ENGL 3321.001: Literature and Film: 90s New Queer Cinema

Monday 7-9:30pm, Spring 2020
OCNR 130

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* I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, as the need arises.

Course Description
Film critic B. Ruby Rich characterizes an angry, stylized wave of 1990s queer filmmaking as “New Queer Cinema”—a sort of “homo pomo” pastiche that disrupts history, genre, and form. As radical movies that disturb and revise history, 90s New Queer Cinema offers us a body of films that help us interrogate the literary and social history of sexuality. What does it mean to be “queer”? What does it mean to be “heterosexual”? What are the histories of those identities, and how do these films confront audiences’ expectations about living as those identities?

This course takes as its starting place 1969 Stonewall riots and activism by transgender women of color. We then briefly survey LGBTQ crises of the 1980s (Regan-era policies, Bowers v. Hardwick, HIV/AIDS epidemic) through such texts as Paris is Burning, How to Survive a Plague, and AIDS and Its Metaphors. We then pivot between early modern texts and 90s New Queer Cinema in order to explore how queer directors engage with and break from queer pre-histories. Key texts include Christopher Marlowe’s Edward II, Derek Jarmon’s Edward II, Shakespeare’s Henry IV, Gus Van Sant’s My Own Private Idaho, Todd Haynes Poison, Daniel Defoe’s Journal of a Plague Year, and a bunch of Gregg Araki (The Living End, Nowhere, The Doom Generation). In the words of B. Ruby Rich, “these works are irreverent, energetic, alternately minimalist and excessive. Above all, they’re full of pleasure.”

A bit of a content warning: these texts deal with graphic depictions of sex, sexual assault, and violence. I believe we can engage with such texts in thoughtful, mature, and productive ways. Specific warnings will be provided.

Required Texts
Defoe, Daniel. A Journal of a Plague Year.
Dekker, Thomas and Thomas Middleton. The Roaring Girl.
Marlowe, Christopher. Edward II.
---. Henry IV, Part 2. (any edition)
Sontag, Susan. Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors.

All other texts will be available on Blackboard. Please print and annotate before class.
Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes
Students who successfully complete ENGL 3321 will be able to
▪ Recognize the formal features of literature and film such as dramatic form, stagecraft, editing, and the language of film
▪ Place literature and film within its historical and social context
▪ Be attentive to how the formal features of literature and film shape meaning of the content
▪ Develop sustained arguments about literature and culture

Grading and Evaluation
All grades will be calculated according to the percentage formula below. No grades will be discussed over email. Please talk to me in person if you are concerned about your grade.

Final Grade Formula:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Online Writing</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement/Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
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Paper 1: A 2-3 page sustained close reading of a text relying on evidence drawn from its formal features. A Specific prompt will be given in class.

Paper 2: A 3-4 page paper that will ask students to draw evidence from 2 different texts, placing them in conversation with each other. A specific prompt will be given in class.

Paper 3: A 5-6 page paper that draws from historical and literary sources in order to render a text within its larger socio-historical context. A specific prompt will be given in class.

Weekly Writing: We will be blogging, brainstorming, and responding to texts through both online and in-class writing. This will be lower-stakes writing meant to facilitate research questions.

Engagement/Participation: Participation doesn’t always look the same for every student, but thoughtful contribution is an essential part of this class, and you will need to be considerate of and attentive to others. It is your responsibility to keep up with the reading, to contribute to class in the form of analytical comments or questions, and to attend class regularly and on time.

POLICIES
Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. *Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.* Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Friday, April 10th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Participation**
A student’s class participation is vastly hindered by said student not coming to class. Plan to attend every class. If you have a legitimate problem, I’m willing to try and work something out. However, you must, if at all possible, bring such problems to my attention before class. If you have mandatory absences (for sports or religious observances), they must be brought to my attention well in advance, but they will not count against you.

**Late Papers**
I love met deadlines. I will not accept late assignments—papers and Blackboard posts—simply because of the necessity of having those items for class activities. All papers and writing assignments must be ready to be turned in at the beginning of the class they are due. However, I am willing to talk about problems and see if we can come to a reasonable solution if you approach me in advance.

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).
Statement of Civility
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Course Schedule (please come to class having read and annotated the texts on the day listed)

Where We Were: Stonewall and the State (70s/80s) 1/27: Intro, syllabus, Happy Birthday, Marshal, Bowers v. Hardwick, DSM and the clinic

Plague Temporality 2/3: Sontag Illness as Metaphor/ AIDS and its Metaphors, Daniel Defoe Journal of a Plague Year, watch How to Survive a Plague

Documenting Queerness 2/10: Livingston Paris is Burning (1991), Muñoz Disidentifications (excerpts), Judith Butler “Gender Insubordination,”

Queer (Pre)Histories 2/17: Hic Mulier and Haec Vir pamphlets, Dekker and Middleton The Roaring Girl

Queer Adaptations 2/24: Shakespeare Henry IV (parts 1 & 2), Menon Shakesqueer, BBC adaptation (1979)

3/9: Spring Break

3/16: Marlowe Edward II, Derek Jarmon’s Edward II (1991), Moe Meyer The Politics and Poetics of Camp (excerpts)


**Queer Pleasure/Violence** 3/30: Bersani “Is the Rectum a Grave?,” Halberstam In a Queer Time and Place (excerpts), Gregg Araki The Living End (1991)


**Queerly Present** 4/27: G.B.F., Moonlight

5/4: Research presentations and peer review