LGBT Studies Courses - Fall 2016

LGBT 1940  A Global History of Love
TR  10:10-11:25  D. Ghosh and T. Loos

By posing seemingly simple questions such as “what is love” and “who has the right to love,” this introductory-level lecture course surveys how love has been experienced and expressed from the pre-modern period to the present. Through case studies of familial and conjugal love in Africa, Asia, the US, Europe, and Latin America, the course will examine the debates about and enactments of what constitutes the appropriate way to show love and affection in different cultures and historical contexts. Among the themes we will explore are questions of sexuality, marriage, kinship, and gender rights. A final unit will examine these themes through modern technologies such as the Internet, scientific advances in medicine, and a growing awareness that who and how we love is anything but simple or universal.

LGBT 2290  Introduction to LGBT Studies
MW  2:55-4:10  C. Howie

Since roughly the middle of the nineteenth century, it has become important for some of us, in some parts of the world, to identify ourselves according to categories such as gender and sexuality, categories further subdivided along some of the lines suggested by the acronym LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender). This course seeks to give students the opportunity to wrestle with what’s at stake in this process of identification, as well as the alternatives to identity (and gender and sexuality) that have arisen in earlier and other cultures. From ancient pedagogical eros, through medieval conceptions of nature and its abuses, to early modern mappings of sexual strangeness onto non-European bodies, we’ll examine the prehistory of our modern identities, even as we engage with the limits of those identities here and now.

LGBT 2421  Sex and Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective
MWF  10:10-11:00  S. Sangren

An introduction to the anthropology of sex, sexuality and gender, this course uses case studies from around the world to explore how the worlds of the sexes become gendered. In ethnographic, ethnohistorical and contemporary globalizing contexts, we will look at: intersexuality & ‘supernumerary’ genders; physical & cultural reproduction; sexuality; and sex- & gender-based violence & power. We will use lectures, films, discussion sections and short field-based exercises.
LGBT 2780  Body as Text: Pleasure and Danger  
TR  11:40-12:55  M. Raskolnikov  

We experience our bodies as so much a part of who we are that we take them for granted. Yet the way we think about the body has a history of its own. This course looks at how the idea of “the body” gets constructed over time. How has the body come to have attributes called “gender,” “sexuality,” and “race”? Why have some bodies been seen as monstrous, perverted, and unholy, others as gorgeous, normal, and divine? What makes bodies pleasurable and dangerous? We’ll find out by examining a broad range of evidence from the ancient era to the present day, including literature (Ovid, Kafka, Octavia Butler), philosophy (Plato, Descartes, Judith Butler), film (Freaks, Hedwig and the Angry Inch), and the history of science.

LGBT 3702  Desire and Cinema  
MW  7:30-8:45  E. Hanson  

"You didn't see anything," a woman in a movie says to her dubious admirer. "No one never sees anything. Ever. They watch, but they don't understand." What is desire in the cinema? How do we know it when we see it or when we feel it? How do the images, sounds, and narratives engage us erotically? We will examine classic theories of gender and sexuality in visual studies through a survey of recent cinema, including work by such auteurs as Stanley Kubrick, Pedro Almodóvar, David Lynch, Abbas Kiarostami, Claire Denis, Michael Haneke, Gaspar Noé, and Wong Kar-wai.

LGBT 3754  Spoken Word, Hip-Hop Theatre, and the Politics of Performance  
TR  1:25-2:40  K. Jaime  

In this course, we will critically examine the production and performance of race, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender through literature and contemporary performance genres such as spoken word, slam poetry, and hip-hop theatre.

LGBT 4241  On "Man": Sociogenesis and Subjectivation  
T  2:30-4:25  C. R. Snorton  

In this course, students will read and engage how “man,” as a concept, has come to be understood in certain areas of philosophy and critical theory. The class will engage how “man” has been socially constructed within a colonial context, with readings from Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Sylvia Wynter. Students will also explore how “man,” emerged as a consequence of discourse, with readings from Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Hortense Spillers, and others. Memoirs, novels, and auto-documentary films will supplement the courses’ exploration of the genealogies of “man."
This course will explore how women are portrayed in hip hop music and culture, addressing women both as consumers and producers. We will draw on texts that analyze misogyny in hip hop music and music videos, while also looking at how both mainstream and marginalized female hip hop artists contest sexually exploitative images of women. The course will utilize Black feminist theory, consumption theory, and youth culture theory to help students interpret and critique the ways in which women are represented in hip hop music, art, fashion, and dance, and in its surrounding culture. Considering analyses of African American, Caribbean, Asian-American, South African, and Latino interactions with hip hop, the course will investigate how youth construct gender and ethnic identities as they negotiate notions of African Diasporic belonging vis-à-vis hip hop. We will employ ethnographic, historical, sociological, literary, and interdisciplinary texts to explore questions such as: What do the sexual politics of rap music reveal about broader gender constructions? How can we compare the portrayal of women in hip hop to representations of women in related musical genres? How are hetero-normative gender ideologies reinforced in hip hop culture? Does hip hop allow a space for alternative femininities? The course will also address broader questions related to representations of Black femininity, minorities in the media, gender and sexual identity construction.

In the course of the semester, we will read literary and theoretical texts concerned with aspects of literary origin or inception. This might include epic poetry (moments from The Iliad, The Metamorphoses, and Paradise Lost), drama (Shakespeare’s Hamlet or The Tempest), and, among many other possible examples from lyric poetry, the specific case of Wallace Stevens. We might also look at the question of origin in the novel—at moments from Robinson Crusoe, for example, and at the opening paragraphs of a series of novels from the 18th to the 20th centuries. We might also read, as a signal if perhaps idiosyncratic instance, Henry James’s Prefaces to the New York Edition, which repeatedly offer, though in baffling terms, accounts of the “germs” of the novels they preface. As a way of organizing our sense of theoretical approaches to the question of linguistic origin and inception, we will explore the specific question of gesture by way of a series of writers: Rousseau, Artaud, Agamben, and Eudora Welty.
LGBT 4800  Black Queer Studies
M   2:30-4:25   C. R. Snorton

This course traces the genealogies and animating debates in black queer studies. Attentive to the relationship between black feminist criticism and black queer theory, this class proceeds with an understanding of gender and sexuality as intrinsic to the study of blackness in global contexts. Readings will include essays and books from Audre Lorde, E. Patrick Johnson, Christina Sharpe, Robert Reid Pharr, and others. Students will also engage popcultural texts, such as films, music videos, and novels to address the conjecture of blackness and sexuality in critical and vernacular discourse.

LGBT 4806  "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down": Theorizing Performance
TR   10:10-11:25   K. Jaime

This course will consider how Latina/o artists explore new approaches to texts, spaces, performers, and audiences. In addition, students will be asked to focus on the connections that were and are being forged between the arts, rituals, political-social actions, and local communities. Although the emphasis of the course will be on U.S. based artists of Latina/o descent, we will also attend to Latina/o experimental performance on a global scale.

LGBT 6241  On "Man": Sociogenesis and Subjectivation
T   2:30-4:25   C. R. Snorton

In this course, students will read and engage how “man,” as a concept, has come to be understood in certain areas of philosophy and critical theory. The class will engage how “man” has been socially constructed within a colonial context, with readings from Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Sylvia Wynter. Students will also explore how “man,” emerged as a consequence of discourse, with readings from Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Hortense Spillers, and others. Memoirs, novels, and auto-documentary films will supplement the courses’ exploration of the genealogies of “man.”
LGBT 6600  Erotics of Visuality
W  2:30-4:25    E. Hanson

A survey of theories of desire and visuality, particularly psychoanalytic, deconstructive, feminist, and queer film theory. The course will focus on films of the past dozen in an effort to explore the significance of classic theoretical texts with regard to contemporary cinematic practice. We will explore recent work by filmmakers such as Pedro Almodóvar, Olivier Assayas, Catherine Breillat, Atom Egoyan, Claire Denis, Peter Greenaway, Michael Haneke, Todd Haynes, Abbas Kiarostami, Stanley Kubrick, David Lynch, Gaspar Noé, Gus Van Sant, and Wong Kar-wai, as well as theoretical and critical texts by Jacques Lacan, Christian Metz, Michel Chion, Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Lee Edelman, D. A. Miller, D. N. Rodowick, and Slavoj Zizek, among others. Graduate students only.

LGBT 6800  Black Queer Studies
M  2:30-4:25    C. R. Snorton

This course traces the genealogies and animating debates in black queer studies. Attentive to the relationship between black feminist criticism and black queer theory, this class proceeds with an understanding of gender and sexuality as intrinsic to the study of blackness in global contexts. Readings will include essays and books from Audre Lorde, E. Patrick Johnson, Christina Sharpe, Robert Reid Pharr, and others. Students will also engage popcultural texts, such as films, music videos, and novels to address the conjecture of blackness and sexuality in critical and vernacular discourse.

LGBT 6811  James Baldwin
T  2:30-4:15    D. Woubshet

James Baldwin is one of the most incisive interpreters of the English language and of American life. In this course, we will pay careful attention to Baldwin’s essays and novels, and how his style in each form changes over the course of his illustrious career. We will consider Baldwin’s work against a variegated historical context and how his work pries open America’s literary, cultural, and political imagination. Also, we will supplement primary texts with shorter pieces by his contemporaries and new critical essays in black queer studies that re-conceptualize Baldwin’s enterprise. The themes of the course will include: the intersection of race and sexuality; the forms of intimacy and kinship; the politics of love; and, the role of the artist/intellectual.