

**L368: Queer Lit & Theory**  
**Spring 2011: T: 4-6:45, B433**

Instructor: Margee Morrison: X460 or leave message with Judy Lidie at X350 (W); 410-889-1054 (H); email: mmorrison@erols.com; office: Bunting 419, Hours, T, W, Th: 3-4 pm or by appointment. Please feel free to come by my office, call, or email if you have questions or comments or should you wish to talk.

**Objectives:** Through literature, art, history, and theory, this course highlights important questions about the politics and social dynamics of "queer" sexuality and gender, including the meaning of gendered and sexual "subjectivities," closeting and homophobia, the problematics of "queer art," etc., and how some of the most interesting 19th and 20th century writers and artists explore those questions in their work. The course contextualizes "queer" by exploring some of the history of same-sex relations and by exploring the meanings of "queer" itself as this poststructuralist notion impacts subjectivities in the 21st century. Besides a book and a selection of essays on queer theory, readings/viewings this spring 2009 include: some classic novels [including Wilde]; short stories (Walker, Kenan, Glave, Hardy, etc.); queer visual art (including Bechdel, Hammond, Miller, Meyer, Waugh, and Bright); and films, including *Celluloid Closet* and Marlon Riggs's *Black Is/Black Ain't*.

**Required Texts [in BOOKSTORE]:**

\*[1] Walt **WHITMAN**. *Leaves of Grass: The Original 1855 Edition* (Thrift Edition) Dover\$1 Publications, 2007.

\* ISBN-10: 0486456765 or ISBN-13: 978-0486456768

\*[2] Oscar **WILDE**. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. NY: DOVER \$1 book: NY: Dover, 1993. ISBN: 978048627807

\*[3] James **BALDWIN**, *Giovanni's Room*.

\*[4] *Queer Beats: How the Beats Turned America on to Sex*. Selected Writings. Ed. Regina **MARLER**. SF,CA: Cleis Press, Inc., 2004. ISBN: 978157344188

\*[5] Leslie **FEINBERG**. *Stone Butch Blues*, Alyson Books, 2003; ISBN: 1-55583-853-7 or 978-1555838539.

\*[6]

\*[7] Jeanette **WINTERSON**. *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. NY: Vintage,1992. ISBN: 978067974447.

\*[8] Manuel **MUNOZ**. *The Faith Healer of Olive Avenue*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 2007.

ISBN: 13-978-1-56512-532-2.

\*[9] Henry **JAMES**. *The Beast in the Jungle and Other Stories*. "The Beast in the Jungle." NY: Dover Publications. ISBN: 978048627552 .

**\*THEORY, history, & art/Culture [in BOOKSTORE]:**

\*Nikki **SULLIVAN**. *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*. NY: New York UP, 2003. ISBN: 978081479841.

**\*On BLACKBOARD**

\*\*Theoretical essays from Foucault, Butler, Sedgwick;

\*\*Stories from Willa Cather and Carbado book:

\*[1] from Willa **CATHER**. *Paul's Case and Other Stories*. "Paul's Case." NY: Dover Publications.

ISBN: 978048629057 .

\*[2] **CARBADO et al**: *Black Like Us: Intro to Part I*: 1900-1950: Harlem Renaissance: + selections: Thurman; Nugent...

**Syllabus**

**JANUARY**

**18** Introduction...**For next week: Intro-essay: in 3-4 pages**, tell a story about: (1) your sexual and/or gender awakening (can be a "coming out story" or a discovery of the opposite sex or both sexes, etc.); or (2) some gender/sexual experience that has impacted you significantly--an important learning experience. Be prepared to read these in class. **READ: SULLIVAN**: Ch. 1, pp 1-21.

**25** **Intro to QUEER theory**; discussion of your sexual/gender stories and beginnings of queer theory with historical context. [Begin **WILDE's** *Portrait of Dorian Gray*. for 2-8]

**FEBRUARY**

**1** **19th Century**; Discuss **WHITMAN** selections. **SULLIVAN** Chs. 2-3 [pp. 22-56]; **video**: *Importance of Being Ernest*.

**8** **CAMP as queer idiom**: Discuss **WILDE's** *Portrait of Dorian Gray* and *Importance of Being Ernest*; **SULLIVAN** ch. 5 [pp. 81-98] and Ch. 11, [pp.189- 205], including camp as a queer tactic.

**15** **Late 19th-Early 20th century**: Closeted queers, **FLAMING** closets, perverse dynamic, homophobia: James's "A Beast in the Jungle\*" and Cather's "Paul's Case" [\***On BLACKBOARD**]; **Sedgwick on closeting**. [PLUS: please start to read Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*, which we will discuss March 1st]

**22** **CARBADO [on Blackboard]**: **Intro to Part I**: 1900-1950: Harlem Renaissance: + selections: Thurman; Nugent... + **SULLIVAN**, Ch. 4, 'Queer Race', 57-80; **video**: *Looking for Langston* [**SP #1 due**]

**MARCH**

**1** **1950s-60s**: James **Baldwin**, *Giovanni's Room*; **video**: *Before Stonewall...*

**8** **1950s-60s**; **MARLER**: *Queer Beats* [intro+selections]; + **BUTLER** on GENDER; **video**: *Paul Bowles* [PLUS: please start to read **Feinberg's** *Stone Butch Blues*, which we will discuss after Spring Break]

[Q1]

**[Spring Break: March 11-21]**

- 22 **1950s-70s: Transgender/transsexual:** FEINBERG's *Stone Butch Blues*; + SULLIVAN Ch.6 [pp. 99-118]: **video:** *Changing Sex*
- 29 **SULLIVAN:** Chs. 7-8 [pp. 136-150]; **HOLLYWOOD's queer impact:** **video:** *Celluloid Closet* [PLUS: please start to read Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, which we will discuss April 12th]

#### **APRIL**

- 5 **1980s: Street sex & AIDS:** WOJNAROWICZ, *Waterfront Journals*; + FOUCAULT, from *History of Sexuality & Technology of Self*, **presentation #1** [SP #2 due]
- 12 **1990s:** WINTERSON's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*; SULLIVAN, Ch. 9-10 [pp.151-188]; **video:** *After Stonewall*.
- 19 **1990s-2000s:** MUNOZ selections: *The Faith Healer of Olive Avenue* ("Lindo y Querido"; "Tell Him About Brother John"; "Ida y Vuelta"; "The Comeuppance of Lupe Rivera") + SEDGWICK, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay"; [Q2]
- 26 **video:** *Black Is, Black Ain't* **presentation #2 & #3** + [hand in reading journals]

#### **MAY**

- 3 YOUR CHOICE/final essay due **Presentation #4**; **video:** *Divine Trash* or *Paris Is Burning* or... [reading journals returned] **PARTY!**

#### **REQUIREMENTS**

- [1] **Introductory paper:** in 2-4 pages, tell a story about: (1) your sexual and/or gender awakening (this can be a "coming out story" or a discovery of the opposite sex or both sexes, etc.); or (2) some gender/sexual experience that has impacted you significantly--an important learning experience. [10 points]
- [2] **Quizzes [Q1 & Q2 on syllabus]:** two [2] announced quizzes, each of which may cover any of the material that has not been quizzed before: labeled [Q] in syllabus. [possible 10 points each = 20]
- [3] **Reading Journals:** your informal **thoughts** about the material you are reading, TYPED and gathered for submission near end of the semester; submit no fewer than 10 pages; some of the entries will be read on the final day of class... [10 points]
- [4] **Two papers:** 3-5 pages, formal, typed paper that makes a specific point about the material you have read for the weeks prior to the due-date. The idea you develop should be an assertion about a topic that interests you that you develop with details from the reading as your evidence. You may use research materials that relate to the material we have been studying but that were not assigned. You should be prepared to read and discuss these papers in class. Points will be deducted for late papers. [You may use these two papers as a basis for your final paper if you like.] (10 points each—[SP1 & SP2] ON SYLLABUS—for Short Paper)
- [5] **A presentation:** Each person in class will assign him/herself to one of 4 groups. Each group will research a topic and present it to the class when the group is scheduled. You may use this opportunity to choose a topic for your final research paper. The feedback from the class could help you sharpen the focus of your paper. The presentation can be [but need not be] about: [1] a group of queer people—like the transpeople; people with AIDS; [2] a comparison of artists, writers, or musicians—like Whitman and Wilde or Bruce Nugent and James Baldwin or Lorde and Feinberg; Wojnarowitz and Mapplethorpe or Opie; [3] theories or theorists: Foucault, EKS, Butler; [4] events: gay sex in the 1970s; Hollywood in the 1930s-40s [Cary Grant and Randolph Scott]; musicians in the 1950s: Aaron Copeland, Leonard Bernstein, Samuel Barber; artists in the 1950s: Johns, Rauschenberg, Cage, Cunningham; current music, art, film. In your presentation, you may use any interesting visual, haptic, or auditory aids. Be as imaginative, startling, quirky, or nasty as you want to be. Each group should limit its presentation to about 30 minutes, including discussion. Hand in one-page summary at end of presentation. [10 points]
- [6] **Final essay.** 5-7 pages describing what changing assumptions about sexuality & gender you have come to see reflected in yourself & in your work since, at the beginning of the semester, you wrote your paper on your sexual/gender awakening or experience. This essay is meant to help you articulate important insights about yourself you may have reached during the class. [20 points]
- [7] **Class attendance and participation** [10 points]. .....**TOTAL: 100**

**Grading:** If you have an emergency or illness, please let the teacher know. Excused absences require verification. Four or more unexcused absences are cause for failure (institutional rule)...**POINTS:** 95-100 = A; 89-94 = A-; 88-83 = B+; 82-87 = B; 78-81 = B-; 72-77 = C+; 67-71 = C; 63-68 = D+; 57-62 = D; 51-56 = D-

#### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

**ADA COMPLIANCE:** In MICA's efforts to provide the highest possible quality educational experience for every student, MICA maintains compliance with the requirements of the ADA and Section 504. Any student who has, or suspects he or she may have, a disability and wants to request academic accommodations must contact the Learning Resource Center, 4th floor Bunting, immediately. MICA has developed policies and practices to ensure a healthful environment and safe approaches to the use of equipment, materials, and processes. It is the mutual responsibility of faculty and students to review health and safety standards relevant to each class at the beginning of each semester. Students should be aware of general fire, health, and safety regulations posted in each area and course specific policies, practices, and cautions. Students who have concerns related to health and safety should contact Quentin Moseley, Environment Health and Safety Coordinator at 410 225 0220 or email at qmoseley@mica.edu

**PLAGIARISM FORBIDDEN** [see hand-out].