

# Sex and the City: Urban Geography and Sexual Locations

University of Michigan Winter 2018

Anthrcul 446.001

Tues-Thurs 2:30PM-4PM

Professor: Gayle Rubin

Office Hours: Monday 1:30-3PM and by appointment 647-0947

Womenstd 446.001

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines contemporary sexual diversity in the context of urban geography, urban studies, and the political economies of sexuality and space. It considers the spatial aspects of sexual populations and situates the formation and disappearance of sexual neighborhoods and territories in terms of the larger dynamics of urban life. Topics include relationships between urban size and sexual specialization, the impact of redevelopment and gentrification on the texture of urban neighborhoods. Specific studies include prostitution and red light districts, gay neighborhoods, lesbian locations, and transgender areas of central cities.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The class is a seminar, so participation in discussion will be part of your grade. You are expected to keep up with the reading and do it on time, attend classes, and contribute to class discussions. You are allowed two absences during the term, no questions asked and no excuse needed. If you do miss class, you are responsible for finding out and knowing what happened when you were not there.

Students are expected to post a brief response to the readings on Canvas by 8PM the night before each class. The response may include a comment or question on the contents, or a topic you would like the class to discuss. When we view a film, short comments on it will be due by 8PM the following night. Additional written work will consist of a short research paper of 8-12 pages on some topic of interest to you and relevant to the class material. **Graduate Students should produce a longer and more in depth research paper, 18-22 pages.** A one paragraph abstract of the project and a preliminary list of sources is due at the start of class on **February 22**. Please note: Google searches are not sufficient for a serious research paper. You should plan to spend some time in the library to consult written, documentary, archival, artifactual, or similar kinds of sources. The final written version of the paper is due at the beginning of class on **April 17**.

Grades are based on Canvas comments, class participation, and research paper. Your final grade is not determined by a strict mathematical calculation. It is based on your work over the course the semester, your degree of thoughtfulness and engagement, and your intellectual growth. A student whose performance improves during the term can expect to see that reflected in the final grade, so a bumpy start can be rescued by a strong finish.

## READINGS

The following books are available from Common Language Bookstore, 317 Braun Court, 734 663-0036. Common Language will be coming the class to sell the books, date TBA.

Samuel Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*. New York: NYU Press, 1999.

Timothy Gilfoyle, *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920*. New York: WW. Norton & Co., 1992.

George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*. New York: Basic Books, 1994.  
Marlon Bailey, *Butch Queens Up in Pumps: Gender, Performance, and Ballroom Culture in Detroit*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013.  
Mary Gray, *Out in the Country: Youth, Media, and Queer Visibility in Rural America*, New York: NYU Press, 2009.

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

If you do not print out the readings, please bring your laptop to class. Please Note: web surfing, email, texting, etc. are strictly prohibited, and if discovered, will be reflected in your final grade. If you do not feel you can pay attention in class, please go ahead and make room for someone who can.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

**January 4**     **Course Introduction:** logistics, overview of course  
Film: *Fenced Out* (2001), produced by New Neutral Zone and Fierce!

**January 9**     **Urban Landscapes as Sexual Places**

G. J. Ashworth, et al, "The Red Light District in the West European City: A Neglected Aspect of the Urban Landscape," *Geoforum*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1988, pp. 201-212.  
Kathy Peiss, "Charity Girls' and City Pleasures: Historical Notes on Working Class Sexuality, 1880-1920," *Passion and Power: Sexuality in History*, eds. Kathy Peiss and Christina Simmons. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989, pp. 57-69.  
Recommended: Walter Reckless, "The Distribution of Commercialized Vice in the City: A Sociological Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 32, no. 1, part 2, July 1926, pp. 164-176.

**January 11**     **Urban Landscapes as Gay Places**

Joseph Harry and William DeVall, "Urbanization and the Development of Homosexual Communities," *The Social Organization of Gay Males*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978, pp. 134-154.  
Barbara Weightman, "Gay Bars as Private Places," *Landscape*, vol. 24, no. 1, 1980, pp. 9-16.  
Kevin Mumford, "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the Gay," *American Quarterly*, vol 48, no 3, September 1996.  
Recommended:  
John Howard, "The Library, the Park, and the Pervert: Public Space and Homosexual Encounter in Post-World War II Atlanta"

**January 16**     **Gay New York I**

Chauncey     Part I

**January 23**     **Gay New York II**

Chauncey     Part II

**Film:** *Paris is Burning* (1991) Directed by Jennie Livingston

**January 25**     **Gay New York III**

Chauncey     Part III

**January 30**     **Sex Work and New York City I**

Gilfoyle *City of Eros*: 17– 91

## **February 1    Sex Work and New York City II**

Gilfoyle *City of Eros* 119-142; 181– 223

## **February 6    Lesbian Spaces**

Liz Kennedy and Madeline Davis, "I Could Hardly Wait to Get Back to that Bar:' Lesbian Bar Culture in Buffalo in the 1930s and 1940s, pp. 27-72.

Tamar Rothenberg, "And She Told Two Friends: Lesbians Creating Urban Social Space," *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities*, eds. David Bell and Gill Valentine. New York: Routledge, 1995, pp. 165-181.

Recommended:

Ann Forsyth, "Out in the Valley," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 21, no. 1, 1997, 36-60.

Daneel Buring, "Softball and Alcohol: The Limits of Lesbian Community in Memphis from the 1940s through the 1960s"

**Film:** *Last Call at Maud's* (1993), Directed by Paris Poirier.

## **February 8    Sex, Class, Race, and Place in San Francisco**

Neil Larry Shumsky and Larry M. Springer, "San Francisco's Zone of Prostitution, 1880-1934," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 7, 1 (1981) 71-89.

Josh Sides, "Excavating the Postwar Sex District in San Francisco," *Journal of Urban History*, vol. 32, no. 3, March 2006, pp. 355-379.

Recommended:

Neil Larry Shumsky, "Vice Responds to Reform: 'San Francisco, 1910-1914' , *Journal of Urban History*, 7:1 (1980:Nov.)

## **February 13    Gay San Francisco**

Nan Boyd, "'Homos Invade SF!': San Francisco's History as a Wide-Open Town," pp. 73-96.

Nancy Achilles, "The Development of the Homosexual Bar as an Institution," *Social Perspectives in Lesbian and Gay Studies: A Reader*, eds. Peters Nardi and Beth Schneider. Routledge: New York, 1998, pp. 175-182.

John D'Emilio, "Gay Politics and Gay Community in San Francisco Since WWII," *Hidden From History: Reclaiming and Gay and Lesbian Past*, eds. Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey. New York: New American Library, 1989, pp. 456-473.

## **February 15    The Castro: Space and Politics**

Timothy Stewart-Winter, "The Castro: Origins to the Age of Milk," *The Gay and Lesbian Review*, Jan-Feb 2009, pp. 12-15.

**Film:** *The Times of Harvey Milk* (1984), directed by Rob Epstein

## **February 20    Queer Neighborhood Differentiation in San Francisco**

Susan Stryker, "Transgender Liberation," *Transgender History*. Berkeley: Seal Press, 2008, pp. 59-89.

Gayle Rubin, "The Miracle Mile: South of Market and Gay Male Leather 1962-1997," *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, James Brook, Chris Carlsson, Nancy Joyce Peters, eds. San Francisco: City Lights, 1998, pp. 247-272.

**Film:** *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria* (2005), Directed by Susan Stryker and Victor Silverman

**February 22** no reading assigned

**Paper Proposals Due**

**Film:** Either *Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @100* or *The Salt Mines*

**February 27 and March 1: No Class– Spring Break**

**March 6      Ballroom Culture in Detroit**

Marlon Bailey, *Butch Queens Up in Pumps*.

Preface (first 3 and a half pages, skip acknowledgements), chapters 1, 2 (Introduction, Ain't nothing like a butch queen) pp. vii-x, 1-76

**March 8      Ballroom Culture in Detroit**

Marlon Bailey, *Butch Queens Up in Pumps*. Chapters 3, 4, and Epilog (From Home to House, It's gonna Get Severe, Future of ballroom culture) pp. 77-181, 221-227.

**Special guest: Marlon Bailey**

**March 13      Queer Michigan**

Tim Retzliff, "Cars and Bars: Assembling Gay Men in Postwar Flint, Michigan," pp. 224-252.

Tim Retzliff, "Gay Organizing in the 'Desert of Suburbia'"

Rochella Thorpe, "The Changing Face of Lesbian Bars in Detroit, 1938-1965," pp. 165-182.

Rochella Thorpe, "A House Where Queers Go: African-American Lesbian Nightlife in Detroit, 1940-1975," *Inventing Lesbian Cultures in America*, ed. Ellen Lewin. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001, pp. 40-61.

Optional: "Persecution of the Gay Community in Lansing," 1980.

**Special Guest: Tim Retzliff**

**March 15      Gay Not in the City I**

Mary Gray, *Out in the Country*, Preface, and chapters 1 and 2 (Introduction, Unexpected Activists), pp xi-xiv, 1-60.

Recommended:

**March 20      Gay Not in the City II**

Mary Gray, *Out in the Country*, Chapter 4 (From Wal-Mart to Websites), Conclusion, Epilog, and Appendix (pp. 87-118, 165-195)

**Film:** *Small Town Gay Bar* (2006), produced by Kevin Smith

**March 22      Urban Renewal, Redevelopment, and Neighborhood Disruption**

Film: *The Fillmore* (1999), directed by Peter Stein, KQED

**March 27      Gentrification and Urban Wealth: What is Gentrification**

Neil Smith, "Gentrification, the Frontier, and the Restructuring of Urban Space," *Readings in Urban Theory*, Susan Fainstein and Scott Campbell, eds. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 2001, pp. 338-358.

Chris Hamnett, "The Blind Men and the Elephant," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol 16, no. 2, 1991, pp. 173-189.

Harvey Molotch, "The City as a Growth Machine," (*version TBA*)

**March 29      Urban Wealth and Large Scale Transformation: Redevelopment, Urban Renewal, and De-Industrialization**

Richard Walker, "Industry Builds Out the City : The Suburbanization of Manufacturing in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1850-1940," *Manufacturing Suburbs: Building Work and Home on the Metropolitan Fringe*, Robert Lewis, ed. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004, pp. 92-123

Joseph Blum, "Degradation Without Deskillling: Twenty-Five years in the San Francisco Shipyards," *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, Michael Burawoy, ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, pp. 106-136.

Recommended: Fainstein et al, "San Francisco: Urban Transformation and the Local State," from Fainstein, Susan, et al, *Restructuring the City: The Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment*, 1986, New York: Longman

**April 3      Gays and Gentrification**

Lawrence Knopp, "Gentrification and Gay Neighborhood Formation in New Orleans," *Homo Economics: Capitalism, Community, and Lesbian and Gay Life*, Amy Gluckman and Betsy Reed, eds. New York: Routledge, 1997, pp. 45-63

Bryant Simon, "New York Avenue: The Life and Death of Gay Spaces in Atlantic City," *Journal of Urban History*, vol. 28, no. 3, March 2002, pp. 300-327.

Katherine Sender, "Selling America's Most Affluent Minority," from *Business Not Politics: The Making of the Gay Market*, 2004, New York, Columbia University Press

**Special Guest: Katherine Sender**

Recommended:

Mickey Lauria and Lawrence Knopp, "Toward an Analysis of the Role of Gay Communities in the Urban Renaissance," *Urban Geography*, vol. 6, no 2, 1985, pp. 152-169.

**April 5      TBA**

**April 10      Requiem for Times Square: Sex and the Deindustrial City**

Samuel Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, Preface and Part I (Times Square Blue), pp. ix-108.

Papayanis, "Sex and the Revanchist City: Zoning out Pornography," *Environment and Planning D: Space and Society*, vol. 18, 2000, pp. 341-353.

**April 12      Requiem for Times Square: Redevelopment and the Sexual City**

Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, Part II (Times Square Red), pp. 109-200.

Bart Eeckhout, "The Disneyfication of Times Square: Back to the Future?" *Critical Perspectives on Urban Redevelopment*, Kevin Fox Gotham, ed. Oxford: Elsevier Science, 2001, pp. 379-428.

**April 17      Last Class– Paper Due**