

GWS 720: Queer Theory/Queer Methods
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Spring 2019 | T 1:20pm-3:50pm | Social Work 110

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Office hours: see Canvas

“The academy is not paradise. But learning is a place where paradise can be created. The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom”

(bell hooks)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: Graduate or professional standing; All face-to-face instruction; Credit hours earned by traditional [Carnegie definition](#)

This graduate seminar engages recent work in queer studies with an emphasis on the emerging body of work in queer methodologies. After briefly reviewing some foundational texts in academic queer theory, we will turn to critiques centered on dismantling its white, Eurocentric focus. From there we turn to thinking through what it means to “queer” research methodologies and methods and what a queer method might look like. To some, the pairing of “queer” and “methods” is an oxymoron, as the former is associated with disrupting classification and the latter with orderly, reproducible techniques. In resistance to this binary, we will interrogate what Heather Love characterizes as an “unwillingness to recognize the significance of method as a failure to grapple with queer studies as a positive knowledge project in need of self-reflexivity.” This course includes queer studies material from the both humanities and social sciences but emphasizes the social sciences. Prior coursework in queer studies is highly encouraged.

When someone accuses you of being a dramatic gay



Course objectives:

After taking this course, you should be able to:

- Describe foundational debates in queer theory
- Identify limitations in the queer theory “canon”
- Explain and critique emerging scholarship in queer methodologies
- Apply queer methodologies to your own research projects and interests

TEACHING APPROACH

There are a number of things about my approach to teaching and learning that you should know in order to have the best possible experience in this course. I use an engaged approach to teaching and learning that is interactive, emphasizes mutual participation and responsibility, and values each individual's contribution to the learning process. What this means is that the course expects you to be an active learner, relate what you learn to your own research interests, and engage in dialogue with both the instructor and other students on the topics we cover. As a graduate seminar, the quality of our sessions is very much dependent on your level of engagement. In other words, be accountable to yourselves and others so that we can all have a productive, enjoyable learning experience.

We may discuss some controversial issues in this course, and it is important to respect other people and "agree to disagree." While all points of view are respected in my classroom, derogatory or hateful language and statements are never permitted, so that the classroom can be the safest space possible for everyone to learn. Likewise, I aim to cultivate mutual respect and care for each other, especially when we disagree.



READINGS

There are five books to purchase, available at *A Room of One's Own*, 315 W. Gorham St. They are also on reserve at College Library.

- Jones, Angela. 2020. *Camming: Money, Power, and Pleasure in the Sex Work Industry*. NYU Press. ISBN: 978-1479842964.
- Ghazani, Amin and Matt Brim, eds. 2019. *Imagining Queer Methods*. NYU Press. ISBN: 978-1479829484. {We will read about half of this book. It would be possible to scan the library copy if you have the time.}
- Haritaworn, Jin. 2015. *Queer Lovers and Hateful Others: Regenerating Violent Times and Places*. Pluto Press. ISBN: 978-0745330617 {This book is available for free as an ebook from our library.}
- Ferguson, Roderick. 2018. *One Dimensional Queer*. Polity. ISBN: 978-1509523566
- Willey, Angela. 2016. *Undoing Monogamy: The Politics of Science and the Possibilities of Biology*. Duke University Press. ISBN: 978-0822361596

All other readings are available as PDF downloads on our Canvas course website:
<https://canvas.wisc.edu/>

*You should complete the readings by the date listed on the calendar below. This should go without saying, but is worth repeating that reading is not optional. Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings. Preparing for class will *definitely* help your participation grade. If you have questions about how to best approach your task of reading and note-taking in order to prepare for class, please come talk to me.*

ASSIGNMENTS

- **All assignments must be submitted via Canvas by 11:59pm on the day they are due.**
- **If you are absent on the day a paper is due, you are still responsible for submitting the assignment on Canvas.**
- **Late assignments are penalized 10% of the grade for each day they are late; no assignments are accepted more than one week after the due date.**
- **All papers must use Times New Roman or Calibri font, 12 point, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, with all references cited using Chicago or APA citation style.**
- **I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Center!! Everyone needs help on their writing!! <https://writing.wisc.edu/index.html>**

Class discussant

Varies

In the spirit of engaged pedagogy and a participatory graduate seminar, you will take turns co-facilitating the class. You are responsible for 1. Summarizing the key point(s) of the readings, 2. Making connections between the week's readings and other course concepts and theories, 3. Proposing a few discussion questions, and 4. Composing a 1-2 page document that contains the above items. You will upload this document to Canvas the **night before** class. I will share the discussant papers with the rest of the class via Canvas.

Keywords papers (2)

DUE 2/11 and 3/10

In this assignment you will practice analytic and writing skills while demonstrating mastery of a "keyword" in queer theory and/or queer methods. You will model your paper on the "keywords" essays we are reading in the class. Your keywords essay should be 2-3 pages (approximately 600-900 words) and respond to the following:

- What kinds of critical projects does your keyword enable?
- What are the critical genealogies of the term, and how do these genealogies affect its use today?
- Are there ways of thinking that are occluded or obstructed by the use of this term?
- What other keywords constellate around it?

You will have to conduct a small amount of outside review of the literature in order to write your essay. You are encouraged to use sources from our syllabus. All works must be properly cited.

Course paper Proposal DUE 3/3, Draft due 4/7, Peer Feedback DUE 4/24, Final Paper DUE 5/5

Coworker: "Oh, I know this cool gay dude! Do you know him?"
Me: "It's not a club. We don't all know each other just because we're gay."
Coworker: *shows me his picture*
Me: "Oh, that bitch."

The final paper in this course will be tailored to your learning needs and where you are at in your academic program. The only requirement is that you substantively engage with the course materials/concepts/theories. You will submit a brief proposal (about a paragraph outlining your idea). The length of your final paper will be commensurate to its purpose (i.e., the journal you're submitting it to, a typical dissertation chapter length in your field). Your paper should be no more than 20 pgs.

In the spirit of learning how to give and receive constructive and useful feedback, you will be paired with another student in the course who shares your topical or methodological interests. You will be responsible for providing your partner detailed feedback on a draft of their final paper. I will give you a sheet detailing what kinds of feedback to give. You will be graded on the content and form of your feedback.

CLASS POLICIES

Communicating with me

All course announcements will be sent through Canvas, please set your notifications if you want to receive them by email!!!!

Please allow 48 for an email response. If it's been longer than that, a polite reminder is OK. I generally do not answer email past 6pm on weekdays and not at all on weekends. If you want to discuss a grade, you must come to office hours; I do not discuss grades over email or before and after class.



Practicing Techno-mindfulness

Many professors at UW and elsewhere prohibit students from using laptops in the classroom. I *do* allow laptops/tablets in the classroom, as I recognize them as tools that can help you learn. You are welcome to use your computer in class in order to take notes or view the readings. You are *not allowed* to use technology in the classroom to absentmindedly surf the web, check email, or use social media. In other words, be present to the class and do not engage in multi-tasking. It is up to you to assess your ability to use your computer in the classroom and be mindful about it. This policy is open to revision at any time during the semester. Please be mindful that if one person abuses the policy, it affects all of us. Cell phone use is *not allowed* in the classroom for any reason, except for sincere emergencies. If you are caught surfing the web or checking your phone, you will be marked absent for that day, no exceptions. I am really serious about this.

GRADING

| % of final grade | Course component |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 5% | Final paper proposal (pass/fail) |
| 10% | Class co-facilitation |
| 10% | Peer editing |
| 20% | 2 Keywords essays (10%/each) |
| 30% | Final paper |
| 25% | Class participation |
| 100% | Total |

Final letter grades are as follows:

| | |
|----|----------|
| A | 93-100 |
| AB | 88-92 |
| B | 83-87 |
| BC | 78-82 |
| C | 70-77 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | below 60 |

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

It is important to understand that academic dishonesty is not only harmful to yourself; it is also harmful to your peers and colleagues at UW as we come together as a community of learners. While there is a zero-tolerance policy of academic dishonesty in this course, we will work together to clear up misunderstandings about appropriate use of sources, appropriate citation and documentation, and the uses of intellectual property.

ACCOMODATION POLICY

I am committed to making sure my courses are accessible to students with a range of disability accommodations and learning needs. If you have a McBurney Faculty Notification Letter, please make it available to me by the end of week 2 of class. If you do not have a McBurney documentation but there are conditions or life circumstances that interfere with your ability to fulfill your responsibilities for this course, I encourage you to meet with me ASAP to discuss how best to accommodate you. In some cases, I may recommend that you consult with the McBurney Disability Resource Center: <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>.

COURSE CALENDAR

Please note: This syllabus is a “living document” in the sense that course readings and assignments may change according to the needs of student learning.

The reading load in this course has been kept intentionally manageable and is lighter than comparable graduate courses. I expect you to come to class having read ALL of the readings, taken notes/journaled about them, and prepared to engage in discussion/questioning/critique.

| Week 1: A very brief tour through the canon of queer theory | |
|---|--|
| January 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berlant, Lauren and Michael Warner. 1995. “What Does Queer Theory Teach us about X?” <i>PMLA</i>, 110 (3): 343-349. • Jagose, Annamarie. 1997. <i>Queer Theory: An Introduction</i>. NY, New York: NYU Press. Chapter 1. <p><i>Suggested Keywords essays:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Queer</i>, by Siobhan Somerville • <i>Race</i>, by Roderick Ferguson • <i>Racialization</i>, by Daniel Martinez HoSang and Oneka LaBennett • <i>Transgender</i>, by Cristan Williams |
| Part 1: Challenging the canon | |
| Week 2: Rethinking queer theory | |
| January 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David, L., J. Halberstam, and Esteban Muñoz. 2005. "What's Queer About Queer Studies Now?" <i>Social Text</i> 23 (3–4): 1-17. • Nair, Yasmin. 2016. "We Were There, We Are Here, Where Are We? Notes Toward a Study of Queer Theory in the Neoliberal University." <i>QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking</i> 3(2): 7-17. • Amin, Kadji. “Haunted by the 1990s” in <i>Imagining Queer Methods</i>, pp. 277-293. • Keegan, Cael M. 2020. “Transgender Studies, or How to Do Things with Trans*.” In <i>The Cambridge Companion to Queer Theory</i>, edited by Siobhan Somerville. Cambridge University Press. <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keegan, Cael M. 2018. “Getting Disciplined: What’s Trans* About Queer Studies Now?” <i>Journal of Homosexuality</i>, DOI: 10.1080/00918369.2018.1530885 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GLQ special issue, "GLQ at Twenty-Five," Volume 25, Issue 1, 2019 • Stryker, Susan. 2008. "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity." <i>Radical History Review</i> 100: 145-157. |
| Week 3: Queer of color critique | |
| February 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manalansan IV, Martin F. 2018. "Messing Up Sex: The Promises and Possibilities of Queer of Color Critique." <i>Sexualities</i> 21(8): 1287-1290. • Hong, Grace Kyungwon, and Roderick A. Ferguson, eds. 2011. <i>Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization</i>. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapter 1. • Cohen, Cathy. 1997. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" <i>GLQ</i> 3(4): 437-46. <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferguson, Roderick. 2003. <i>Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. • Muñoz, José Esteban. 1999. <i>Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics</i>. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. |
| Week 4: Decolonizing queer theory | |
| February 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pereira, Pedro Paulo Gomes. 2019. "Reflecting on Decolonial Queer." <i>GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies</i> 25(3): 403-429. • Patil, Vrushali. 2018. "The Heterosexual Matrix as Imperial Effect." <i>Sociological Theory</i>, 36(1): 1-26. • Dutta, Aniruddha, and Raina Roy. 2014. "Decolonizing Transgender in India: Some Reflections." <i>TSQ</i> 1(3): 320-337. • Driskill, Qwo-Li. 2010. "Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critiques: Building Alliances between Native and Queer Studies." <i>GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies</i> 16(1-2): 69-92. <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSQ special issue "Decolonizing the Transgender Imaginary," Volume 1, Issue 3, 2014 • Driskill, Qwo-Li, ed. 2011. <i>Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature</i>. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. <p>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Keywords essay 1</p> |

| Week 5: Rethinking queer politics | |
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| February 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferguson, Roderick. 2018. <i>One Dimensional Queer</i>. Polity. |
| Part 2: Queering methods | |
| Week 6: What makes methods “queer”? | |
| February 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love, Heather. 2016. “Queer Messes.” <i>WSQ: Women’s Studies Quarterly</i>, 44(3): 345-349. Ghazani, Amin and Matt Brim. “Queer Provocations: Four Provocations for an Emerging Field,” in <i>Imagining Queer Methods</i>, pp. 3-27. Corbman, Rachel. 2019. "Does Queer Studies Have an Anti-Empiricism Problem?" <i>GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies</i> 25(1): 57-62. Ward, Jane. “Dyke Methods: A Meditation on Queer Studies and the Gay Men Who Hate It,” in <i>Imagining Queer Methods</i>, pp. 259-276. Pascoe, CJ. 2018. “What to Do with Actual People? Thinking through a Queer Social Science Method.” In <i>Other, Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology</i>, edited by D’Lane Compton, Tey Meadow, and Kristin Schilt, pp. 291-304. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>WSQ: Women’s Studies Quarterly</i> special issue on queer methods, Volume 44, Numbers 3–4, 2016 Compton, D’Lane, Tey Meadow, and Kirsten Schilt, Eds. 2018. <i>Other, Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology</i>. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. Browne, Kath and Catherine J. Nash, Eds. 2010. <i>Queer Methods and Methodologies: Intersecting Queer Theories and Social Science Research</i>. Surrey, England: Ashgate Press. |
| Week 7: Asking queer questions/asking questions queerly | |
| March 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Johnson, E. Patrick. “Put a Little Honey in My Sweet Tea: Oral History as Quare Performance,” in <i>Imagining Queer Methods</i>, pp. 45-59. Grzanka, Patrick R. “Queer Survey Research and the Ontological Dimensions of Heterosexism,” in <i>Imagining Queer Methods</i>, pp. 84-102. Thrasher, Steven. “Discursive Hustling and Queer of Color Interviewing,” in <i>Imagining Queer Methods</i>, pp. 230-247. Compton, D’Lane. 2018. “How Many (Queer) Cases Do I Need?” In <i>Other, Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology</i>, edited by D’Lane |

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| | <p>Compton, Tey Meadow, and Kristin Schilt, pp. 185-200. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Final paper proposal</p> |
| <p>Week 8: Queers in the archives</p> | |
| <p>March 10</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snorton, C. Riley. 2018. "DeVine's Cut: Public Memory and the Politics of Martyrdom," in <i>Black on Both Sides: A Radical History of Trans Identity</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. • Joynt, Chase and Kristen Schilt. 2015. "Anxiety at the Archives." <i>TSQ</i>, 2(4): 635-644. • TBD • TBD <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stone, Amy L., and Jaime Cantrell. 2015. <i>Out of the Closet and Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories</i>. Albany, NY: SUNY Press. <p>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Keywords essay 2</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">SPRING BREAK</p> | |
| <p>Week 9: Can there be a queer ethnography?</p> | |
| <p>March 24</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornejo, Giancarlo. 2019. "Travesti Dreams Outside in the Ethnographic Machine." <i>GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies</i> 25(3): 457-482. • Fields, Jessica. "The Racialized Erotics of Fieldwork: A Queer Feminist Understanding," in <i>IQM</i>, pp. 63-83. • Muñoz, Lorena. 2010. "Brown, Queer and Gendered: Queering the Latina/o 'Street-scapes' in Los Angeles." In <i>Queer Methods and Methodologies: Intersecting Queer Theories and Social Science Research</i>, edited by Kath Browne and Catherine J. Nash, pp. 55-68. Surrey, England: Ashgate Press. • Dahl, Ulrika. 2016. "Femme on Femme: Reflections on Collaborative Methods and Queer Femme-inist Ethnography." In <i>Intersecting Queer Theories and Social Science Research</i>, edited by Kath Browne and Catherine J. Nash, pp. 143-166. Surrey, England: Ashgate Press. |

| Week 10: The erotic potential of research, part 1 | |
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| March 31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorde, Audre. 1978. "The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" in <i>Sister Outsider</i>, pp. 53-59. • Langarita Adiego, Jose Antonio. 2019. "On Sex in Fieldwork: Notes on the Methodology Involved in the Ethnographic Study of Anonymous Sex." <i>Sexualities</i> 22 (7-8): 1253-1267. • Newton, Esther. 1993. "My Best Informant's Dress: The Erotic Equation in Fieldwork." <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> 8(1): 3-23. • Nguyen, Tan Hoang. 2014. <i>A View from the Bottom: Asian American Masculinity and Sexual Representation</i>. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapter 1. <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kulick, Don, and Margaret Willson, eds. 2003. <i>Taboo: Sex, identity and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork</i>. New York, NY: Routledge. |
| Week 11: The erotic potential of research, part 2 | |
| April 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jones, Angela. 2020. <i>Camming: Money, Power, and Pleasure in the Sex Work Industry</i>. NYU Press. <p>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Draft to peer editor and to prof</p> |
| Week 12: Queer science studies | |
| April 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willey, Angela. 2016. <i>Undoing Monogamy: The Politics of Science and the Possibilities of Biology</i>. Duke University Press. <p>ASSIGNMENT DUE: Comments to peer editee</p> |
| Week 13: Queer spaces and places | |
| April 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haritaworn, Jin. 2015. <i>Queer Lovers and Hateful Others: Regenerating Violent Times and Places</i>. Pluto Press. • Moussawi, Ghassan. 2019. "The Fraught Nature of Exceptional Gay Spaces." <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. Spotlight on Queering Urban Studies</i>. <p><u>Suggested further reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GLQ special issue "Queering the Middle: Race, Region, and a Queer Midwest," Volume 20, Issue 1-2, 2019 • Manalansan, Martin F. 2005. "Race, Violence, and Neoliberal Spatial Politics in the Global City." <i>Social Text</i> 23(3-4): 141-155. |

| Week 14: Course wrap up | |
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| April 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TBD |
| Tuesday, May 5 | FINAL PAPER DUE ON CANVAS BY 11:59pm!!! NO EXCEPTIONS!! |