

# QS 3100: LGBTQ America Since 1945

Spring 2024

Tuesday, Thursday 12-1:15

LH 114

## Professor Richard Price

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 10:30-11:30

Appointments available by request

## Course Description

We live in a world where couples can get married regardless of the genders involved. A world in which gay, trans, and nonbinary youth can become homecoming royalty. A world in which trans people are models, actors, and politicians. This world, however, is quite new. Not that long ago being queer in public could lead to police harassment, arrest, being registered as a sex offender, and ostracization from society. This class explores the history of how queer people got to the current situation. It explores the key historical events, the mobilization of LGBTQ people, and the tactics used to gradually change society. And, sadly, we have to consider how much backsliding is occurring in modern America.

## A Note About Language

Language is always important but especially in this class. It's also often difficult. As we will explore 70+ years of American history, we will see that the way that people talk about themselves has changed as has societal norms. You will learn that I have a certain degree of dislike towards the acronym, as I call it, even though it is used in the title of the course. LGBT developed in the 1990s and 2000s as a laudable expression of broad group solidarity but it represented an aspiration of unity more than the reality at times. It also tends to reinforce binaries and limit the spectrum of identities, leading to the continuous debates about how best to expand the acronym to reflect the diversity of sexual and gender minorities. For a variety of reasons, personal and professional, I tend to use queer as a broad catchall term, as representative of the queer identity spectrum that LGBTQ+ illustrates. However, I also realize that some are not comfortable with this term due, in part, to its use as a slur. At times, I will sometimes use gay as a shorthand instead, especially in talking about times and debates in which gay men and lesbians dominated. Ultimately you should use the terminology that you feel most comfortable with and always feel free to raise questions or concerns about language as we go.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will gain a mastery of modern LGBTQ history

Students will show strong ability to make an argument utilizing appropriate sources.

## Course Readings

There is one required book for this course. Additional readings are required and available on Canvas. It is your responsibility to obtain and read these materials before class.

Stein, Marc. 2019. *The Stonewall Riots: A Documentary History*. New York University Press. (\$34)

## Course Requirements

1. Participation (25%). This will come in two parts that will be equally weighted (12.5% each) but are also interrelated.

Short writing assignments: Most weeks you will be required to do a short writing assignment, 250-500 words roughly. This may be specific, say discussing something about a reading, or may be broader. These will be submitted via Canvas. They will be graded on a pass (100%), low pass (75%), and fail (0%) range.

In-class participation. While this class may at times be lecture heavy, I still expect active engagement that can come in multiple forms from asking questions, to discussing readings, or to debating ideas. You will submit a self-evaluation that I will take into account at the end of the semester.

2. The Queer Agenda Papers (75% total) One of the tropes of anti-LGBTQ politics has been the idea of a “Gay Agenda.” This is presented as a dangerous cabal of evil queer people seeking to corrupt public morals and especially children. In three papers spaced throughout the semester, you will write approximately 8-10 page papers addressing the development of what we might call the real agenda of LGBTQ people and how it worked out. Deep engagement with both course readings and lecture will be expected.

## Grade Scale

A = 93% or above	A- = 90 – 92 %	B+ = 87 – 89%	B = 83 – 86%
B- = 80 – 82 %	C+ = 77 – 79%	C = 73 – 76%	C- = 70 – 72 %
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63 – 66%	D- = 60 – 62%	E = 0 – 59%

## Course Schedule

The following is an approximate schedule that I reserve the right to alter, with notice, at any time.

**Tuesday 1/9**, Introduction. What exactly is LGTBQ history? We will introduce the basics and talk a bit about terminology.

- Murib, Zein. 2014. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1(1/2): 118-120.
- Video: *Boys Beware!* (10 mins. 1961) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTn7ALbLYPI>

**Thursday 1/11**, Queer Life at Mid-Century. Queer existence was barely acknowledged in the polite society of the 1940s and ‘50s. Yet, we know today, that life was not nearly as straight and conformist as once believed. Today we will look at a few elements of queer existence during these decades and the way that society sought to reinforce “normalcy.”

- Vider, Stephen. 2021. *The Queerness of Home*, pgs. 29-58.
- Bérube, Allan. 1990. *Coming Out Under Fire*, pgs. 34-66.

**Tuesday 1/16**, Protecting the Nation. Police, prosecutors, and courts engaged in various tactics to police and control queer people. Consider both the assumptions of police as well as the experiences expressed in Stein.

- Lvovsky, Anna. 2021. *Vice Patrol: Cops, Courts, and the Struggle Over Urban Gay Life Before Stonewall*, pgs. 24-63
- Graves, Karen L. 2009. *And They Were Wonderful Teachers: Florida's Purge of Gay and Lesbian Teachers*, pgs. 20-49.
- Stein docs. 1-18
- "Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government." 1950 congressional subcommittee report.
- ACLU Position on Homosexuality, 1/7/1957.

**Thursday 1/18**, Homophile Organizing I. While a time of increasing repression, the 1950s also saw the rise of the first stable gay and lesbian organization. These homophile organizations would act as the foundation upon which modern LGBTQ activism would be built. Over these two days we will explore the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis. Particular attention will be paid to why separate groups formed as well as their different approaches to confronting society.

- D'Emilio, John. 1983. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, pgs. 57-91.
- Gallo, Marcia M. 2007. *Different Daughters*, pgs. 1-20
- Stein, Docs. 19-34, 42-45
- FBI Report on Mattachine Society, 1953 [this is optional, you can skim a bit if you're interested]

**Tuesday 1/23**, Homophile Organizing II.

- Continuing last class.

**Thursday 1/25**, Homophile Activism. The homophile organizations gradually saw increased agitation for public action from more radical elements of the community. How radical does this activism seem today?

- Cervini, Eric. 2020. *The Deviant's War: The Homosexual vs. The United States of America*, pgs. 197-214.
- Stein, Docs. 46-67
- Franklin Kameny to Dick Leitsch, 19 June 1968. In Long, Michael G. 2019. *Gay is Good: The Life and Letters of Gay Rights Pioneer Franklin Kameny*.

**Tuesday 11/30**, Rise of a Gay Market. In the 1950s and '60s a series of commercial enterprises developed materials for gay men primarily. These entrepreneurs offered physique magazines, various other products, and even pen pal networks.

- Johnson, David K 2019. *Buying Gay: How Physique Entrepreneurs Sparked a Movement*, pgs. 193-220.
- *Manual Enterprises v. Day* (1962)

**Thursday 2/1**, Trans People Fight for their Place. Homophile organizations had no real space for trans or gender variant folks. Trans people had to craft their own form of activism and liberation.

- Meyerowitz, Joanne. 2002. *How Sex Changed*, pgs. 208-254.
- Velocci, Beans. 2021. “Standards of Care: Uncertainty and Risk in Harry Benjamin’s Transsexual Classifications.” *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 8(4): 462-480.
- Stein Docs. 35-41

**Tuesday 2/6**, Stonewall. In the early morning hours of 28 June 1969, a riot broke out during a bar raid on Christopher Street in New York City. Today Stonewall stands for a major breaking point in gay activism; most assume it was the start of such activism. Of course, we know this isn’t the case. So why does Stonewall occupy such a prominent position in our memories?

- Stein Docs. 73-102

**Thursday 2/8**, NO CLASS, PAPER DAY

**Tuesday 2/13**, Gay Liberation. Rising out of the New Left of the late 1960s, Gay Lib became a demand for a fundamental change in society. They opposed the politics of respectability and assimilation. What did they seek?

- Hobson, Emily K. 2016. *Lavender and Red*, pgs. 17-41.
- Stein Docs. 103-108, 114-117, 127-131, 152, 166

**Thursday 2/15**, Lesbian Feminists. As traditional gay organizations were dominated by men, they tended to focus on gay male needs. Some lesbian feminists found this untenable and sought to construct separate organizations that spoke to their needs. Within this struggle between gay male and lesbian organizations, trans people found themselves evicted from the movement.

- Faderman, Lillian. 1991. *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers*, pgs. 215-46
- Stryker, Susan. 2017. *Transgender History*, rev. ed., pgs. 115-138
- Stein Docs. 109-113, 118-122, 154-157, 165

**Tuesday 2/20**, The Moderate Shift. Some activists found the gay lib organizations to be chaotic and disappointing. These more moderate voices decided to leverage traditional levels of influencing government. This included electoral politics, lobbying, and litigation. Does this mean that their goals were more moderate than the gay lib folks?

- Faderman, Lillian. 2015. *The Gay Revolution*, pgs. 249-297
- Stein Docs. 169-200

**Thursday 2/22**, College Students. College students organized in the late 1960s and early ‘70s. After winning the right to organize they implemented various strategies at campus engagement to combat harassment as well as internalized homophobia.

- Beemyn, Brett. 2003. “The Silence is Broken: A History of the First Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual College Student Groups.” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12(2): 205-223.
- Dilley, Patrick. 2019. *Gay Liberation to Campus Assimilation*, pgs. 26-49.
- HOPS-Penn State exchange, 1971.
- *Gay Lib v. University of Missouri* (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1977 & SCOTUS dissent 1978).

**Tuesday 2/27**, Christian Counter-Mobilization. The gradual successes of the 1970s brought about a conservative backlash. The leading opponent was Anita Bryant but she ultimately represented a wave of homophobic retrenchment against gay rights victories.

- Frank, Gillian. 2013. “‘The Civil Rights of Parents’: Race and Conservative Politics in Anita Bryant’s Campaign against Gay Rights in 1970s Florida.” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22(1): 126-160.
- Bryant, Anita. 1977. *The Anita Bryant Story*, pgs. 16-18.
- VOICE Pamphlet from Eugene, Oregon, 1978 (in The Gay Writer’s Group. 1983. *It Could Happen to You ...*, pgs. 89-90.

**Thursday 2/29**, Harvey. The 1970s saw a new phenomenon: out gay candidates for public offices. While he was not the first, Harvey Milk was the most influential. He proved to be a galvanizing force in gay politics in San Francisco and after his assassination he became a martyr to the cause.

- Shilts, Randy. 1982. *The Mayor of Castro Street*, pgs. 69-110.
- “Harvey Milk on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (1978)”
- “Harvey Milk’s Political Will” (from *The Mayor of Castro Street*, pgs. 372-375)
- Video: *The Times of Harvey Milk* (90 mins. 1984)

## **SPRING BREAK 3/4 – 3/8**

**Tuesday 3/12**, The Plague Hits. Just as the movement was starting to win some forward momentum AIDS struck. People living with AIDS were left largely without resources or support by a government that saw this as a gay disease and a just punishment for an immoral group.

- Royles, Dan. 2020. *To Make the Wounded Whole: The African American Struggle against HIV/AIDS*, pgs. 1-12, 17-46.
- Kramer, Larry. 1983. “1,112 and Counting.” *New York Native*, March 14.
- Video: *United in Anger: A History of ACT UP* (94 min. 2012)

**Thursday 3/14**, AIDS Activism. AIDS decimated an entire generation of gay male leadership but galvanized a new generation of activists. ACT UP embraced a return to the agitation of the gay liberation era. The AIDS Quilt, however, presented a different form of activism. What do you make of it?

- Schulman, Sarah. 2021. *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP New York, 1987-1993*, pgs. 137-165, 227-269, 457-469.
- Explore the Interactive AIDS Quilt

**Tuesday 3/19**, NO CLASS, PAPER DAY

**Thursday 3/21**, Creating Gay Families. The 1980s and ‘90s saw continued battles over the nature of “family” in American law, politics, and society. Denied legal recognition, couples often had to resort to extraordinary arguments about new forms of family. This was more complicated by the boom in lesbian and gay couples raising children.

- Rivers, Daniel Winunwe. 2013. *Radical Relations*, pgs. 173-206.

- Vider, Stephen. 2021. "What Happened to the Functional Family? Defining and Defending Alternate Households Before and Beyond Same-Sex Marriage." In *Intimate States*, 257-279.

**Tuesday 3/26**, 1990s Counter-Mobilization. Riding the rise of a newer more conservative American politics, the Christian Right launched a range of attacks on lesbians, gay men, and their families.

- Schultz, William. 2021. "The Rise and Fall of 'No Special Rights.'" *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 122(1): 6-37.
- Video: *Ballot Measure 9* (72 min. 1995)

**Thursday 3/28**, Won't Someone Think of the (Queer) Children?! Rhetoric around anti-gay activism had long used children as justification for their proposed policies. An assumption of these decades was that all kids are straight and cisgender. By the 1990s queer kids themselves began to demand space especially within schools, dragging LGBTQ groups into educational policy.

- Ball, Carlos. 2010. *From the Closet to the Courtroom*, pgs. 67-98.
- Lane, Stephen. 2019. *No Sanctuary*, pgs. 91-104.
- Project 21 (1995), "Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students' Bill of Educational Rights."
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**Tuesday 4/2**, Expanding the Acronym I. The 1990s saw sustained activism from trans and bisexual folks to broaden the definition of who belonged in the community and, importantly, in activist groups. Increasingly LGBT became the term coined to represent this more inclusive vision. But how well did the vision translate into practice?

- Murib, Zein. 2017. "Rethinking GLBT as a Descriptive and Analytic Category in Political Science." In *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, 14-33
- "Urvashi Vaid Speaks at the 1993 March"
- "Queer Nation Manifesto, 1990"
- Wilchins, Riki. 2014. "The Start of Trans Activism, 1994-1995." In *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves*, pgs. 525-528.
- Hutchins, Loraine, and Lani Ka'ahumanu. 1991. "Do Bisexuals Have a Place in the Gay Movement?"

**Thursday 4/4**, Expanding the Acronym II. We continue to explore struggles to expand the queer umbrella.

- Continuing last class

**Tuesday 4/9**, Marriage Equality: Assimilation Ascendant? The new millennium saw marriage equality take center stage in the movement. To some this was simply the next step in civil rights but to others it was an abandonment of distinctive queer identity for an assimilation into straight culture.

- Daum, Courtney W. 2017. "Marriage Equality: Assimilationist Victory or Pluralist Defeat." In *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, pgs. 353-373.
- Panel. 2018. "LGBTQ Politics After Marriage in *Queer Activism after Marriage Equality*."

- *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015)

**Thursday 4/11**, Trans Activism in the New Millennium. Trans people gained a new prominence in the 2000s. Trans inclusion in mainstream LGBT groups became more cohesive. These groups began to win significant reforms to healthcare, criminal justice, and schools. This progress was met with a counter-mobilization from conservative forces seeking to roll back trans protections.

- Stryker, Susan. 2017. *Transgender History*, rev. ed., pgs. 195-236
- Schilt, Kristen and Laurel Westbrook. 2015. "Bathroom Battlegrounds and Penis Panics." *Contexts* <https://contexts.org/articles/bathroom-battlegrounds-and-penis-panics/>

**Tuesday 4/16**, Where Does the Movement Go From Here? By any measure, LGBTQ Americans have won massive changes in the past 70 years. For some this has been seen as the final realization of everything that civil rights pioneers in the 1960s desired. Others question the certainty that the victories won are entrenched as well as whether some have been left behind.

- Duberman, Martin. 2018. *Has the Gay Movement Failed?*, xiii-xviii, 163-207.
- Kirchick, James. "The Struggle for Gay Rights is Over." *The Atlantic*, 28 June 2019.

**Thursday 4/18**, Catch-up/Paper day.

## Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is an important element to any class but especially this one. The readings and lectures will be complementary but not coextensive and you will be held responsible for all of the information from both lectures and assigned readings. While attendance alone is not sufficient for the participation element of your final grade, it is necessary.

Grading Policy: Barring unforeseen crises, I will return graded assignments within two weeks of the due date. If you are unsatisfied with a grade assigned you may appeal that grade to me and I will reevaluate the assignment from scratch. This means that you could receive a higher, lower, or the same grade as initially given. To appeal you must send me a short statement explaining why you believe the grade is incorrect along with the original graded copy of the assignment.

Late Assignments: Assignments are due at the time and date listed on the syllabus. Any late papers will be deducted a letter grade for every 8 hours late (e.g. A to A-, A- to B+, B+ to B, and so on). Requests for extensions must be made to me before the assignment is due and will not be granted retroactively.

Academic Integrity: As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is "the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person's or group's ideas or work." Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure for the specific assignment, at a minimum, or failure for the whole course at the professor's discretion. Students will also be reported to the Dean of Students.

**NOTE**: It is also a violation of this policy to submit work previously submitted in another course. You should speak to me if you have any concerns about where the line is for this policy.

Reasonable Accommodation: Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Disability Services Office at (801) 626-6413 or [dsc@weber.edu](mailto:dsc@weber.edu). See more info at <https://www.weber.edu/disabilityservices>

Core Beliefs: According to PPM 6--22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.”

Recording Class: Video or audio recording of any portion of lectures is only permitted in this class upon authorization of the faculty member. If you would like to request authorization to record, please contact me. Unauthorized recording is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, for which a student may be subjected to disciplinary action under PPM 6-22, Student Code. Students who seek to record for purposes of accommodating a disability should contact the Disability Services Office at (801) 626-6413 or [dsc@weber.edu](mailto:dsc@weber.edu). See more info at <https://www.weber.edu/disabilityservices>

Emergency Closure: If the University is forced to close for any reason during the semester, please check the course Canvas page and your Weber email for updates on how this course will proceed. The University announces closures and other emergencies through its Code Purple emergency alert system. Students are encouraged to sign up for Code Purple: <http://www.weber.edu/codepurple/>

Office Hours and Communication: My regular office hours are listed above and I encourage you to avail yourself of them if you have any problems, questions, or simply want to discuss ideas. If you cannot make my office hours, I am available by appointment. If you have a quick question, please feel free to email me. Finally, I may regularly use email to contact you (in particular if I have to cancel a class meeting or change an assignment). This means that you will be responsible for regularly checking your WEBER email account and keeping it open to emails. I will not make any extra attempt to contact you if an email gets rejected because yours is full. Nor will I accept as an excuse that you do not use your Weber email account.

- Canvas Announcements: I will sometimes use Canvas to send you announcements. This has a few quirks. One is that while you will be notified via email (if you have notifications properly set up), any attachments will have to be obtained by logging into Canvas and going to the announcements section. Also, please never hit reply to such announcement notifications in your email. It is not sent to me; it is instead posted as a reply to the announcement but Canvas does not notify me of this and I will not see it. If you need to contact me, always email or message me directly.



Note on Email: Please put the name and/or number of this class in the subject of any email message so I can easily sort them. I will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours, beginning on the next business day after receipt; please note that weekends are not business days.

A Note on the Canvas Gradebook

All of your grades will be available online in the Canvas gradebook. Please note a quirk of that system is that it only estimates your final grade based on the scores recorded. If you have not yet done an assignment, thus showing “-“, Canvas treats it as nonexistent. So it may state that you have an 83% when you have only done 3 of 6 required assignments but that estimate will drop rapidly if you fail to do an assignment and a “0” is entered. Also, Canvas is not perfect and you need to remember the terms of the syllabus when it comes to weighting assignments. If Canvas has an error for some reason and improperly weights assignments you need to remember that the syllabus always controls and any Canvas error will be corrected even if your grade estimate is affected. For this reason I encourage you to let me know if anything in Canvas looks odd.