Queer Lives/Queer Theories  
ANG 6990  
Wednesday 11:00 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.  
SIPA 335

Instructor: Dr. Jason Ritchie  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-1:00 and by appointment.

Summary  
This seminar will introduce students to some of the key arguments, theories, and methods of queer studies, a relatively new but important field of inquiry that grew out of LGBT and feminist studies. Queer theory was initially motivated by a critique of the ways in which certain formations of sex, gender, and desire are constructed as “normal,” while others are policed and marginalized. In recent years, however, queer theory has developed a more expansive critique of identity as such and a valuable set of analytical tools for thinking about the connections between sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and other modes of power/identification in diverse contexts.

Oriented around the general themes of time, space, and the body, the course will bring queer theory, which has historically been dominated by textually-oriented humanities scholars, into conversation with the social sciences by asking how queer theory can contribute to – and complicate – our understandings of how people experience their bodies, their lives, and their worlds in particular (and not always predictable) relationships with time and space.

Course Requirements

Regular Attendance and Participation

The success of this seminar will depend largely on the degree to which we all regularly come to class and sincerely engage with one another and the course materials. I will do my part to create an open space in which we all feel free to share our thoughts and collectively work through a set of sometimes difficult questions. I hope that you will do your part by coming to class, taking the materials and assignments seriously, and maintaining respect for your classmates.

Assignments

1. Annotated Bibliography. At the end of each class, submit a concise but critical annotation (1-2 paragraphs) for each reading that includes a brief summary of the major points and a reflection on the reading that suggests some of its problems/potentials for social research (and/or your own research), how the reading engages in (or avoids) conversation with other key texts/arguments, lingering questions or points of confusion, etc. At the end of the semester, your entries should be compiled and submitted as an annotated bibliography. (See, for example,
http://olinuris.library.cornell.edu/ref/research/skill28.htm for guidance on preparing an annotated bibliography.)

2. **Class Presentation.** Beginning Sept. 21, at the start of each class, one student will offer a brief presentation on the topic for the day that draws on and synthesizes the readings to provide your own scholarly “take” on the materials in a context of engagement with your classmates. Your presentation may be more formal or informal, depending on your preferences and/or the conventions of your discipline. It may be purely theoretical or draw on a particular case from your own research or of interest to you. The goal of this assignment is to provide you the opportunity to orient the class discussion and push your classmates to think more critically about the materials.

3. **Research Paper.** Your final paper may be a theoretical engagement with a particular issue relevant to the course or an application of queer theory to your research topic or to a case/phenomenon relevant to your research. Whatever the case, you are urged to think strategically about the paper as an opportunity to explore how queer theory might contribute to your own research and scholarship.

   (a.) By **Oct. 26**, you should meet with me to discuss your paper topic.
   (b.) By **11:59 p.m., Nov. 27**, you should submit a draft or excerpt of your paper to the course Moodle site. Although it is not expected to be a polished final product, by this point in the semester, your paper should be well underway.
   (c.) On **Nov. 30**, we will hold an in-class workshop, in which we will discuss and offer feedback on one another’s papers. You are, of course, expected to read and take seriously your classmates’ work.
   (d.) Final papers due **Dec. 9**.

**Grades**

- **Attendance & Participation** 20%
- **Annotated Bibliography** 20%
- **Class Presentation** 15%
- **Final Paper** 45%

**Required Readings**


2. All other readings are available electronically on the course Moodle site.
Course Schedule

Aug. 24  Introduction to the Course

Aug. 31  Histories of Sexuality


Sept. 7  The Emergence of Queer Studies


Sept. 14  Performativity, Gender, and Identity

Film: Paris is Burning


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Oct. 12 Global Queers/Queerness


Oct. 19 Trans Lives/Experiences


Oct. 26

*Space and Sexuality*


Nov. 2

*Queer(ing) Time*


Nov. 9    Queer Bodies


Nov. 16   Homonationalism: Death and Sex in War/Terror


Nov. 23   Queer Affect/Sociality


**Nov. 30**  
*Paper Workshop*

**Dec. 9**  
*Final Papers and Annotated Bibliographies due at 5:00 p.m.*