HIST 2981D (FALL 2021)

HISTORIES OF SEXUALITIES

W 3-5:20
Sharpe House (97 Brown St.) 113

Prof. Tara Nummedal
Department of History



Alchemical "coitus" between Sol (sulfur) and Luna (Mercury), *Rosarium philosophorum.* (Frankfurt, 1550). ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Rar 8230.

Mode of instruction:

In person (with masks), with the possibility that we will move to Zoom if the Covid situation makes that necessary. This course will use the following technological platforms: Canvas, Zoom. I am committed to ensuring access to online course resources by students. If you have any concerns or questions about access or the privacy of any of these platforms, please reach out to me.

Communication:

Office hours by appointment: Tu 9-10am (Zoom); Th 10:45am-11:45 (Sharpe 213)
(sign up for an appointment at https://tinyurl.com/3ywjdppn)
e-mail: Tara_Nummedal@Brown.edu

Course Description

What does it mean to write a history of sexualities? Examining how scholars have grappled with this question in a broad range of temporal and geographic contexts, we will consider multiple forms of past sexualities, as well as their intersections with the law, race, empire, religion, medicine, and culture; sex work/commerce; pleasure and desire; consent and power; and relationships between histories of sexualities and histories of gender, sex, and the body. Finally, we will reflect on how the changing terrain of gender and sexual identities today (e.g. queer, trans) shapes the questions scholars ask and whose stories get told.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course students will:

- Have a foundational knowledge of the field of history of sexuality, including how it has developed in the past half century and how it now overlaps with and diverges from work in gender, LGBTQIA+, and trans history; queer theory; history of marriage and family, among others. Students will be introduced to a wide range of scholarly questions, theoretical and methodological orientations, and sources that scholars have used to write the history of sexuality in particular times and places, from Byzantium to modern China.
- Be able to undertake an intersectional analysis of histories of sexuality, placing questions about sexuality in conversation with other fields, including Black, Indigenous, and Ethnic studies; decolonial and postcolonial studies; transnational histories; disability studies, among other fields.
- Articulate the personal and social stakes of historical sexualities to contemporary discussions of diversity and inclusion, as well as to activist communities.

- Feel empowered to continue to explore the history of sexuality after our seminar is over, as a reader, researcher, and writer.

Commitment to an Inclusive and Respectful Learning Community:

I am committed to creating a classroom environment in which students from all backgrounds and perspectives are well served, students' learning needs are addressed both in and out of class, and all experiences, subject positions, and backgrounds are viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intention to present materials and activities that are respectful of all racial, ethnic, religious, and gender identities, sexualities, as well as socioeconomic status, ability, age, and other differences. If there is anything that I need to know to communicate respectfully and effectively with you -- for example, your lived name, preferred pronouns, access needs, pronunciation of your name(s), etc. -- please let me know.

At the same time, at its core, this course deals with material that may be unfamiliar and challenging. There are disagreements among scholars immersed in these topics and certainly students will have different responses to our course material as well. I expect us to read, discuss, and listen to each other with openness and a willingness to engage with new ideas and perspectives, and with respect for each other. I ask you to uphold the principles of the University community as you engage in all aspects of the course. If you have concerns about a violation of these principles, I encourage you to raise them with all of us, with me directly, or via the Brown Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion procedures for incident reporting: https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/incident-reporting

I recognize that the Coronavirus pandemic continues to heighten inequalities, and that any one of us could encounter unexpected issues related to health, accessibility, resources, or inadequate workspaces during the semester. If you experience disruptions to learning due to COVID or other related issues, please let me know as soon as possible and we will make an arrangement that makes sense for your situation. See Canvas for additional resources.

Course Requirements:

(1) Books: We will use the following books, all of which are available on reserve at Rockefeller Library via OCRA. For those who prefer to (and can) buy paper books, you may be able to order them directly via your local independent bookstore (see https://www.indiebound.org/).

Betencourt, Roland. *Byzantine Intersectionality: Sexuality, Gender & Race in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020.

Capó, Jr., Julio. *Welcome to Fairyland*: *Queer Miami before 1940*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

Chiang, Howard. *After Eunuchs: Science, Medicine, and the Transformation of Sex in Modern China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2021.

DeVun, Leah. *The Shape of Sex: Non-Binary Gender from Genesis to the Renaissance.* New York: Columbia, 2020.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1, An Introduction*, transl. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.

Hardwick, Julie. *Sex in an Old Regime City: Young People, Production, and Reproduction in France, 1660-1789* . New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Hartman, Saidiya. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (W. W. Norton & Co., 2019)

Massad, Joseph Andoni. *Desiring Arabs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Tortorici, Zeb. *Sins Against Nature: Sex and Archives in Colonial New Spain*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

(2) Time Commitment

The total of in-class hours and out-of-class work for all full credit courses at Brown is approximately 180 hours over the length of a semester. In this class, students seeking to maximize their learning can expect to spend 42 hours in class (3 hours per week for 14 weeks, 98 hours reading for class (approx. 7 hours per week for 14 weeks), 10 total hours on the book review assignment, 20 hours researching and writing the proposal/first draft of their final paper and 10 hours researching and writing the second draft of their final paper. Actual times will vary for each student; final grades are not determined by the amount of time a student spends on the course.

(3) Class Recording and Distribution of Course Materials

I may choose to record Zoom class meetings when case students are unable to attend class due to illness. If you have questions or concerns about this protocol, please contact me so that we can talk them through to also ensure your full participation in this course.

Lectures and other course materials are copyrighted. Students are prohibited from reproducing, making copies, publicly displaying, selling, or otherwise distributing the recordings or transcripts of the materials. The only exception is that students with disabilities may have the right to record for their private use if that method is determined to be a reasonable accommodation by Student Accessibility Services. Disregard of the University's copyright policy and federal copyright law is a Student Code of Conduct violation.

Course Expectations & Evaluation Criteria:

(1) Accessibility, Accommodations, and Campus Resources

University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you may require accommodations or modification of any of course procedures. You may speak with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you need accommodations around online learning or in classroom accommodations, please be sure to reach out to Student Accessibility Services (SAS) for their assistance (sas@brown.edu, 401-863-9588). Students may also speak with Student Accessibility Services to discuss the process for requesting accommodations.

Brown welcomes students from around the country and the world, and their unique perspectives enrich our learning community. To support students whose primary language is not English, services are

available on campus including language workshops and individual appointments. For more information, contact English Language Support at ellwriting@brown.edu or (401) 863-5672. Also students may wish to consult other learning support resources on campus, such as Academic Support Services, the Library or Writing Center.

(2) Course Activities

Participation *(20%*). I expect you to come to class having completed the readings and prepared to engage in a rigorous, constructive discussion. We do realize that some students find it difficult to speak up in seminars; if you know that this is the case for you, please come talk to one of us at the beginning of the semester so that we can strategize about ways to ensure that you find a way to contribute to our discussions. Your participation grade is comprised of two elements:

- Attendance and active participation in weekly discussions (10%). May also involve students leading discussion once during the semester (TBD).
- Weekly "takeaways" (10%). 2-3 sentences due on Canvas at the end of each week reflecting on core lessons or questions or problems that you took away from the week's readings and discussion. These are informal, but opportunities to take a moment and contemplate/review before moving on to the next week.

Source Spotlight (10%, sign up for date at first class). Each student will choose a primary source from their own field and make a 10-minute presentation to the class describing the source and discussing the kinds of questions and problems it raises for a history of sexuality.

Book Review (20%, due on Canvas October 15, 11:59pm). A 6-8-page book review of a "classic" book in your field (for example, Chauncey, *Gay New York* or Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*), focusing on its sources, method, and historiographical significance *at the time it was published*. Then, consider what you might do differently in writing this same book today. Additional details about this assignment to follow.

Proposal + **bibliography** for final paper (credit/no credit, 2 pages + bibliography, due on Canvas November 12, 11:59pm). The proposal should identify the historiographical issue/research question you wish to explore in your final paper, as well as the principal authors engaged in the topic. This will require a bit of research on your part: combing footnotes, reading book reviews, talking to us or other faculty in your field, and so on.

Final Paper (50% total, due on Canvas December 15, 11:59pm). Students have two options for this assignment:

> Option A: 20-page research prospectus identifying a research question, surveying existing secondary literature on this topic, outlining the specific sources, methods, theoretical approaches you will use to examine your question, and the potential significance of your work in the context of the history of sexuality and your particular field. Be sure to include a concrete research plan as well: which archives/libraries/digital collections, specific series of documents, etc.
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> Option B: 20-page historiographical essay on a topic of your choosing related to the history of sexuality. This essay should clearly define the topic you wish to survey (e.g. sexuality and the early

modern Iberian empire in the Americas; queer migration histories; LGBTQ+ communities in 19th-c S. Asia; indigenous queer histories) and draw on central works on this topic to articulate the state of the field -- points of convergence, consensus, conflict, unresolved issues -- as well as potential new directions and interventions.

Class Schedule

1. Sept. 8 - First Class Meeting

- Manion, Jen. "The Performance of Transgender Inclusion: The Pronoun Go-Around and the New Gender Binary. *Public Seminar* November 27, 2018.
- Spade, Dean. "We Still Need Pronoun Go-Rounds." deanspade.net, Dec. 1, 2018
- Halberstam, J. "Reflections on Queer Studies and Queer Pedagogy." *Journal of Homosexuality* 45, Nos. 2-4 (2003): 361-364.
- Hawthorne, Sîan Melvill. "'Reparative Reading' as Queer Pedagogy." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 155-60.

2. Sept. 15 – What is "the history of sexuality" and how might we write it?

- Kunzel, Regina. "The Power of Queer History." *The American Historical Review* 123.5 (2018): 1560–1582.
- Bennett, J. M. "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9, nos. 1/2 (2000): 1–24.
- Halperin, David M. "How to do the History of Male Homosexuality." *GLQ* 6, no. 1 (2000): 87–123.

3. Sept. 22 – Foundations

- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1, An Introduction*, transl. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. "Remembering Foucault." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14, no. 1 (2005): 186-201.

4. Sept. 29. Theories and Methods

- Arondekar, Anjali. "Without a Trace: Sexuality and the Colonial Archive." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14, nos. 1/2, January 2005/April 2005, pp. 10-27.
- Butler, Judith. "Critically Queer," in Donald E. Hall and Annamarie Jagose, eds., *Routledge Queer Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 18-31.
- Johnson, E. Patrick. "'Quare' Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know About Queer Studies I Learned from my Grandmother." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 21, no. (2001): 1-25.

5. Oct. 6. Community

- Capó, Jr., Julio. *Welcome to Fairyland*: *Queer Miami before 1940*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.
- Gomes Pereira, Pedro Paulo. "Reflecting on Decolonial Queer." *GLQ* 25, no. 3 (2019): 403-429.

6. Oct. 13. Desire, Empire, and Modernity

- Massad, Joseph Andoni. *Desiring Arabs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

- Tallie, T. J. "Queering Natal: Settler Logics and the Disruptive Challenge of Zulu Polygamy." *GLQ* 1 April 2013; 19 (2): 167–189.

book review must be submitted to Canvas on Oct. 15 by 11:59pm on Oct. 15

7. Oct. 20. Desire in/and the Archive

- Tortorici, Zeb. *Sins Against Nature: Sex and Archives in Colonial New Spain*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.
- Johnson, Jessica Marie. "Full Use of Her: Intimacy, Service, and Labor in New Orleans," in *Wicked Flesh: Black Women, Intimacy, and Freedom in the Atlantic World*, 121-152. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020.

8. Oct. 27. Reproductive Intimacies

- Hardwick, Julie. *Sex in an Old Regime City: Young People, Production, and Reproduction in France, 1660-1789* . New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Lafleur, Greta. "'Defective in One of the Principle Parts of Virility': Impotence, Generation, and Defining Disability in Early North America." *Early American Literature* 52, no. 1 (2017): 79-107.

9. Nov. 3. Radical Intimacies

- Hartman, Saidiya. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval.* W. W. Norton & Co., 2019.
- [optional] Jack Halberstam, "Minor Revolutionaries: A New Chapter in Queer Studies," *Los Angeles Review of Books.* July 21, 2019. https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/minor-revolutionaries-a-new-chapter-in-queer-studies

10. Nov. 10. Sexuality, Gender, and the Body

- DeVun, Leah. *The Shape of Sex: Non-Binary Gender from Genesis to the Renaissance.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2021.

final paper proposal and bibliography must be submitted to Canvas on Nov. 12 by 11:59pm

11. Nov. 17. Sex and Epistemology

- Chiang, Howard. *After Eunuchs: Science, Medicine, and the Transformation of Sex in Modern China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020.

12. Nov. 24: THANKSGIVING RECESS. NO CLASS.

13. Dec. 1. Possible Subjects

- Betencourt, Roland. *Byzantine Intersectionality: Sexuality, Gender & Race in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020.

14. Dec. 8: READING WEEK.

- Informal class meeting, TBD.

final paper must be submitted to Canvas on Dec. 15 by 11:59pm