Course Description
This junior colloquium will give you a solid theoretical foundation in the field of queer studies. Although "queer" is a contested term, it describes—at least potentially—sexualities, genders, and other social positionalities that fall outside normative constellations. However, as queer studies has been institutionalized in the academy, in popular culture, and in contemporary political movements, many suggest that today, "queer" shorthands gay and lesbian (or LGBT), or is too easily co-optable (e.g., Queer Eye for the Straight Guy), or that queer studies' construction of the body, desire, and sexuality effaces or ignores crucial material conditions, bodily experiences, or cultural differences.

This course, a theory-based, reading-intensive seminar, will address these debates. After a brief exploration of some of the foundational works in queer theory, we will focus on the relationships—and disagreements—between queer theory and other modes of theory designed to illuminate and critique various forms of power, marginality, privilege, and normativity. We will emphasize critical race theory, transgender studies, cross-cultural perspectives, Marxism, feminist theory, and disability studies in their intersection with queer experiences, bodies, performances, and desires. Rather than understanding queer studies as a coherent school of thought, we will continuously problematize the field, politics, modes of analysis, and theoretical debates that are understood as queer theory. Throughout, we will ask: What kinds of bodies or desires does queer describe? What are the politics of queer? What are the promises of queer theory, according to its proponents? What are the perils of queer theory, according to its critics? What is the meaning of queer activism and politics today? What is the future of queer?

This course is excellent preparation for a queer studies concentration in American Studies.

Recommended Course Text

*Book is available at the Bookstore and on reserve at Olin library. Articles are on Moodle.*

Course Assignments

Attendance and Participation – 15%
TPQ Memo – 10%
Focused Project Presentation – 15%
Midterm Paper – 25%
Final Paper/Project – 35%

Attendance and Participation
This is an intensive seminar course, so your active participation is crucial to its success. I expect you to come to class on time and prepared, and to contribute to our discussion in a positive, relevant, and respectful way. We will be reading challenging theoretical essays that often advocate opposing viewpoints. Thus, participation in this course means coming to class ready to ask questions, to think about what is at stake in these debates, and to begin to forge your own analysis. Your participation should be grounded in the reading; pointing us to relevant sections of an article or to a particular
quote is most productive. If you like to take notes on your laptop, you may bring it to class; however, any use of your computer for non-class purposes will result in suspension of this privilege.

You may miss one class without explanation or penalty. Unexcused absences after one will negatively impact your final grade. If you think you have a valid reason for missing class (emergency, health problem, etc), please contact your class dean/other relevant Wesleyan official and have that person contact me. Excused absences are only granted when a Wesleyan official contacts me on your behalf (not when you send me an email).

TPQ Memo: Two Points and a Question
Every week (except the week you do your Focused Project presentation), you will come to class with a memo containing two points and a question from the readings. The memo has two purposes: first, to give you a formal opportunity to reflect on the readings in a connective or synthetic way before class begins and second, to serve as a starting place for class discussions. The memos – and the class as a whole – will require you to read the essays carefully, looking up terms you do not understand, and keeping notes as you read. Once you have completed a week’s reading, ask yourself: How do these authors (perhaps differently) understand queer and theory? Which ideas are most important, controversial, enlightening, difficult to understand, provocative? What are the disagreements or debates in this set of readings? What do these authors argue is the function, point, or use of queer (or related) theory? How do these readings connect/disconnect to other texts we have read? And finally, what do you think about these arguments, concepts and analyses? To aid in class discussion, please note particular quotations or pages that you wish to discuss. You will turn in these memos after our class, but they will not be graded (you will receive credit/no credit). Instead, the memos are to help you think through the material we’ve read, connecting the various authors, sorting out ideas, and allowing you to begin to form your own analysis. During the semester, you may be asked to direct our class discussion using your memo.

Focused Project Presentation
Working with a partner, you will guide us through one Focused Project during the semester. These projects entail reading two additional essays and presenting these to the class. The projects give the class additional information or a perspective different from that of the main reading – they are debates or problematics that complement or expand the readings for that day. So, for example, on the day we consider the debates between Queer Theory and Transgender Theory, the special topic is “Butch/FTM Border Wars,” a series of debates around the borders between butch lesbians and transmen. On the day we consider Queer Theory and Crip Theory, the special topic is “Performing Crip”; we will explore the politics of crip performance art. Your task is to present this material in a clear, comprehensible way that will enhance the class’s understanding and add to our discussion. Plan to spend 10 minutes or so explaining the main point of the special topic readings and their relation and relevance to the main readings for that day. You might follow the summary with discussion questions, an exercise, a handout, short clips/media, etc. I will also bring material to help us think through these projects, so check in with me by 5pm the night before our class so we can coordinate.

Midterm Paper
Just before Spring Break, you will turn in a 5-7 typed, double-spaced-page paper based on an essay prompt. The paper is based on our course reading, and will not require additional research. I will give additional guidance as the midpoint of the semester approaches.

Final Paper/Project
Your final assignment is a research paper on an aspect of Queer Studies of your choice. The paper should be 8-10 typed, double-spaced pages. I would like you to choose a topic in which you are particularly interested, and integrate the concepts and frameworks you have learned in the course with new perspectives, theories and analysis you have researched on your own. Be on the lookout
throughout the semester for something you want to examine. Some options include: working in the LGBT/Q Special Collections (ask me if you would like to set up an appointment with Suzy Taraba, Head of Special Collections at Olin), developing one of the Focused Projects into a paper, or working on a topic that may serve as the framework for your senior essay or thesis. Be sure to meet with me early if you are having trouble coming up with a topic; you will meet with me (at least) once to discuss your topic.

Final papers are due by 5/13 at 4pm (in my office, under my door, or in my mailbox in CAMS).

**Extra credit**
You may attend an appropriate campus event (our syllabus has several options) and write a 2-page paper discussing how the event relates to our course themes and readings. The paper should be turned in shortly after the event.

**Class Policies**

*I do not accept late papers, nor give extensions.*

Please come see me in office hours if there is any course material you do not understand, or if you need guidance on my expectations for papers, presentations or any other aspect of this course.

**Students with Disabilities:**
It is the policy of Wesleyan University to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with Disabilities Services, in addition to making requests known to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at: http://www.wesleyan.edu/deans/disability-students.html.

**Honor Code:**
All work must be done in compliance with the Honor Code. If you need help with proper citations or you have questions on how to avoid plagiarism, let me know or contact the Writing Workshop: http://www.wesleyan.edu/writing/workshop/
**Schedule**

**Wednesday, January 26: Introduction: Queer and Theory**

**Wednesday, February 2: Queer Theory: Normativities**

Teresa de Lauretis, 1990. "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities" (to p. xi) differences
Judith Butler, 1993. “Critically Queer” in Bodies that Matter (up to p. 230)

**Recommended Reading:** Nikki Sullivan, Chapters 3 and 5 QT

**Focused Project:** Paris is Burning

**Wednesday, February 9: Queer of Color Critique: Intersectionality**


**Recommended Reading:** Nikki Sullivan, Chapter 1 and 4 QT

**Recommended films:** Black is … Black Ain’t, Tongues Untied

**Focused Project:** Sexology

**Friday, February 11: Recommended Event:**
Activism and Academia Symposium (10-noon and 2-4 in Russell House)

**Wednesday, February 16: Queer // Feminism: Sex/uality and Gender**

Gayle Rubin, 1984. “Thinking Sex” in LGBT Reader (read 1, 9-16 closely)
Biddy Martin, 1994. “Sexualities without Genders and Other Queer Utopias” in Diacritics
Judith Butler, 1994. “Against Proper Objects” differences

**Recommended:** Annamarie Jagose 2009. “Feminism’s Queer Theory” Feminism and Psychology

**Focused Project:** Lesbian Feminism and Queer Theory
Wednesday, February 23: Queer // Transgender: Gender and the Body

Susan Stryker, 2006. "(De)Subjugated Knowledges: An Introduction to Transgender Studies" in *The Transgender Studies Reader*


Vi Namaste, 1996. "Tragic Misreadings: Queer Theory’s Erasure of Transgender Subjectivity" in *Queer Studies*

C. Jacob Hale, 1997. "Leatherdyke Boys & Their Daddies: How to Have Sex Without Women or Men" *Social Text*

Emi Koyama, “2006. Whose Feminism is it Anyway?” *The Transgender Studies Reader*

**Recommended Reading:** Nikki Sullivan, Chapter 6 *QT*


**Focused Project:** *Butch/FTM Border Wars*

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Friday and Saturday, February 25-26: Recommended Event:

Sex, Gender, Species Conference

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Wednesday, March 2: Queer // Disability Studies: Compulsory Ablebodiness


Robert McRuer, 2006. "Introduction" to *Crip Theory*

Ellen Samuels, 2003. “My Body, My Closet” *GLQ*

Eli Clare, 2001. “Stolen Bodies, Reclaimed Bodies: Disability and Queerness” *Public Culture*

Eli Clare, 2003. "Gawking, Gaping, Staring" *GLQ*

**Focused Project:** *Performing Crip*

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**MIDTERM PAPER DUE:** Friday, March 4 by 4pm

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**SPRING BREAK**

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Wednesday, March 23: Queer(ing) Capitalism? Commodifiying Queer

John D’Emilio, 1983. “Capitalism and Gay Identity” *LGBT Reader*

Rosemary Hennessey, 1994. “Queer Visibility in Commodity Culture” (to p. 54) *Cultural Critique*

Judith Butler, 1997. “Merely Cultural” *Social Text*


**Recommended Reading:** Nikki Sullivan, Chapter 11 *QT*

Jeff Maskovsky, “Do We All Reek of the Commodity?” *Out in Theory*

**Focused Project:** *Queer Pop Culture*
**Wednesday, March 30: Queer Politics: Radical, Liberal and Neoliberal**

Lauren Berlant and Elizabeth Freeman, 1992. “Queer Nationality” *boundary 2*
Margot Weiss, 2008. “Gay Shame and BDSM Pride” *Radical History Review*

**Recommended Reading:** Nikki Sullivan, Chapters 2 and 7 *QT*

**Focused Project:** Queer Neoliberalism

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**Wednesday, April 6: Queer Citizenship: The Hetero/Homonormative State**

David Bell, 1995. “Pleasure and Danger: The Paradoxical Spaces of Sexual Citizenship” *Political Geography*
Lisa Duggan, 1994 “Queering the State” *Social Text*
Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, 1998. “Sex in Public” *Critical Inquiry*
Jasbir Puar, 2006. “Mapping U.S. Homonormativities” *Gender, Place and Culture*

**Focused Project:** Queer Nationalism

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**Thursday, April 7: Recommended Event:**
Diane Weiss Memorial Lecture -- Judith/Jack Halberstam

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**Wednesday, April 13: Global Gays? Transnational Queer Studies**

Dennis Altman, 1997. “Global Gaze/Global Gays” in *GLQ*
Martin Manalansan, 1995. “In the Shadows of Stonewall” in *GLQ*
Lisa Rofel, 1999. “Qualities of Desire” *GLQ*
Don Kulick, 1997. “A Man in the House” *Social Text*

**Focused Project:** Queer Ethnographic Method

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**Wednesday, April 20: Queer Futures? Queer Times**

Elizabeth Freeman, 2007. “Introduction” to *Special Issue: Queer Temporalities* in *GLQ*
Leo Bersani, 1987. “Is the Rectum a Grave?” in *October*

**Focused Project:** Queer History, Queer Children
Wednesday, April 27: What’s Queer About Queer Studies Now?

Lauren Berlant & Michael Warner, 1995. “What Does Queer Theory Teach Us about X?” *PMLA*
Annamarie Jagose and Don Kulick, 2004. “Thinking Sex/Thinking Gender” *GLQ*
David L. Eng, Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz, 2005. “Introduction” to *What’s Queer About Queer Studies Now?* in *Social Text*
Janet Halley and Andrew Parker, 2007. “Introduction” to “After Sex? On Writing since Queer Theory,” in *SAQ*

Wednesday, May 4:
Course wrap-up

FINAL PAPER DUE: Friday, May 13 by 4pm
Focused Project/Special Topic:

Wednesday, February 2: Queer Theory – Paris is Burning
Film: *Paris is Burning*

Wednesday, February 9: Queer of Color Critique – Sexology
Siobhan Somerville, 1998. “Scientific Racism & Invention of the Homosexual Body” *Sexology*
Pick one:
Margaret Otis, 1913. “A Perversion not Commonly Noted” *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*
Richard von Krafft-Ebing, 1886. “Antipathic Sexuality; Intro” and “Congenital Antipathic Sexual Instinct in Man” in *Psychopathia Sexualis*
Havelock Ellis, 1897. “Sexual Inversion: Introduction” and “Sexual Inversion in Women” in *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*

Wednesday, February 16: Queer // Feminism – Lesbian Feminism and Queer Theory
Pick one:
Cherrie Moraga and Amber Hollibaugh, 1983. “What We’re Rolling Around in Bed With” in *Powers of Desire*

Wednesday, February 23: Queer /// Transgender -- Butch/FtM “Border Wars”
Pick two:
Max Wolf Valerio, 2002. “Now That You’re A White Man...” in *This Bridge We Call Home*
C. Jacob Hale, 1998. “Consuming the Living, Dis(re)membering the Dead in the Butch/FTM Borderlands” *GLQ*

Wednesday, March 2: Queer /// Disability Studies -- Performing Crip
Robert McRuer, 2006. “Crip Eye for the Normate Guy” in *Crip Theory*
RE/SEARCH, 1993. *Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist*
Film: *Sick*
-or-
Carrie Sandahl, 2003. “Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer?” *GLQ* (with links to sites)
Film: *Vital Signs*

Wednesday, March 23: Queer Commodity // Capitalism -- Queer Pop Culture
Pick one:
Jose Muñoz, 1999. “Pedro’s Real World” in *disidentifications*
Danae Clark, 1991. “Commodity Lesbianism” *Camera Obscura*
*Pick one:*
GLQ Forum on “Queer Eye” *GLQ*
-or- “Brokeback Mountain Dossier” *GLQ*

**Wednesday, March 30: Queer Politics -- Queer Neoliberalism**
*Pick two:*
Martin F. Manalansan, 2005. “Race, Violence, and Neoliberal Spatial Politics in the Global City” *Social Text*
Janet Jakobsen, 2005. “Sex+ Freedom= Regulation WHY?” *Social Text*
Jane Ward, 2008. Excerpt from *Respectably Queer: Diversity Culture in LGBT Activist Organizations*

**Wednesday, April 6: Queer Citizenship -- Queer Nationalism**
*Pick two:*
Margot Weiss, 2009. “Rumsfeld!: Consensual BDSM and ‘Sadomasochistic’ Torture at Abu Ghraib” in *Out in Public*

**Wednesday, April 13: Global Gay? -- Queer Ethnographic Method**
*Pick two:*
David Valentine, 2007. “I Know What I Am” *Imagining Transgender*
Gloria Wekker, 1999. “What’s Identity Got to Do With It?” in *Female Desires*
Evelyn Blackwood, 2005. “Transnational Sexualities in One Place: Indonesian Readings” *Gender and Society*

**Wednesday, April 20: Queer Futures? Queer Times -- Queer History, Queer Children**
Kathryn Bond Stockton, 2004. “Growing Sideways” in *Curiouser*
Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, 1991. “How to Bring Your Kids up Gay” *Social Text*
-or- *pick two:*
Carla Freccero, 2006. “Prolepses” from *Queer / Early / Modern*
Elizabeth Freeman, 2010. “Introduction” to *Time Binds*
Carolyn Dinshaw, 1999. “Introduction” to *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*