

CL 48A: SP.TP.QUEER THEORY

Section 01, Summer 16, Boğaziçi University

Mondays 13:00-14:50 in M 1170; Wednesdays 15:00-16:50 in NH 202; Thursdays 13:00-14:50 in M 2231

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Office hours following class

Course Description

Eve Sedgwick's *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (first published in 1985 and reprinted in 1992 with a new preface) initiated both lesbian and gay studies and queer theory as related but distinct perspectives in the U.S. academy. While lesbian and gay studies reinforce a binary view of identity (e.g., male/female, men/women, and straight/gay), queer theory critiques this fixed, stable, and essentialist view in favor of the more fluid, unstable, and constructed view of all identities. In this manner, queer theorists view gender and sexuality as "discursive" (i.e., constructed and performed through language). However, intersections between queer studies and other perspectives (e.g., transgender studies and intersectionality) question and complicate this view. In this course, we will trace the evolution of these changing ways of thinking about gender and sexuality as we learn about LGBT history and read the work of major theorists in connection with diverse texts (short stories and documentary films). Assignments will include reading quizzes, textual analysis exams, and a final reflection essay.

Texts

Queer Theory: An Introduction by Jagose

Excerpts by major theorists, such as Butler, Foucault, and Sedgwick, and short stories

Films

American Experience: Stonewall Uprising (2011) and *Paris Is Burning* (1990) (both to be screened in class)

Assignments

Reading Quizzes: Your learning in this course and class participation depend on timely completion of readings, so all readings are required. At the beginning of each class, you will take a reading quiz that will test your knowledge of the readings assigned for that session. To prepare for the quizzes, take notes as you read and review your notes before class. The quizzes will be given at the beginning of each class. Make sure to show up for class and be on time since there will not be make-up quizzes.

Textual Analysis Exams: These are in-class essay exams about the topics and texts we will discuss in class. I will provide further information about these exams in due time.

Reflection Essay (2+ pages): For this assignment, you will reflect on your learning in this course. This is not a course evaluation; I would like to hear what you knew about LGBTQ identities and experiences prior to this course and what you learned that you had not known before.

Grading Scale

930-1000 AA
880-929 BA
830-879 BB
780-829 CB
730-779 CC
680-729 DC
600-679 DD
0-599 F

Grade Distribution

- Quizzes 10%
- Four essay exams 80%
- Reflection essay 10%

Note about Classroom Participation and Late Work

To accomplish course goals, you must come to each class and be prepared. This means coming to class on time, as well as doing in-class work, readings, and assignments. Active and informed class participation is also very important.

Attendance is required for your success on quizzes and exams. If you miss too many classes, I reserve the right to take off points from your course grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed, make up for it, and come to the next session prepared.

Finally, make sure to contact me about emergencies in writing and back up your documents. Also, feel free to contact me with questions and/or meet with me to discuss any issues related to the course and your progress.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

All written work submitted for a grade in this course must be the product of your own composition. Ideas generated through reading and group discussion may provide the inspiration for your work, but should not be the sole ideas represented. *Plagiarism* is the act of presenting as your own work another individual's ideas, words, data, or research material. The concept applies equally to written, spoken, or electronic texts, published or unpublished. All ideas and quotations that you borrow from any source must be acknowledged according to the MLA documentation style (for more information, see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>). You should know that penalties for academic dishonesty and plagiarism are severe and can entail failing this course, as well as suspension from the University. You are responsible for reading and understanding "The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities" available at http://www.boun.edu.tr/en_US/Content/About_BU/Governance/Councils_Boards_and_Committees/Ethics_Committees/Student_Rights_and_Responsibilities.

Classroom Etiquette

No texting and no surfing the Web—turn off or silence your devices, such as cell phones and laptops, to resist the temptation. Also, show up on time and do not leave until class is over—

unless you have permission. Finally, we will discuss sensitive topics in this class; be respectful at all times.

Daily Schedule

This schedule lists films, readings, and dates for exams and written assignments. I will announce any necessary changes in advance. You will complete assigned readings prior to class.

Week 1

Thursday, June 16 Introductions; course overview; queer terminology

Week 2

Monday, June 20 *American Experience: Stonewall Uprising* (2011)

Wednesday, June 22 Jagose: “Ch. 1: Introduction”-“Ch. 2: Theorizing Same-Sex Desire”
Foucault: Excerpt from *The History of Sexuality*

Thursday, June 23 BU Graduation Day (no class)

Week 3

Monday, June 27 Katz: Excerpt from *The Invention of Heterosexuality*
Carver: “What We Talk About, When We Talk About Love”

Wednesday, June 29 Jagose: “Ch. 3: Homophile Movement” & “Ch. 4: Gay Liberation”
D’Emilio: “Capitalism and Gay Identity”

Thursday, July 30 Short stories: Oates: “Three Girls”
Schwartz: “Public Display”
Maupin: “Letter to Mama”

Week 4

July 4, 6, and 7 No class due to Ramazan Bayramı

Week 5

Monday, July 11 Exam 1

Wednesday, July 13 Jagose: “Ch. 5: Lesbian Feminism”
Radicalesbians: “The Woman Identified Woman”
Rich: “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence”

Thursday, July 14 Short stories: Sprecher: “Sister Safety Pin”
McDaniel: “The Juliette Low Legacy”

Thorpe: "Growing in Defiance"

Week 6

- Monday, July 18 Exam 2
- Wednesday, July 20 Jagose: "Ch. 6: Limits of Identity"
Sedgwick: Introduction to *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* & Chapter I of *The Epistemology of the Closet*
- Thursday, July 21 Short stories: Youngblood: "Mothers Know"
Allison: "River of Names"
Newman: "A Letter to Harvey Milk"

Week 7

- Monday, July 25 Exam 3
- Wednesday, July 27 Jagose: "Ch. 7: Queer"
Butler: Excerpt from *Bodies That Matter*
Itulua-Abumere: Review of *Bodies That Matter*
- Thursday, July 28 *Paris Is Burning* (1990)
White: "Running on Empty"

Week 8

- Monday, Aug. 1 Jagose: "Ch. 8: Contestations of Queer" & "Ch. 9: Afterword"
Stryker: "(De) Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies"
- Wednesday, Aug. 3 Short stories: Binnie: "I Met a Girl Named Bat Who Met Jeffrey Palmer"
Nelson: "Winning the Tiger"
DeLine: "Dean & Teddy"
- Thursday, Aug. 4 Exam 4

Reflection essay due as an attachment in MS Word through email on the final exam date (to be announced by the registrar)

Welcome to the course! I look forward to a summer semester of thought-provoking reading, writing, and discussion with you. ☺