San José State University
Humanities Department

CA95: Introduction to Queer Arts, Section 01, Fall 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: J. Todd Ormsbee
Office Location: Clark 433
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Email: todd.ormsbee@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: TTh 12:00-13:00 and by appointment
Class Days/Time: TR 16:30-17:45
Classroom: Clark 306
GE/SJSU Studies Category: C1

Course Format: Canvas
Students must acquire access to Canvas for assignments, course materials, collaboration, and communication with Prof. Ormsbee. http://sjsu.instructure.com/

Course Description
Exploration of the ways that LGBTQ individuals and groups have used the arts through the ages, in various times and places, to make their lives, communities, and selves meaningful and to resist the domination of non-queer cultures, groups, and institutions.

Course Goals

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

GELO 1: Arts courses will enable students to recognize aesthetic qualities and processes that characterize works of the human intellect and imagination. Accomplished by seminar participation and Art Experience Journals, and particularly in Assignment One.

GELO 2: Arts courses will enable students to respond to works of art both analytically (in writing) and affectively (in writing or through other forms of personal and artistic expression). Accomplished by seminar dialogues and required analytical Essays, but particularly in Assignment Two.

GELO 3: Arts courses will enable students to write clearly and effectively. Writing shall be assessed for correctness, clarity, conciseness, and coherence. Accomplished by Art Experience Journals and analytical Essays, particularly in Assignment Three.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
CLO 1: Students will develop a sense of the complexity and diversity of human sexuality and gender identities, and the ability to describe and explain sexuality and gender as they intersect with other social and cultural categories and institutions, such as race, class, ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc.

CLO 2: Students will develop an understanding of the metaphor of the closet and the conflicted and contested idea of queerness and use those ideas to explain and interpret works of art across media.

CLO 3: Students will develop their understanding of how the arts are used to make life intelligible and meaningful, and the specific ways that LGBTQ people have used the arts to make sense of their sexual and gender differences.

CLO 4: Students will be able to analyze the relationship between the experience of sexual and gender difference and the creation and appreciation of the arts.

CLO 5: Students will be able to explain the relationship between aesthetics and politics, and use that relationship to explain queer works of art.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

Other Readings
CA95 F18 Course Reader (to be purchased at Maple Press, 330 S 10th St #200, San Jose, CA 95112)

Other technology requirements / equipment / material
Access to the internet for film, music, and other visual materials.
Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

To put that in plain terms, for each class you should have planned to spend three hours for work outside of class for studying, reading, preparing for class, and completing assignments. On a weekly basis, that’s a total of 3 hours of class (divided into two equal parts on T & Th) and 6 hours outside of class (scheduled in a way that maximizes your learning throughout the week).

Each of the following assignments is designed to move students forward in the development of all GELOs and CLOs:

Seminar Participation (15% of grade): By nature, learning to see, critique, interpret, and analyze aesthetic works requires in-person practice with the guidance and Socratic questioning of an experienced practitioner. For this reason, students will receive periodic grades (three times) for the engagement, questions, and oral responses to art in a Seminar setting. Student grades will be assigned in consultation with the students themselves, who will fill out a short self-evaluation form for each grading period.

Art Responses (25% of grade): Daily during the semester, students will be asked to respond in writing to works of art — visual arts, film, poetry, fiction, etc. These Responses are designed to meet two goals simultaneously. First, they help students prepare their thoughts about the art we’ll be studying for the day and give our conversations a jumpstart. Second, they aid students to practice key aesthetic analysis skills in a low-impact way for their grades. In their entries, students should practicing moving from personal experiences and feelings about the artworks toward analysis and critique, situating works in their historical contexts, and analysis of the work’s meaning, including how it may change meaning over time in different contexts.

• Responses will be approximately 300 words, single-spaced, normal fonts and margins (this length is flexible; quality counts more than quantity). Responses must be printed/typed before class.
• Responses may address the relationship between any of the following questions in various combinations:
  + What is my response to this work of art? How does it make me feel? What does it mean to me?
  + Why does it mean that to me?
  + How does it convey its meaning? That is, what is the relationship between the form and the content?
  + What was the historical context of creating this work? How did that context shape or constrain or influence the work, and its reception and meaning?
  + How might that work have changed meaning over time as context changes? How are current meanings similar to and different from the meanings it might have had over time in different contexts?
• Over the course of the semester, you must complete 22 responses (that means you can drop your 7 lowest scores, including responses you do not complete).
• Because responses are meant to be practice for quizzes and essays, grading is straightforward: \( \sqrt{+} \), \( \sqrt{\ } \), or \( \sqrt{-} \) (roughly A, B, C). A good faith effort that shows engagement and thoughtfulness about the work of art will receive full credit. Note: A clearly bad faith effort will receive no credit.

Quizzes (25% of grade): Three times during the semester, students will take short-answer quizzes (approx. 1 hour) relating to the materials we’ve covered in class. They are designed to both
demonstrate students’ retention of key concepts and their growing ability to apply what they’ve learned to new situations and works of art.

**Essays (35% of grade):** These formal writing assignments build on the skills students are developing through their Responses and discussion Participation. We are working to build the skills of description, analysis, interpretation, comparison, and synthesis.

- **Essay #1:** Work/Artist focus – Writing an aesthetic analysis of one specific work by a significant LGBTQ artist (approx. 2-3 pages). Focus on description, analysis, and interpretation.
- **Essay #2:** Synthetic, Comparative Final Essay (due in Final Exam period) – This paper synthesizes the students’ skills by comparing two artists, through one work by each of them. The student will research the social and political background on each artist; the paper will culminate in a comparative set of aesthetic analyzes. (4-5 pages)

**Final Examination or Evaluation**

For the purposes of concluding the semester and demonstrating students’ ultimate mastery of skills and content outlined in the GELOs and CLOs above, **Essay #2** will serve as the culminating experience (capstone) of the course. Note that the 3rd Quiz will take place during our final exam period.

**Grading Information**

**Determination of Grades**

**VERY GOOD**

- A: excellent performance, mastery of content & skills
- A-: mastery; with minor omissions or errors

**GOOD**

- B+: better than average performance; approaching mastery with one or two areas for improvement
- B: better than average performance with 3 or 4 areas for improvement

**SATISFACTORY**

- B-: an average performance, solid grasp of large concepts and acceptable skill level; needs work to achieve mastery
- C+: an average performance, solid grasp of large concepts and acceptable skill level; 1-2 areas of concern, misunderstanding, or developmental skill level
- C: an average performance, solid grasp of large concepts and acceptable skill level; 2-3 areas of concern, misunderstanding or developmental skill level

**SUFFICIENT/DEVELOPMENTAL**

- C-: fulfills minimum requirements of the course; not yet achieving any level of mastery of skill or content
- D+: fulfills minimum requirements of the course; not yet achieving any level of mastery of skill or content with 1-2 areas of grave concern
- D/D- fulfills minimum requirements of the course; not yet achieving any level of mastery of skill or content with 3-4 areas of grave concern

**Percentage Weight Per Assignment**

- Seminar Participation Check 1 05%
- Seminar Participation Check 2 05%
- Seminar Participation Check 3 05%
- Art Encounters Journal (ongoing) 20%
- Essay #1 15%
- Essay #2 20%
- Essay #3 30%

**Late Policy:** For full credit, assignments must be on time. Quizzes & Essays may be turned in up to 4 days late with a deduction of 10% per day late off the grade. So for example, if you completed Essay 1 and received a 88/100, but were two days late, you’d receive a 68/100 (-20%). Essay 2 may not be turned in late, as it’s the final project of the
course. CSU Policy allows students to receive excused absences for specific reasons; for excused absences, you must make arrangements with me (Prof. O) in advance if possible. Planning your vacation or flying home at the end of the semester is not an excused absence.

Classroom Protocols

We maintain that it is critical to a student’s success to create an environment conducive to learning. To that end, we will strive together to create an atmosphere where we can focus together on the contents of the course and not have to worry about distractions of any kind.

Discussion Participation

Much of our learning will occur in interactive dialogue and Socratic question and response (this is often called a “seminar” in college). When done well, dialogic learning is among the most effective learning techniques for most students. In order for these to be as effective as possible, you should have completed your 2-hour reading commitment and your Response for the day before class. In class, you should be ready to listen carefully and take notes; respond to your classmates; and pose questions and offer commentary, examples, personal perspectives, analysis, critique, etc. Together, we will try to generate knowledge, confront our own prejudices and holes in our knowledge, and open ourselves to learning and discovery. The ultimate goal is to become independent thinkers.

For more help with seminars, see the University of Reading’s guide, “Getting the Most out of Seminars” http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/studyadvice/Studyresources/Seminars/sta-getting.aspx

Electronic/Digital Devices

Cell Phones: All cell phones should be shut off and put away at the beginning of class. No texting: Disrespectful to me and to your classmates; and disruptive to your own learning. Laptops are to be closed or off, unless a specific class activity requires their use.

Laptops: No laptops should be open in class, without permission from the professor. Note: Sometimes during class, you will have a question that I cannot answer or that I want more details on. In those cases, I will ask someone with a laptop to look up the answer and we will explore together as a class. If you want to look something up during the course of a lecture or discussion, please simply give me a heads up so I know what you’re doing and so we can, again, explore the knowledge together as a class.

Participation, Courage to Speak, & Civility. Respect of your fellow students is critical to creating a learning atmosphere. In our course we may be discussing controversial issues or even matters that are personally important to someone in the class. You are encouraged to disagree and argue with each other and the professor, but it is imperative that you do so respectfully and without personal attacks. Any form of hate speech will result in ejection from the course for the day.

Prepare for Class, Read for Retention, and Study to Learn. To succeed in this course, students should arrive having completed the preparation for class with questions and comments ready. Maximize your learning by studying (read and review to draw connections and think critically and synthetically, NOT just to repeat rote information).

See How to Get the Most Out of Studying http://www.samford.edu/how-to-study/default.aspx

University Policies (Required)

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/
The calendar may change for pedagogical reasons with fair notice

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Before Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 21</td>
<td><strong>KEY:</strong> watch=film or television, explore=artistic texts (poetry, fiction, etc.), look=visual arts to be examined on Canvas, listen=music digitally available, read=scholarly, critical texts to advance understanding and skill</td>
<td><strong>Intros: Personal &amp; Course</strong></td>
<td>For Art Responses, see the Syllabus; Essays assignments will be distributed separately; Quizzes will be “take home” on Canvas, mixed format, and timed. All assignments due in class unless otherwise noted.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Aug 23</td>
<td>Watch: Hannah Gadsby: Nanette [Netflix]</td>
<td><strong>Into the Deep End: Queerness &amp; the Arts</strong></td>
<td>Art Response #1</td>
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<td>Aug 28</td>
<td>Look: Indigenous Queer Arts (Canvas)</td>
<td><strong>Naming the Erotic: Sexuality, Gender, &amp; Power</strong></td>
<td>Art Response #2</td>
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<td>Aug 30</td>
<td>Read: Berger, Ch. 1 (reader); Stryker, “Why the T in LGBT Is Here to Stay” (reader)</td>
<td><strong>The Problem of Art</strong></td>
<td>Art Response #3</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sep 4</td>
<td>Look: Greek Pederasty Vase Art</td>
<td><strong>The Uses &amp; Abuses of History</strong></td>
<td>Art Response #4</td>
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<td>Sep 6</td>
<td>Explore: Sappho, poems (reader); story of Perpetual and Felicitas (reader)</td>
<td>Queer Arts before 1800, Part 1</td>
<td>Art Response #5</td>
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<td>Sep 11</td>
<td>Explore: Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 64a-b; Abu Nuwas, poem; and Zulali Khwansari, poem; Saikaku; and Wu Meicun (reader)</td>
<td>Queer Arts before 1800, Part 2</td>
<td>Art Response #6</td>
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**Setting the Stage: Intersections of Queer & Art**

Modernity & the Sexual “Deviant” (19th Century)
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sep 13</td>
<td>explore: excerpts from Thoreau (reader); excerpts from Melville, <em>Moby Dick</em> (reader)</td>
<td>Queer before Queerness</td>
<td>Art Response #7</td>
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| 5    | Sep 18 | explore: Carpenter, “Into the Regions of the Sun” (reader) 
| 5    | Sep 20 | explore: Whitman, *Cadmus* (1855 version) 
look: 19th Century Homoerotic Painting (Canvas) | Homoeroticism, Aesthetics, & Poetics  | Art Response #9                       |
| 6    | Sep 25 | play: (blues songs to come) 
explore: excerpt from Alain Locke | Quiz #1: The Beginnings of Modern “Queernesses” (Early 20th Century) | Art Response #10 
Essay No. 1 distributed in class |
| 6    | Sep 27 | listen: (blues songs to come) 
explore: excerpt from Alain Locke | Race, Jazz, Blues, and Queer Women of the 1920s | Art Response #10 
Essay No. 1 distributed in class |
| 7    | Oct 2  | look: Eakins, Sargent, Bellows, Lavendecker (Canvas) 
read: excerpt from Sedgwick, “The Epistemology of the Closet” (reader) | Early 20th Century American Masculinities | Art Response #11                       |
| 7    | Oct 4  | explore: Stein, “Miss Furr and Miss Skene”; excerpt from Hall, *Well of Loneliness* 
look: Frida Khalo (Canvas) | Lesbian Modernism                    | Art Response #12                       |
| 8    | Oct 9  | explore: excerpts from queer pulp novels (reader) 
Look: Queer Pulp Covers & Movie Posters (Canvas) | Cold War Pulp Fiction                | Art Response #13                       |
| 8    | Oct 11 | read: Sontag, “Notes on ‘Camp’”; LaBruce, “Camp and Anti-Camp” 
look: Tom of Finland & Body Building Pictorials of the 50s & 60s (Canvas) | Camp: A Queer Aesthetic?             | Art Response #14 
Hard copy of Essay No. 1 due in class; uploaded electronically to Canvas for plagiarism detection. |
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<td></td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>listen: selections by Cris Williamson, Alex Dobkin, and Tracy Chapman (links on Canvas)</td>
<td>Wymyn’s Music of the 1970s &amp; 80s</td>
<td>Art Response #16</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>explore: excerpt from Morraga; poetry from Lorde; excerpt from Anzaldúa (reader); look: Lesbian Art of the 1970s</td>
<td>Lesbian Feminism &amp; Lesbians of Color in the 70s and 80s</td>
<td>Art Response #17</td>
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<td>Oct 25</td>
<td>look: Mapplethorpe (Canvas)</td>
<td>Mapplethorp’s Gaze</td>
<td>Art Response #18</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>listen: selections TBA (links on Canvas)</td>
<td>Queercore Music: HIV, Politics of Survival &amp; Resistance, and the Birth of the “Queer”</td>
<td>Art Response #20 Quiz #2 due 11/2 by midnight</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
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<td>Quiz #2</td>
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**Queerness, Homophobia, & Death**

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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>watch (choose one): <em>Female Trouble</em> (1974); <em>El ley del deseo</em> (1987); <em>Poison</em> (1991); or <em>No Skin Off My Ass</em> (1993);</td>
<td>The New Queer Cinema</td>
<td>Art Response #21</td>
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<td>watch: <a href="https://www.amazon.com/dp/B073J7Q77M">Viva</a> (2013) [Amazon; Netflix]</td>
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<td>Nov 22</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving — Campus Closed 11/21-11/23</strong></td>
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<td>(explore: Fun Home)</td>
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<td><strong>The Treachery of Homonormativity in the 21st Century</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>explore: Fun Home (2006) listen: songs from the musical Fun Home (links on Canvas)</td>
<td>Closets, Feminism, Gender, and Sexuality in Words, Images, Song, and Stage</td>
<td>Art Response #26</td>
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<td><strong>The Treachery of Homonormativity in the 21st Century</strong></td>
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<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>explore: [articles about Ru Paul; Ben de la Creme’s critique] watch: episode of RuPaul’s Drag Race TBA read: excerpt from Butler, Gender Trouble</td>
<td>The Massification of Drag</td>
<td>Art Response #27</td>
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<td><strong>The Treachery of Homonormativity in the 21st Century</strong></td>
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<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>watch: videos TBA read: excerpts from Halberstam, Female Masculinity</td>
<td>Drag as Communal Politics &amp; Meaning</td>
<td>Art Response #28</td>
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<td>Essay #2 due 10 December by 5 p.m. to my office (CL443)</td>
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<td>FINAL</td>
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<td>Quiz #3 Friday, December 14 at 12:30 in classroom</td>
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