

LGBTQ History & Activism: Duke, Durham and Beyond

DOCST 290S-02, DOCST 790S-02, HISTORY 390S, WOMENST 290S, CULANTH 290S.

Class Meeting Information:

Center for Documentary Studies
Day and Time: Mondays, 3:05-5:35 p.m.
Spring, 2015
Room: CDS Bridges 113

Primary Instructor Information:

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Service Learning Graduate Assistants:

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This is a seminar course focused on documenting and analyzing LGBTQ life and activism at Duke and in Durham. Designed as a learning community, we will conduct oral histories, work with archival materials, engage community activists, and develop original research that gives voice to a largely ignored history of struggle and survival in these local LGBTQ community. The class is designated as a service-learning course that supports the ongoing effort, Queering Duke History, and the Durham LGBTQ community history project.

We will learn how to conduct oral history interviews; research complex social histories; develop skills in storytelling; and wrestle with issues of representation and privacy. In collaboration with community partners, we will work together to develop a final public humanities project that reflects what we have learned and supports the goals of the community partners.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will build capacity in the following areas:

Skills

- Build a learning community that supports active engagement and critical thinking
- Assess the assets and challenges of doing oral history and documentary research as a tool for social and human rights activism
- Acquire skills to successfully work alongside community-based organizations
- Acquire skills in using specific documentary techniques such as photography, interviewing, and audio work.
- Acquire ability to critically analyze situations and problem-solve

Knowledge

- Develop a more complex understanding of Duke and Durham's LGBTQ history.
- Understand the role of memory and academic historical research and public history programming in shaping public consciousness about the past.

- Understand the need to analyze the economic, political, social, and cultural contexts in a community when considering approaches to human rights and documentary work
- Understand the value of biographical and autobiographical writing
- Recognize the value, power, and resource differences that impede human rights organizing and change efforts

Values

- Value active citizenship and community participation
- Appreciate the complexity inherent in representing the stories, views and images of others through oral history research and documentary work.
- Value individual worth and dignity and a person's unique characteristics of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, veteran status, ability, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or political orientation
- Appreciate professional ethics, and recognize the individual's right to self-determination and active participation in social change and documentary work

Student Rights

As a student, you have the right to criticize and question what you are hearing and reading, without fear of ridicule or threat of retribution. You have the right to support and affirm what is being discussed and shared, as well. You have the right to be treated equally and with respect. You have the right to be fully informed of course requirements and grading procedures. You have the right to receive prompt and comprehensive feedback on your assignments.

Teaching Methods and Course Structure

Community-Based/Service Learning Component

In this course, learning will take place both inside and outside of the classroom. Duke and Durham are a focus of our class, both metaphorically as a collection of memories and as a physical location. Memory and experience are often closely associated with a specific place or location.

Community engagement, the core principle of our work for the semester, is entirely reliant upon nurturing and building personal relationships. In this course we will explore ethical approaches to this work, our responsibilities to each other as Duke and Durham community members and the ways that community engagement can be a catalyst for social change.

Collaborative Learning

We all have things to learn and likewise, things to teach. With this in mind, there will be limited lecture in this class. Primarily we will engage in small group or large group discussions, take field trips, and host community activists in our classroom. Our discussions will require you to come to class having read the readings assigned for the week and

prepared to engage them within the class community. If you do not complete the required readings each week, it *will* affect your grade.

As we move through the semester if some things don't work, make sense or seem fair, say so. You are responsible for your learning. The teaching team is responsible for creating a safe, accessible, and resource rich context for your learning. Please approach Professor Lau or Graduate Assistants Mendal Polish or Aaron Hayworth if you have thoughts about how we might create an even better learning environment.

Learning Needs

If you have any specific learning needs, please let me know at the beginning of the semester so we can make appropriate accommodations.

Please remember that what you get out of this class will be significantly impacted by the effort and time you devote to both the fieldwork assignments and the readings.

Attendance & Punctuality

Class activities, discussions, and presentations constitute a major portion of the learning experience in this course. In other words, this course does not exist in textbooks and lecture notes; it grows out of the experiences and contributions of the students. Therefore, missed classes cannot be "recovered" by reading the text or borrowing class notes. Attendance and participation are expected for all class days and our one extra fieldtrip. Because of the emphasis on collaborative learning, any absence interferes with your performance and the dynamic of the entire class. More than one absence *will* affect your final grade.

By signing up for this class, you are making a commitment to attend all class meetings, be punctual, read thoroughly, and actively contribute to discussion. Acting in accordance with the Duke Community Standard, you should **use the [Short-Term Illness Notification Form \(STINF\)](#) when you are ill and must miss graded work (class participation is graded so this means every class session). See [here](#) for a definition of illness. The STINF tells me that you have missed class and/or cannot complete an assignment on time due to an incapacitating illness or injury. When you submit a STINF, **it is your responsibility to meet (or otherwise communicate) with me within 48 hour** to discuss your missed work and how it will be made up. If you do not contact me within 48 hours following the date the STINF was submitted, your absence will drop your grade.**

Course Requirements Timeline:

January 28: Reflection Essay Due – Post to Sakai by 5 p.m.

February 27: First Oral History Interview (Duke focus)

Complete packet includes fieldnotes, audio recording, tape log, signed release forms
+ Interview Guide 1 week prior

March 20: Reflection Essay Due – Upload to Sakai by 5 p.m.

April 3: Second Interview Package (Durham focus)

Complete packet includes fieldnotes, audio recording, tape log, signed release forms
+ Interview Guide 1 week prior

April 20: Final Paper Due

Late in the Semester - Date TBD: Class Performance

Reflection Assignments: The reflection assignments are 3-5 page writing assignments (double-spaced with page numbers) that place your experience/thoughts into conversation with ideas from the readings, films, classroom discussions, and fieldtrips. Please integrate, synthesize, question, confront or connect in your writing. Each reflection assignment must reference ideas from at least 2 of our readings or your research. **Even if you are not using formal quotations, please reference your sources by using footnotes or parentheses.** These assignments will demonstrate your ability to think critically and to connect academic and your thoughts and experiences. These assignments are due January 28 and March 20, 2015. You will also be asked to select quotes from the readings that are particularly meaningful for you and develop discussion questions based on those quotes. These assignments must be turned in, in writing (can be hand written), at the end of the class period in which they are assigned.

Oral History Interviews: We will be supporting our community/campus partners by conducting oral history interviews with LGBTQ community members they have identified. See the PMP Guide for Student Interviewers for more information about preparing your interview materials for inclusion in archival collections at Duke and at Durham Public Library.

Final Paper: Your final paper will be a 5-7 page (double-spaced with page numbers) essay that will include a translated section of your interview and your commentary similar to the format used in Bodies of Evidence. Your commentary will integrate your reflections on the interview with your historical research and issues about oral history that we discuss in class.

Classroom Discussion: Participation in classroom discussion is key to our effort to build a learning community that supports active engagement and critical thinking. It is a place to test ideas and respond to the ideas of others. As a group, our goal is to create a classroom environment in which we all feel respected and heard but we do not have to agree, a place where individual ideas and perspectives are welcome.

Performance: Together with your classmates, you will develop a performance piece based on materials from your oral histories. This will be shared with a public audience (invitation will go to your interviewees) and we will work on this during class periods toward the end of the semester.

Grading System**

Grades for this course will be broken down as follows:

➤ Class Participation	25%
○ Attendance, Discussions, Reflections	
➤ 2 Oral History Interviews + Support Documents	40%
➤ Final Paper	20%
➤ Performance	<u>15%</u>
➤ Total	100%

** There will also be opportunities for extra credit for attending events outside of class that are approved or suggested by the instructor and submitting an additional reflection essay about that experience.

Here is a general grading system that will be used in this course:

A: Excellent	--Writes insightful, coherent, original reflections and insightful final paper. --Makes creative contributions to discussions. --Conducts thorough interviews with community members that demonstrates good preparation and research. --Co-Creates an engaging performance piece based on oral history materials.
B: Strong	--Writes authoritative but conventional reflections and final paper. --Participates instructively in discussions. --Conducts good interviews with community members that demonstrates some preparation. --Co-Creates a competent performance piece based on oral history materials.
C: Adequate	--Writes competent reflections and final paper, but of limited scope or insight. --Participates superficially in discussions.

- Conducts an adequate interviews with community members that demonstrates little preparation.
- Co-Creates an adequate performance piece based on oral history materials.

- D: Inadequate
- Writes incoherent reflections and final paper that demonstrate a lack of understanding of central concepts or course themes.
 - Does not come to class or fails to participate.
 - Fails to complete interviews.
 - Fails to complete performance piece.

Late Assignments Policy

I will be available both via email and in person to help clarify assignments prior to their due dates. **Assignments are due at the beginning of class.** Assignments that are late will lose one letter grade for each day it is late, extensions will be granted prior to the due date by special consideration of the instructor – do not come to class and ask for an extension for something due that day.

COURSE CALENDAR

All readings on Sakai unless otherwise noted

Class 1: January 7 – Introductions/Course Overview

Review course syllabus, get to know one another, learn more about why our work is so critical to our community/campus partners. Choose High Five Buddies.

Class 2: January 12 – Our Project Partners/Finding Shared Goals

Guests: Denzell Faison, Queering Duke History Initiative, Duke '14 (Skype)
Steven Petrow, Journalist, former President of the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association, Duke '78
Luke Hirst, Durham LGBTQ Community Oral History Project (In Person)

Readings:

- Queering Duke History Exhibit Text
<http://exhibits.library.duke.edu/exhibits/show/queer>
- Letter from BDU to President Brodhead
- Durham LGBTQ Community Timeline

Special Class Meeting - January 25: Fieldtrip to Charlotte LGBTQ Exhibits

Meet at Parking Lot behind the Allen Building at 10:00 a.m. for trip to Charlotte, plan to return to Durham approximately 6 p.m.

You will be writing a Reflection Essay about the exhibits that will be due January 28 by 5 p.m. uploaded into your Drop Box on Sakai

Class 3: January 26 – Oral History & Visit to the Archives

MEET IN PERKINS ROOM 118 JUST FOR THIS CLASS SESSION

The Art of Oral History – Classroom Discussion & Practice
Fieldtrip to Rubenstein Library Rare Books & Manuscripts

Readings:

- Linda Shopes, “Making Sense of Oral History,” from History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web (February 2002): 1-22
- Alessandro Portelli, “What Makes Oral History Different” in **The Oral History Reader**, eds. Perks and Thomson (2006) 32-42

Assignments:

- Reflection Essay Due from Fieldtrip

Class 4: February 2 – Early Duke LGBTQ Experience

Guest: Tom Clark, Duke LGBTQ Network, Queering Duke Task Force, Duke '69 [In person]

Readings:

- John D'Emilio. 2002. **The World Turned** – Chapter 5: Cycles of Change, Questions of Strategy: The Gay and Lesbian Movement After Fifty Years, pgs. 78-98 and notes.
- Brett Beemyn. "The Silence is Broken: A History of the First Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Student Groups.: *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12, no. 2 (April 2003): 205-223

Media:

- Listen to Charles Adams Interview and take notes that can be used to develop questions for Mr. Clark [Sakai]

In class Assignment:

- Review list of potential Duke interviewees.

Class 5: February 9 – Oral History: Approach & Context

Readings:

- Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Who Is the Subject?: Queer Theory Meets Oral History* by Nan Alamilla Boyd
- Marjorie L. DeVault, "Women's Talk: Feminist Strategies for Interviewing and Analysis" in **Feminist Perspectives on Social Research**, Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Michelle L. Yaiser, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): 227-250

Media:

- Listen to one of the Queering Duke History Interviews, take notes and be prepared to present an overview and critique in class

Assignment:

- Each High 5 buddy team should reserve a H1 or H2 recorder and bring it to class
 - Request Form: <http://www.cdscage.com>
- Select a Duke affiliated LGBTQ community member for your interview and make initial contact with them.

Class 6: February 16 – LGBTQ History

Readings:

- Leslie Feinberg. 1993. **Stone Butch Blues**. Ithaca NY: Firebrand books, pps: TBD
 - Leslie Feinberg. “Stone Butch Blues” in **American Queer Now and Then**, eds. David Shneer and Caryn Aviv. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2006.
- Charlotte Bunch [Duke ‘66], “Lesbian Feminist Theory,” in **Our Right to Love: A Lesbian Resource Book**, ed, Ginny Vida. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1978. Pgs 180-182.
- Yolanda Chávez Leyva, “Breaking the Silence: Putting Latina Lesbian History at the Center,” in **The New Lesbian Studies: Into the Twenty-First Century**, eds. Bonnie Zimmerman and Toni A. H. McNaron. New York: The Feminist Press. 1996. Pgs. 145-152.

Media:

- Interviews with Sylvia Rivera - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1cthgHWDJU>
- Short Film: *Faerie Tales* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kGvAn8W-5w>

Viewing in Class: *Stonewall*

Assignment:

- Bring one quote from a reading to class and be prepared to use it as a discussion prompt.

Class 7: February 23 - Our Responsibilities to the Stories

Guests: Alexis Pauline Gumbs & Julia Wallace – Mobile Homecoming Project

Readings:

- Audre Lorde: “Scratching the Surface: Some Notes on Barriers to Women and Loving,” in **Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches**: Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984
- Additional Readings TBD by our Guests

Media:

- Mobile Homecoming Website: <http://www.mobilehomecoming.org>

Assignment:

- First Oral History Interview Packet - Due February 27

Class 8: March 2: Review & Reflection

In Class:

- Discussion of First Oral History Interviewing experience – Bring a copy of your field notes to class.
- Joint poetry writing or creative activity from interview materials

Assignments:

- Send your field notes to your high five buddy at the same time that you upload your interview materials to your drop box. Review your high five buddy's notes and prepare written comments making sure to include both your appreciations and your constructive criticism.
- Listen to an interview of your choice from Queering Duke History project. Select a short section (5-10 minutes) to transcribe and bring the transcription to class.

March 9 – Spring Break – NO CLASS

Class 9: March 16 – Durham & Southern stories

Guest: Dee Lutz (Duke '80s) and Durham LGBTQ researcher

Readings:

- Dee Lutz. 1992 “Lavender Triangle: Evolution of the Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement in a North Carolina Community, 1969 – 1990.” Master’s Thesis in History, University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Pgs. TBD
- Mab Segrest. 1985. **My Mama’s Dead Squirrel: Lesbian Essays on Southern Culture**. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books. Pgs. TBD
- Patrick E. Johnson. 2008. **Sweet Tea: Black gay men of the South**. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. Pgs. TBD

Media:

- Listen to Audio documentation of *Coming Out in the South* Program (April 2012)

Assignments:

- Review list of potential Durham Interviewees
- Reflection Essay based on *Coming Out in the South* Program Due March 20 by 5 p.m.

Class 10: March 23 – Video Oral Histories

Guest Professor: Mendal Polish

Readings:

- Alexander Doty. 1993. **Making Things Perfectly Queer: Interpreting Mass Culture**. Pgs. TBD

Media: In Class

- Stonewall. 1999 DVD, a film by Nigel French: BBC Films and Arena NY
- Watermelon Woman. 1996 DVD, a film by Cheryl Dunye

Class 11: March 30 - Oral History in Performance

Readings:

- Natalie M. Fousekis, “Experiencing History: A Journey from Oral History to Performance,” in *Remembering: Oral History Performance*, ed. Della Pollock (2005) 167-186.
- Jason Ruiz, E. Patrick Johnson. “Pleasure and Pain in Black Queer Oral History and Performance: E. Patrick Johnson and Jason Ruiz in Conversation” in *QED: A Journal of GLBTQ World Making*, Vol. 1, No. 2 Summer 2014. Pp 160-180

Media:

- Listen to *Welcome Home*, by Mendal Polish,

Assignment:

- Durham focused Oral History Interview Packet Due April 3

Class 12: April 6 – Discussion of 2nd Interview

Listening to Interviews

Creative Exercise

Class 13: April 13 – Conversations with Our Work

Readings:

- Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horatio N. Roque Ramirez eds. **Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History**. Pgs. TBD

Class 14: April 20 - Preparation for Performance

In Class: Rehearsal and Final Editing for Performance

Assignment:

- Final Paper Due