

CURE 2036 Queer Theory and Culture

1st Semester, 2025-2026

Time: Wednesday 12:30 - 15:15

Venue: TBC

Tutors: TBC

Instructor: PANG Ka Wei, Janet

Course Description

Since the 1990s, queer theory has given new momentum to doing Cultural Studies and Gender Studies. Interrogating the idea of “heteronormativity” in literary theory, philosophy and politics, queer theory unceasingly questions what normal is, and examines how the normal arises, develops, gains hegemony and becomes discriminatory and even oppressive. On the one hand, queer theory has emancipated some marginalized groups, but on the other hand, queerness and queer as a critical theory seem to have aroused fear, anxiety and hostility in many others. In this course, we will examine the Tongzhi movement and culture in the light of queer theories. Drawing on the works of lesbian and gay historians and queer theorists, we will discuss also the strengths and limitations of queer theory and identity politics. By studying and critiquing queer theories, this course hopes to look into the possibilities of and obstacles to striving for equality, promoting compassionate dialogues among different stakeholders, and embracing diversity in the contemporary world.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to

1. demonstrate an understanding of queer theories,
2. analyze representations and discourses pertinent to sexuality in light of queer theories,
3. question the set normal that derives institutional inequality, and
4. critically integrate multidisciplinary perspectives in issues and debates of sexuality.

Assessment Scheme

- ✧ Tutorial Presentation & Participation 30%
- ✧ Mid-Term Assignment (600-800 words) 30%
 - ◆ Due Dates: VeriGuide – **4 Nov (Tue) 11:59pm** & Hard copy – **5 Nov (Wed) 10:30am**
 - ◆ Students who intend to review events held in November can request an extension of 2 weeks.
- ✧ Final Assignment (English: 2000 words/ Chinese: 3000 words) 40%
 - ◆ Due Dates: VeriGuide – **3 Dec (Wed) 11:59pm**

- ◆ Both written assignments could be written in either Chinese or English.
- ◆ The written assignment must be word-processed [in Word (.docx) format] with font size 12, 1.15-line spacing.
- ◆ Please print the hardcopy of the assignment on BOTH sides of the paper.
- ◆ One letter grade will be lowered per day delay.

Course Schedule

Week 1 **Straight Eye for the Queer World** 3 Sep

Rubin, Gayle. "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." In *Culture, Society and Sexuality: A Reader*, edited by R. Parker & P. Aggleton, 143-178. London: UCL Press, 1999.

Wittig, Monique. "The Straight Mind." *Feminist Issues* 1, no.1 (1980): 103-111.

Week 2 **From Gay Liberation to Queer Movement** 10 Sep

周華山、趙文宗。〈前言：同性愛性身份的誕生—殖民主義下的戰後本土中產新世代〉。載《衣櫃性史：香港及英美同志運動》，142-146。香港：香港同志研究社，1995。

Kong, Travis S.K., Lau, Sky H.L., & Li, Eva C.Y. "The Fourth Wave? A Critical Reflection on the Tongzhi Movement in Hong Kong." In *Routledge Handbook of Sexuality Studies in East Asia*, edited by Mark McLelland, Vera Mackie, 188-201. London; New York: Routledge, 2015.

Foucault, Michel. "Scientia Sexualis." In *The History of Sexuality, vol.1: An Introduction*, translated by Robert Hurley, 51-73. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.

Week 3 **Who's Privileged? Whose Privilege?** 17 Sep

Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." *Signs* 5, no.4 (1980): 631-660.

Wong, Day. "(Post-)identity Politics and Anti-normalization: (Homo)sexual Rights Movement." In *Remaking Citizenship in Hong Kong: Community, Nation, and the Global City*, edited by Agnes S. Ku and Ngai Pun, 195-214. London; New York: Routledge, 2004.

Week 4 **Let's Watch & Talk!** 24 Sep

Week 5 **No Class – National Day** 1 Oct

Week 6 **Hello Strangers!** 8 Oct

de Lauretis, Teresa. "Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation." *Theatre Journal* 40, no.2 (May 1988): 155-177.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "Epistemology of the Closet." In *Epistemology of the Closet*, 67-90. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2008.

Week 7 **When We Read, When We Write** 15 Oct

紀大偉。〈緒論—台灣的發明〉。載《同志文學史：台灣的發明》，21-101。台北：聯經出版公司，2017。

蘇美智。《我們的同志孩子》。香港：三聯書店香港有限公司，2012。

江紹祺。《男男正傳：香港年長男同志口述史》。香港：進一步多媒體有限公司，2014。

鄧芝珊、伍詠欣。《同聲同氣：香港年長女同志口述史》。香港：手民出版社，2024。

Week 8 **When We Watch, When We Consume** 22 Oct

Aaron, Michele. "New Queer Cinema: An Introduction." In *New Queer Cinema: A Critical Reader*, edited by Michele Aaron. New Brunswick, 3-14. N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

游靜。〈我們要/有「同志電影」嗎？〉。載《性/別光影：香港電影中的性與性別文化研究》，121-140。香港：香港電影評論學會，2006。

Rich, B. Ruby. "New Queer Cinema." In *New Queer Cinema: A Critical Reader*, edited by Michele Aaron, 15-22. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

Meyer, Uli. "Hidden in Straight Sight: Trans*gressing Gender and Sexuality via BL." In *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-Cultural Fandom of the Genre*, 232-256. Edited by Antonia Levi, Mark McHarry and Dru Pagliassotti. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2010.

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Warner, Michael. "Beyond Gay Marriage." In *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*, 81-147. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999.

22 Oct Sexual Strangers

Phelan, Shane. "Strangers among "Us": Secondary Marginalization and "LGBT" Politics." In *Sexual Strangers: Gays, Lesbians, and Dilemmas of Citizenship*, 115-138. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001

29 Oct Rainbow Capitalism

Smialek, Eric. 2021. "Who Needs to Calm Down? Taylor Swift and Rainbow Capitalism." *Contemporary Music Review* 40 (1): 99–119. doi:10.1080/07494467.2021.1956270.

5 Nov The Queer Art of Failure

Halberstam, Judith. "Introduction: Low Theory." In *The Queer Art of Failure*, 1-25. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

12 Nov Consultation Week

Grade Descriptors

- A** Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A-** Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B** Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C** Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D** Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
- F** Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.