

THTR 312 – LGBTQ Theatre

63257R/Units: 4

Spring 2021 — MON, WED — 10:00-11:50am

Location: ONLINE

Instructor: Boni B. Alvarez

Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom

Contact Info: bbalvare@usc.edu

(I will reply as soon as I can, but please allow 36 hours for a response.)

Course Description

This course explores the range and genealogy of LGBTQ theatre and performance across political, historical, and theatrical contexts. Plays surveyed are from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries of American theatre with specific attention paid to the tropes of ‘coming out’ plays, plays dealing with the AIDS crisis and intersectional ‘identity’ plays.

Learning Objectives

- Students will broaden their dramatic literacy with a specific appreciation for LGBTQ playwrights and plays.
- This course cultivates the students' abilities for dramatic analysis and critical thinking via class discussion and through writing essays on close readings of the texts.
- Students will develop a knowledge of plays dealing with the AIDS crisis.
- Students will learn to identify queer tropes in dramatic narratives.
- Through the readings of LGBTQ texts, students will learn how playwrights shape queerness for presentation and performance.

Required Readings

Texts marked with an asterisk (*) have been ordered through the USC Bookstore and can be purchased at usctext.com. All other texts will be distributed via Blackboard.

- Birkenmier, Liza. *Dr. Ride's American Beach House*
- Christopher, J. Julian. *Julio Down By The Schoolyard*
- Deen, Mashuq Mushtaq. *Draw the Circle*
- *Hunter, Samuel D. *The Whale*
- Jackson, Michael R. *Strange Loop*
- Kaufman, MJ. *Masculinity Max*
- *Kramer, Larry. *The Normal Heart*
- *Kron, Lisa & Tesori, Jeanine. *Fun Home*
- *O'Hara, Robert. *Boyt candy*
- Silverman, Jen. *Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops*

Additional Readings

These texts will be distributed electronically.

- Drake, David. *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*
- Sanchez, Edwin. *Trafficking in Broken Hearts*
- Vogel, Paula. *Baltimore Waltz*
- Yew, Chay. *A Language of Their Own*

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Participation – 15%

Students must actively participate in the discussion topics, demonstrate preparedness of the assigned readings, and practice active listening & engagement. Many ideas, questions, and opinions will arise; students should be respectful and employ empathy in the ensuing discussions.

Close Reading Paper – 20%

This paper will deal with a close reading of a scene from *Fun Home*, *Boothycandy* OR *Draw the Circle*. This paper will examine a particular scene/song/monologue through a lens of 'coming out'. Papers must have a thesis and include textual evidence. A more detailed prompt will be distributed.

Midterm - Group Presentation – 25%

Students will be divided into groups; each group will be assigned a contemporary play which grapples with the AIDS epidemic. Groups will present on the play's dramaturgical relation to Kramer's *The Normal Heart*. A more detailed prompt will be distributed.

Analysis Paper – 25%

This paper will examine notions of the queer body as dramatized in *Julio Down By The Schoolyard* or *Collective Rage* or *The Whale* or *Strange Loop*. Students may also choose one of the Secondary AIDS plays. Papers must have a thesis and include textual evidence. A more detailed prompt will be distributed.

Final Assignment – 15%

A final paper surveying the texts studied over the course of the semester, evaluating what essentials a play requires to fall under the umbrella of LGBTQ Theatre. A more detailed prompt will be distributed.

Grading Breakdown

ASSIGNMENT	% of grade
Participation	15
Close Reading Paper	20
Midterm - Group Presentation	25
Analysis Paper	25

Final Assignment	15
TOTAL	100

Grading Scale for SDA: **A** indicates work of excellent quality; **B** of good quality; **C** of average quality; **D** of below average quality; and **F** indicates inadequate work.

A+: 100-98	A: 97-94	A-: 93-90
B+: 89-87	B: 86-84	B-: 83-80
C+: 79-77	C: 76-74	C-: 73-70
D+: 69-67	D: 66-64	D-: 63-60
F: 59-0		

When a student’s mathematical GPA falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted towards the higher end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class have been excellent or good and toward the lower end for those with average or poor attendance and participation.

Assignment Submission Policy

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Additional Policies

Camera Policy

This course has a “camera-on” policy. Class dynamics are substantially compromised without the ability to see the people in class. For privacy concerns, students may use virtual backgrounds. If there are other challenges and concerns, please contact the professor regarding other accommodations.

Time Zone Accommodations

USC considers the hours from **7:00am to 10:00pm**, in the local time zone for each student, as reasonable times for students to attend synchronous sessions. Students facing obstacles to their learning as a result of time zone differences should contact the professor.

Recording Online Classes

USC policy requires that all classes conducted online be recorded. ITS has set up Zoom to automatically record and transcribe class sessions, which are then made available in Blackboard. Students should review their responsibilities towards the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-c/>). Students are not permitted to create their own class recordings. Violations of these policies will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction. Zoom recordings will be retained in the cloud until the end of the semester, at which point they will be deleted.

<u>WK</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>WEEKLY SCHEDULE</u>
2 LGBTQ THEATRE		
	MON 1/18	MLK HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
	WED 1/20	Introductions; Play excerpts: Fornes' <i>Mud</i> ; Son's <i>Stop Kiss</i> ; Brittain's <i>Rotterdam</i> ; <u>Defining LGBTQ Theatre</u>
3 COMING OUT (-OF-AGE)		
	MON 1/25	Kron & Tesori's <i>Fun Home</i>
	<u>WED 1/27</u>	<u><i>Fun Home</i> (cont)</u>
4	MON 2/1	O'Hara's <i>Bootycandy</i>
	<u>WED 2/3</u>	<u><i>Bootycandy</i> (cont)</u>
5	MON 2/8	Deen's <i>Draw the Circle</i>
	<u>WED 2/10</u>	<u><i>Draw the Circle</i> (cont)</u> CLOSE READING PAPER DUE – SAT, 2/13 11am
6 AIDS		
	MON 2/15	PRESIDENTS' DAY – NO CLASS
	<u>WED 2/17</u>	<u>Kramer's <i>The Normal Heart</i></u>
7	MON 2/22	<i>The Normal Heart</i> (cont)
	<u>WED 2/24</u>	<u><i>The Normal Heart</i> (cont); Secondary AIDS Plays – MIDTERM PREP</u>
8	MON 3/1	MIDTERM - GROUP PRESENTATIONS
	<u>WED 3/3</u>	<u>Livingston's <i>Paris Is Burning</i></u>
9 CONTEMPORARY IDENTITIES & INTERSECTIONALITIES		
	MON 3/8	Christopher's <i>Julio Down By The Schoolyard</i>
	WED 3/10	<i>Julio Down By The Schoolyard</i> (cont) <u>Dolan's Theatre & Sexuality - (Miller's foreward)</u>
10	MON 3/15	Silverman's <i>Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops</i>
	<u>WED 3/17</u>	<u><i>Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops</i> (cont)</u>
11	MON 3/22	Hunter's <i>The Whale</i>
	<u>WED 3/24</u>	<u><i>The Whale</i> (cont)</u>
12	MON 3/29	Jackson's <i>Strange Loop</i>
	<u>WED 3/31</u>	<u><i>Strange Loop</i> (cont)</u>
13	MON 4/5	<i>Strange Loop</i> (cont) CRITICAL ANALYSIS DUE – 11:59pm
	<u>WED 4/7</u>	<u>WELLNESS DAY – NO CLASS</u>
14	MON 4/12	Birkenmeier's <i>Dr. Ride's American Beach House</i>
	<u>WED 4/14</u>	<u><i>Dr. Ride's American Beach House</i> (cont)</u>
15	MON 4/19	<i>Dr. Ride's American Beach House</i> (cont)
	<u>WED 4/21</u>	<u>Kaufman's <i>Masculinity Max</i> (cont)</u>
16	MON 4/26	<i>Masculinity Max</i> (cont)
	<u>WED 4/28</u>	<u>Wrap-Up</u>
FINAL	MON 5/10	8:00-10:00am FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. 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>.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu