t sincerely hold that opinion in your “real life”). Comments about whether or not you liked something are not “critical” unless you are also able to explain why. **“Critically” does not mean** jumping to conclusions, avoiding reasoned thinking, or assuming that your point of view is the only or best point of view.

When a reading assignment is listed for a particular date, you should read it **before** the class period and be prepared to discuss the reading – that means more than simply ‘reading’ the way you would read a novel at the beach. “Reading” at a research university like KU means reading closely (and even more than once!), taking notes and/or underscoring/highlighting key parts of the reading, puzzling through terms or passages that are confusing, and considering whether you agree with the reading or not (and why!).

Although I expect us all to participate in discussions equally, as the instructor I reserve the right to end or alter discussions as needed to keep us on track. (Words and behavior that don't productively further the discussion can be considered "academic misconduct" under University rules and regulations.) **Disagreements and open expression are part of critical thinking. It's not only okay to disagree, it's required!** Our goal in this class is not to discover any "right answer" or to agree about everything but rather to locate, develop, and articulate ways of understanding these topics as well as to learn how to locate and evaluate the assumptions that underlie various stances and opinions.

I have zero tolerance for people talking on their cell phones or texting in class. If I see you texting in class I will take your phone and return it after our class session is over. I want us to respect each other and our learning styles, and texting/talking on the phone is very distracting.

**During almost every class discussion I will ask you to explain yourself, to answer "why," or to take your answer a bit further. I will also play "devil's advocate" to get you to think through points we make in class. When I use these tactics to further the discussion it does not mean that your answer or comment is "wrong," or that you aren't doing well or that I'm trying to "catch you" or "embarrass you." QUITE THE CONTRARY! It means that you are onto something good that we need to explore more!**

### COMMUNITY CHECK-IN

Once a month, we will do a 'community check-in' in order to gauge where the class is with readings, class concepts, assignments, and KU more generally. Why are community check-ins important? Because classes can be challenging, especially at a large university like KU and this is a way to make space for that. I want our class to be a community where we can connect and support each other. This is meant to be a safe space where we can work through any issues that are creating barriers for you. Here are the guidelines for community check-ins:

- Respect each other's privacy, what is said during the community check-in should stay in the classroom.
- Check-ins take place during the last 5-10 minutes of class.
- The check-in gives you a opportunity to share any difficulties you're having with the course material or the class more generally.
- Be concise during the check-in. It is easy to talk for 5 minutes without realizing it. Be intentional about what you say and make sure you leave space for others.
- If you don't feel comfortable sharing during the check-in time, but want me to know about any concerns or questions you are having, email me or come to my office hours.

### NAMES AND E-MAILS OF THREE CLASSMATES

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# ASSIGNMENTS/GRADES! All must be typed, 12pt font, Dbl Spaced, Times New Roman, 1" Margins.

## OPTION 1:

### **Participation (100pts):**

Participation (See: How to Attend Class) will count directly towards your grade. To participate, you must attend class. In this class there are no "excused" or "unexcused" absences. You can miss up to **three lectures** for any reason (illness, family emergency, oversleeping, whatever) without affecting your course grade; after three absences, each subsequent absence reduces your final course grade by five points (half a letter grade). **Missing 7 or more lecture and/or discussion sections means that you fail the course.** NOTE: any in-class work you miss or any assignments you fail to turn in because of your absence will count against your grade, regardless of your attendance record. *You will also be counted absent if you are inattentive during class (as demonstrated by whispering, Facebooking, texting, sleeping, and the like).*

### **Daily, in class response (20 responses due, 10pts each, 200pts):**

Each day a reading is assigned, you will respond to two or three short questions about the reading. This assignment has several purposes: To help you reflect on what you've read, to synthesize and articulate some of the main points, and also to help us start class discussion in a more focused way. Please come to class prepared, having done the reading. Sometimes these responses will be done in groups, and sometimes they will be used more like "quizzes." This daily assignment cannot be made up if you miss class.

### **Awesome LGBTQ People and Cultural Artifacts Assignment (100pts for paper, 50pts for presentation = 150pts):**

You will prepare a 2-3 page report on either an Awesome LGBTQ person from history -OR- a report on an interesting aspect of LGBTQ culture than interests you. You will present for 3-4 minutes in class to share with us what you have learned. **More instructions will be provide on this assignment next week.** Be open to using these assignments as a springboard for your final paper. These reports should reflect an earnest engagement with the topic you choose, but you will not be required to do extensive research. You will use our course concepts and extra-classroom research to describe and analyze a topic of personal interest to you. These clean and polished essays will be in lieu of exams, so you will you will be expected to use (and cite!) our course texts and concepts.

### **LGBTQ Life Assignment (550pts):**

This assignment is meant to help you explore an aspect of LGBTQ life that is either interesting to you or relevant to your life in some way. This project can grow out of your Awesome LGBTQ People and Cultural Artifacts Assignment or it can be a totally separate project. It will be broken down into multiple steps (see due dates on pg1 of your syllabus). The project will culminate in a final paper and a display of your work in Watson Library on a poster board. **More instructions will be provide on this assignment in the next few weeks.**

### **EXTRA CREDIT:**

**EC1:** You may turn in a 1-page summary of an event you attended this semester that is relevant to the LGTBQ community.

**EC2:** You may turn in a 1-page summary of films you watched THIS SEMESTER relevant to the LGBTQ community.

These will be worth up to 10pts each. If you take advantage of BOTH opportunities, one must be a community event and the other must be a film. The final day I will accept these assignments is Tuesday before Stop Day.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ADD UP TO A TOTAL OF 1000 POINTS. GRADES WILL FOLLOW THE +/- SCALE WHERE: 93-

100 = A ::: 90-92 = A- ::: 87-89 = B+ ::: 84-86 = B ::: 80-83 = B- ::: 77-79 = C+  
74-76 = C ::: 70-73 = C- ::: 67-79 = D+ ::: 64-66 = D ::: 60-63 = D- ::: 0-59 = F

**YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EARN UP TO 1000 POINTS OVER THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER. I DO NOT GIVE OUT GRADES. YOU EARN THEM.**

## OPTION 2: SERVICE LEARNING

### **Participation (100pts):**

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### **Service Learning Report (twice) (50pts for each paper, 25pts for each presentation = 150pts):**

In addition to your 20 hours of service this semester, you will write a reflection summary about your service experiences. The written reflection must be a minimum of 300 words the first time, and you can incorporate this essay into the second essay, which must be a minimum of 600 words. This last essay will serve as your reflection essay that is required by the Center for Civic and Social Responsibility.

### **LGBTQ Life Assignment (550pts):**

This assignment is meant to help you explore an aspect of LGBTQ life that is either interesting to you or relevant to your life in some way. This project can grow out of your Awesome LGBTQ People and Cultural Artifacts Assignment or it can be a totally separate project. It will be broken down into multiple steps (see due dates on pg1 of your syllabus). The project will culminate in a final paper and a display of your work in Watson Library on a poster board. **More instructions will be provide on this assignment in the next few weeks.**

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## **COURSE SCHEDULE ON A SEPARATE SHEET**

Our course schedule is liable to change for a number of reasons. It is your responsibility to check your registered email address and to attend class so that you are aware of any changes. You should read and prepare texts **BEFORE** the day they are listed on the schedule. **Failure to come to class having prepared the readings will result in loss of attendance points.**

## Course Outline/Tentative Schedule:

Queer America = QA  
Blackboard = BB

### HISTORY, LANGUAGES, & IDENTITY

#### Week 1: Introduction

- Tues 1.21:** Defining LGBTQ  
LGBTQ Culture Quiz
- Thurs 1.23:** Syllabus Quiz & Review  
Definitions Sheet & LGBTQ 101  
Gayle Rubin's "Thinking Sex" Pt1 (143- top of page 155)

#### Week 2:

- Tues 1.28:** Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex" Pt2 (155 to end)
- Thurs 1.30:** **Writing Center Workshop**

#### Week 3:

- Tues 2.4:** QA Ch5 (BB)  
Screening: *Stonewall Uprising* PBS Documentary  
**\*\*DAILY PRESENTATIONS BEGIN\*\***
- Thurs 2.6:** QA Ch6 selections (BB)  
Excerpts from STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries) (BB)  
Finish: *Stonewall Uprising*  
**\*\*SERVICE LEARNING DECISIONS MUST BE MADE BY THIS DATE\*\***

### POST STONEWALL POLITICS

#### Week 4:

- Tues 2.11:** *NY Times*, "Rare Cancer Seen in 41 Homosexuals" (BB)  
*NY Times*, "New Homosexual Disorder Worries Health Officials" (BB)  
Screening: *How To Survive a Plague*
- Thurs 2.13:** "HRC Issues Brief: HIV/AIDS and the LGBT Community" (BB)  
PH Collins, "Prisons for our Bodies, Closets for our Minds: Racism, Heterosexism, and Black Sexuality" (BB)  
Finish: *How To Survive a Plague*

#### Week 5:

- Tues 2.18:** QA Ch8 (BB)  
**DUE: TITLE and ABSTRACT**
- Thurs 2.20:** QA Ch9 (BB)

### POLITICS, IDENTITIES, & ACTIVISM

#### Week 6:

- Tues 2.25:** Stoddard, "Why Gay People Should Seek the Right To Marry" (BB)  
Ettelbrick, "Since When is Marriage a Path to Liberation?" (BB)  
"Feminist Perspectives" and Lind, "Queering Marriage" from *To Have & To Hold: The Making of Same-Sex Marriage in South Africa*
- Thurs 2.27:** KCAVP Guest Speaker  
IPV Report & Hate Violence Report  
Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo, "Medical Violence Agnst Ppl of Color.." in *Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology* (BB)

#### Week 7:

- Tues 3.4:** Jane Ward, "No One is Born Gay (or Straight): Here Are 5 Reasons Why" & "It's Not that 'It Gets Better,' It's that Heterosexuality is Worse"  
Excerpts: Adrienne Rich's *Compulsory Heterosexuality*

- Thurs 3.6:** Dean Spade, *Normal Life* Ch1 & Ch2  
**DUE: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY and RESEARCH LOG**
- Week 8:  
**Tues 3.11:** Kate Bornstein, *My Gender Workbook*  
 Screening: RuPaul's Drag Race
- Thurs 3.13:** Meet in Watson Library ←
- Week 9:  
**Tues 3.18:** SPRING BREAK
- Thurs 3.20:** SPRING BREAK
- Week 10:  
**Tues 3.25:** Allen Drexel, "Before Paris Burned" (BB)  
 Screening: *Paris is Burning*
- Thurs 3.27:** Stryker, *Transgender History* Ch2 (BB)  
 Finish: *Paris is Burning*
- Week 11:  
**Tues 4.1:** **Workshop Papers in Class**  
**DUE: CLEAN DRAFT OF PAPERS and PRESENTATION MOCK-UP**
- Thurs 4.3:** Guest Speaker: David Brown, Attorney who works for and with LGBTQ Populations  
**Mandatory:** Bring to class at least two substantive questions for Mr. Brown concerning the law and legal issues relevant to LGBTQ populations and individuals
- INTERSECTIONALITY: Sexuality/Masculinity/Disability/Medicalization/Race**
- Week 12:  
**Tues 4.8:** TBA
- Thurs 4.10:** LGBTQ Panel  
**Mandatory:** Bring to class at least two substantive questions for our panel regarding LGBTQ issues and politics
- Week 12:  
**Tues 4.15:** C.J. Pascoe, *Dude, You're a Fag* Ch3 & Ch4 (BB)
- Thurs 4.17:** Eli Clare, TBD (BB)  
 Guest Speaker: Ashley Mog, PhD Student in WGSS  
**Mandatory:** Bring to class at least two substantive questions for Ashley Mog relating to the reading regarding intersectional identity, disability, and queerness
- Week 14  
**Tues 4.22:** NO CLASS → **DUE: FINAL PAPERS on blackboard by midnight.**
- Thurs 4.24:** **LIBRARY PRESENTATION DAY**
- Week 15  
**Tues 4.29:** Simone Chess et al., "Calling All Restroom Revolutionaries!" (BB)  
**TO DO: PIS\$AR Checklist (BB)**
- Thurs 5.1:** Judith Butler, "Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Transsexuality" (BB)
- Week 16  
**Tues 5.6:** Cathy Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, & Welfare Queens" (BB)
- Thurs 5.8:** TBA