

Queer Film and Media (CIN336HS)
Winter 2021

Course Description: This course considers how queerness flourishes in unexpected places beyond the purview of representation, proposing that queer media are defined not just by the figures on screen, but also by how visual objects structure looking, time, and aesthetic form. This course seeks out queerness in historical periods, genres, public spaces, discursive contexts, and media formats that would seem to preclude its existence, and in doing so, it asks that queerness be understood not just as a narrative element, but as an optic, as a vessel for presenting visions of subjectivity, community, and erotic life. In this sense, this course will not be concerned with a portrait of queer film and media in the singular, but will investigate several iterations of what a queer moving image culture can be, as well as how such cultures have been elaborated in the past. If queer politics has often been concerned with decentering established relational forms (such as the nuclear family and the heterosexual couple), this course proposes that media are part of this work: that the queerness of a moving image is produced in an encounter – often surreptitious, strange, or dissonant – between itself and its surrounding history, between itself and its medium’s capacities, between itself and its viewer’s imagination.

Course Schedule

Unit I (*Queer Ways of Looking*)

1. January 14: Reading

Screening: *Late Spring* (Yasujirō Ozu, Japan, 1949, 108 min.), “The Unique Queerness of Howard Ashman’s Songs” (Dreamsounds, USA, 2019, 27 min.) and “*The Matrix: A Different Perspective*” (Now You See It, 2019, 7 min.)

Reading: Ramzi Fawaz and Shanté Paradigm Smalls, excerpt from “Queers Read This! LGBTQ Literature Now,” *GLQ* 24, no. 2-3 (2018): 169-79.

Robin Wood, excerpts from “Resistance to Definition: Ozu’s Noriko Trilogy,” in *Sexual Politics and Narrative Film: Hollywood and Beyond* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 94-100; 108-23.

Yuka Kanno, “Implicational Spectatorship: Hara Setsuko and the Queer Joke,” *Mechademia* 6 (2011): 287-303.

2. January 21: Ga(y)zes

Screening: *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (Kenneth Anger, USA, 1965, 3 min.), *Dyketactics* (Barbara Hammer, USA, 1974, 4 min.), sex scene from *Je tu il elle* (Chantal Akerman, Belgium, 1974, 11 min.), *Teorema* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, Italy, 1968, 98 min.), *The Attendant* (Isaac Julien, Great Britain, 1993, 8 min.), and “Frank Ocean – Self Control” [*Moonlight* fanvideo] (matthew, 2018, 4 min.)

Reading: John David Rhodes, “Notes on Cinematic Desire,” *World Picture* 4 (2010): 1-8.

Juana María Rodríguez, “Queer Sociality and Other Sexual Fantasies,” *GLQ* 17, no. 2-3 (2011): 331-48.

3. January 28: Cruising

Screening: *Un chant d’amour* (Jean Genet, France, 1950, 25 min.), *Goodbye Dragon Inn* (Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan, 2004, 82 min.), club scene from *Paris 05:50: Théo and Hugo* (Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau, France, 2016, 10 min.), and “Queen and David Bowie – Under Pressure (playing in an empty shopping centre)” (Cecil Robert, USA, 2018, 4 min.)

Reading: Samuel R. Delany, excerpt from *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 3-31.

Timothy Morton, "Queer Ecology," *PMLA* 125, no. 2 (2010): 273-82.

Jia Tolentino, "The Overwhelming Emotion of Hearing Toto's "Africa" Remixed to Sound Like It's Playing in an Empty Mall," *New Yorker*, March 15, 2018.

4. February 4: Cinephilia Otherwise

Screening: *The Watermelon Woman* (Cheryl Dunye, USA, 1996, 90 min.), *Meeting of Two Queens* (Cecilia Barriga, Chile, 1991, 14 min.), *Positiv* (Mike Hoolboom, Canada, 1998, 10 min.), and "Red River is kind of gay" (Isley Unruh, USA, 2010, 1 min.)

Reading: Karin D. Wimbley, "Stereotypy, Mammy, and Recovery in Cheryl Dunye's *The Watermelon Woman*," in *Sisters in the Life: A History of Out African American Lesbian Media-Making*, eds. Yvonne Welbon and Alexandra Juhasz (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 143-59.

Roger Hallas, "Gay Cinephilia and the Cherished Body of Experimental Film," in *Reframing Bodies: AIDS, Bearing Witness, and the Queer Moving Image* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 185-94.

Patricia White, excerpt from "Lesbian Cinephilia," in *Uninvited: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Lesbian Representability* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 29-49.

Unit II (Past Engagements: Queer Historiography)

5. February 11: Documenting Crisis

Screening: *Anthem* (Marlon Riggs, USA, 1991, 8 min.), clip from *Blue* (Derek Jarman, Great Britain, 1993, 5 min.), and *How to Survive a Plague* (David France, USA, 2012, 109 min.)

Reading: Douglas Crimp, "How to Have Promiscuity in an Epidemic," *October* 43 (1987): 237-71.

Ann Cvetkovich, "AIDS Activism and Public Feelings: Documenting ACT UP's Lesbians," in *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 156-204.

6. February 25: Ghost Time

Screening: *Tropical Malady* (Apichatpong Weerasethkul, Thailand, 2004, 124 min.)

Reading: Arnika Fuhrmann, "Tropical Malady: Same-Sex Desire, Casualness, and the Queering of Impermanence in the Cinema," in *Ghostly Desires: Queer Sexuality and Vernacular Buddhism in Contemporary Thai Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 122-59.

Bliss Cua Lim, excerpt from "Clocks for Seeing: Cinema, the Fantastic, and the Critique of Homogenous Time," in *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 1-25.

7. March 4: Ephemeral Archives

Screening: "Dickson Experimental Sound Film" (USA, 1895, 39 sec.), *Different from the Others* (Richard Oswald, Germany, 1919, 50 min. [fragment]), *Sink or Swim* (Su Friedrich, USA, 1990, 47 min.), and *575 Castro St.* (Jenni Olson, USA, 2009, 7 min.)

Reading: Ina Linge, "Sexology, Popular Science, and Queer History in *Anders als die Andern* (*Different from the Others*)," *Gender & History* 30, no. 3 (2018): 595-610.

José Esteban Muñoz, "Ephemera as Evidence: Introductory Notes to Queer Acts," *Women and Performance* 8, no. 2 (1996): 256-77.

Elizabeth Freeman, excerpt from "Queer and Not Now," in *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 1-14.

8. March 11: Childhood Strangeness

Screening: *Jabberwocky* (Jan Švankmajer, Czechoslovakia, 1971, 13 min.), *Hausu* (Nobuhiko Ôbayashi, Japan, 1977, 88 min.), and *Me and Rubyfruit* (Sadie Benning, USA, 1989, 6 min.)

Clips: *Mädchen in Uniform* (Leontine Sagan, Germany, 1931, 5 min.), *Olivia* (Jacqueline Audry, France, 1951, 2 min.) and *The Children's Hour* (William Wyler, USA, 1961, 5 min.)

Reading: Kathryn Bond Stockton, excerpt from "Introduction: Growing Sideways," in *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 1-17.

Mary Celeste Kearney, "Productive Spaces: Girls' Bedrooms as Sites of Cultural Production," *Journal of Children and Media* 1, no. 2 (2007): 126-41.

Eve Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay: The War on Effeminate Boys," in *Tendencies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 154-64.

Unit III (*Contesting Cinema*)

9. March 18: Animating Affections

Screening: *Ferdinand the Bull* (Dick Rickard, USA, 1938, 7 min.), *Begone Dull Care* (Evelyn Lambart and Norman McLaren, Canada, 1949, 8 min.), *What's Opera, Doc?* (Chuck Jones, USA, 1957, 7 min.), *Walking* (Ryan Larkin, Canada, 1968, 5 min.), *Asparagus* (Suzann Pitt, USA, 1979, 20 min.), *Narcissus* (Norman McLaren, Canada, 1983, 22 min.), Car transformation from *Adolescence of Utena* (Kunihiko Ikuhara, Japan, 1999, 8 min.), "Fabulous Secret Powers" (slackcircus, USA, 2005, 4 min.), and *Steven Universe*, "Alone Together" [season 1, episode 36] (Ki-Yong Bae, Sue-Hong Kim, Elle Michalka, and Ian Jones-Quartey, USA, 2015, 11 min.) and "The Answer" [season 2, episode 22] (Byung Ki Lee, Jasmin Lai, Joe Johnston, and Ian Jones-Quartey, USA, 2016, 11 min.)

Reading: Sergei Eisenstein, excerpts from *On Disney*, in *The Eisenstein Collection*, ed. Richard Taylor (New York: Seagull Books, 2006), 84-9, 95-107.

Esther Leslie, "Animation and History," in *Animating Film Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 25-36.

Kevin Cooley, "Drawing Queerness Forward: Fusion, Futurity, and *Steven Universe*," in *Representation in Steven Universe*, eds. John R. Ziegler and Leah Richards (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020), 45-67.

10. March 25: Family Television

Screening: Bert and Ernie clips (approx. 10 min.), *All in the Family*, "Archie the Hero" [season 6, episode 4] (Paul Bogart, USA, 1975, 25 min.), *The Simpsons*, "Homer's Phobia" [season 8, episode 15] (Mike B. Anderson, USA, 1997, 22 min.), and *Pose*, "Never Knew Love Like This Before" [season 2, episode 4] (Ryan Murphy, USA, 2019, 62 min.)

Reading: Amy Villarejo, "Introduction" and excerpt from "Television Ate My Family: Lance Loud on TV," in *Ethereal Queer: Television, Historicity, Desire* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 1-17 and 81-92.

E. Patrick Johnson, "Quare Studies, or (almost) everything I know about queer studies I learned from my grandmother," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (2001); 1-25.

11. April 1: Vidding/Fandom

Screening: *My Own Private Idaho* (Gus Van Sant, USA, 1991, 104 min.)

LeiLani Nishime, "Queer Keanu: The Politics of Bad Acting in the Age of Don't Ask, Don't Tell," in *Undercover Asian: Multiracial Asian Americans in Visual Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 21-40.

Francesca Coppa, Alexis Lothian, and Tisha Turk, "Vidding and Identity: A Conversation," in *The Routledge Companion to Media Fandom* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 230-40.

Alexis Lothian, Kristina Busse, and Robin Anne Reid, "Yearning Void and Infinite Potential: Online Slash Fandom as Queer Female Space," *English Language Notes* 45, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2007): 103-11.

12. April 8: How to Have Promiscuity in 2021

Screening: online videos from assignment one (to be compiled into a playlist)

Reading: Kris Cohen, "Introduction," in *Never Alone, Except for Now: Art, Networks, Populations* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 1-13.

Mel Y. Chen, "Toxic Animacies, Inanimate Affections," *GLQ* 17, no. 2-3 (2011): 265-86.