

Queer Flows

FEMST 250AE

Tuesdays, 12:30-3:20PM

South Hall 4631A

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This course studies culture on the move. It follows uncouneted and often unimagined flows across borders and boundaries of all kinds. The goal of the course is to apply queer and trans theories (and those we will borrow from other disciplines and interlocutors for queer and trans purposes) to track circuits, pathways, and networks that are at times literally submerged but never static.

Three monographs will punctuate the readings/viewings for this course, chosen to loosely speak to the movement of ideas (Alexander), objects (Gómez-Barris), and bodies (Aizura). In focusing on such areas as migration and borders, performance, object circulation, and regulations to prohibit certain flows, this course tends toward analyses of excess, abundance, transgression, and leakage instead of the usually evoked late capitalist and austerity discourses of scarcity, lack, debt, and loss. So while an understanding of how neoliberalism, racial capitalism, and market economies will play a key role in this course, we will enter these conversations through queer and trans theories and concepts to thus engage the ongoing flow of scholarly thought in these arenas from the stance of deviance and dissidence. Similarly, this course queerly approaches the nation-state, and even the discourse of the transnational, recognizing that flows quintessentially transgress assumptions and expectations, even as they can be made, sometimes violently, to move in rigid, uniform, and even fascist ways. Thus, the scholarship on *homonormativity* will play as much of a role in this course as *heteronormativity* in describing how flows, even those nominally declared to be “queer,” can participate in disciplining movement.

I would like you to spend the majority of the course close-reading the texts, engaging in lively and collegial conversations/interpretations in seminar, and applying your analysis and notes from seminar to your own projects. A course called “Queer Flows” could take any of us in a number of imaginative and creatively generative directions for our own work, or at least that’s my hope. I invite you to pursue those connections even if they were unanticipated by this syllabus, and I look forward to discussing those ideas in seminar.

Required Texts (all from Duke UP; listed in order we will read them):

Alexander, M. Jacqui. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*. 2006

Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. 2017.

Aizura, Aren Z. *Mobile Subjects: Transnational Imaginaries of Gender Reassignment*. 2018.

A note on participation:

Always start with what a work does, that is its intervention and potential thematic, theoretical, and/or methodological use for your own work and in the field(s). Queer theory often goes beyond critique to offer creatively generative tools for analysis yes, but also for doing stuff (e.g., politics, art, writing, performance, presentation, activism) outside the rigid confines of “common sense,” “civility,” and “the way things are.” In the course, I would like you to take some risks not only in what you say and do, but how you say and do it. With that being said, this course will also only thrive if we practice the ethical rubric that David Román has called “critical generosity.” (*Acts of Intervention*) We are a collective actively working together to build knowledge around what this course calls “queer flows.” We all bring immense strengths to this course; the role of a good colleague involves giving critical feedback to your peers to help them locate and develop these strengths alongside your own.

A note on technology:

For those who would prefer not to print, you can bring your tablets or laptops to seminar, but they should only be used for close reading the texts during discussion. I would highly recommend using a notebook for note-taking so that you can treat your machine as “text” and nothing else. All other applications and the internet must be silenced and closed during seminar. We will do quite a bit of writing together so if you prefer to write via computer/tablet, then this would also be an effective use of the machine. No cellphones will be permitted in seminar and should be silenced and put out of site for the duration of the course. If you need to use machines for any other purposes, please communicate with me.

Seminar Activities:

Conversation Facilitation: Every student will choose one week of readings with a colleague or two and come prepared with 2-3 carefully crafted substantial questions that will be made visible in some way. As a collective, we will examine and work with the questions themselves and then we will do some writing. In addition to the 2-3 questions, each student will identify and make visible an artifact or phenomenon from their own project that pertains to the reading. Guided by the readings, the student will describe the artifact and discuss what kinds of analysis could be conducted with that artifact. Your colleagues and myself can then weigh in (again using the readings) to offer additional feedback on the artifact/phenomenon in question. Nonverbal forms of communication, pastiche stylistics, bricolages, and aesthetic acts of any kind welcome.

Weekly Writing Activities:

In addition to writing as a group on-site in seminar, students will also practice writing before seminar meets using the gauchospace forums that I set up. Prompts, styles of writing, and writing forms will vary week-to-week. Most exercises will ask for 300-600 word entries.

Attending Events:

There are a few events (marked throughout the syllabus) that I would like you to attend. If your schedule conflicts, please communicate with me.

Participation:

Come prepared and having read for seminar, and engage the conversation guided by what the readings do and what they can do for your work.

Final Project: In consultation with professor based on what piece of writing/performance/artistic project/collaborative endeavor you want to accomplish at this stage in your career. You will submit a proposal during week 7 and meet with the professor to discuss your ideas.

Course Schedule (subject to change):

Week 1, October 1: Introduction: Terms, Theories, Methods

Povinelli, Elizabeth A. and George Chauncey. "Thinking Sexuality Transnationally: An Introduction," *GLQ* (1999) 5 (4): 439-449.

Grewal, Inderpal and Caren Kaplan. 2001. "Global Identities: Theorizing Transnational Studies of Sexuality" in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 7:4, 663-679.

Wilson, Ara. "Intimacy: A Useful Concept for Global Analysis." *The Global and the Intimate: Feminism in Our Time*, edited by Geraldine Pratt and Victoria Rosner, Columbia University Press, 2012, pp. 31–56.

Appadurai, Arjun, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Theory Culture, Society* (1990) 7: 295-310.

Week 2, October 8: Pedagogies of Crossing

Alexander, M. Jacqui. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*. 2006 (Parts I and II)

Week 3, October 15: Bodies in Motion

Rivera-Servera, Ramón, "Reggaetón's Crossings: Black Aesthetics, Latina Nightlife, and Queer Choreography," in *No Tea, No Shade: New Writings in Black Queer Studies*, edited by E. Patrick Johnson, Duke UP, 2016, 95-112.

Manalansan, Martin. "Restless Urban Meanderings: Mournful Flanerie in Troubled Times," *GLQ*, 42-44.

McRuer, Robert. Excerpts. *Crip Times: Disability, Globalization, and Resistance*. NYU Press, 2018.

Cassidy Crawford, Lucas. "Transgender without Organs? Mobilizing a Geo-Affective Theory of Gender Modification," in *Transgender Studies Reader 2*, 473-482.

For the second half of class, and under the banner of "Navigating the City," we will participate in a self-defense workshop with Mexico City-based and visiting lesbian transfeminist activist and martial artist, Ingrid Colín. Wear comfortable clothing. MCC Lounge

To prepare for the workshop, read <https://brightthemag.com/mexicos-women-are-learning-to-hit-like-a-girl-feminist-self-defense-sexual-violence-a21559c2f389> and watch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7GSDSoc55Q> (in Spanish but will give you a sense of her work)

Optional: From 6-8PM at MCC Lounge, "Writing Myself into the Diaspora," Shyam Selvadurai reads from *Funny Boy* and *The Hungry Ghost*

Week 4, October 22: Trade

Tyburczy, Jennifer. "Sex Toys After NAFTA: Transnational Class Politics, Erotic Consumerism, and the Economy of Female Pleasure in Mexico City," *Signs* 42, 1 (2016): 123-152.

Mitchell, Gregory, "Evangelical Ecstasy Meets Feminist Fury: Sex Trafficking, Moral Panics, and Homonationalism during Global Sporting Events," *GLQ* 22, 3 (2016): 325-357.

Capó Jr., Julio, excerpts from *Welcome to Fairyland: Queer Miami Before 1940*, UNC Press: 2017.

Mistersyn, Kimberly, "Managing the Local Gay and Lesbian Bookstore," 161-163.

Week 5, October 29: The Extractive Zone

Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. 2017.

Week 6, November 5: Queer Migrations

Lubhéid, Eithne. "Queer/Migration: an Unruly Body of Scholarship," *GLQ* 14 2/3 (2008): 169-190.

Fajardo, Kale. "Transportation: Translating Filipino/Filipino American Tomboy Masculinities Through Seafaring and Migration." *GLQ* 14, 2/3

Balaguera, Martha. "Trans-migrations: Agency and Confinement at the Limits of Sovereignty," *Signs* 43, 3 (Spring 2018): 641-664;

Allen, Jafari. "Black/Queer/Diaspora at the Current Conjuncture," *GLQ* (2012) 18 (2-3): 211-248.

Shakhsari, Sima. "The queer time of death: Temporality, geopolitics, and refugee rights," *Sexualities* 17, 2 (2014): 998-1015.

Week 7, November 12: Mobile Subjects

Aizura, Aren Z. *Mobile Subjects: Transnational Imaginaries of Gender Reassignment*. 2018.

Week 8, November 19: Queer Circuits

Haber, Benjamin, "Introduction to Queer Circuits: Critical Performance and Digital Praxis," *Women and Performance* 28, 2 (2018):

<https://www.womenandperformance.org/bonus-articles-1/benjamin-haber-daniel-sander-28-2>

Blas, Zach. "Virus, Viral," *WSQ* 40, 1 & 2 (2012): 29-39.

Clough, Patricia and Jasbir Puar, "Introduction," *WSQ* 40, 1&2 (2012): 13-26.

cárdenas, micha. "Dark Shimmers: The Rhythm of Necropolitical Affect in Digital Media," in *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the politics of Visibility*. MIT Press, 2017.

Ruberg, Bonnie. Excerpts. *Video Games Have Always Been Queer*. NYU Press, 2019.

Puar, Jasbir. "Circuits of Queer Mobility: Tourism, Travel, Globalization," *GLQ* 8, 1-2 (2002): 101-137.

Event: Bonnie Ruberg will be giving a talk on Nov. 20. Details to follow.

Week 9, Movements and Mobilizations

Atshan, Sa'ed and Darnell L. Moore, "Reciprocal Solidarity: Where the Black and Palestinian Queer Struggles Meet," *Biography* 37, 2 (2014): 680-705.

Kuhar, Roman and David Paternotte, excerpts from *Anti-Gender Campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing Against Equality*. Rowman and Littlefield International, 2017.

Arguedes Ramírez, Gabriela. "Gender Ideology, Religious Fundamentalism and the Electoral Campaign (2017-2018) in Costa Rica," LSE Religion and Global Society interdisciplinary blog, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2018/12/gender-ideology-religious-fundamentalism-and-the-electoral-campaign-2017-2018-in-costa-rica/>

Sexuality Policy Watch, "Judith Butler attacked in Brazil: a briefing,"

<https://sxpolitics.org/judith-butler-in-brazil-a-briefing/17916>

Shih, Elena. "Not in my Backyard Abolitionism:" Vigilante Rescue Against American Sex Trafficking," *Sociological Perspectives* 59, 1 (2016): 66-90

Week 10: Writing and discussion workshop for final projects or artistic presentations of final projects