

The University of Texas at Austin – Department of Anthropology

Summer 2011

ANT S324L • Queer Ethnographies

81960 • Instructor: Sofian Merabet
MTWTH 1000am-1200pm SAC 4.174
(also listed as WGS S340)

Email: sofian.merabet@mail.utexas.edu Phone: (512) 471 0057
Office Hours in SAC 5.164: W 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description:

This upper-level undergraduate writing course deals with the anthropological analysis of queer gender and sexuality. Its aim is to critically evaluate formative concepts and theories that have been subject to recent debates within Anthropology, Gender Studies, and Queer Theory. Through the reading of a variety of ethnographies, we will explore how terms like "women" and "men," "femininity" and "masculinity," as well as "homosexuality," "heterosexuality," "bisexuality," and "transsexuality" structure people's experiences around the globe. Moreover, the course focuses on local-level social and cultural processes that challenge a wide range of heteronormativities within a regional and global framework. The basic theme of the material for this course concerns the extent to which both realities and the ways in which they are perceived are socio-cultural constructs that are subject to constant change.

Required Texts/Audiovisuals: (in alphabetical order)

Books (ordered at the *University Co-Op*, www.universitycoop.com, 2246 Guadalupe St, Austin, (512) 476-7211):

Halley, Janet and Parker, Andrew (eds.) *After Sex?: On Writing Since Queer Theory*. A special issue of: *South Atlantic Quarterly*. Volume: 106. Issue: 3. Pages: 232, 2007 (Excerpts).

Young, Damon & Weiner, Joshua Joanou (eds.) *Queer Bonds*. A special issue of *GLQ*, 212 pages, 8 illustrations Vol. 17, nos. 2/3, paper, 978-0-8223-6749-9, 2011 (Excerpts).

Decena, Carlos Ulises *Tacit Subjects: Belonging, Same-Sex Desire, and Daily Life among Dominican Immigrant Men*. 336 pages, paper, 978-0-8223-4945-7, 2011

Gaudio, Rudolph Pell *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN-10: 9781405152525, 2009

Rubin, Gayle “Blood Under the Bridge: Reflections on ‘Thinking Sex’” in Love, Heather (ed.) *Rethinking Sex*. A special issue of GLQ, Vol. 17, no. 1, paper, 978-0-8223-6735-2, 2011

Robbins, Jill *Crossing through Chueca: Lesbian Literary Culture in Queer Madrid*. University of Minnesota Press. ISBN 978-0-8166-6990-5

White, C. Todd Pre-Gay L.A.: *A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights*. University of Illinois Press, 978-0-252-07641-1, 2009

Movies/Documentaries:

- *Chuecatown* (original title) by Juan Flahn (2007, 101 mins.)
- *Madame Satã* by Karim Ainouz (2002, 97 mins.)
- *Paris is Burning* by Jennie Livingston (1991, 71 mins.)

Course Requirements for Registered Students:

The class relies on the intellectual commitment and active participation of all students. It will be run primarily as general discussions with some lectures. In order for the course to be effective, all students must have the reading assignments completed and ready for in-depth discussion for each class. Regular attendance is required. *Mere attendance in class, however, does not constitute participation*. You must come to class having carefully read all materials and be prepared to discuss, question, and argue about issues raised in the readings. It will be beneficial for you to take excerpts/notes on any material that you find enlightening, controversial, or objectionable. You should also take notes in class on themes, key terms, and debates we discuss. These note-taking strategies will be crucial when you write your response papers. In short:

- Attend classes.
- Do all assigned readings (while taking excerpts/notes!) by the date indicated on the syllabus and participate actively in the general class discussion.
- Regular 5 to 10-minute presentations on the weekly readings to be assigned to students. They are intended to launch the general class discussions.
- Four (4) 4-page (double-spaced/12 point) critical response papers to be sent to the instructor **every Monday** and covering a theoretical question based on the assigned readings (assignment to be posted on blackboard the preceding weekend).

The writing assignments (both short and long) are designed to develop critical reading, analytical, and writing skills. Rewriting in order to improve one's skills is strongly encouraged! Evaluation criteria include: critical and integrative analysis of texts, clarity of thought, ability to synthesize readings and class discussions into your own argument, and ability to formulate a theoretical grounding for it.

Anyone plagiarizing will first be given an "F" (Fail) and a report will be forwarded to the appropriate university authorities.

Grading Procedure:

- 4 response papers: 70%.
- Presentations: 20%.
- Regular attendance/participation: 10%.

Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives.

Reading Schedule: (this schedule is tentative and subject to possible revision)

- Monday, July 11th Introduction to the course

Week 1: Origins and History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights in the US

- Tuesday, July 12th Introduction and Chapters 1., 2., and 3. in White, C. Todd Pre-Gay L.A.: *A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights*.

- Wednesday, July 13th Chapters 4., 5., and 6. in White, C. Todd Pre-Gay L.A.: *A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights*.

- Thursday, July 14th Chapters 7., 8., and 9. (Conclusion[s]) in White, C. Todd Pre-Gay L.A.: *A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights*.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.: Class visit to the Gender and Sexuality Center (SAC 2.112K)

Week 2: Race, Sexuality, and Power among Gay Immigrant Men of Color

- Monday, July 18th "Introduction: Queer Bonds" in Young, Damon & Weiner, Joshua Joanou (eds.) *Queer Bonds*. Pp. 225-241. "Queering

Identities” (Ford, Hoad, Muñoz, Schneider) in Halley, Janet and Parker, Andrew (eds.) *After Sex?: On Writing Since Queer Theory*. Pp. 121-166

First Paper due!

- Tuesday, July 19th “Part I. ~~Leaving~~ Living in the Mental Island” in Decena, Carlos Ulises *Tacit Subjects: Belonging, Same-Sex Desire, and Daily Life among Dominican Immigrant Men*.
- Wednesday, July 20th “Part II. Body Languages” in Decena, Carlos Ulises *Tacit Subjects: Belonging, Same-Sex Desire, and Daily Life among Dominican Immigrant Men*.
- Thursday, July 21st “Part III. Colonial Zones” in Decena, Carlos Ulises *Tacit Subjects: Belonging, Same-Sex Desire, and Daily Life among Dominican Immigrant Men*.

Week 3: “Feminine Men” in Northern Nigeria

- Monday, July 25th Chapters 1 and 2 in Gaudio, Rudolph Pell *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*.
Second Paper due!
- Tuesday, July 26th Chapters 3 and 4 in Gaudio, Rudolph Pell *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*.
- Wednesday, July 27th Chapters 5 and 6 in Gaudio, Rudolph Pell *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*.
- Thursday, July 28th Chapter 7 and Epilogue in Gaudio, Rudolph Pell *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*.

Week 4: Lesbian Literary Cultures between Pride and Globalization in Spain

- Monday, August 1st “1. A Brief History of Chueca and Madrid's Queer Space,” “2. Lesbian Literary Identities in the Madrid Book Business,” and “3. The New Safita: Andalusia and the Phallic Woman in *Plumas de España*” in Robbins, Jill *Crossing through Chueca: Lesbian Literary Culture in Queer Madrid*.
Third Paper due!

- Tuesday, August 2nd “4. Lesbian-Themed Best-Sellers and the Politics of Acceptance,” “5. Dislocations: Identity and Communication in *Cenicienta en Chueca*,” “6. Popular Lesbian Fiction: Romance, Literature, and Legislation,” and “Conclusion: Toward Lesbian Visibility” in Robbins, Jill *Crossing through Chueca: Lesbian Literary Culture in Queer Madrid*.

- Wednesday, August 3rd Film Screening: *Chuecatown* (original title) by Juan Flahn (2007, 101 mins.)

- Thursday, August 4th “Blood Under the Bridge: Reflections on ‘Thinking Sex’” by Gayle Rubin in Love, Heather (ed.) *Rethinking Sex*. Pp. 15-48.

Week 5: Queer Theory and Its Aftermath

- Monday, August 8th “Lesbian and Gay after Queer” (Cvetkovich, Love, and Rambuss) in Halley, Janet and Parker, Andrew (eds.) *After Sex?: On Writing Since Queer Theory*. Pp. 169-204.
Fourth Paper due!

- Tuesday, August 9th Film Screening: *Madame Satã* by Karim Ainouz (2002, 97 mins.)

- Wednesday, August 10th “Queer Texts, Bad Habits, and the Issue of a Future” by Teresa de Lauretis in Young, Damon & Weiner, Joshua Joanou (eds.) *Queer Bonds*. Pp. 243-263. “Remarks on ‘Queer Bonds’” by Judith Butler in Young, Damon & Weiner, Joshua Joanou (eds.) *Queer Bonds*. Pp. 381-387.

- Thursday, August 11th Film Screening: *Paris is Burning* by Jennie Livingston (1991, 71 mins.)