

**The University of Western Ontario
London Canada
Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
Winter 2022**



**WS 1023G: Gay Life and Culture in the 21st Century
Talbot College
Room 204
Tuesdays 10:30 – 1:30pm**

The department would like to recognize that we are located on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples.

Instructor: Jeremy Fairall

Email: jfairall@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday 2PM-4PM (or by appointment)

Teaching Assistant: Kody Muncaster (kmuncas@uwo.ca)

Course Description:

In *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), Lee Edelman argues that queer people are “held in thrall by a future continually defined by time itself, constrained to pursue the dream of a day when today and tomorrow are one” (30). In the decades following the Stonewall riots of 1969, queer liberation has appeared, to many queer scholars and activists, as if it were perpetually on the horizon, a promise of a “tomorrow” that was, as Annie sang, “always a day away.” With recent strides that have been made towards marriage equality, legal status, and popular visibility, the 21st century would appear to be the fulfillment of the long-awaited promise of freedom and equality. Still, as Michael Hobbes reports in “The Epidemic of Gay Loneliness” (2015), “the rates of depression, loneliness and substance abuse in the gay community remain stuck in the same place they’ve been

Medical Policy: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of

topic related to the subject of the course, although you will want to concentrate on issues which require constructing an evidence-based (rather than critical) argument. You may wish to consider relevant issues relating to health, politics, representation, education, business, or global affairs.

Course Timetable:

Week 1 (January 3): *Introduction*

Week 2 (January 10):

Annamarie Jagose, “Theorising Same-Sex Desire” (1996)
Ritch C. Savin-Williams, “Who’s Gay?” (2005)
Cody Lawrence, “Brief Thoughts on Bi-Erasure” (2020)

Week 3 (January 17): *It Gets Better?*

Richard Dyer, “Coming Out as Going In: The image of the homosexual as a sad young man” (2001)
Derritt Mason, “Getting Better: Children’s Literature Theory and the *It Gets Better* Project” (2021)
Michael Hobbes, “The Epidemic of Gay Loneliness” (2017)
IN-CLASS SCREENING: *The Christmas Setup* (trailer) [2020]
Critical Essay handout

Week 4 (January 24): *s Dance!*

Sasha Geffen, “Infinite Utopia: Queer Time in Disco and House” (2020)
Rich Juzwiak, “Katy Perry, Ke\$ha, and the Great Gay-Pander-Off of 2010” (2011)
Alfred Soto, “Only When I’m Dancing Can I Feel This Free” (2016)
IN-CLASS SCREENING: Shura, “What’s it Gonna Be?” (2016)
Critical essay Q&A session

Week 5 (February 1): *Out of (and into) the Closet*

Bill Konigsberg, *Openly Straight* (2013)

Week 6 (February 8): *Masculinities*

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay: The War on Effeminate Boys" (1991)

Kevin John Bozelka, "The gay-for-pay gaze in gay male pornography" (2013)

Nick Levine, "The One Question Men Need to Stop Asking on Gay Dating Apps" (2019)

IN-CLASS SCREENING: "Why 'Straight Acting' Insults the Memory of Stonewall" (2015)

****Critical Essay due****

Week 7 (February 15): *Queer Politics*

John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity" (1983)

Benjamin H. Shepard, "The Queer/Gay Assimilationist Split: The Suits vs. the Sluts" (2001)

Nathan J. Robinson, "

Week 11 (March 15): *Disability*

Robert McRuer, “Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence” (2013)

Patrick Strudwick, “This Is What Dating Is Like When You’re LGBT and Disabled” (2015)

IN-CLASS SCREENING: *Hole* (2014)

Week 12 (March 22): *Married (with Children?)*

glenn mcdonald, “More Human (in defense of marriage)” (2004)

Katherine Mason, “‘Won’t Someone Think of the Children?’: Reproductive Futurism and Same-Sex Marriage in US Courts, 2003-2015” (2018)

IN-CLASS SCREENING: “Faith, Foster care, and LGBT rights collide at Supreme Court” (2020)

Review for Final Exam

****Research Essay due****

Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies: Grading Criteria

- Challenging and specific thesis that is clearly developed
 - Correct and interesting sentence structure
 - Sophisticated writing style
 - Appropriate documentation
 - Quotations well integrated into the text, with proper documentation
 - Evidence of originality or independence of thought
 - Provision of strong analysis
 - Complexity, and subtlety in approach to subject
 - Well-organized with a logical development of the argument
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- Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs
 - Correct sentence structure
 - Adequate documentation
 - Allowance for some (minor) problems such as:
 - errors in factual content or interpretation
 - some minor errors in terminology or general writing skills
 - occasional lapses in clarity, including vagueness, incompleteness, flaws in structure
- : A grade in the range of 75-79 indicates an essay that borders on an A but has some significant flaw that prevents giving out the higher grade.
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- Generally correct but tends to provide more description t

- Problems with grammar or matters of style
 - Simplicity of thought, structure, or expression
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- Does not provide an argument or a line of thought
 - Major difficulties with logical structure, and expression of ideas
 - Topic has not been thought through
 - Errors of grammar and diction interfere with understanding
 - Over-generalization with inadequate support, evidence, or documentation
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- Assignment submitted does not apply to course
 - Basic requirements of the assignment are not met

Photo credits (l to r): “What’s It Gonna Be?” (dir. Chloe Wallace, 2016), *1985* (dir. Yen Tan, 2018)