**USC**Dornsife

Gender Studies

**SWMS 306: Introduction to LGBTQ Studies (34921)**

**Spring 2018/4 Units/T-Th 11-12:20pm/THH 203**

**Instructor: Dr. Chris Freeman/Office: Taper 410 Office Hours: T/Th 9:30-11 & by appointment**

**Email: cefreema@usc.edu**

***“Axiom 1: People are different from each other.”***

***—****Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick* (*Epistemology of the Closet,* 1990)

**Course Description**

Eve Sedgwick, one of the pioneers of Queer Theory, believed that “it’s only by being shameless about risking the obvious that we happen into the vicinity of the transformative.” Her first axiom—“People are different from each other”—is a good starting point for our course. Many of the “differences” she writes about are part of what we’ll be exploring for the next fifteen weeks, by reading a lot, asking questions, sharing ideas, writing, and agreeing and disagreeing, with civility and serious intent.

What do we talk about when we talk about sexuality and gender? We talk about the intersection of theory, history, psychology, culture, identity, race, class, medicine, and law, among many other things. But we also talk about stories—personal stories. Behind every movement and every theory are people who found a need, faced a challenge, or had a great idea. We’ll be exploring these stories as they are told in a masterful recent book, *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* (2015) by the eminent lesbian-feminist historian Lillian Faderman. Her comprehensive book provides an inclusive history of the LGBTQ movement, covering the past 75 or so years with events, laws, scandals, personal stories, theories, challenges, defeats, and victories.

Our course will concern itself with how the study of gender and sexuality came to include same-sex desire; how the feminist axiom that “the personal is political” and the methodologies and strategies of the U.S. feminist movement and the Black civil rights movements, among other social and civil causes, paved the way for the rise of the modern queer (gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender/queer/intersex/asexual. . . ) movement(s). We will also trace the development of academic and scholarly inquiry as it has evolved in the past century or so; it accelerated in the 1970s and has proliferated since the mid-1980s. But it wouldn’t have started without the pioneering work of Freud or of the 19th century sexologists, whose work helped to legitimate the study of sex, sexuality, and gender in the first place. While some of that early discourse, even most of it, may seem retrograde or cringeworthy to twenty-first century sensibilities, that work is foundational and therefore important for us to engage with and understand.

We will supplement Faderman’s book with documentaries, feature films, interviews, memories, and works of theory and history. As a participant in the course, you will work on a project (a 12-15 minute presentation and a 1500-2000 word essay) which will supplement our coverage. Your topics will fill in some gaps or add depth to our conversation. You’ll also write an additional formal essay and will complete a final exam assignment.

NOTE: ***If you are concerned about engaging with and discussing, in a respectful and open-minded way, the content of this course—gender, sex, sexuality, feminism, etc.—then you should consider finding a different course, since that is the focus of what we’ll be doing for the whole semester.***

**Learning Objectives/Tenets**

* Critical thinking: reading, discussion, analysis, and writing about the complex history, theory, and literature of LGBTQ studies—interdisciplinarity and intersectionality among texts, topics, and issues will challenge all of us to collaborative, inquire, and expand in our thinking around the key questions of the course.
* Feminist theory/inquiry will inform the readings and discussions in this course.
* The readings and topics are interdisciplinary and involve the intersection of gender and sexuality with social class, race, religion, and nationality.
* The shrinking world in the era of globalization will inform research projects and discussions as we consider sexuality in the context of world cultures, traditions, and shifting values.
* Honing your skills in discussing, thinking, and writing about these questions and challenges and addressing them for yourself in innovate, informed ways.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

Lillian Faderman, *The Gay Revolution* (Simon & Schuster, 2015)

Meg-John Barker and Julia Scheele, *Queer: A Graphic History* (Icon Books, 2016)

Various essays on Blackboard

Documentaries and other video material

Possible guest speakers

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Students are expected to attend every session. Part of your grade will be based on your *active participation* in discussion, so you should read carefully and take notes to help facilitate your participation. In addition to your presentation and essay, you will write an essay (1000-1200 words) due week seven. And there will be a take-home final exam.

You will work with a partner on a research project. This assignment will allow you to develop deeper knowledge of a focused topic, and you’ll share some of the relevant information/knowledge with the class in a 12-15 minute presentation, which will be accompanied by a research-based essay (1500-2000 words, written together or separately). These will having rolling due dates throughout the term, beginning week four. A hard copy of your project essay is due the Thursday of the week after your presentation at my office by noon.

**Grading Breakdown (1000 points possible)**

Essay: 300 (1000-1200 words)

Project and Presentation: 400 (12-15 minute presentation and 1500-2000 words)

Final Exam Essay/assignment: 150 (due Tuesday, 5/8, by noon via email)

Class Participation: 150

A: 930-1000; A-: 929-895; B+: 984-830; B-: 829-795; C+: 794-770, etc.

NOTE: JEP participation/completion will be worth 1/3 of a grade at the end of the semester, so B become B+, for example)

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Essays will be submitted in class, hard copies, and must include word count. No late work will be accepted, except in extreme circumstances (advanced arrangement required). The presentation will be 12-15 minutes long and must have a visual component (Prezi, PowerPoint, etc.); the research essay is due ONE WEEK after the presentation (noon, Thursday), unless you present the final week of the class (due last day of class in that case). The final exam should be submitted via email, as an attachment, with your last name and the course title in the document title (MS Word only, please).

**Attendance Policy**

*Attendance is required*, as this is a discussion-based course. Beyond three absences, your grade will suffer. Penalty: one-third of a letter grade per absence after 3, so a B+ becomes a B at absence number 4. Late work accepted ONLY by pre-arrangement.

**Course Schedule: Weekly Breakdown (Subject to change as scheduling requires)**

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| Date | **Topics/Daily Activities** | **Readings & Homework**  | **Deliverable/Due Dates** |
| Week 1 (1/9 & 11)  | Introduction to the discipline of Gender Studies/sexuality studies/LGBTQ studies | Faderman, Prologue and Chapters 1 and 2; begin *Queer*; BLACKBOARD—“Is there a History of Sexuality”; Jeffrey Weeks, “The Challenge of Gay and Lesbian Studies” (from *Lesbian and Gay Studies* edited by Theo Sandforth, et al, pp. 1-14.);  | Discuss projects on Thursday |
| Weeks 2 (1/16 & 18) and 3 (1/23 & 25) | The 1940s and 50s; Sexology and the Modern Homosexual | Faderman, Ch. 3 and 4; screening, *Coming Out Under Fire* (Dong, 1994); continue in *Queer*; BLACKBOARD: Foucault, from *The History of Sexuality,* vol 1. | sign up for research projects during week two |
| Weeks 4 (1/30 & 2/1) and 5 (2/6 & 2/8) | The 1950s; Freud and psychology on homosexuality | Faderman, Ch. 5 and 6; continue *Queer* |  visit from research librarian Chimene Tuckerand tour ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, 909 W. Adams |
| Week 6 (2/13 & 15) | Organizing and Laying the Groundwork | Faderman, Ch. 7; continue *Queer*; BLACKBOARD: intro to *Letters to ONE* (Craig Loftin, 2012)  |  project one: Kinsey reports project two: Christine Jorgensen  |
| Week 7 (2/20 & 22) | The 1960s: change is gonna come | Faderman, Ch. 8 ,9, and 10; continue *Queer*; view CBS News documentary, “The Homosexuals” (1967); BLACKBOARD: *Life* magazine feature from 1964; watch excerpts of *Before Stonewall* (Weiss, 1999) |  project: Evelyn Hooker and her work/legacy project: Mattachine and Daughters of Bilitis |
| Week 8 (2/27 & 3/1) | The Modern Gay Movement begins, again | Faderman, Ch. 11 and 12; finish *Queer*; excerpts from Jim Downs’ new book, *Stand by Me* on the 1970s | **ESSAY DUE 3/1**project: Rita Mae Brown project: BOYS IN THE BAND |
| Week 9 (3/6 & 3/8) THEN SPRING BREAK and Week 10 (3/20) | Lesbianism/feminism; the 1970s and coming out | Faderman, Ch. 13 and 14; BLACKBOARD— Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Experience” ; Audre Lorde, “The Uses of the Erotic”; for Week 10, Faderman, Ch. 15 and 16; BLACKBOARD: Freeman on LGBT fiction; “Word is Out” (1977, Mariposa Collective) | project: DSM and sexualityproject: James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, or another writer/artistproject: homosexuality in Asia/Middle East/Africa |
| Weeks 10 (3/22) & 11 (3/27 & 29) | Queer Theory and the 80s and 90s | Faderman, Ch. 17, 18, and 19; BLACKBOARD: Eve Sedgwick, “Epistemomology of the Closet”; Eve Sedgwick, “Queer and Now”; Judith Butler, “Critically Queer” (18-31) | Project: *Bowers v. Hardwick* Project: Judith Butler or other Queer Theorist |
| Week 12 (4/3 & 5) & 13 (4/10) | AIDS and Queer Theory | Faderman, Ch. 20- 23; watch *Tongues Untied* (Riggs, 1991) and excerpts from *United in Anger* (2012) | Project: Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell and DOMAProject: AIDS in politics and pop culture Project: Trans folks in politics and pop culture |
| Weeks 13 (4/12) and 14 (4/17) | Trans lives and theories; case study: Marsha P. Johnson documentary & controviersy | Faderman, Ch. 24-27; J. Halberstam, “Transgender Butch”; essays and material on David France documentary |  |
| Weeks 14 (4/19) & 15 (4/24 & 26) | Queer Lives in the 21st century; case study: *Moonlight*  | Finish Faderman; BLACKBOARD: “Introducing Queer Futures” in *Queer Futures* edited by Yekani, Kilian and Michaelis (2012) | Final exam assignment given; all projects/written work except for final exam due the second day of this week |
| FINAL | Take-home final exam (1000 words, approx.) | Due by Tuesday May 8 at noon; submit electronically | **Email attachment in MS Word to** **cefreema@usc.edu****File should be named thus:** **Lastnameswms.doc** |

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards*<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

## **Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html>provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu/*](http://emergency.usc.edu/)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.