

**01:512:375 *Gay and Lesbian History in the United States (300)*
Summer Session III (July 10 – August 16)**

Class Zoom Link:
TBA

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This seminar explores the dynamics of queer relationships, communities, and activism. Thinking as historians, how can we best understand the perspectives of those who sought to challenge the gender/sexual status quo across several centuries? The determination of a male/female binary (and any other sex or gender category) is not fixed or obvious: what is sex? What is gender? How has movement across borders, colonization, migration affected people's understandings of sex and gender norms and possibilities? This course will examine queer life as it transformed throughout social and political movements in American history.

Format:

This is an exceptional course being offered during exceptional times. While you may be used to online courses since the beginning of COVID, they still take some getting used to. I hope to offer a flexible classroom environment in which students' needs will be met. For this reason and in the spirit of flexibility, this course will be offered asynchronously through lectures and discussion posts on Canvas and office hours over zoom.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

This course is meant to help students learn about the past and improve their writing and critical thinking skills. Learning to analyze primary and secondary source materials in order to write like a historian is a key goal for this class. Writing like a historian includes forming a historical argument and analyzing evidence to support your claims. By the end of this course, I hope you all will be able to identify multiple forms of primary sources (textual, visual, material, etc.), develop skills for reading and analyzing secondary source material and using them to construct an argument and enhance your written and oral communication about historical events.

One key aspect the humanities can teach us all is how to empathize and understand the world around us. By gaining knowledge about the past, we as scholars learn how people have related to one another, differed, fought, warred, built relationships, allies, love. In understanding this history, we gain context for our current social, political, and economic present.

Accessibility:

Everyone is welcome in this course. Please let me know if you need any accommodations in the instruction or evaluation procedures in order to facilitate your full participation.

Academic Integrity:

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational, research, and clinical missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- make sure that all work submitted in a course, academic research, or other activity is the student's own and created without the aid of impermissible technologies, materials, or collaborations.
- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, images, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with the student's interpretation or conclusions.
- treat all other students ethically, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This principle requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.
- uphold the ethical standards and professional code of conduct in the field for which the student is preparing.

Assignments:

- Attendance and Participation (20%):
- Primary source analysis of the Ladder magazine (10%)
- 2 Papers (20% each)
- Building a Queer Archive (30%)

Assignment Descriptions:

***Note on late policy: All assignments that are turned in late will receive a penalty. The deduction is one third of a letter grade for every day it is late. With the exception of the final project, which must be turned in on the last day of class in order to submit final grade submissions to the university.

-Attendance and Participation: Since this course is heavily devoted to discussion, participation is a large part of your grade. As you can see from the syllabus, it is worth the same amount as your midterm papers. Attendance is key to your participation; students must attend class. During discussion section, we will go over the readings that were assigned for that class meeting. These

readings will include secondary source material from historians and scholars, as well as primary sources from the time period we are discussing that week. I will ask you to interpret these primary sources and their meaning as well as engage with historian's analysis of the past.

The most important aspect of this seminar is discovering your own insights from your reading, writing, and maintaining open dialogue with others to collectively build greater insight. Everyone's perspectives are essential to this endeavor. You are encouraged to share your questions, and also be aware of the overall discussion dynamic. What can you do to facilitate an open-minded and respectful process of sharing and listening? Consider yourselves to be co-caretakers of seminar dynamics by actively working to ensure that everyone is invited to share their perspectives; speaking in the first person singular; modeling respect for all persons; facilitating communication if discussion becomes stressful; and helping open things up if people in seminar are reluctant to speak. *It is everyone's responsibility to help each other participate; this is at the heart of your participation grade.*

Since this is a class on the history of gender and sexuality, we may be discussing topics that some of you find controversial. I want to urge that discrimination and disrespect are unacceptable in my classroom. The phrase "safe space" is often used to describe some classroom dynamics. I want us to employ all the practices that go into creating a safe space, but also encourage debate and engage with viewpoints different from our own. For that reason, I also want to build a "brave space." We should all try to challenge one another's assumptions about the past, while maintaining a respectful discussion.

-Primary source analysis of The Ladder Magazine: Write a 2-3 page primary source analysis due at midnight on **Wednesday, August 4th**. I will provide access to *The Ladder Magazine*. Consider that the Daughters of Bilitis, a lesbian rights organization of activists, (creators of *The Ladder*) organized after World War II and McCarthy Era prosecutions against LGBT citizens. How does the hostility of the 1940s-50s effect the organizing techniques of these groups? How did reading these sources impact your understanding of the historical time period in which they were written? This course uses a large number of primary sources, that is, written texts or works of art created by people in the past. These are not 'extras' tacked on to lecture and assigned readings. If anything, the lectures and readings are tacked on to these sources: because the readings, and my lectures, and all other works of modern historians, are nothing more than our interpretations of these documents and documents like them. (That's why they're called "primary" sources and the writings of modern historians are called "secondary" sources.) Analyzing and interpreting such documents is what historians do, and as college-level historians yourselves, you also must start analyzing such documents and making your own historical interpretations from them.

-Midterm Papers: Two papers will serve as your midterms in this course. Each should be 4-5 pages and will be in response to a prompt. These papers will require you to form a historical argument, include a thesis and relevant evidence from assigned readings. For these assignments, you will answer a question that helps you think about this course's major themes and that develops your skills as a historian. Successful papers will demonstrate critical thinking about the

reading and will be written clearly. All of your papers should attend to the following general guidelines: Begin your paper with a thesis statement, a one-sentence statement of your argument in response to the question. Follow that thesis with at least three examples (pieces of evidence) that illustrate that argument. Write two sentences about each piece of evidence, one sentence to summarize the content and one sentence to relate that content to your thesis. Conclude your response paper with three to five sentences that interpret that evidence and the conclusions you draw from it.

- **Midterm Paper 1: Due July 23 at midnight**
 - This paper asks you to think about the relationship between words for sexual relationships as historical ideas. As you will read in Karen V. Hansen, “‘No Kisses Is Like Youes’: An Erotic Friendship Between Two African American Women during the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” the words “homosexual” and “bisexual” did not exist in the 1850s and 1860s when Rebecca and Addie met and exchanged their letters. Given what you have learned about 19th century sexualities, does the idea of “bosom sex” provide a more or less useful way to think about these women’s sexual acts or identities? How have historians used language and terminology to discuss the history of sexuality and do you find their methods useful or convincing?
- **Midterm Paper 2: Due August 13 at midnight**
 - What role has activism played in LGBT history? How have activists brought what were seemingly private matters (sex/sexuality) into public discourse? How have activists altered societal understandings of sex, gender, race? Do you see patterns over decades of activism emerge throughout the 20th century? How has studying the history of queer activism altered your perception of more contemporary movements? Discuss either the Daughters of Bilitis, the Mattachine Society, Radicalesbians, the Combahee River Collective or other individual activists and organizations from course readings and class discussions.

-Building a Queer Archive: Select an LGBT person or organization from before 1990 in the historical record and create an archive around them (selections must be made with my approval). This can take many different forms. You can create a blog using wordpress or tumblr. You could make an art project, build an annotated map of a historically well-known gay neighborhood, make a game board. The possibilities are wide open. When building your archive, imagine it as a tool that others will use to learn about the person you have chosen to research. In this way, you will be teaching our class about what you learned and presenting it at the end of the semester. Include pictures of person or organization you decided to focus on, pieces of work they have authored including books, articles or poetry. Point your audience in other directions where they can learn more about your subject like podcasts, interviews, documentaries and newspaper articles that feature your historical actor. Be inventive! And play to your strengths. If you are engaged with social media and have a twitter or Instagram, imagine who your historical actors would follow or retweet if they were still alive. This project is in place of a final exam and therefore will make up a significant portion of your grade. For the last day of class, students will prepare a presentation of their project to share with the class and show off all their hard work. You will teach others how to navigate your digital archive and tell us about the person or organization you selected.

Week 1: July 12 and 14

Monday: Welcome

- Introductions
- Syllabus Review

Wednesday: What is the history of same sex sexuality?

Readings:

-Margot Canaday, "LGBT History," Frontiers, 2014

*available on Canvas

-David Halperin's "Is There a History of Sexuality" History and Theory Vol. 28, No. 3 (Oct., 1989), pp. 257-274

*available on Canvas

Week 2: July 19 and 21

Monday: Civil War to Reconstruction

Readings:

-Karen V. Hansen, "'No Kisses Is Like Youres': An Erotic Friendship Between Two African American Women during the Mid-Nineteenth Century" (153-182)

*available on Canvas

-Carol Smith Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual," Signs 1, no. 1 (Autumn 1973): 1-29.

*available on Canvas

Wednesday: Civil War to Reconstruction

Readings:

-Clare Sears, "All that Glitters: Transing California's Gold Rush Migrations," GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, 14 (2008), 383-402

*available on Canvas

-Martin Duberman, "Writhing Bedfellows" in Hidden from History (Routledge, 1989), 153-168

*Not scanned to canvas, must find through library website.

- How to find on library website: search Duberman, Hidden from History in Rutgers Library search engine. Click the first book option, then scroll down to "Find Online" and click Hathi Trust link, scroll to the very bottom and click Temporary Access link, at the top of the page you will see the button "check out" → now you have access to the book,

just scroll to the correct page. Be aware, if you leave the tab open it will expire and you might have to start over.

-Podcast: Jen Manion interview on *Female Husbands: A Trans History*
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/female-husbands>

--- MIDTERM PAPER 1 DUE FRIDAY JULY 23RD AT MIDNIGHT ---

Week 3: July 26 and 28

Monday: Turn of the 20th Century

Readings:

-George Chauncey, *Gay New York* read:

- “Introduction;” (1-29)
- Chapter 2: “The Fairy as an Intermediate Sex” (47-64)
- Chapter 3: “Trade, Wolves, and the Boundaries of Normal Manhood,” (65-99)

*available on Canvas

Wednesday: Turn of the 20th Century and Modern America

Readings:

-Esther Newton, “The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman,” in *Hidden from History*: (281-294)

*Not scanned to canvas, must find through library website.

- How to find on library website: search Duberman, *Hidden from History* in Rutgers Library search engine. Click the first book option, then scroll down to “Find Online” and click Hathi Trust link, scroll to the very bottom and click Temporary Access link, at the top of the page you will see the button “check out” → now you have access to the book, just scroll to the correct page. Be aware, if you leave the tab open it will expire and you might have to start over.

-Eric Garber, “A Spectacle in Color: The Lesbian and Gay Subculture of Jazz Age Harlem,” in *Hidden from History*: (318-331)

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- How to find on library website: search Duberman, *Hidden from History* in Rutgers Library search engine. Click the first book option, then scroll down to “Find Online” and click Hathi Trust link, scroll to the very bottom and click Temporary Access link, at the top of the page you will see the button “check out” → now you have access to the book, just scroll to the correct page. Be aware, if you leave the tab open it will expire and you might have to start over.

-Joanne Meyerowitz, Introduction in *How Sex Changed* (1-13)

*available on Canvas

Week 4: August 2 and 4

Monday: World War II and the McCarthy Era

Readings:

-Elizabeth Kennedy and Madeline Davis, "I Could Hardly Wait to Get Back to That Bar: Lesbian Bar Culture in Buffalo in the 1930's and 1940's" *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community*, pages 26-66

*available on Canvas

-Podcast on Julio Capó Jr.'s Welcome to Fairyland: Queer Miami Before 1940

<https://newbooksnetwork.com/welcome-to-fairyland>

-Watch Coming Out Under Fire documentary film on your own before class → available on library website

Wednesday: World War II and the McCarthy Era

Readings:

-John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity," *Making Trouble* (4-16)

*available on Canvas

-Podcast: Making Gay History Podcast episode with Harry Hay (Season 4, Episode 3)

- Please read the brief introduction on the website before listening to the episode.

<https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/>

-Primary Source: Excerpts from The Daughters of Bilitis *The Ladder*

<https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1003347879>

-Watch Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin documentary film on your own before class → available on library website

--- PRIMARY SOURCE PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY AUGUST 4 AT MIDNIGHT ---

Week 5: August 9 and 11

Monday: Gay and Trans Liberation Movements

Readings:

-Susan Stryker, *Transgender History*, 59-91

*Not scanned to canvas, must find through library website.

-Watch Screaming Queens documentary film on your own before class → available through library website

Wednesday: Gay and Trans Liberation Movements

*****must have your historical actor or organization approved by instructor by this class meeting**

Readings:

-Primary Source: Combahee River Collective Statement

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/combahee-river-collective-statement-1977/>

-Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality,” (40 pages)

*available on Canvas

-Carl Wittman, “Refuges from Amerika: A Gay Manifesto” (1-9)

*available on Canvas

-New York Radicalesbians, “The Woman Identified Woman”

*available on Canvas

-Watch Paris is Burning documentary film on your own before class → available through library website

--- MIDTERM PAPER 2 DUE FRIDAY AUGUST 13 AT MIDNIGHT ---

Week 6: August 16 and 18

Monday: Reverberations, Continuations and the Present

Reading:

-Brett C. Stockdill, *Activism Against AIDS: At the Intersections of Sexuality, Race, Gender and Class* (57-81)

*available on Canvas

-Daniel Bergner, “The Struggles of Rejecting the Gender Binary,” *New York Times*, June 4, 2019

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/04/magazine/gender-nonbinary.html>

-Watch How to Survive a Plague documentary film on your own before class → available through library website

Wednesday:

- In-Class Presentations of Final Projects