

LGBT Studies- Spring 2017 courses

LGBT 2230 Masculinities
TR 10:10-11:25 C.R. Snorton

This course begins with the hypothesis that there is not one version of masculinity but rather multiple masculinities, as influenced by race, ethnicity, class, nationality, sexuality, disability and produced differently in various historical contexts. Exploring the relationship between sex and gender, as it appears across twentieth century U.S. cultural history, this class uses pop cultural texts, visual art, autobiography, and fiction to attend to the ways masculinities and femininities have been structured in dialogue with one another.

LGBT 2350 Literature and Medicine
MWF 1:25-2:15 E. Cohn

How does literary language depict the experience of physical suffering? Can a poem or a novel palliate pain, illness, even the possibility of death? From darkly comic narratives of black plague and accounts of early modern melancholy to nineteenth century discourses of sex to twentieth century critiques of mental institutions and depictions of the AIDS crisis, this course examines literature centered on medical practices from the early modern period through the twentieth century. How have medical practices changed, and when do these changes have political implications? Readings will include a broad range of genres, including poetry (Keats, Coleridge, Whitman), fiction (Stevenson, Shelley, Gilman, Kafka), theater (Kushner), nonfiction prose (Defoe, Woolf), and critical theory (Scarry, Lacqueur, Foucault, Derrida, Sontag).

LGBT 2760 Desire
MW 7:30-8:45 E. Hanson

"Language is a skin," the critic Roland Barthes once wrote: "I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words. My language trembles with desire." Sexual desire has a history, even a literary history, which we will examine through an introductory survey of European dramatic literature from Plato and Aristophanes to Jean Genet and Caryl Churchill, as well as a survey of classic readings in Western sexual theory from the Ancient Greeks through Freud and Foucault to contemporary feminism and queer theory.

LGBT 3210 Gender and the Brain
MW 2:55-4:10 S. Dietz

Why are boys more likely than girls to suffer from autism, and women more likely than men to be diagnosed with depression? Are there different “gay” and “straight” brains? And how does brain science interact with gender and sexuality in popular debate? Reading and discussing the original scientific papers and related critical texts, we will delve into the neuroscience of gender.

LGBT 3550 Decadence
MW 2:55-4:10 E. Hanson

"My existence is a scandal," Oscar Wilde once wrote, summing up in an epigram the effect of his carefully cultivated style of perversity and paradox. Through their valorization of aestheticism and all that was considered artificial, unnatural, or perverse, the so-called "Decadent" writers of the late-nineteenth century sought to free the pleasures of beauty, spirituality, and sexual desire from their more conventional ethical moorings. We will discuss literary and visual texts by Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, J.-K. Huysmans, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, A. C. Swinburne, Walter Pater, René Vivien, James McNeill Whistler, and Aubrey Beardsley, with a particular focus on Oscar Wilde. Students may read French and German texts in the original or in English translation.

LGBT 3725 Femininity as Masquerade
TR 1:25-2:40 M. Raskolnikov

“One is not born a woman, but rather becomes one” wrote Simone de Beauvoir. How does such an odd becoming happen? What can literature teach us about it? Does anyone ever achieve “being a woman” and how do we (“we”??) survive always falling short of the implicit ideal? We will think about the power afforded by receptivity, passivity, bottoming, emotionality and openness, whether or not these are enacted by people born, designated or living as female. What are some of the dimensions of femininity’s diversity, even in the United States, today? This course is intimately informed by intersectional queer, women of color and trans* perspectives, which will be at the center of our inquiry. It will cover film, literature, personal essays and gender theory.