

INGL 4038: Queer Sexualities in Film

Instructor: Lynette Cintrón

Email: lynette.cintron@upr.edu

Class: Tuesday 3:00-6:20 pm

Room: P 106 (Screening Room)

Credit Hours: 3

Office & Office Hour: P12 Pedreira basement; T 2pm & by appt.

Course Description: An examination of filmic representations of queer practices and identities. In this course, film analysis is defined as the examination of form as well as content. Throughout this syllabus, I use queer as an umbrella term & shorthand for a wide range of subjectivities, identifications and practices.

Course Objectives: *As a result of meeting the requirements of this course, students will be able to:*

- Explain key terms relevant to queer studies and the study of queer cinema.
- Identify & describe some of the key formal elements developed by queer filmmakers & artists.
- Identify & describe some of the key themes developed by queer filmmakers, artists, and film critics.
- Demonstrate increased awareness and understanding of the historical, cultural and political issues relevant to queer cinema.
- Understand some of the ways in which sexuality, gender, race, and class intersect.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and writing skills.
- Develop original scholarship appropriate to the fields of English, Film Studies & Queer Studies.

Course Outline: We begin by defining key terminology, keeping in mind the controversies, histories and fluidity of certain types of naming. Throughout our course, our attention will be on the queer cinema movement, as well as contemporary films that pay attention to intersecting issues of sexuality, gender, race, activism, desire, the gaze, visibility, and spectatorship. Films will be read alongside critical texts. Course readings will be interdisciplinary in scope. We will ask question such as, but not limited to: How is queerness cinematically represented? How are queer, racialized subjects represented? How do filmmakers *queer* cinema, queer the gaze? What does it mean to talk about a queer gaze? What constitutes a queer film? What are the relationships between queer spectators and cinema? What are the possibilities and limits of queer visibility?

Teaching Strategies: Lectures, guided discussion, in-class screenings and student-generated analysis. Class will usually begin with a mini lecture on a particular subject. Lectures will be brief, and participation will be expected. Students must complete all the readings before the class for which they are assigned. You are required to BRING the assigned text (digital or hardcopy) to class, and to refer to it in order to support your arguments. Should contributions to class discussions begin to lapse, I may assign additional homework, or initiate unannounced pop quizzes at any time during class. Up to 11.25 hours of this course may be covered online at Moodle, through a combination of guided forum discussions, quizzes, video lectures & ppt.

Accessibility Resources: Those students who receive services provided by the office of Vocational Rehabilitation must contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order to plan reasonable accommodation according to the recommendations provided by the *Oficina de Asuntos para las personas on impedimento* (OAPI) at the Office of the Dean of Students.

Classroom Policies: Please keep in mind that many of the topics and issues that we will discuss may be controversial. The classroom should be a space for sincere intellectual growth, and I encourage respectful discussions and debates.

- **Attendance:** Mandatory and will be taken at all classes.

-Defined as arriving on time, with the assigned course material, and staying until class is dismissed. Unless you have spoken with me ahead of time, do not leave class early, or you will be marked as absent.

-You are allowed 1 unexcused absence without penalty.

-Every absence without an acceptable documented excuse = automatic 1% grade reduction.

-Every **three** times you arrive late (more than 10 min. after class has begun) will equal one absence and will affect your grade.

-**Each absence over three** results in the reduction of your final grade by a letter grade.

*Five or more absences will result in automatic failure of this course—regardless of the circumstances.

Whenever possible, please notify me (in person or via email) that you will be absent.

-Turn your phone on silent or off, during the entire class time, including screenings. Using your phone will affect your Participation Grade.

-**Emails:** Always sign your emails so that I know who has sent the message and **always include an appropriate subject line, eg:** INGL 4038 question (always identify the class you are in). Do NOT email me about a matter without checking to see if the syllabus contains the answer. I will not respond to emails that do not contain a signature. I will not respond to email questions for which the answer is in the syllabus. Do not expect a response over the weekend, or within 24 hours.

-**Academic Integrity:** You will be subject to the standards of ethical academic conduct—cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Work found to be unethical will not be counted. Unethical conduct on the part of the student may result in further disciplinary action such as failure of the course.

-**Incompletes:** To request an Incomplete Course Grade, you must arrange to meet with me IN PERSON, at least ONE week before the last day of class (NOT FINALS). Should you require an Incomplete because of an emergency, you must let me know ASAP and provide a documented reason.

Required Texts:

Available at our course website.

<http://online.uprrp.edu/>

Log In with UPR username.

Grading Scale: A, B, C, D, F.

A 90-100	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 64-67
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	D- 60-63
B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F below 60

Course Requirements:

Classroom Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 10%

Critical Response Paper: 25% (4 pages)

Final Research Paper: 45% (7-8 pages, includes a 10% proposal)

Classroom Participation (20%): Thorough preparation for and active participation in class discussions are expected. You are expected to share your own ideas on the material. Don't get discouraged reading difficult texts. Bring your questions to class- together we will make sense of complicated theories. Check out Close Reading & Active Listening Guide, under "Syllabus & Resources."

* In-class film and video screenings are essential to this course. You are expected to take notes during class screenings (as well as discussions)— your success will depend on it.

* *Attendance* and *participation* are related but, nevertheless, quite different. *Attendance is a requirement.* One's contributions to the course are never based on merely "showing up" regularly. "Showing up" is your **attendance**. What you do when you show up is your **participation**: it is the measure of your engagement in the films/readings/discussions/lectures of the course. It is not my style to call you out for staring at your phone during screenings. Be aware that using your phone during discussions and screenings will affect your participation grade. See Grading Criteria for Participation.

Quizzes (No more than 4 quizzes for a total of 10%): May be announced or unannounced. These are brief examinations designed to test your knowledge of, and engagement with the readings and films. A quiz may consist of multiple choice and/or short answer questions. Quizzes may be given at the beginning of class or after a screening.

Critical Response Paper (1 paper, 25%): **4 pages** (not including the Works Cited page) **12pts. Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins all around, MLA.** Keep in mind the scope of the paper--analyze only ONE film. No late response will be accepted without a documented excuse. Your response must be on a film that appears in our syllabus, before the due date (including recommended films). See Schedule for date.

***This is a critical, as opposed to personal or merely descriptive response. Your response must have:**

1. An original title
2. A thesis that is supported by concise and focused arguments, and a conclusion. Written in academic tone. It must reflect an engagement with the theories and concepts discussed in the course.
3. Use at least one of the assigned articles to analyze the text.
4. Rather than merely discussing the film's content, use Timothy Corrigan (See: Syllabus & Resources) as a reference for how to analyze the ways in which **cinematic form relates to content**.
5. Focus on at least one sequence or scene. Be specific.
6. Response will be evaluated based upon argumentation, content, organization, style and documentation. Spelling and grammar will also be taken into consideration. MLA style & methods of citation are required. See Grading Criteria for Papers

Final Research Paper: (45%-includes a proposal worth 10%). 7-8 pages (not including Works Cited page), double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins all around, MLA. Due via email. Check Schedule for dates. NO final paper will be accepted without a proposal. NO late papers will be accepted. FOLLOW EMAILING INSTRUCTIONS CLOSELY. Failure to do so will cost you up to 5 points!

1. For this paper you will analyze the film or films (max. 2-no exceptions) of your choice (this is your primary source). Film can be from outside our course. Film can also be from within our course but **cannot be the film analyzed in your critical response.**

2. You are required to pay attention to film FORM as well as content and analyze the ways the relate to each other.

3. Your final paper should show original thinking. It should NOT be about how well you can describe a primary source, but about the complexity of an argument that emerges from a sustained analysis of your primary source(s).

4. You can work on any film used during our coursework—except for the one you analyzed in your response paper.

5. You must use at least two secondary sources to support your arguments. You must include at least 1 source from outside our course.

6. Paper will be evaluated based upon argumentation, content, organization, style and documentation (MLA). Spelling and grammar will also be taken into consideration. Clear arguments and correct documentation using MLA citation method are required.

-You are required to submit a 1-2 page proposal via email (check schedule & follow emailing instructions). Your proposal must include:

1. A tentative title.
2. A clear thesis.
3. Brief description of your project.
4. A preliminary list of primary and secondary sources.
5. Intellectual question(s) that motivate your work.

The proposal will allow me to make recommendations and catch any potential problems or difficulties before you set-out to develop your work.

Grading Criteria:

Participation

A: Active, consistent, meaningful participation. You come to class prepared not just to respond questions but also to initiate discussion with comments and questions. You come to class ready to make and argue claims about the readings and films. You attend to the comments of others in class, agreeing, elaborating, or respectfully disagreeing. You bring our attention to passages from the reading or scenes from films to make your point; and at times connect such thinking with earlier readings/films or class discussions. You frequently take notes during screenings, lectures and discussions. “A” participants are not necessarily the most knowledgeable, they will remark just as much on what they have *not* understood (or misunderstood) about the readings as what they have understood about them.

B: You come to every class, have *almost* always done all the reading, and consistently respond to the questions of others and the questions of the instructor. “B” participants comment with frequency and their comments show that they have comprehended the readings. Like A grade participants, B grade participants initiate comments on their own, but not as frequently. Finally, they take notes during class.

C: You come to almost every class, usually have done most of the reading, most of the time, but do not demonstrate through preparation and ongoing engagement with the material. You contribute infrequently, maybe once a week. You rarely or infrequently take notes during class discussions, lectures, or film screenings. “C” participants rarely initiate comments in class. Use of your phone.

D: You may be physically in class most of the time and may contribute a few times throughout the semester (usually when called upon). When called upon, “D” participants tend to respond with little thoughtfulness, reflection, or willingness to engage with the readings or with the ideas of others. “D” participants rarely or infrequently take notes during class discussions, lectures, or screenings. Notable use of your phone during screenings, lectures and/or discussions.

F: The result of a combination of not coming to class, failing to take part in class discussions, not engaging with other students or with the instructor when called upon, or failing to take sufficient notes. You are always on your phone.

Papers

A: This is an excellent paper. It engages with ideas that are complex. Your text unfolds like a story; you guide your reader through a narrative-like progression from one idea to the next. The writing flows well from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph. When discussing a scene or sequence, attention is paid to film form as well as content. Minimal spelling and grammatical errors. Academic tone sustained throughout.

B: This is a good paper. It fulfills the requirements of the assignment. A “B” paper goes beyond merely summarizing your source material. It demonstrates analytical skills and goes beyond mere explanation or summary. Most of the ideas in this paper are good. Some ideas may even be great, but their support may need to be fuller in some areas. Some transitions may be abrupt. There may be some awkward sentences in this paper or some inconsistencies in tone. Attention is paid to film form as well as content. A few spelling or grammatical errors are okay in a “B” paper. Academic tone sustained throughout.

C: This is the most complicated type of paper. This paper has a number of strengths, but it also has some obvious weaknesses. A “C” paper will show a basic understanding of the expectations for the assignment even if they are not all fulfilled. The most common problem is a paper that is overly explanatory rather than analytical. Sometimes there may be analysis, but it needs to be more intellectually complex or is poorly defended. There are some good ideas in this paper, but they tend to be haphazardly presented or unrelated to the analysis. There may be lapses in logical reasoning. The writing tends not to flow that smoothly from sentence to sentence or from paragraph to paragraph, and the wording may be awkward in many places. Papers that merely summarize material from the readings or class sessions will receive a grade no higher than a “C.” A large number of spelling or grammatical errors will put a paper into this category, although some “C” papers can be grammatically sound. Tone and language may be too informal. Lacks attention to film form.

D: A “D” paper has fewer strengths and a greater degree of weakness than a “C” paper.

F: This is only for a paper that does not meet any of the requirements for the assignment.

Resources: (Additional resources will be posted)

Film:

GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, *Camera Obscura*, *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, *Film Quarterly*, *Film/Literature Journal*, *Sight & Sound*, *Journal of Film and Video* (at UPR Biblioteca- online databases)

Senses of Cinema: <http://sensesofcinema.com/>

Film Comment: <https://www.filmcomment.com/>

Podcasts:

Gender Rebels (weekly question & answer exploration of life beyond the gender binary):

<https://genderrebels.podbean.com/>

The Read (with Kid Fury & Crissle): <http://thisistheread.com/>

Making Gay History (queer oral history/interviews): <http://makinggayhistory.com/>

Who Shot Ya? (cinema, discussion of current films) <http://www.maximumfun.org/shows/who-shot-ya>

Switchblade Sisters (discussion of genre films with April Wolfe):

<http://www.maximumfun.org/shows/switchblade-sisters>

You must Remember This. (Hollywood history with Karina Longworth):

<http://www.youmustrememberthispodcast.com/>

Activism, News & Popular Culture:

<https://www.orgulloarcoiris.com/> Orgullo Arcoiris, Pride-Puerto Rico

<http://prparatodos.org/> Puerto Rico Para Tod@s

<http://transadvocate.com/> The Transadvocate

<http://www.advocate.com/> The Advocate

<http://everydayfeminism.com/> Everyday Feminism

<http://feministing.com/> Feministing

<https://www.bitchmedia.org/> Bitch Media, Feminist Analysis News & Culture

<https://equalityarchive.com/> Equality Archive

<http://alp.org/> Audre Lorde Project

<http://www.colorlines.com/>

<https://genderqueer.me/> Transgender & Nonbinary Resources

<https://intomore.com/> Into Digital Magazine

<http://www.newnownext.com/> Logo

<https://hornet.com/stories/> The Hornet

<https://www.pride.com/> Pride

<https://www.queerty.com/> Queerty

Writing:

GLAAD Media Reference Guide:

<http://www.glaad.org/reference/lgbtq>

<http://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender>

Online Writing Center of U @ Purdue. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

Online Writing Center, Harvard. <http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/resources>

Grammar tips by Grammar Girl. <http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl>

Schedule (subject to revision)

3/13: Introductions & Syllabus

Screening: Dir., R. Epstein & J. Friedman. *The Celluloid Closet* (1995). (Available at English Lab- P 105)

3/20: Naming & Power: Terms & Definitions

-Susan Stryker. Ch. 1: "Introduction to Transgender Terms and Concepts." In: Susan Stryker. *Transgender History*. Seal P, 2008.

-Harry Benshoff. "What Is Queer Film History?" In: Benshoff, *Queer Images: A History of Gay & Lesbian Film in America*. Rowman, 2005.

-Jonathan Ned Katz. Excerpt from *The Invention of Heterosexuality*.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/assault/context/katzhistory.html>

-Susan Stryker. "Queer Nation." (1-page Intro to the Queer Nation Manifesto)

-Queer Nation Manifesto

<http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/queernation.html>

-Laura Kacere. "Homonormativity 101: What it Is and How It Is Hurting Our Movement."

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/01/homonormativity-101/>

Recommended: -Harry Benshoff & Sean Griffin. Excerpt from *America on Film*. Blackwell, 2006.

Benshoff & Griffin offer an overview of queer cinematic representation in U.S. cinema, from early U.S. film to the 2000s. Scope is broad and includes: issues & films tackled in *The Celluloid Closet* (also a critique of the documentary) gay & lesbian actors in classic Hollywood films & the studio system, representation during McCarthyism & the Cold War, Camp, New Queer Cinema, TV shows, and representation in the early 2000s. This is a text you can read return to throughout the semester.

-Lisa Duggan. *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics & the Attack on Democracy*. (2003) esp. Introduction and Ch3. Key text for understanding the relationship between neoliberalism, sexuality, & the political subject in the US today.

-GLAAD Media Reference Guide – Glossary of terms

<http://www.glaad.org/reference/lgbtq>

<http://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender>

Screening: clips CBC doc. *How We Got Gay* (Youtube). Dir. Alain Berliner. *Ma vie en rose* (Eng. Lab, 1997).

Recommended: Dir. Jeremy Asher Lynch. *Tomgirl* (2015) Free on Vimeo <https://vimeo.com/147551380>

3/27: Acts of Intervention: AIDS Activism, Video & Film

-Peter Cohen. Ch. 4: “Act Up as Gay Politics.” In: Peter Cohen. *Love and Anger: Essays on AIDS, Activism, and Politics*. New York: Harrington Park P, 2004.

-Richard C. Cante. “The Implications of *How To Survive a Plague*.”

Screening. Dir. David France. *How to Survive the Plague*. (2012). Hulu

-Read and listen to podcast (about 10minutes) “#WorldAIDSday: How to Change the Way You Talk about HIV/AIDS”

<http://www.scpr.org/programs/take-two/2015/12/01/45398/worldaidsday-how-to-change-the-way-you-talk-about/> Dec. 2015.

Recommended texts:

David France. *How to Survive the Plague: The Inside Story of How Citizens and Science Tamed AIDS* 2016.

David Roman. *Acts of Intervention: Performance, Gay Culture, and AIDS* (1998).

David France. “Pictures from a Battlefield.” NYMagazine.com

<http://nymag.com/news/features/act-up-2012-4/>

Frontline/PBS.org. “The Age of AIDS.” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/aids/>

Recommended films (doc): Dir. David Weissman. *We Were Here* (2011). Netflix.

(doc) *United In Anger: A History of Act UP* (2012). Amazon Prime

Films (narrative): *The Normal Heart* (US, HBO, 2014) Based on Larry Kramer’s play. Rent or buy on itunes/amazon

Holding the Man (Australia, available at Netflix, 2015) based on Timothy Conigrave’s memoir.

4/3: New Queer Cinema Beginnings: Isaac Julien’s *Looking for Langston* & *The Attendant*

-Ruby Rich. Chapter 1 from *New Queer Cinema* at Indiewire

<http://www.indiewire.com/2013/06/read-the-first-chapter-of-b-ruby-richs-new-queer-cinema-the-directors-cut-a-must-read-for-anyone-even-remotely-interested-in-lgbt-cinema-37457/>

-Shane Vogel. Introduction to *The Scene of the Harlem Cabaret*.

Screening: Isaac Julien. *Looking for Langston* (1989) & *The Attendant*. English Lab.

Recommended Films: Dir., Marlon Riggs *Tongues Untied* (1989)

Dir., Rodney Evans. *Brother to Brother* (2004).

Recommended text: E. Patrick Johnson & Mae G. Henderson, eds. *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology* (2005) & Shane Vogel. "Closing Time: Langston Hughes and the Queer Poetics of Harlem Nightlife."

4/10: "Black Lesbian Possibility": Cheryl Dunye's *The Watermelon Woman*

*** DUE: Critical Response Paper ***

Recommended Readings: Laura Sullivan. "Chasing Fae: The Watermelon Woman and Black Lesbian Possibility."

-Ruby Rich on *The Watermelon Woman*.

-Screening: Dir., Cheryl Dunye. *The Watermelon Woman* (1996) English Lab.

Recommended: Dir. Dee Rees *Pariah* (2012) Netflix, & Dir. Rose Troche *Go Fish* (1994) Eng Lab.

4/17: The Politics of Camp

-Susan Sontag. "Notes on Camp."

-Richard Dyer. "It's Being So Camp as Keeps Us Going."

-Excerpts from *Reading Rocky Horror* (Introduction pp 1-7, & read at least one of the included chapters: either Ch 8 on Cultural Performance & Communitas, or Ch 10 "In Search of the Authentic Queer Epiphany: Normativity & Representations of the Queer Disabled Body").

Recommended: S. Richard. "Divine Dog Shit: John Waters and Disruptive Queer Humour in Film."

<http://sensesofcinema.com/2016/american-extreme/john-waters/>

Screening: Clips from John Waters' *Female Trouble*, *RuPaul's Drag Race*, *Who Killed Rosemary's Baby?*, *Feud*, Dir., Jamie Babbit *But I Am a Cheerleader* (1999). *But I'm a Cheerleader* is available at Amazon Prime & Eng Lab.

Dir. Jim Sharman. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975).

4/24: Queer Third Cinema

-Helen Hok-Sze Leung. "New Queer Cinema & Third Cinema."

-Lisa Shaw, "Afro-Brazilian Identity: *Malandragem* and Homosexuality in *Madame Satã*."

Screening: Dir., Karim Ainouz. *Madame Satã* (2002) Eng. Lab

5/1: Gender Is Burning

-Julia Serano. Chapter 2 from *Whipping Girl*.

-Liz Kotz interview with Judith Butler in *Atforum* "The Body You Want."

-Judith Butler: Selected Quotes.

-bell hooks. "Is Paris Burning?"

Recommended: -Susan Stryker. "Transgender Liberation."

-Butler J. "Gender Is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion."

- "Burning Down the House" <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/jun/24/burning-down-the-house-debate-paris-is-burning>

Discussion of Final Paper & Final Paper Proposal.

Screening. Dir. Jennie Livingston. *Paris Is Burning* (1991). Eng. Lab & Netflix

Recommended: Dir. Xavier Dolan. *Laurence Anyways* (2012, Amazon Prime). Dir. Sean Baker. *Tangerine* (2015, Netflix).

5/8: Activism, Film & Community in Puerto Rico.

-Juana Maria Rodriguez. "Activism & Identity in the Ruins of Representation."

Screening: Dir. Antonio Santini & Dan Sickles *Mala, Mala* (2014). Eng. Lab

Wednesday 5/9: DUE! FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL VIA EMAIL – Follow email instructions

5/15: Film Noir in Color

Chris Perriam. "Legacies."

Screening: Dir., Pedro Almodóvar *Mala Educación* (2004).

5/22: A New Queer Cinema Renaissance?

-Margaret Talbot, "Forbidden Love." *TheNewYorker.com*

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/11/30/forbidden-love>

-Michael Bronski. Ch. 9 "Visible Communities/Invisible Lives." In: Bronski, Michael. *A Queer History of the United States*.

Screening: Dir. Todd Haynes. *Carol* (2015).

5/29: Visibility, TV & Streaming Screening: TBD LAST DAY OF CLASS

-José Muñoz. Excerpts from *Cruising Utopia: The Then & There of Queer Futurity*.

TUESDAY, JUNE 12: FINAL PAPER DUE VIA EMAIL BY 11:59 pm – FOLLOW EMAIL INSTRUCTIONS