ENGLIT 2660
SEXUALITY & REPRESENTATION:
CONSIDERING DEVIANCE
Spring 2006 (CRN 18797)
Wednesdays, 1:00 PM to 4:50 PM
444 Cathedral of Learning

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM;
Thursdays, 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM;
and by appointment.

RATIONALE:
By placing sexual identity at the center of discussions about cultural politics, queer theory has produced new ways of understanding the relations among representation, power, and sexuality. This seminar uses queer theory to consider modern Western sexual identities in the nineteenth- and twentieth centuries and their emergence through both specialized discursive practices (medicine, sexology, psychoanalysis, sociology) and mass cultural institutions, particularly the cinema. Beginning with Michel Foucault’s demonstration that categories of deviance crucially subend most contemporary forms of knowledge, we will be concerned with queer theory’s interventions in debates about sexuality and power, as well as with its various reevaluations of cinema’s relation to deviant bodies and subjectivities.

The seminar can be roughly divided into three sections. We begin with a consideration of some of the discursive constructions of sexual deviance that helped make contemporary sexual identities possible. We then look at the role played by the emerging mass media in the public articulation and circulation of sexual deviance and deviant identities before the Second World War. Finally, we are concerned with how queer theory might provide ways for us to move through the seemingly intractable contradictions that determine modern sexual definition, and toward different ways of being (or not being). Throughout the course we will view film and video work related to these critical projects.

TEXTS:


SEMINAR PROCEDURES
Because this course is conducted as a seminar, your attendance and prepared contributions are both expected and highly valued. Students in the seminar are required to write a short response (approximately 1,000 words) to one of several questions on take-home exam that will be distributed on February 15 and due by March 1. Students will also formulate a research project on which to base a final seminar paper (approximately 4,000-6,000 words). Each student will also make a short presentation of her/his research project to the seminar near the end of the course.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND SCREENINGS
(x) = reading available through electronic reserve.

January 4

SCREENINGS:
History Lessons (US 2000, d. Barbara Hammer) 65 minutes.

January 11

READING:
Michel Foucault. History of Sexuality, 3-49.


SCREENINGS:
Intersex Exposition: Full Monty (Australia 2002, d. Eli (Shorona) se Mbessakwin) 7 minutes.
The Virgin Machine [Die Jungfrauen Maschine] (West Germany 1988, Hyäne Film/Norddeutscher Rundfunk, d. Monika Truet) 85 minutes.

January 18

READING:


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**SCREENINGS:**

*Know Thy Wife* (US 1918, Christie Film Company, d. Al Christie) 13 minutes.

*A Florida Enchantment* (US 1914, Vitagraph, d. Sydney Drew) 63 minutes.

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January 25

**READING:**


**SCREENING:**

*Swoon* (US 1992, d. Tom Kalin) 94 minutes.

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February 1

**READING**


**SCREENING:**

*Dottie Gets Spanked* (US 1994, d. Todd Haynes) 45 minutes.

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February 8

**READING:**


**SCREENING:**
*Palmy Days* (US 1931, MGM, d. Edward Sutherland) 77 minutes.

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February 15

**READING:**


**SCREENINGS:**
*Shanghai Express* (US 1932, Paramount, d. Joseph Von Sternberg) 90 minutes.
*Encuentra entra Dos Reinas [The Meeting of Two Queens]* (Spain 1991, d. Cecelia Barriga) 14 minutes.

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February 22

**READING:**


**SCREENINGS:**
March 1

READING:


SCREENINGS:
O Happy Day (US 1996, d. Charles Lofton) 6 minutes.
Out: The Making of a Revolutionary (US 2000, d. Sonja de Vries and Rhonda Collins) 60 minutes.

March 8 SPRING BREAK

March 15

READING:


SCREENINGS:
A Day in the Life of a Bull Dyke (Canada 1995, d. Shawna Dempsy and Lorri Millan) 11 minutes.
Hide and Seek (1996, d. Su Friedrich) 63 minutes.

March 22

READINGS:


Michel Foucault, History of Sexuality, 135-59.

SCREENING:
The Birds (US 1964, Universal, d. Alfred Hitchcock) 119 minutes.
March 29

READING:
Leo Bersani and Ulysee Dutoit. *Forms of Being*, 1-73.

SCREENING:
*Le Mépris [Contempt]* (France/Italy, Rome-Paris Films/Films Concordia [Paris]/ Compagnia Cinemagrafica Champion [Rome], 1963, d. Jean-Luc Godard) 109 min.

April 5

READING:
Leo Bersani and Ulysee Dutoit. *Forms of Being*, 74-123.

SCREENING:
*Todo sobre mi madre [All About My Mother]* (Spain/France 1999, El Deseo S.A./Renn Productions/France 2 Cinéma, d. Pedro Almodóvar) 101 minutes.

April 12

READING:
Leo Bersani and Ulysee Dutoit. *Forms of Being*, 124-178.

SCREENING:

April 19

TBA