

COMM 337: The LGBTQ Revolution and the Media 4 Units

Spring 2024 – Tues/Thurs – 12:30-1:50

Section: 20538

Location: ANN 209

Instructor: T Delfín, Ph.D.

Office: TBD

Office Hours: In-person, Zoom, or phone. By appointment

Contact Info: tdelfin@usc.edu; cell: 510.219.5554 (text first)

Course Description

This course is an exploration of major milestones in LGBTQ+ history and the role of media in documenting, distorting, elevating, silencing, and inspiring queer storytelling. The curriculum is broken up thematically, beginning with “Early Queer Archetypes,” continuing with “Stonewall,” and so on. This trajectory takes us to about 2000, leaving the last twenty years open for student contributions. As a media-focused class, the idea of a “text” is defined loosely to include films, podcasts, comics, and more. Participation is a major component of this course and students will be responsible for developing discussion questions to guide our seminars. Please approach material with an open mind and be open to learning from one another. Do also note that there are many dark episodes in our queer history, some of which will be part of the curriculum. If you would like trigger warnings, please make that request privately and I will do my best to accommodate you.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course will simultaneously take two approaches: we will be learning about major moments in LGBTQ history through diverse media and we will also be analyzing the media and rhetorical strategies with which these themes are conveyed. We will study a diverse range of media including fiction and nonfiction, journalism, oral histories, documentaries, podcasts, feature-length films, comics, and more. Students will learn how to engage critically and with generosity toward the subject matter and your peers. By the end of the semester, you should feel confident facilitating group discussions, analyzing media, and sourcing your own media selections.

Course Notes

The syllabus is subject to change. Any updates will be posted in “Announcements” on Blackboard. Many assignments will be “shared” on Google but “turned in” on Blackboard.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

This course will meet in person on campus with few exceptions. The following links provide information that may be beneficial to you during the semester. [USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program](#), [Zoom information for students](#), [Blackboard help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#).

Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](#) website.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- [*Lesbian Pulp Fiction*](#) (available online from USC library)
- [*The Stonewall Reader*](#) (available online from USC library and may also be purchased in print and audio)
- *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For* (please purchase hard copy of book. Students may also share copies)
- *Between Certain Death and a Possible Future* (if you don't want to purchase the text, [you can access enough of it here](#))

Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials

Additional articles will be linked on Blackboard

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Discussion Questions:

There will be two types of open-ended discussion questions. The first, denoted in the syllabus with *, applies to questions about texts everyone has been assigned. These should follow the following format:

* One sentence of context to make sure others are following followed by an open-ended question that helps generate conversation, moves us to think more deeply about the material, and to connect it to other LGBTQ+ media. See rubric for details about open-ended questions and the grading structure.

The second type of question (**) asks for more detail in the context section, as there are several occasions when students will have the opportunity to make a unique reading selection from many options. On these occasions, your context should be explanatory, and the questions should be expansive and universal enough to allow those who read different material to join the conversation. For example:

In *Return to Lesbos*, two characters discuss being “gay,” with an admonition to “never admit you’re gay.” **How was sexuality discussed in the passages you read, whether overt or merely alluded to? What conclusions did you draw based on how sexuality was or was not discussed?**

TBD Response Paper:

There are several omissions on your syllabus in the second half of the semester. This is deliberate. Your one-page (single-spaced) response paper is an opportunity to share what you think is working, what isn't, and what you'd like more or less of going forward. You are welcome to make general or specific suggestions. A successful response paper should show deep engagement with the previous material and make an argument to back up your conviction. (Convince me why we should stay the course or go in a new direction.) The suggestions in these papers will help set the tone for the following weeks.

Alison Bechdel 5 Questions:

Alison Bechdel will be presenting a Visions and Voices talk in April and might also be visiting our class! (Follow-up with her agent in February). In preparation, you will each write 5 well-researched open-ended questions that reveal a deep engagement with her work. You should certainly draw on *Dykes to Watch Out For*, but you should also do your own research. Feel free to engage with her other work, interviews, talks, etc. Your context section should clue her in as to the source of your information. (For example: “In your recent keynote address delivered at _____, you spoke about _____...”). Turn in your questions on Blackboard and submit anonymously on the Google Doc so we can vote on our favorite questions.

Final Presentation (Group Project):

Don't worry! This *is* a group project, but your grades are completely independent. The goal of this project is to design proposed curriculum that brings us to the present. Each group should have a different theme, and each presenter

should focus on a different aspect of that theme. For example, if your group chooses “Nonbinary” as your theme, each member should focus on something specific. Subthemes might include “Nonbinary Hollywood,” “Depictions of nonbinary youth in right-wing media,” etc. Each presenter should suggest 5 texts/media to assign. Be sure to include multimedia elements such as video clips, images, soundbites, etc in your presentation. More details will be available on Blackboard.

Annotated Bibliography:

Your annotated bibliography is the foundation for your presentation. You should provide 5 references to media you would be interested in adding to a syllabus focused on your topic. These can include film, TV, podcast, journalism, etc. At least one should be from a scholarly source (peer-reviewed journal article or scholarly book). Please include a full reference for each entry and one paragraph that summarizes the content and makes a case for its inclusion in your proposed curriculum.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Value	Due Date	Where/How to Submit
1-2 Discussion Questions (weekly +)	20%	by start of class	Blackboard & Google Doc
End of Phase 3 “TBD Response Paper”	10%	3/7/24	Blackboard
Alison Bechdel 5 Questions	20%	4/2/24	Blackboard & Google Doc
Final Presentation (Group Project)	25%	By presentation date	In-person and on Blackboard
Annotated Bibliography	25%	5/3/24	Blackboard

Participation

This class will be collaborative and project oriented. Attendance and meaningful participation are expected.

Course Grading Scale

Letter grades and corresponding point value ranges.

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
94% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 93%: A- (A minus)	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C- (C minus)	0% to 59%: F

Course Specific Policies

Contact me if you would like the opportunity to submit late work or resubmit work for a chance at a better grade.

Phones should only be used in class if they contribute positively to the course experience.

We will explore the potential of AI together in this class. You are welcome to use AI to help you brainstorm, but final submissions of any work should be your own. Be especially careful with citing references provided by AI engines such as Chat GPT, which are known to “hallucinate” legitimate sounding citations that are often nonsensical.

Throughout the semester, we will grapple with many contentious issues while working to mindfully interrogate our own biases and standpoints to hold space for new, sometimes uncomfortable, but always interesting ideas. This is a seminar, so you will be expected to participate with an open mind. Be prepared to teach and learn from your peers as you tackle complicated concepts and ideologies together.

Attendance

Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences. Each additional absence may result in a grade level reduction (from A to A-, B+ to B, and so on).

Classroom Norms

- The primary commitment is to learn from each other. We acknowledge differences among us in disciplines, experiences, interests, and values.
- Build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding.
- If you wish to challenge something that has been said, challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
- Keep the tone and words respectful and productive.
- Allow others a chance to participate; empower yourself to participate.
- Maintain one another's confidence. We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.
- Do not write or say anything that would be compromising if it were made public.

Course Evaluations

Students will receive midterm evaluations. There will be dedicated in-class time at the end of the semester to allow students to complete faculty evaluations.

Grading Standards

What each letter grade demonstrates.

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

Grading Timeline

Every effort will be made to grade submissions within a week.

Assignment Submission Policy

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.

B. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Phase 1: Early Queer Archetypes		
Week 1	Tues 1/9	Course Intro;
	Thurs 1/11	Screen: "Daddy and the Muscle Academy" in class
Week 2	Tues 1/16	Screen: <u>Pandora's Box</u>
	Thurs 1/18	Screen: <u>Pandora's Box</u> continued In-Class: Review of Assignments
Week 3	Tues 1/23	Read: <i>Lesbian Pulp Fiction</i> (Introduction + 1 Chapter of your choice) Turn in/Share: One question* about <i>Pandora's Box</i> and another about the reading**
	Thurs 1/25	Read: Foreword and Introduction to <i>The Stonewall Reader</i> + 4 chapters of your choice from Section One, "Before Stonewall" Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the reading** Screen: "Before Stonewall" (part 1)

Phase 2: Stonewall		
Week 4	Tues 1/30	Screen: "Before Stonewall" (continued)
	Thurs 2/1	Read: pages 99-127 in <i>The Stonewall Reader</i> Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the reading** Screen: Death and Life of Marsha P Johnson
Week 5	Tues 2/6	Screen: "Stonewall Uprising"
	Thurs 2/8	No Class Meeting: Independent Screening: "Stonewall Uprising"
Week 6	Tues 2/13	Read: pages 128-152 in <i>The Stonewall Reader</i> Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the reading** Screen: Death and Life of Marsha P Johnson (continued)
	Thurs 2/15	Read: pages 153-184 in <i>The Stonewall Reader</i> Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the reading

Phase 3: The HIV/AIDS Years		
Week 7	Tues 2/20	Read: "Between Certain Death and a Possible Future: An Introduction" Screen: Philadelphia (part 1)
	Thurs 2/22	Screen: Philadelphia (continued)
Week 8	Tues 2/27	Read: 2 essays of your choice from <i>Between Certain Death and a Possible Future</i> Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the text** Screen: TBA
	Thurs 2/29	No Class Meeting: Listen to podcast: " ACT UP: A History of AIDS/HIV Activism "
Week 9	Tues 3/5	Screen: <i>How to Survive a Plague</i> (part 1) Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the ACT UP podcast*
	Thurs 3/7	Screen: <i>How to Survive a Plague</i> (continued) Read: NY Times AIDS Retrospective Article Turn in/Share: 2 questions about the reading*, 1-page "TBD response paper"
Spring Break	Tues 3/12	Spring Break
	Thurs 3/14	Spring Break
Week 10	Tues 3/19	TBD
	Thurs 3/21	TBD

Phase 4: Lesbian Visibility		
Week 11	Tues 3/26	Read: "Readers Respond to Alison Bechdel" Read: <i>Dykes to Watch Out For</i> (pages TBD) Turn in/Share: 2 questions about journal article*
	Thurs 3/28	Read: <i>Dykes to Watch Out For</i> (pages TBD)

		TBD
Week 12	Tues 4/2	Read: <i>Dykes to Watch Out For</i> (pages TBD) Turn in: 5 open-ended questions about <i>Dykes to Watch Out For/Alison Bechdel's work</i>
	Thurs 4/4	Alison Bechdel event. Details TBA

Phase 5: LGBTQIA+ Media Representations Now: Student Projects		
Week 13	Tues 4/9	Independent Group Project Workshop: No Class Meeting
	Thurs 4/11	Student Designed Curriculum TBD
Week 14	Tues 4/16	Student Designed Curriculum TBD
	Thurs 4/18	Student Designed Curriculum TBD
Week 15	Tues 4/23	Student Designed Curriculum TBD
	Thurs 4/25	Student Designed Curriculum TBD

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to check email and Blackboard regularly for updates.

Communication

For the most immediate response, please text me: 510.219.5554. Please also text to make arrangements for phone calls, Zooms, and office hours. Allow 48 hours for email response Monday-Thursday. I do not check email Friday-Sunday.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#)

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is also prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems

Annenberg Student Success Fund

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

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

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

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

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

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

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

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

[TrojansAlert](#)

TrojansAlert is an alert system that allows university officials to contact you during an emergency. It is your connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information. Visit the website to sign up.

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](#).

[ITS Customer Support Center \(CSC\)](#): (213) 740-5555

The ITS Customer Support Center (CSC) provides support to the USC community for connecting to the USC Network and using supported applications. For help with network connectivity and software, contact CSC. Walk-in support is available in Leavey Library's Information Commons.

[Violence-Free Campus](#)

Visit the website to read more about prohibited behaviors, reporting responsibilities and where to report.

[Student-Athlete Travel Excuse Letters](#)

Prior to a university-sponsored away competition, Student-Athletes are responsible for providing their Instructor with a Competition Excuse Letter (provided by their academic counselor) for the classes missed while on the road (i.e., excused absence). It is the responsibility of the Student-Athlete to provide the letter prior to leaving on their trip and to make arrangements for a make-up of any missed assignments or exams. Please refer to the [SAAS site](#) where they detail travel and travel excuse letters.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 1/8/2024 – 4/26/2024; Final Exam Period: 5/1-8/2024)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20241/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, January 26, 2024

Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund: Friday, January 26, 2024

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, January 26, 2024 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Audit:

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, February 23, 2024

[Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply.]

*Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

Last day to drop with a mark of "W": Friday, April 5, 2024

About Your Instructor

Teresa "T" Delfín is an anthropologist and filmmaker. She earned a Ph.D. from Stanford in the Program in Modern Thought and Literature and an M.A. in Latin American Studies from U.C. Berkeley. T is a native Spanish speaker who grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico and the San Francisco Bay Area. Her current research focuses on LGBTQ+ community in Jalisco and Nayarit, Mexico.