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Graduate Center CUNY, Room 6304.01
First 4 Wednesdays in May, 6.30-8.30pm US EST
live stream: <http://videostreaming.gc.cuny.edu>

Queer(ing) New York

A CLAGS Seminar in the City
Fall 2013

Lgbtq people have formed and been formed by cities, so much so that literature scholar Julie Abraham has argued that homosexuals have become “models of the city itself” (2009, xix). Of all the cities where lgbtq people have flourished, historian Robert Aldrich has argued that “New York offered a prototype for American gay cultures” (2004, 1727). While lgbtq studies has begun to extend itself to look at rural and other non-urban environments, much of the urban still remains to be accounted for, particularly difference within the city.

This CLAGS Seminar in the City addresses the ways we can use queer identity and experience along with queer theory to examine the ways cities support or inhibit difference in the city. Drawing on work from queer theory and lgbtq studies in geography, sociology, anthropology, history, and literature studies, we will use the city as a lens and site for our reading and research. This course will include seminar discussions and site visits throughout the New York City area. Using queer theory to account for our differences, we must queer the city in the way it normalizes groups and spaces, and New York City is the exciting urban environment to begin within. In this Seminar in the City, we will read work that challenges and queers the normalized histories and spaces of lgbtq life. How can we queer the neighborhood, bar, streets, and bodies within it to tell stories of difference? These versions of lgbtq life often privilege certain places in the queer geographical imagination and thereby ignore the more complicated queer spaces and stories of our everyday lives. Such a normalizing focus on lgbtq spaces and places ignores the ways that lgbtq people produce their spaces through difference around sexual, gender, race, class, and ability identities. How can a queer reading of traditional lgbtq spaces of New York City more radically account for difference?

No prior experience in theoretical readings or site analysis is needed; an open, imaginative, and inquisitive mind is mandatory. All readings will be provided. Participation in the seminar is free and open to the public. For those not in NYC, you can watch the course online via live streaming and ask your questions via Twitter. We aim to speak at least 15-20 minutes per week will be devoted to handling questions from Twitter (hashtag: #CLAGSqNY).

Schedule of the Course

- May 1st: The City and the Bodies within It
- May 8th: The Bar, the Institution, and the Space Between
- May 15th: Street Life
- May 22nd: Neighborhoods and Communities and Gayborhoods, Oh My

Participation & Attendance

Class participation is not mandatory but always welcome, whether in class or watching the course videos later. We're creating a smart, welcoming space to think through some tough issues both in lgbtq contemporary spaces, past, present, and future.

About the Core Readings & Further Recommended Readings

To access the readings, go to <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/82swcjzdz28x5hv/jflsdcMg3g>. Do your best to read as much as possible but make sure to do at least one or two full readings per week. Further recommended readings will continually be added to the website in drop-down tabs under Syllabus.

I have created an open access Zotero library (<http://jgieseking.org/CLAGSqNY/zotero-library/>) for the course so that we can share citations we like in a public list. There is no need to participate but feel free to use the lists as you wish. (Learn more at Zotero.org.) Feel free to reach out to me (Jack) for works on specific subjects of interest, or check out my Gender, Sexuality, and Space Bibliography on the Projects section of <http://jgieseking.org>.

Sustaining a Conversation / Taking Part in the Course

To keep the conversation going beyond the classroom, you have the opportunity to share your responses to the readings to bring your experiences to class. We will be using two venues for ease of use: 1) the Seminar Blog and 2) the #CLAGSqNY hashtag on Twitter.

What's Involved in Making a Comment?

A comment is at most one or two paragraph(s) that responds to one or more of the week's readings through your own experiences. Under a post, there is hyperlink to "Leave a Reply." Be sure to use the same name/pseudonym to connect conversations over the weeks. There's no requirement to chime in but come by, read, and comment as you will.

You can include and/or make visuals, videos, audio, and other mixed media by just pasting in the links; be sure to include proper citations. You could also include or instead post some questions developed in the course of your reading that you would like to share with the group. There will be two threads per weekly class, one before the class and one during the class.

- Pre-Course Thread: On Saturdays, I (Jack) will be posting my thoughts on the readings on the Seminar Blog. If you have thoughts or questions to share with the class before we meet.
- In-Class Thread: On Wednesdays at 6.30pm US EST, I will launch an in-course thread to allow for conversation and questions during the class. You can also use Twitter.

What's Involved in Using a Hashtag?

Much of the participation in the seminar will happen through hashtag via Twitter. Our course hashtag, #CLAGSqNY, affords us a public way to connect with each other and discuss the seminar beyond the physical classroom with a broader audience.

A hashtag marks, denoted by the # symbol, marks keywords. For info on setting up a Twitter account, check out <http://www.youtube.com/embed/zkWL985S95E>. For more info on how to use Twitter, read Howard Rheingold's piece on "Twitter Literacy" (<http://blog.sfgate.com/rheingold/2009/05/11/twitter-literacy-i-refuse-to-make-up-a-twittery-name-for-it>).

Grading

There are no grades for this course. Rather, it's a queer brain jam. However, if you want to seek credit from a home institution, we can discuss the work necessary for a certificate of completion.

Core Readings

Week 1 / May 1st: *The City and the Bodies within It*

- D'Emilio, John. 1983. "Capitalism and Gay Identity." In *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, edited by Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson, 100–113. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Abraham, Julie. 2009. Selections from "Paris, Harlem, Hudson Street—1961," in *Metropolitan Lovers: The Homosexuality of Cities*. Minneapolis, UMN Press, 169-194, 208-215, notes 323-332.

Week 2 / May 8th: *Place-Making, i.e. the Bar, the Institution, and the Space Between*

- Nestle, Joan. 1997. "Restrictions and Reclamation: Lesbian Bars and Beaches on the 1950s." In *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance*, edited by Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter, 61–68. Seattle, WA: Bay Press.
- Sommeila, Laraine, and Maxine Wolfe. 1997. "This Is About People Dying: The Tactics of Early ACT UP and Lesbian Avengers in New York City (An Interview with Maxine Wolfe by Laraine Sommeila)." In *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance*, edited by Anne-Marie Bouthillette and Yolanda Retter, 407–38. Seattle, WA: Bay Press.
- Armstrong, Elizabeth A., and Suzanna M. Crage. 2006. "Movements and Memory: The Making of the Stonewall Myth." *American Sociological Review* 71 (5) (October): 724–751.

Week 3 / May 15th: *Street Life*

- Chauncey, George. 1996. "Privacy Could Only Be Had in Public: Foraging a Gay World in the Streets." In *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*, 178-205, notes 417-426. New York: Basic Books.
- Delany, Samuel R. 2001. "...Three, Two, One, Contact: Times Square Red." In *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, 111-147. New York: NYU Press.
- Duggan, Áine. 2011. "'Nobody Should Ever Feel the Way That I Felt': A Portrait of Jay Toole and Queer Homelessness." *S&F Online* 10 (1-2). <http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/nobody-should-ever-feel-the-way-that-i-felt-a-portrait-of-jay-toole-and-queer-homelessness/>.

Week 4 / May 22nd: *Neighborhoods and Communities and Gayborhoods, Oh My*

- Manalansan IV, Martin F. 2005. "Race, Violence, and Neoliberal Spatial Politics in the Global City." *Social Text* 23 (3/4): 141–155.
- Moore, Mignon R. 2006. "Lipstick or Timberlands? Meanings of Gender Presentation in Black Lesbian Communities." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 32 (1): 113–139.
- Ghaziani, Amin. 2010. "There Goes the Gayborhood?" *Contexts* 9 (4): 64–66.
- Gieseeking, Jen. 2013. "Queering the Meaning of 'Neighbourhood': Reinterpreting the Lesbian-Queer Experience of Park Slope, Brooklyn, 1983-2008." In *Queer Presences and Absences*, edited by Yvette Taylor and Michelle Addison, 178–200. London: Palgrave Macmillan.