

**Women's Studies/English 211: Sex Matters: Introduction to Queer Culture and Literature (H, 3 Credits) Tues/Thurs 2:50-4:05, CUE 319
Fall 2014**

Professor Heidenreich Zuñiga
Office Hours: 4:30-5:30 Tues/Thurs. and by appt.
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If you have a question, ask it in class or come to my office. I will not bite.

Course Introduction and Description:

Women's Studies/English 211 is an introduction to queer cultural production in the US. Its emphasis, this semester, is on queerwoman cultural production. Queer cultural production does not occur in vacuum or emerge from unmarked cultural communities. Instead it emerges from specific cultural communities, shaped by the specific histories and socio-economic realities. Thus, this course will focus on the resistance work produced by three distinct queer communities: Black, Chicana/o, and Euro-American queer communities. It begins in the 1600s, with a Mexican nun writing feminist poetry and love letters to other women, spends some time in the 1950s, with the production of early pulp fiction, and it ends with the backlash of the late twentieth century when conservatives reacted to a new flourishing of queerwoman cultural production. By examining texts from different U.S. cultural communities throughout U.S. history, it provides students with a basis for evaluating relationships between popular culture and social change, and for mapping uses of cultural production/fiction to further specific community struggles for a more just society.

Students read queer-authored twentieth-century novels as well as theory essays and primary historical documents. They complete a 3-4page text analysis where they apply key concepts to a specific text, with a focused lesson on completing a humanities-based writing project (citations, theses, scholarly sources). Throughout the semester students also complete *Written Discussion Question* worksheets to aid them in responding to critical/structural questions about texts, and three exams to reinforce key concepts, historical watersheds, and specific examples of change over time.

Course Objectives:

Improve your ability to analyze information, think critically about sources, and to express your conclusions, arguing from sources, in writing. In the context of queerwoman cultural production, this means you will learn to:

1. Analyze and discuss the historical circumstances that gave rise to the phenomenon of queerwoman (and other queer) - produced fiction from specific cultural communities.
2. Recognize the tools used by queerwriters in constructing counter-narratives.
3. Identify political arguments put forward in texts from dominant cultures as well as minority cultures.
4. In a written format, you will also be able to apply and explain basic critical concepts (gender, race, social disruption) to specific texts.

Required Texts (available at Crimson and Gray and at the Bookie – and Amazon.com and HPB.com):

1. Bergman, Bear S. *Butch is a Noun* (2006)
2. Boykin, Keith, ed. *For Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Still Not Enough* (2012)
3. Gaspar de Alba, Sor Juana's Second Dream (1999)
4. Gomez, Jewelle, *The Gilda Stories* (1991). (Chapters 1-2, 5-8)
5. Packer, Vin. *Spring Fire* (1952; reprint 2004).
6. W ST 211 Reader: Available at Cougar Copies

Other Texts (you will be assigned one: available through Summit (libraries):

Adams, S.J. *Sparks: The Epic, Completely True Blue, (Almost) Holy Quest of Debbie*

Dos Santos, Steven, *The Culling*

Lo, Malinda, *Ash*

Sánchez, Alex, *The God Box*

Course Requirements:

Mid-Term Exams (100 points each for a total of 200 points/40% of grade): There will be two mid-term exams, one during week six and one at week eleven. Mid-term exams are framed to encourage students to review material from lectures, films, discussions and readings. They consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short essay (analytical ID) responses. If you miss a mid-term exam the only time to make-up the exam is at the final. No Exceptions.

Short Paper/text analysis (100 points/20% of grade): On December 4th, at the beginning of class, you will be required to turn in a three-page book review/analysis (plus bibliography) that makes connections between a specific book and issues and events addressed in class readings.

In the essay you will be required to do the following:

- a. Map the context and historical setting (in Adams, Sánchez, Lo, etc.).
- b. Explain/argue whether or not the text challenges structural inequalities (racism, patriarchy, gender binaries).
- c. Directly apply the work of one of the course readings (Lorber, Allan or Baldwin) in making the argument.

Full assignment will be distributed during week seven.

Written Discussion Question Worksheets (20 points each for a total of 100 points/20% of grade): Five times during the semester you will be required to complete discussion question worksheets prior to class. This is a credit/no credit assignment. In class, we will review and discuss all worksheet topics in large and/or small groups.

Each worksheet consists of a crossword puzzle and one or two discussion questions. Examples of discussion questions include: “If you could add one character to this novel, who would it be? How would they relate to the protagonist?” “Is this text queer? If so, how so? If not, why not?” “Which characters challenge social norms?” You will also be encouraged to formulate your own questions.

All due dates are specified by a “WDQ” in the syllabus.

Text Discussions: We will discuss key texts in class. If, during the course of class discussion, it becomes obvious that you have not read the assigned text, you may be asked to leave.

Final Exam (100 points/20% of grade): The final exam is cumulative and tests your knowledge of readings, lectures, videos and class discussions. It will cover all material from week 11 through week 16 as well as any information included on midterm examinations.

Roll is not taken in this class, yet regular attendance is critical to succeeding in the course. Students are expected to take responsibility for learning the course material and attending class regularly. If, for any legitimate reason, you miss a class be sure to speak with a colleague to learn what information you missed. See me for specific questions you might have *after* speaking with a colleague and copying their notes for the day.

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Mid-Term Exams	200	40%
Text Analysis	100	20%
WDQ	100	20%
Final Exam	100	20%
Total Point Possible	500	

Grading Scale:

94-100%	A	74-76%	C
90-93%	A-	70-73%	C-
87-89%	B+	67-69%	D+
84-86%	B	60-66%	D
80-83%	B-	Below 60%	F
77-79%	C+		

Course Policies:

Academic Etiquette Policy: Class begins with a focus moment promptly at 2:50. Arriving late or leaving early results in 5 points off from your grade. Cell phones are to be turned off and all reading material irrelevant to the course put away at the beginning of class. Each time your cell phone sounds or is visible, you will lose 5 points from your grade and the professor will hold your phone until the close of the class session. In relation, laptops are to remain closed unless approved for specific projects. Discussion of texts and concepts is critical to the success of this class, thus all students must treat each other respectfully. Students who violate this last rule will be asked to leave class until they can meet to speak with the instructor. If the behavior repeats the student will be dropped from the class.

Assignments: Text Analysis is due within five minutes of the start of class on its due date. After the first five minutes papers are considered “same day late” and lose five points. They continue to lose five points each day thereafter. Assignments must be turned in as “hard copy.” Electronic submissions are not acceptable. Readings are due on the day they appear in the syllabus; *late Written Discussion Question Worksheets will not be accepted.*

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the Access Center. For more information contact a Disability Specialist on your home campus:

Pullman or WSU Online: 509-335-3417

<http://accesscenter.wsu.edu>, Access.Center@wsu.edu

Academic Integrity Policy: Plagiarism or cheating of any kind on any assignment will not be tolerated and *will result in a failing grade for the assignment and a report to Office Student Standards and Accountability*. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). It is strongly suggested that you read and understand these definitions

Campus safety plan/emergency information: Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors. It is highly recommended that you review the Campus Safety Plan (<http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/>) and visit the Office of Emergency Management web site (<http://oem.wsu.edu/>) for a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics, and information related to campus safety, emergency management, and the health and welfare of the campus community.

Fall Schedule of Readings and Assignments

NOTE: Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance in class.

Week One: Introductions

Tuesday, Aug. 26 Introductions, Syllabus, Handout #1 (Plagiarism); Readings in Boykin.

Thursday, Aug. 28 “It’s All about Race?” Introduction to race and ethnicity and their function in queerwoman cultural production.

Reader Readings in Boykin; *Race and Membership in American History*, “Ranking Humankind,” “Science and Prejudice,” “Science, Skulls, and Mustard Seeds (43-54)

Begin Reading *Spring Fire*

Week Two: Race and Gender in the Americas: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Tuesday, Sept. 2 Race, Class and Sex in the Americas

Boykin “Pop Quiz” (Taylor, 14)

Continue Reading *Spring Fire*

Thursday, Sept. 4 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Reader “Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, overview; “From the 1600s”; “The Social Construction of Gender,” Judith Lorber

Week Three: Challenging Gender Roles, Challenging Patriarchy

Tuesday, Sept. 9 Social Systems: Patriarchy

Reader “Patriarchy, the System,” Allan G. Johnson

Boykin “Strange Fruit” (Brown, 23)

Video *Yo la Peor de Todas*

WDQ “Patriarchy, the System”

Thursday, Sept. 11 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Challenging Patriarchy

Video *Yo la peor de todas*

Begin Discussion *Spring Fire*

Week Four: From *Fire!* to Pulp Fiction

Tuesday, Sept.16 “The Golden Age of Lesbian Pulp Fiction”
 Reader “Smoke, Lilies, and Jade”
 Boykin “When the Strong Grow Weak” (Farrow, 144)
 Finish Reading *Spring Fire*

Thursday, Sept.18 “Before Stonewall”
 Review Guides Distributed

Week Five: Before Stonewall (cont.)

Tuesday, Sept.23
 Finish Discussion of *Spring Fire*
 Film Clip: *Before Stonewall*
 Boykin “When I Dare to be Powerful” (Boykin, 81)

Thursday, Sept. 25
 Begin Reading *Gilda Stories*(Chptr. 1: Louisiana: 1850)
 Reader Jewelle Gomez, overview

Week Six: Exam Week

Tuesday, Sept. 30 Review

Thursday, Oct. 2 Exam
 Continue Reading *Gilda Stories* (Chptr. 2: Yerba Buena)

Week Seven: Race and Sex, Beyond Binaries/Paper Assignment Distributed

Tuesday, Oct. 7
 Continue Reading *Gilda Stories*(Chapter 5)
 Video Clip *Watermelon Woman*
 Boykin “Coming Out in the Locker Room” (McCullom et al., 70)
 Reader James Baldwin, overview; “Freaks and the American Ideal of Manhood”

Thursday, Oct. 9 Searching for Antepasadas
 Finish Reading *Gilda Stories*(Chapter 6-end)
 WDQ *Gilda Stories*

Week Eight: Twentieth-Century Black Lesbian Writings: Sign up for Consultations

Tuesday, Oct.14 Home Girls: Lorde and Barbara Smith
 Reader Audre Lorde, overview; Coal, Audre Lorde; “Who Said it was So Simple”;
 Boykin “Casualties of War” (Gipson, 301)

Nuts and Bolts: MLA Citations, working a paragraph, sources not to use.
 Exams Returned

Thursday, Oct.16 Sign-ups (*rough drafts required for all consultations*) for Oct. 21st
 Video Clip Litany of Survival
 Reader Lorde; *Zami* (excerpt)

Week Nine: The Homo-Sexual Speaks Back

Tuesday, Oct.21 Consultations (no class today). A sign-up sheet will be distributed Thursday the 16th.

Begin Reading *Butch is a Noun*

Thursday, Oct.23 Before there was Butch...the birth of the homo-sexual

Reader *Well of Loneliness* (excerpt), Radclyffe Hall

WDQ *Well of Loneliness*, Due in Class

Week Ten: Emergence of Transgender Lit.

Tuesday, Oct. 28 From Masculine Women, to Real Men?

Boykin "Thank you, CNN" (Malebranche, 258)

Continue Reading *Butch is a Noun*

Thursday, Oct.30 Review

Finish Discussion *Butch is a Noun*

Week Eleven: Exam/The Return of Sor Juana

Tuesday, Nov. 4 Exam Two

Thursday, Nov. 6 The Birth of Queer Chicana Cultural Production (the deep roots)

Begin Reading *Sor Juana's Second Dream* (3-79)

Reader Sor Juan Inés de la Cruz, overview; "From the 1600s"

Week Twelve: Twentieth Century Chicana Lesbian Writing

Tuesday, Nov. 11 *Workshop: The Power to Disrupt*

Reader Gloria Anzaldúa, overview; "Letting Go," Gloria Anzaldúa; "Borderlands,"

Boykin "Poetry of the Flesh" (Herrera y Lozano, 294)

Thursday, Nov. 13 Exams Returned/Sor Juana in 3Voices: Paz, Gaspar de Alba, and You

Continue Reading *Sor Juana's Second Dream* (116-176, 239-297).

WDQ *Sor Juana's Second Dream*

Week Thirteen: From Flourishing to Culture Wars

Tuesday, Nov. 18 From Flourishing to Backlash

Finish Reading *Sor Juana's Second Dream* (397-end).

WDQ *Sor Juana's Second Dream*

Thursday, Nov. 20 From Cures to Fetal Patches: The Art of Homophobic Cultural Production

Film Clip *For the Bible Tells Me So*

Extra Credit Slides *and* Drafts due to Professor

Week Fourteen: Autumn Break Nov. 24-28

Week Fifteen: New Battles

Tuesday, Dec. 2 Backlash
Reader Introduction to “Onward Christian Soldiers: The Religious Right in
American Politics,” Wilcox and Larson; “Suspect Science,” Schlatter and
Sherkat.
Video *But I’m a Cheerleader*

Thursday, Dec. 4 Sign up for Extra Credit Presentations
Video *But I’m a Cheerleader*
Papers Due Today

Week Sixteen: Bringing it all home

Tuesday, Dec. 9 Extra Credit Presentations

Thursday, Dec. 11 Review Session

Final Exam is Friday December 19th, 10:10am-12:10pm

