

THE 4935/5317
QUEER THEORIES OF/ & PERFORMANCE
Dr. Hans Vermy

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OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 11am-1pm Wednesday 12pm – 2pm
E-mail for appointment or risk a wait and drop in.
OFFICE LOCATION: Fine Arts 305

COURSE MEETING TIME: T. & Th. 2:00PM – 3:15PM LOCATION: FAB 309

On The Androgyne

Among mystics of the early church a new type of humanity was expected to emerge when a fusion of the sexes produced a new unpolarized consciousness.
The power inherent in both sexes, when brought together, create a great symbol of dynamic unity.
Both St. Paul and St. John considered androgyny one of the characteristics of spiritual perfection.
Hesiod claimed that bisexuality is one of the glories of divinity.
Life becomes a search for the Inner Unity that the Divine Androgyne symbolizes. Your birthright was double-sexed: half from the mother, half from the father.
Philosophically speaking one cannot be anything par excellence unless one is at the same time its opposite.
--James Broughton

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Queer Theories of/ & Performance examines sexuality through dramatic literature, popular performance, essays, and critical writings of queer theory. These materials aim to expand our thinking and actions regarding sexuality and sexual difference in the U.S.. Writings employ multiple theoretical lenses on sexuality in performance and performance of sexuality—social and discursive construction, identity formation, conditions of knowledge (*episteme*), (de)limits of the body, perception, desire, shame, class power, etc.

This course begins with an introduction to queer theory history and questions surrounding gender and sexuality in performance and aesthetics used in queer art. After this, the course moves into contemporary queer theories in order to examine works that use embodiment to pose questions about constructions of gender and sexuality onstage. Next we look at queer performance and move to questions about the application of queer theories and notions of sexuality across cultures are a major focus of the course. Examples of performance span from theatrical stages to everyday performance to pop stars to celebrity theorists, their interlocutors, and critics. Course work focuses on the deployment of critical queer theories in the analysis of performance and/or the explication of queer theories within performance studies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course continues to deepen students' knowledge of drama and performance while also strengthening their understanding of the constructions of sexuality in our art practice and society. The course poses the following questions: How are sexuality and gender performative constructs? How are sexuality and gender constructed through performance? How do theater artists use the “between” of performance to engage issues of sexuality? How does society use sexuality to re-inscribe or delimit power? How can perceptions and depictions of sexuality and gender be constructed and deconstructed? How can we approach difference through solidarity and in what ways can well intentioned solidarity re-inscribe social difference? How do we (wittingly or unwittingly) participate in these manipulations? How can we change our own practices and performances to challenge these manipulations?

Throughout the progression of the course students will gain the skills to:

Improve their deployment of critical thinking skills (written and verbal).

Have ownership over perspectives, language, and theories to explain how categories such as sexuality, gender, and humanity are socially constructed.

Identify issues relevant to the discussion of sexuality across the humanities, theatre, and performance.

Identify key figures in queer theory and queer performance.

Create written and oral critiques that analyze queer objects through queer theory.

Demonstrate and implement how queer theory can be used to inform and construct a more imaginative and exciting theatrical practice as well as a dynamic critical spectatorship.

Practice a refined ability to offer close readings of dramatic literature and unmediated performance, and explain the benefit of close reading for both audiences and practitioners.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Puar, Jasbir. *Terrorist assemblages : homonationalism in queer times*

Munoz, Jose. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*

Halberstam, Judith. *The Queer Art of Failure*

Warner, Michael. *The Trouble With Normal*

Delaney, Samuel. *Times Square Red Times Square Blue*

(Required Texts Con't)

Kushner, Tony. *Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1993.

Tesori, Jeanine, Lisa Kron, and Alison Bechdel. *Fun Home*. Samuel French, Inc., 2015.

Vogel, Paula. *The Baltimore Waltz - Acting Edition*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 1992.

COURSE READER

You are responsible for printing out and bringing copies of readings to class on the day they are due and for the following meeting as well.

COURSE READER BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dolan, Jill. *Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theater*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005.

Ferguson, Russell, ed. *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*. Documentary Sources in Contemporary Art, v. 4. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge, Mass: New Museum of Contemporary Art; MIT Press, 1990.

Hooks, Bell. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1992.

Minwalla, Framji, and Alisa Solomon, eds. *The Queerest Art: Essays on Lesbian and Gay Theater*. Sexual Cultures. New York: New York University Press, 2002.

Muñoz, José Esteban. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Cultural Studies of the Americas, v. 2. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Román, David. *Acts of Intervention: Performance, Gay Culture, and AIDS*. Unnatural Acts. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.

Savran, David. *A Queer Sort of Materialism: Recontextualizing American Theater*. Triangulations. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003.

———. *Communists, Cowboys, and Queers: The Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams*. Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1992.

Sontag, Susan. *Against Interpretation, and Other Essays*. Picador. New York: [New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux; Distributed by Holtzbrinck Publishers, 2007.

Stockton, Kathryn Bond. *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century*. First Edition. Duke University Press Books, 2009.

COURSE LABOR

Throughout the course you will write two essays and write weekly reading responses. Responses are due each Monday by 7PM (except 1.18 and 3.7. No Responses due those weeks) Responses are 1.5-2.5 pages in length. Turn in with proper MLA heading and format. Responses require proper MLA citation but no bibliography as quotes and paraphrases will come from the required texts. For responses, use author's last name and page number (Vermy 2). Essays require bibliographies.

The intimacy of this course offers the ability for assignments to be tailored for each student; taking into account their interests and learning needs. For each essay I will deliver a personalized prompt. Students are encouraged to outline their own lines of inquiry. For each response I will deliver a group prompt.

Essay 1 in response to a prompt. 6-8 pages.

(Final) Essay 2 in response to a prompt or an approved idea. 8-10 pages.

(For Graduate Students ONLY)

Use Chicago Style. No written reading responses. Be prepared with reading response notes for each class.

ABSTRACT

DUE:

FINAL Essay 20 pages

OUTLINE+ABSTRACT

DUE: FINAL DUE:

EVALUATION

Your grade will be based on the following:

(25%) Discussion, participation, and attendance

In class discussion/contributions

(Graduate Students ONLY)

Graduate students are expected to read all materials. This percentage of your grade will be based on an in class presentation. Graduate students will present for the class a summarization of one of our essay readings. I will make the assignments. Create a handout of your design to aid understanding of a secondary reading. Create a 15-20 minute oral introduction of the most cogent arguments in the essay or critical reading for the class' appreciation.

(40% total) Weekly Responses and completion of readings

(15%) Essay 1

(20%) Final Essay 2

(Grad students see me for your grade breakdown.)

"A" grades are reserved only for those students who exceed and excel in coursework. Those who only meet expectations should not expect an "A." Excelling includes: high quality presentations, papers, and projects, thorough preparation for discussions, and promotion of a collegial classroom environment.

It is vital that you save a copy of everything that you produce for this course-even after turning it into me. I keep track of a variety of materials and occasionally things can be misplaced. Should I ask you for a second copy of your work, you should have one immediately accessible.

Keep copies of all of the work you do until you receive your final grade at the end of the semester.

Bring your textbooks and/or required handouts and readings to class on the days we discuss materials from them. We will be utilizing turnitin.com for all papers.

Written assignments are graded as follows:

A+ = excellence in all areas.

The assignment presents a strong thesis statement, is argued coherently, and offers clear evidence to support your ideas. Written voice excels. Almost perfect in form and content.

A = excellent.

The assignment presents a strong thesis statement, is argued coherently, and offers clear evidence to support your ideas. Written voice strong. One or two minor errors.

A- = excellent.

The assignment presents a strong thesis statement, is argued coherently, and offers clear evidence to support your ideas. One or two minor errors.

B+ = good in all areas.

The assignment presents a good thesis statement; the argument and evidence are okay, but could be stronger. Assignment meets minimum number of pages. Almost no MLA, grammatical or other semantic errors. Work could still be attended to in some capacity to strengthen it.

B = good.

The assignment presents a good thesis statement; the argument and evidence are okay, but could be stronger. Assignment meets minimum number of pages. A few MLA, grammatical or other semantic errors. Work could still be attended to in some capacity to strengthen it.

B₋ = good.

The assignment presents a good thesis statement; the argument and evidence are okay, but could be stronger. Assignment meets minimum number of pages. Many MLA, grammatical or other semantic errors. Work could still be attended to in some capacity to strengthen it.

C+ = meets minimum requirements of assignment.

Overall, paper needs more work on many aspects. Work does not excel in any area.

C = meets minimum requirements of assignment.

But, overall, paper's argument lacks cohesion and paper needs more work on many aspects.

The assignment presents a passable thesis statement. An argument and evidence exists, but is either not convincing or not well articulated.

C₋ = meets bare minimum requirements of assignment.

Standard grade if minimum # of pages is not met.

D = falls short of minimum requirement, but effort in completing the assignment clearly made.

Thesis, evidence, and argument either very weak or missing.

COURSE PROTOCOL

Attendance. Required at all class sessions. See the University Policy for excused absences below. If you know you will be absent from class, it is your responsibility to notify me in writing (with appropriate documentation) prior to the absence and turn in work due that day prior to the start of class time. Students who miss class due to an unanticipated crisis should contact me at your earliest convenience. You must contact me to make up missed work within one week of your return to class.

Documentation is needed for an excused absence. These include:

Notes/receipts from medical professionals or clinics

Official jury, state, or federal summons.

Documentation from auto repair specialists (receipts with date stamps)

Documentation of emergencies relating to family.

An event the University deems acceptable for an excused absence (attendance at a conference, a show tour.)

Submit documentation no later than a week from your absence. Please email your TA to declare an absence. Students have exactly 1 week to make up work from excused absences. Any extensions are at my discretion.

Unexcused absences, tardiness and/or early departures. This class, like rehearsals, production meetings, and performances depends on the contributions of every one of its members for its success. Coming to class late or leaving early disrupts discussions and shows disrespect for your peers. You also risk missing critical information. One unquestioned unexcused absence with e-mail informing of absence an hour before class. Further unexcused absences will lower your attendance/participation grade by half a grade point (i.e., from A to A-) for the semester. **Two** unexcused tardy arrivals or early departures will lower this grade by the same amount.

Pop Quizzes may be given at the beginning of class to assess our progress through the course and its materials. If you miss a quiz due to an unexcused absence or tardiness, you may not make it up.

Quality participation. This includes demonstrating careful reading of assignments, active listening, and thoughtful comments in discussions. Bring all assigned readings to class on the days we discuss them.

Communication. Please schedule meetings with me to discuss your research interests, career goals, and specific assignments. It is your responsibility to check the email address you designate to use for this course everyday.

Late papers and assignments will not be accepted. Printer or computer failure will not be considered an acceptable excuse.

Written work. Follow MLA style guidelines. Graduate students please follow Chicago style.

All written assignments are to be double spaced in times new roman font set at 12pt on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper, with one-inch margins on all sides.

Keep all returned written work in a folder that, if requested, can be turned in during the semester and again on the last day of class for my review. Also keep copies of your work until you have received your semester grade.

Excessive carelessness in spelling, grammar or word choice will lower your grade. Look at spell check. Check problem words (their:there, your:you're, etc.) Check your use of punctuation. Check the spelling of names, essays, and other cited materials. Do not submit rough drafts. For topics: schedule appointments with me, start writing early, and revise your drafts. Revision—like rehearsal—is fundamental to the creative process that is putting your thoughtful analysis into print.

Submission of essays. All essays to be turned in as .pdf files. All reading responses to be emailed each Monday by 7PM as .pdf files. EMAIL hvermy@fsu.edu

Backup copies. Keep all returned written work in a folder that, if requested, can be turned in during the semester and again on the last day of class for my review. Also keep copies of your work until you have received your semester grade.

Syllabus Change Policy. Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Course Content Warning! The material in this course includes language and topics that some people might find objectionable or overly disturbing. If the material is triggering distressing psychological and/or physiological responses, stop reading, look away, plug ears, and see me immediately after class to discuss possibilities in aid. If some of this material is so offensive to you that it negatively affects your ability to learn, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possibilities in aid. Some disturbing topics are couched in single week readings and alternative readings and assignments are possible. I will inform you about the disturbing topics that accompany our readings on the first day.

Ethics. Students are expected to adhere to the Academic Honor Code as set forth in the FSU Student Handbook, which also sets out penalties for failing to uphold the code. All work in the class must be your own, and you must not aid another student in cheating. See the University Academic Honor Policy below.

CALENDAR

DATE	Readings	In Class Activities /Assignments Due
Th 1.7		<p>Introductions</p> <p>Course Objectives</p> <p>Student Goals</p> <p>Syllabus</p>
<u>:: Questions of Queer Theory ::</u>		
T 1.12	<p>Warner: Ch 1</p> <p>Wittig. "Straight Mind."</p> <p>Foucault, "We Other Victorians," from <i>The History of Sexuality</i></p>	<p>Working with secondary materials (internet, video, essays, playbills, dramaturgical notes, audience notation) Finding. Reading. Citing.</p> <p>Intellectual Property</p> <p>Plagiarism Test</p>
Th 1.14	<p>Butler, <i>Bodies that Matter</i>. Intro</p> <p>Butler, <i>Gender Trouble</i>. Preface</p> <p>Foucault, "The Repressive Hypothesis."</p>	Social Construction of Gender
T 1.19	<p>Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave?"</p> <p>Sedgwick, "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold."</p> <p>Stockton, "The Queer Child." selection TBA</p>	Queer Lives Queer Theories
<u>:: Queer Aesthetics ::</u>		
Th 1.21	<p>Sontag, "Notes on Camp."</p> <p>Case, "Towards a Butch Femme Aesthetic."</p>	Watch Broughton Films
T 1.26	<p>Román, "It's My Party and I'll Die If I want To! AIDS Performance and the Circulation of Camp in the Late 1980s and Early 1990s."</p> <p>Halberstam, "Low Theory." from <i>Queer Art of Failure</i></p>	Watch Jarman's <i>Blue</i>
Th 1.28	Watch an episode of <i>RuPaul's Drag Race</i>	Watch <i>Paris is Burning</i>

T 2.2	Hooks, "Is Paris Burning?"	Watch <i>Paris is Burning</i>
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:: Queer Theatre ::

Th 2.4	Kushner, <i>Angels in America: Part 1</i> Román, "November 1, 1992: AIDS/ <i>Angels in America</i> "
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T 2.9	Vogel, <i>The Baltimore Waltz</i> Savran, "Paula Vogel as Male Impersonator."
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Th 2.11	Abdoh, <i>Quotations from a Ruined City</i> Essay TBA	Watch Abdoh Video Work
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T 2.16	Nauffts, <i>Next Fall</i> Warner, Ch 2
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Th 2.18	Selections, <i>Communists, Cowboys, and Queers : The Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams</i> TBA	Watch <i>Belle Reprieve</i>
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T 2.23	Kushner, <i>Angels in America Part 2</i> Savran, "Ambivalence, Utopia, and a Queer Sort of Materialism: How Angels in America Reconstructs the Nation"
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Th 2.25	Kate Bornstein and Justin Vivian Bond Readings TBA	Watch Kiki and Herb
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:: Queer Performance: Autobiography ::

T 3.1	Choose a Queer Memoir, Autobiographical Solo-Show, Autobiography. Memoir. Play. Film. Present in Class. Miller and Savran, "Preaching to the Converted" Scott, "The Evidence of Experience."	Memoir/Memory/Experience
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Th 3.3	Selections, <i>O Solo Homo</i> TBA Dolan, "Finding our Feet in Another's Shoes: Multiple-Character Solo Performance."	Memoir/Memory/Experience
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Spring Break

:: Autobiography and Queer Closet Drama ::

T 3.15	Stein, <i>Byron</i> Salvo, "Topping Stein."	Queer Sharing/Education Problem of Generations DUE: Essay 1
Th 3.17	Traub, "Setting the Stage behind the Seen: Performing Lesbian History."	Watch Susanna Cook
T 3.22	Kron, <i>Fun Home</i>	Listen to Fun Home in Class From Novel reading to Play
Th 3.24	Freeman, "Time Binds."	Fun Home

:: Queer Performances: Disidentifications ::

T 3.29	Halberstam, from <i>The Queer Art of Failure</i> : "Dude Where's my Phallus?" Forgetting, Losing, Looping." And "The Queer Art of Failure"	
Th 3.31	Edelman, <i>No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive</i>	Dan Savage Kate Bornstein It Gets Better (?)
T 4.5	Munoz, <i>Disidentifications</i> . TBA	
Th 4.7	Delaney, <i>Time Square Red/Time Square Blue</i> TBA	Queer Space and Activism Discussion
T 4.12	Delaney, <i>Time Square Red/Time Square Blue</i> TBA	
Th 4.14	Puar, <i>Terrorist Assemblages</i> TBA	Queer Bodies and Terrorism Discussion
T 4.19	Puar, <i>Terrorist Assemblages</i> TBA	DUE: Essay 2
Th 4.21	FINAL CLASS	

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities. contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center

874 Traditions Way

108 Student Services Building

Florida State University

Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167

(850) 644-9566 (voice)

(850) 644-8504 (TDD)

sdrc@admin.fsu.edu

<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

Instructional Recording Technology and Distribution Policy - School of Theatre Florida State University

A long history of faculty use of recording technology exists within the School. Faculty have relied upon these methods to further the students' educational experience and by extension to enhance their classroom effectiveness. This policy is not intended to interfere with that practice. The purpose of this policy is to protect both student and faculty privacy.

Use of Recording Technology

The use of recording devices including those brought by students in any School of Theatre classroom or performances space/location is at the discretion of the classroom instructor. Items in this category include, but are not limited to, camcorders, cameras, cellular phones, and audio recorders. Any device which stores video, audio, or still images is subject to this policy. Beyond permission of the instructor to utilize recording technology, written permission must be obtained from all individuals to be recorded.

Distribution

The School of Theatre at Florida State University policy mandates that no recorded image including still and moving or audio may be distributed without express written permission of all individuals presented on an image or sound to be distributed. This applies to all formats of distribution including, but not limited to, print, digital, and analog.

Course Policy

Students may take and are encouraged to take in-process shots of their work during class for use in their portfolio, webpage for obtaining work and internship placement. This may include others at work but you must get their permission to use the image you snapped. They do not need to see the final product if they are aware of the moment you record or photograph.

Permission

Any individual wishing to record course content or activities must obtain written permission from all individuals being recorded by filling out SOT Record/Tech forms.

Violations

All violation will be reported to the Associate Dean who will retain records of all violations. Students found to be in violation of the policy a second time will be subject to sanctions beyond those associated with the class up to and including dismissal from the School of Theatre. In addition, students violating the policy a second time will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and subject to further University sanctions.

Limitations

This policy does not supersede any Federal, State, Local, or Institutional policy regarding recording or distribution of materials. It applies solely to instructors and students in School of Theatre courses. Furthermore, it should not be implied that permission to record and/or distribute material from classes extends to the content presented.