

**THTR 312 – LGBTQ Theatre**

62874R/Units: 4

Fall 2021 — TUES, THURS — 8:00-9:50am

**Location: KDC 241**

**Instructor: Boni B. Alvarez**

**Office Hours:** by appt: TUES, THURS 10am-1pm

**Office:** MCC 214

**Contact Info:** bbalvare@usc.edu

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

**Course Assistant: Ben Wendel**

**Contact Info:** bmwendel@usc.edu

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**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. 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. *Bootycandy*
- Pamatmat, A. Rey. *Edith Can Shoot Things and Hit Them*
- Silverman, Jen. *Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops*

### **Additional Readings**

The following texts will be distributed electronically:

- Drake, David. *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*
- Rabe, David. *A Question of Mercy*
- 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*, *Bootycandy* OR *Draw the Circle*. This paper will examine a particular scene/song/monologue through a lens of 'coming out'. Papers should 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

**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.

### SDA PRODUCTIONS, ISPS, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SDA productions, ISPs and Extracurricular Activities\* will not excuse you from any class work. There will be no exceptions made for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, homework or lack of class participation resulting from your involvement in any of the above. Your grade will reflect your work in this class, independent from work in any other class or activity.

\*Activities that have been officially sanctioned by the larger university (such as marching band, song girls, or varsity sports) are exempt. You must submit official documentation to your professor regarding your participation in an event prior to your absence.

### Additional Policies (should the course move to an online platform)

#### 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>
<b>1 LGBTQ THEATRE</b>		
	TUES 8/24	Introductions; Play excerpts: Fornes' <i>Mud</i> ; Son's <i>Stop Kiss</i>
	THURS 8/26	Play excerpts (cont): Brittain's <i>Rotterdam</i> ; Defining LGBTQ Theatre
<b>2 COMING OUT (-OF-AGE)</b>		
	TUES 8/31	Kron & Tesori's <i>Fun Home</i>
	<u>THURS 9/2</u>	<u><i>Fun Home</i> (cont)</u>
3	TUES 9/7	O'Hara's <i>Bootycandy</i>
	<u>THURS 9/9</u>	<u><i>Bootycandy</i> (cont)</u>
4	TUES 9/14	Deen's <i>Draw the Circle</i>
	WED 9/15	EDI @SDA: Professional Development/Mandatory EDI Training All SDA students are welcome to join an interactive community building experience that explores how we integrate core values of equity, diversity, and inclusion into our educational and artistic journey at SDA. Competencies that will be covered will include, but not limited to, Anti-Racism as Everyday Practice; Equity-Mindedness (w/colleagues from USC Race & Equity Center); and Theatrical Intimacy & Building Cultures of Consent. More details will follow. NOTE: All SDA classes will be cancelled to support involvement in this effort. We encourage all to participate.
	<u>THURS 9/16</u>	<u><i>Draw the Circle</i> (cont)</u>
<b>*CLOSE READING PAPER DUE – MON, 9/20 - 10am</b>		
5	TUES 9/21	Pamatmat's <i>Edith Can Shoot Things</i>
	<u>THURS 9/23</u>	<u><i>Edith Can Shoot Things</i> (cont)</u>
<b>6 AIDS</b>		
	TUES 9/28	Kramer's <i>The Normal Heart</i>
	<u>THURS 9/30</u>	<u><i>The Normal Heart</i> (cont)</u>
7	TUES 10/5	<i>The Normal Heart</i> (cont)
	<u>THURS 10/7</u>	<u>Livingston's <i>Paris Is Burning</i></u>
8	TUES 10/12	<b>*MIDTERM - GROUP PRESENTATIONS</b>
	<u>THURS 10/14</u>	<u><b>FALL RECESS – NO CLASS</b></u>
<b>9 CONTEMPORARY IDENTITIES &amp; INTERSECTIONALITIES</b>		
	TUES 10/19	Silverman's <i>Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops</i>
	<u>THURS 10/21</u>	<u><i>Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops</i> (cont)</u>
10	TUES 10/26	Christopher's <i>Julio Down By The Schoolyard</i>
	<u>THURS 10/28</u>	<u><i>Julio Down By The Schoolyard</i> (cont)</u>
11	TUES 11/2	Hunter's <i>The Whale</i>
	<u>THURS 11/4</u>	<u><i>The Whale</i> (cont)</u>
12	TUES 11/9	Jackson's <i>Strange Loop</i>

THURS 11/11 *Strange Loop (cont)*

**\*CRITICAL ANALYSIS DUE – MON, 11/15 - 10am**

13 TUES 11/16 *Birkenmeier's Dr. Ride's American Beach House*

THURS 11/18 *Dr. Ride's American Beach House (cont)*

14 TUES 11/23 *Dr. Ride's American Beach House (cont)*

THURS 11/25 **THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS**

15 TUES 11/30 *Kaufman's Masculinity Max*

THURS 12/2 *Masculinity Max (cont)*

**FINAL TUES 12/14 4:30-6:30pm FINAL**

## 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](http://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](mailto: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.

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### Health and Participation in Class

You are expected to complete your Trojan Check screener daily and, as your instructor, I may ask you to show your daily screening in class. Your health and safety, and the health and safety of your peers, are my top priorities. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you discover that you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms or who have tested positive, you must follow the instructions on Trojan Check. My hope is that if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone with the virus, you will stay home to protect others. I will ensure that you can continue to participate in class remotely so that your education is not disrupted.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, USC requires that face coverings (masks) be worn indoors including in classrooms. Face coverings must cover your nose and mouth and be worn throughout the class session. A mask with a valve is not considered an adequate face covering and should not be used, as it can expel exhaled air, increasing the risk to others. Eating or drinking during class is prohibited because of the risk posed by removing your mask for these activities. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in your being asked to leave the classroom immediately. Requests for accommodations related to the face covering and eating/drinking policies should be directed to the Office for Student Accessibility Services (<https://osas.usc.edu/>).

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### SDA Student Support & Reporting Form:

To facilitate a supportive environment of accountability, SDA has created an internal system of reporting for students to address issues/concerns and to offer feedback or suggestions for improvement. This mechanism provides a pathway for reporting and offering feedback without fear of retaliation or judgment. Any submission filed through this form will be reviewed and processed accordingly through SDA Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To file a report, please visit: <https://bit.ly/SDAstudentreporting>

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## Support Systems:

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

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

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*

[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776*

<https://osas.usc.edu>

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*  
[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.