

Queer Studies & LGBTQ Life in London & the Global World

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: LNDN 3233

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Course Description

This course analyzes the relationship between sexuality and London's history since the late 19th Century to the present day. As a Queer Studies course, a central theme will be how understandings of sexuality have changed over the last one hundred years. We will particularly consider how western identity terms, such as bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight and transgender are relatively recent inventions and are largely the creation of colonial trajectories and the late 19th Century western medical gaze. But we will also acknowledge how the terms LGBTQ1 have been reclaimed in the 20th Century as a result of the American civil rights movements, LGBTQ movements, Women's movements as well as anti-colonial struggles. Most importantly, we will ask what is distinctive about Queer Studies in the London context and we will readily engage with contemporary Queer life and culture in London via an interdisciplinary approach to sexuality; the latter approach is characteristic of Queer Studies.

Course Objectives

Throughout the course, students will examine London as both the former center of the British Empire and as a contemporary city that is intrinsically connected to numerous post-colonial contexts and the wider global world. Students will also examine the relationship between colonial legacies and current discussions surrounding sexuality, culture and ethnicity in Britain and in the wider postcolonial world. Such as the debates surrounding the legal statutes which

Britain introduced to its various colonies during the British empire and which still remain in many of its ex-colonies. Through both a historical and cross-cultural approach students will engage with the specific socio-historical context(s) which have shaped current sexuality debates. More broadly, this course provides students with an interdisciplinary introduction to the debates surrounding sexuality, culture and ethnicity.

Students will get the chance to apply concepts from the course content through experiential learning with visits to sites around London. Proposed sites include the British Museum, the Freud Museum, the Black Cultural Archives, the Wellcome Collection, a walking tour of Soho as well as guest speakers. Other site visits will be suggested during the course for students' further interest. The class will also make use of feature films, documentaries, music, political/personal manifestos, critical theory, autobiographical novels, poems, legal documents and postcolonial nationalist histories.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, a student will have the knowledge and skills to:

- Analyze the dynamic relationship between sexuality and London's history since the late 19th Century
- Communicate ideas in both oral and verbal forms
- Compare LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) life and history in London with wider global contexts especially in relation to urban environment and globalization
- Critically appreciate how Queer Studies challenges traditional disciplinary boundaries
- Understand the social dynamics and diversity of LGBTQ life and history in London

Methodology

Readings

Weekly readings will be made available in photocopy or electronic format. It is imperative that students do the assigned readings before the tutorial for which they are assigned, as they will be required to discuss and evaluate these ideas in the sessions.

Field Studies

Field classes form an important component of this course. Attendance at these classes is mandatory. We will interpret the sites we visit through class discussion, as well as in written work.

Required Reading / Materials

Assigned readings will be distributed from the following resources, among others:

- Cocks, Harry and Matt Houlbrook. Eds. (2006). Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

- Gandhi, Leela. Postcolonial theory, A Critical Introduction. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.
- Lewis, Reina & Sara Mills. (2003). Feminist Postcolonial Theory. New York, Edinburgh University Press.
- Warner, Michael. (1993). Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Grading

Grading Rubric

| Letter Grade | Score or Percentage | Description |
|--------------|---------------------|--|
| A | 93–100 | Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. |
| A- | 90–92 | Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements. |
| B+ | 87–89 | |
| B | 83–86 | |
| B- | 80–82 | Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect. |
| C+ | 77–79 | |
| C | 73–76 | |
| C- | 70–72 | Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements. |
| D+ | 67–69 | |
| D | 60–66 | |
| F | 0–59 | Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I. |

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

| Assignments | Percentage of Grade |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Engagement (x5) | 25% (5% each) |
| Research paper 1 | 15% |
| Research paper 2 | 25% |
| Presentations | 25% |
| Class pParticipation | 10% |

Assessment Details

GRADING PENALTIES FOR WORK SUBMITTED LATE

Assignments received after the due date will be reduced by five percent (5%) of the possible grade for the piece of work being assessed per day, up to seven (7) days after the due date. Work submitted more than seven (7) days after the due date will not be marked, unless arrangements have been made prior to the due date for an extension.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Your participation mark is based on your preparation for class and your input into group discussion in all classes (excluding the class of your presentation - for which you will get a separate mark). You will need to demonstrate that you have read and thought about the set material for each week. Participation in class discussion will be marked on the constructiveness of your input to the class discussion and debate.

ENGAGEMENTS, including 1 MyEducation activity

(25% of overall course mark where each individual engagement is worth 5%):

The purpose of engagements is to have you critically engage course readings and concepts on a small scale. Engagements will take a number of forms, including generating questions for class discussions, responding to questions I pose about readings, completing out of class exercises, writing short response papers, attending events and connecting them to class

concepts....and so forth. You will complete six engagements during the semester and I will take your best five when calculating your grade for this section of the course.

Alongside this course's engagements, CAPA's MyEducation program offers you the opportunity and independence to decide how to learn about culture according to how you enjoy learning. You are required to write on one MyEducation event as part of the engagements assignment. This is due in week 13.

MyEducation events will differ slightly from semester to semester. But the instructor will clearly signpost suitable choices for this course. PLEASE NOTE that many MyEducation events require advanced sign up, so be sure to check the calendar and plan your activities well in advance. Others are self-directed, and may be undertaken at the time of your choosing.

You may also select alternative events or activities listed on the MyEducation calendar, as long as they are not already closely related to field studies for this course and are approved by the instructor in advance. We will also make use of other relevant MyEducation events and activities during class discussion where appropriate, as well as draw on students' own individual travel experiences.

RESEARCH PAPERS

Paper 1 (1000 words, due week 7, and worth 15% of the overall course mark)

You will write on ONE of the following topics:

1. How are contemporary sexual identity terms influenced by the late nineteenth century context?
2. What use is Queer Studies as an interdisciplinary field of study?
3. What does the expression 'the personal is political' mean in terms of sexual politics?
4. How would you adjudicate between the rival claims of queer politics and identity politics?
5. Is sexuality an integral part of a person's identity? Discuss.
6. What is distinct about LGBTQ life in London?

Paper 2: (2000 words, due week 14 and worth 25% of the overall course mark)

You may write on ONE of the following topics. But students are encouraged to think of their own topics for this paper:

1. "'Whiteness' is often read (or not read) as the blank slate around which 'the other' is constructed.' Do contemporary representations of sexuality simultaneously advance cultural constructions of race?
2. How do constructions of race and/or ethnicity inform constructions of sexuality and is it useful or limiting to consider these identitarian categories separately?
3. 'Sexual expression is perhaps the most fundamental manifestation of human individuality. Erotic material is subversive in the sense that it celebrates, and appeals to, the most uniquely personal aspects of an individual's emotional life.' (Mongiovi) Discuss.

4. Is it useful to compare understandings of sexuality in London with wider global contexts? Support your essay response with reference to contextual examples.

PRESENTATION: Sexuality & London's history (25%)

Each student will give a presentation as part of the course on a theme, or angle, on sexuality and London's history. These themes may include, but are not limited to:

- sexuality and London as an urban context
- the intersection between gender and sexuality (or gender, sexuality and ethnicity)
- representations of LGBTQ people in London's history
- empire and sexuality
- sexuality and politics
- gay marriage, civil unions and/or civil marriage
- sexuality and human rights
- sexuality and ideas of national belonging
- sexuality and the media
- sexuality and postcolonial cultures

CLASS ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (10%)

CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Students are also expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments BEFORE the class, and come in on time.

If you need to miss class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, you must send an email to let the Director of Academic Affairs (DAA) know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following email: excused.absence@capa.org. Note that calling the CAPA Center (Tel. 020 7370 7389) is accepted only if you do not have access to the internet. An email is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. If you miss any meetings without an excused absence by email, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. And when you must miss a class or field trip, you are responsible to speak to your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars, and in online forums and discussions, in a critical and evaluative manner; to approach professors and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in debate, while avoiding derogatory or inflammatory comments on the cultures or attitudes of others in the class.

Course Content

Unit 1

Introduction to queer studies & LGBTQ life in London & the global world

- Today's class introduces some of the central concepts and ideas on the course. We will also look at clips from the 1985 film *My Beautiful Launderette* in order to start thinking about what is distinctive about queer studies in London, Britain and the wider world.
- *****Engagement 1 which is due by the beginning of week 2 class***:**
 1. (From Bristow chapter 1) Some critics argue that early sexologists' research in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has simplified later discussions of sexuality, particularly in how a lot of sexologists' research has presented homosexuality as 'deviant' or 'unnatural'. Other critics say that early sexologists have played an important role in legitimizing the study of sexuality. Do you think that early sexologists' research helped to stimulate an interest in sexual diversity?
 2. (From Bristow chapter 1) Why did early sexologists focus on discovering 'universal' truths when approaching the study of sexuality? What would have propelled them to utilize such research methods?
 3. (From Bristow chapter 4): What four 19th Century phenomena did Foucault focus on in order to illustrate how the attempt to censor certain issues in the west paradoxically gives rise to an explosion of discourses? (Begins on p 174) NB: *This is Foucault's main point about power because, for Foucault, policing/censoring bodies/desires can allow for peoples/desire to participate in power dynamics.*
 4. (Ross Forman reading): Why are sexuality, class and ethnicity so linked in the British context since at least the late 19th Century? Think back to the colonial and Victorian obsession with categorisation.

Unit 2

Inventing sexuality

- This week we focus on the emergence of western sexual identity terms via 19th Century western medical discourses and colonial ideas of 'difference'. We will consider these ideas in relation to our week 3 visit to the Freud Museum in order to analyse how Freud's ideas have shaped the broader discussions surrounding sexuality in the 20th Century.
- *****Engagement 1 due for today*****
- **Required reading:**
 - Bristow, Joseph (1997) *Sexuality* Ch2: 'Sexological Types' (at least pp. 12-46 'Sexual Classifications') and Ch4: 'Discursive Desires' (at least pp. 168-188 'Foucault's Bodies')

- Forman, Ross (2006) 'Race & Empire' in *Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality*. H.G. Cocks and Matt Houlbrook (eds). Pps. 109-132.

Unit 3

Class excursion to the Freud Museum

- **NB: Class begins at Finchley Road tube station.**
- **Required reading:**
 - Barker, Stephen. *Excavations and their Objects: Freud's Collection of Antiquity*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.
 - Crozier, I.D., 'Taking Prisoners: Havelock Ellis, Sigmund Freud and the Construction of Homosexuality, 1897- 1951'. *Social History of Medicine*. 1 (3), 2000. 447-466.
 - Rutherford, Paul. *A World Made Sexy: From Freud to Madonna*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.
- *****Engagement 2 for weeks 3-4 which is due at the beginning of week 4 class***:**
 1. From the evidence you can find in Freud's study and the rest of the house, where do you think he got his ideas from?
 2. Look at the small filing cabinet at the bottom of the stairs. Each drawer contains objects and is labeled with a Freudian concept. Take one object and explain its relationship to that concept. How does the same object relate to one of the other drawers?
 3. Look carefully at the Family Tree on the upstairs landing.
 4. What evidence can you find about events of the first five years of Freud's life, which may have influenced the development of his work?
 5. Look at the dreams scattered around the museum. What do these dreams tell you about Freud's relationship to either his mother or his father or his children?
 6. Which specific parts of the Museum reflect Freud's theories on sexuality? Can we see the influence of these theories in contemporary culture? [Think of Freud's pivotal role in the emergence of psychoanalysis here.]

Unit 4

Queer London in the early to mid-20th Century

- *****Engagement 2 due for today*****
- **Required reading:**
 - Cook, Matt. *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
 - Doan, Laura. *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality and Women's Experiences of Modern War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

- Houlbrook, Matt. *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Unit 5

Walking tour of Soho

- **NB: Class begins at Leicester Square tube station**
- *****Engagement 3 for weeks 5-6 which is due at the beginning of week 6 class***:**
 1. How has Soho changed from the late 19th Century to the early 20th Century? [See Houlbrook from last week in particular for this.]
 2. What features of Soho make the area stand out as a gay area?
 3. What is the relationship between the central gay area of Soho and Chinatown? Is it random that immigration is a distinctive historical feature of Soho?
 4. Is Soho comparable with other urban spaces in London or elsewhere?
 5. Does gender as a marker of difference stand out in any of the gay friendly establishments?
- **Required reading:**
 - Mort, Frank. 'Cityscapes: Consumption, masculinities and the mapping of London since 1950'. *Urban Studies*. 35(5-6), 1998. 899-907.
 - 'Soho Memories' website: <http://www.sohomemories.org.uk/>
 - Walkowitz, Judith. (293): *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Nineteenth Century London*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

Unit 6

LGBTQ life in London & civil rights in the post-World War Two era

- *****Engagement 3: Written response to the Soho walking tour due for today*****
- Required reading:
 - Sinfield, Alan. *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*. London: The Athlone Press, 1997.
- We will also watch part of the 1985 documentary *Before Stonewall*
- **Further suggested links:** Recovered photos of gay couples in the 1950s: <http://news.distractify.com/people/lifshitzvintage-lgbt-photos/?v=1>

Unit 7

Class excursion to the Wellcome Collection

- **NB: Class meets at the Euston road entrance to the Wellcome Collection**
- Background information for this field trip: The Wellcome Collection is described on its website as 'the free destination for the incurably curious'. Website: <http://www.wellcomecollection.org/>
- Taking this as our cue, we will begin this field trip by focussing on how aspects of The Wellcome Collection can be interpreted from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. We

will particularly focus on exhibition entitled 'The Institute of Sexology': <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/jul/17/sex-wellcome-collection-exhibition-november>. More generally, we will consider how The Wellcome Collection permanent collection seeks to bridge the gap between science and other disciplines and we will ask what this contributes to understandings of sexuality today.

- Required reading:
 - Hill, Jude: 2006. 'Travelling Objects: The Wellcome Collection in Los Angeles, London and Beyond'. *Cultural Geographies*. July 2006, 13:3, pps 340-366.
 - AIDS Posters' from The Wellcome Collection: <http://www.wellcomecollection.org/explore/sickness--health/topics/aids-posters.aspx>
- **NO ENGAGEMENT FOR THIS WEEK AS RESEARCH PAPER 1 IS DUE**

Unit 8

Semester break

Unit 9

Imperialism, "race," & sexuality

- *****Engagement 4: Written response on the reading due for today*** This week's engagement will be based on the course reading.**
- Required reading:
 - Carr, Robert. 'On 'Judgements' Poverty, Sexuality-Based Violence and Human Rights in 21st Century Jamaica'. *The Caribbean Journal of Social Work*. Vol 2. July 2003. 71-87.
 - Johnson et al (2005). *Black Queer Studies: An Anthology*.
 - McClintock, Anne. (1995). *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Unit 10

Class excursion to the British Museum

- Required reading:
 - Liddiard, Mark. 'Changing histories: *Museums, sexuality and the future of the past*'. *Museum and Society*, March 2004. 2(1). 15-29.
 - O'Neill, Mark. '*Enlightenment museums: Universal or merely global?*' *Museum and Society*. Nov 2004, 2 (3) pps. 190-202.
 - Vanegas, Angela. '*Representing lesbians and gay men in British social history museums*' in *Museums, Society, Inequality*. London: Routledge, 2002. Pps. 98-109.
- *****Engagement 5 for weeks 10-11 which is due at the beginning of week 11 class***:**

This week's engagement involves responding to the British Museum collection entitled 'Desire and Diversity':

http://www.britishmuseum.org/visiting/planning_your_visit/object_trails/desire_and_diversity.aspx

- Choose 3 of the artifacts from the 'Desire and Diversity' trail. Is sexuality and/or gender a distinctive feature of each artifact? Refer to how each artifact reflects the period within which it is produced.
- How does the overall collection of artifacts compare with the ones we saw from the Freud Museum or The Wellcome Collection? [Think of how Freud drew a direct parallel between archaeology and psychoanalysis; see weeks 2 and 3.]
- Are there any striking absences in this specific collection of artifacts?
- Is it more appropriate to use the term same-sex desire rather than the terms homosexual or gay when describing these artifacts?
- Given the complexity of sexuality, what are the pros and cons of comparing representations of sexuality across different cultural and historical time periods?

Unit 11

Heterosexuality & "whiteness"

- *****Engagement 5: Response to the British Museum tour due today*****
- Required reading:
 - Dyer, Richard (1997) Chapter One: 'The Matter of Whiteness' in *White: Essays on Race and Culture*. London: Routledge, 1997. pp. 1-40
 - Dyer, Richard. 'Heterosexuality', in *Lesbian and Gay Studies: A Critical Introduction*. Medhurst, A. and Munt, S., (eds). London: Routledge, 1993. pp. 261-273.
 - 'Heterosexual Questionnaire' (1972) by Martin Rochlin.

Unit 12

Class excursion to the Black Cultural Archives

- Required reading:
 - Stuart Hall and Les Back. (2009). 'At Home and Not at Home: Stuart Hall in Conversation with Les Back'. *Cultural Studies*, 23:4, 2009. 656-687.
 - Gilman, S.L., "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth Century Art, Medicine, and Literature." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn 1985): 204-242.

Unit 13

Global "gay" & queer identities

- *****Engagement 6: Written response to ONE of the My Education events due today*****

- Required reading:
 - Altman, Denis. 'Global Gaze/Global Gays'. GLQ, Vol 3, 1997. Pps. 417-436.
 - Puar, Jasbir. (2008). *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.
 - Warner, Michael. (1993). *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Unit 14

Contemporary London & LGBTQ life

- We will have a guest speaker as part of today's class
- Required reading:
- Ellis, SJ, 'Community in the 21st Century: *Issues Arising from a Study of British Lesbians and Gay Men*'. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy*. 11:1-2, 2007. 111-126.
- Sinfield, Alan. *Gay and After*. London: Serpent's Tail, 2008.
- *****Research paper 2 due*****

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).