

# WS 304: LGBTQ Studies

**Instructor:** Elise Dixon  
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**Office:** Bessey 300 D  
**Office Hours:** M 9:00am-12:00pm  
W 9:00am-12:00pm  
**Required Texts:** *Queer: A Graphic History*  
By Meg-John Barker  
& Julia Scheele  
Other Readings provides on D2L

## Course Description

This course will provide a survey on cultures, and communities of lesbian, gay, transgender, queer, and intersex people including a global perspective. This course will provide an opportunity for you to learn about the ways in which queer identity and politics have shaped the wider culture globally and in LGBT and gender studies within the academy. Because this is a survey course, we cannot cover all topics, but you will be introduced to a variety of ideas central to understanding LGBT studies and how it relates to, informs, challenges, and critiques the world in which we live. The first half of the course will be rooted in developing an understanding of a survey of topics in LGBT issues, science, history, and culture. The second half of the course, we turn the focus inward as we learn to better understand the ways in which we are individually and communally connected to queer ways of knowing in the world.

## Learning Goals:

- To introduce students to the key introductory concepts in LGBT studies, including LGBT foundations, histories, queer theory debates within LGBT studies and how they may be related to gender, gender construction, sex and sexuality.
- To allow students to develop a better appreciation for their own ever shifting identity.
- Teach students the critical thinking skills to use when considering how the intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality affect us all on both the local and global levels.
- To provide students with the tools of online activism (be that LGBT-related or otherwise) through the instruction of various digital mediums.

This course is online and will be primarily discussion-based and your participation and engagement in the work each week will be reflected in your grade. It is important to be prepared to discuss these topics in online discussions respectfully.

## Course Materials:

- Access to the internet, including MSU email and class D2L
- A webcam

## Requirements and Grade Breakdown

<b>Grade Weight:</b>		<b>Grade Scale:</b>
Weekly Discussion Posts	20%	94-100% - 4.0
Weekly Synthesis Papers		87-93% - 3.5
35%		80-86% - 3.0
Danger of a Single Story Project	20%	73-79% - 2.5
Final Podcast /Video Project	25%	68-72% - 2.0
		63-67% - 1.5
		59-62% - 1.0
		< 60% - 0.0

## Course Work

- Video Posts (20%)

Each week, you will be asked to respond to the readings in a brief, 90 second long video. You'll log into Flipgrid, where you'll respond with a 90 second video *and* respond to *at least* one of your classmates' discussion posts with another video *at least* 60 seconds long. These videos can be hot takes, personal reactions, a rant (as long as it's appropriate) that shows you're engaged. Simply make sure that your opinions are supported by specific points from the text(s)... For example, "I didn't agree with this reading" is not sufficient; tell us specifically what you're critiquing from the text. When you are responding to your classmates' post, interact with whatever they may have written. Ask a question, make a comment, or recommend a resource. [To access Flipgrid, your entry code is your APID]. These video posts will be graded pass/ fail, and they must be **posted on D2L by Friday at 11:59pm** of the given week/ unit.

- Weekly Synthesis Responses (35%)

Each week, you will compose a response to the weekly readings in which you can (but are not limited to) pose some questions about the readings and work through some potential answers, suggest issues to discuss in class, synthesize the materials (please avoid summary), relate the readings to your own scholarship, or relate the readings to your own personal experience. The approaches to these responses are up to you. Feel free to play with genre, design, and voice. Make a mini zine, video, website, image, poem, gif, manifesto, rant, etc. Written responses must be 2-3 pages in length. Multimodal responses must be accompanied by a 1 page explanation of the project. I ask that you show that you are engaging with the material in a way that is beneficial to your own learning. These response papers will be due to the D2L dropbox by **Friday night at 11:59pm of the given week/unit**.

- The Danger of a Single Story Project (20%)

Your first project is the most "traditional" project in the sense that you will write a 5-7 pg reflective analysis paper on a political issue that pertains to LGBT studies that, before you learned more about it, you only had a *single story* for. The first week of class, we'll watch Chimamanda Adiche's "The Danger of a Single Story" as a way in to thinking about how, when we're only presented with a single story, we miss out on other possibilities. In turn, we often are presented with very singular stories about gender, sexuality, what queerness "should" look like, who belongs in the LGBT community, etc. Thus, for this paper, you will choose an issue that pertains to LGBTs studies that has been presented with only a single story, and then *complicate that story*. These stories can be related to popular culture, medicine, home

life, race, class, gender, sexuality, ableism, international affairs, local or national politics, to name a few. In this paper, you will need to explain the situation in-depth, citing at least 5 sources (either from class or outside sources) and then explain how the issue has been presented singularly, and then show other ways of telling more/different stories about that issue.

If you would rather do a multimodal version of this project (aka a video, website, blog, presentation), please let me know what you have in mind and we can negotiate the rubric. This project is due **by Friday at 11:59 of week four [June 7th]**.

- Final Podcast or Video (25%)

You may have noticed that each week of this course, you will listen to a podcast or watch a movie (or a few videos) . For your final project, you will create a podcast or video of your own. This podcast can take many forms, including drawing from your "Danger or a Single Story" project. The podcast or video must be 3-5 minutes in length and must engage 5-7 sources from class (or outside source) and discuss a topic of your choice related to LGBT studies. You should make this *yours*, choose to do a project that is useful for you. You'll get out what you put into this project.

Please engage with the genre of a podcast or video, keeping in mind issues of music choice, various shots and photo editing, and the various forms podcasts can take. You'll need to propose a concept idea for this project **by Friday at 11:59 of week five [June 14th]**. This project is due by **Friday at 11:59 of week seven [June 27th]**.

### Late or Make-up Work

**I will not accept late assignments on any terms. This includes assignments accidentally not attached to emails, encrypted or broken files, or assignments turned in even five minutes late.** If you know you will be absent, we can make arrangements for you to turn in assignments early (see above Oh Shit Policy).

\* Oh Shit Policy: With this said, I understand shit/life happens. If you experience extenuating circumstances that prevent your participation in this class, I encourage you to advocate for yourself by reaching out and letting me know beforehand. Together we can work to formulate a plan should anything happen.

### Community Conduct

Don't be mean. It is likely that you will come into contact with people who are different from you and believe different things than you do. Don't be mean about it. In particular, **no racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or any other negative communication harmful to an individual or group will be tolerated.** Whether something is offensive or not will be determined by the people whom it might offend. That means if you're the offender, you don't get to argue about whether or not what you said was hurtful. That isn't for you to decide.

### Communication

I use e-mail to communicate important information about the class. You are responsible for checking your school account regularly. If you didn't check your email and miss something because of it, that's on you.

### A Note on Saving Your Files:

It is imperative that you save everything for this class, including all of your revised drafts of all of your major projects. I also strongly suggest that you develop a system to backup your files in case of a technological tragedy or emergency.

# UNIVERSITY POLICIES

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using words or ideas from another source as if they were your own. In other words, plagiarism is presenting work as your own when it contains ideas or language that are not your own. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be met with serious consequences. My penalty for plagiarism will be either immediate failure on the plagiarized assignment or immediate failure in the course.

Here is MSU's academic integrity policy (<https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html>):

1.00 PROTECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

- 1.01 claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.
- 1.02 procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
- 1.03 complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
- 1.04 allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
- 1.05 alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
- 1.06 fabricate or falsify data or results.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirement for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations.

## **Limits to Confidentiality**

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the Department of Police and Public Safety) if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

## **Emergency Procedures/ Protocols**

If an emergency arises in this classroom, building or vicinity, your instructor will inform you of actions to follow to enhance your safety. As a student in this class, you are responsible for knowing the location of the nearest

emergency evacuation route or shelter. These directions appear on the maps posted on the walls throughout this building. If police or university officials order us to evacuate the classroom or building, follow the posted emergency route in an orderly manner and assist those who might need help in reaching a barrier-free exit or shelter. To receive emergency messages, set your cellular phones on silent mode when you enter this classroom. If you observe or receive an emergency alert, immediately and calmly inform your instructor. (See also [www.alert.msu.edu](http://www.alert.msu.edu).)

### **Resources**

For students with a diagnosed disability, university resources are also available. Students with disabilities that may require assistance or who have questions related to any accommodation for testing, note takers, readers, etc., must inform the instructor and provide certification from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD), 120 Bessey Hall, 517/353-9642 or TTY 517/355-1293.

### **Even More Resources**

The Writing Center: <http://writing.msu.edu>

Resource Center for People with Disabilities: <http://www.rcpd.msu.edu>

Learning Resources Center: <http://lrc.msu.edu>

The Counseling Center: <http://www.counseling.msu.edu>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.msu.edu>

Computer Labs: <http://tech.msu.edu/computerlabs/>

ESL Lab at the English Language Center: <http://elc.msu.edu/esl-lab/>

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP): <http://mss.msu.edu/camp>

TRIO Student Support Services: <http://www.oss.msu.edu>

MSU LGBT Resource Center: <http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/>

Office of Cultural & Academic Transitions (OCAT): <http://ocat.msu.edu/>

# Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	5/13-5/17	Queer Foundations	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 1-26 Marinucci, Mimi. <i>Feminism is Queer</i> , Intro Bornstein, Kate. <i>My New Gender Workbook</i> , Ch. 1 Gibson, Alexander & Meem. <i>Finding Out</i> , Intro YouTube, <a href="#">Gender Norms</a> YouTube, <a href="#">The Danger of a Single Story</a>	Welcome Video Post Video Post #1 Synthesis #1
2	5/20-5/24	Queer History and Politics	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 27-62 Gibson, Alexander & Meem. <i>Finding Out</i> , ch. 1, 3, 4 <a href="#">The Stonewall Riots</a> <a href="#">LGBT History Timeline</a> <a href="#">Making Gay History Podcast</a> (pick one)	Video Post #2 Synthesis #2
3	5/27-5/31	Gender & Hetero normativity	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 62-84 Yep, "The Violence of Heteronormativity" Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and the Lesbian Continuum" Butler, <i>Gender Trouble</i> , 1990 & 1999 Preface YouTube, " <a href="#">Your Behavior Becomes Your Gender</a> " YouTube, " <a href="#">Judith Butler's Theory of Gender Performativity</a> " <a href="#">What's Left of Queer Theory Now?</a> Podcast	Video Post #3 Synthesis #3
4	6/3-6/7	Zines & Rants!	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 84-104 <a href="#">QZap Archive</a> (Pick a few to look through) Radicalesbians, "Woman Identified Woman" CLIT Statement #2 Lesbian Avengers Dyke Manifesto #1 Lesbian Avengers Dyke Manifesto #2 <a href="#">Combahee River Collective Statement</a> <a href="#">The Queer Nation Manifesto</a> <a href="#">The Lesbian Avengers Eat Fire Too</a>	Video Post #4 Synthesis #4 Danger of a Single Story Project
5	6/10-6/14	Intersections	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 104-124 Gibson, Alexander & Meem. <i>Finding Out</i> , ch. 7 Lorde, "Age, Race, and Class: Women Redefining Difference" Johnson, E Patrick. "Quare Studies" Anzaldua, Gloria. "Too Queer the Writer" <a href="#">Indigequeer Podcast</a> <a href="#">Paris is Burning</a>	Video Post #5 Synthesis #5 Final Project Proposal
6	6/17-6/21	Pop-Culture and Community	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 124-138 Gibson, Alexander & Meem. <i>Finding Out</i> , ch. 10-12 <a href="#">Autostraddle</a> (click through and read some stuff) <a href="#">Gay Times</a> (click through and read some stuff) <a href="#">The Celluloid Closet</a>	Video Post #6 Synthesis #6
7	6/24-6/27	Who am I?	Barker & Scheele. <i>Queer: A Graphic History</i> , pp. 138-172 YouTube, <a href="#">The Danger of a Single Story</a> (yes, again) Bornstein, Kate. <i>My New Gender Workbook</i> , ch. 5-8	Video Post #7 Synthesis #7 Final Project