

GSWS 431
Local Sex On Global Screen

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Course Description

This course examines the globalization of sexual cultures and the emergence of queer screen culture on the margin or outside of North America and Europe. We will analyze the impact of globalization on local, diasporic, and postcolonial expressions of sexual practice and gender identity. In turn, we will also explore the various ways in which these mediatized expressions reframe our understanding of LGBTQ issues from transcultural and comparative perspectives.

Educational Goals

Students are expected to:

- gain a comprehensive understanding of current theoretical perspectives on queer cinema, its relation to the globalization of sexual cultures and to LGBTQ identities
- acquire literacy in the aesthetics and politics of global queer cinemas through in-depth case studies of influential films
- learn research techniques and critical skills in writing film analysis
- develop creative and interdisciplinary perspectives on sexuality, cinema, and screen culture

Course Assessment

Attendance & Participation: 10%
Weekly Film/Reading Response on Canvas: 10%
“Be A Film Critic!” Creative Project: 20%
Film Analysis (3-4 pages): 20%
Final Research Paper (8-10 pages): 40%

Required Texts

Links to all articles are available on Canvas.

Films

I Can't Think Straight (Shamim Sarif, 2008, U.K.)
Wild Side (Sébastien Lifshitz, 2004, France)
Happy Together (Wong Kar-wai, 1997 Hong Kong)
The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros (Auracus Solito, 2005, The Philippines)
Drifting Flowers (Zero Chou, 2008, Taiwan)
I Don't Want To Sleep Alone (Tsai Ming-liang, 2006, Malaysia and Taiwan)

Description of Assignments

Attendance & Participation: The attendance & participation grade reflects the punctuality and regularity of your class attendance, your degree of preparedness and involvement during class discussion, and your contribution to the learning environment.

Weekly Response on Canvas: Students are required to post discussion questions, comments, or responses about the issues raised by the film, the readings, and/or the class discussion every week. This grade is primarily marked on efforts and degree of engagement.

“Be A Film Critic!” Creative Project: Using a non-academic format (e.g. a short video, a podcast segment, a blog post, a magazine article etc.), introduce and discuss a queer film (one that has not been screened in class) of your choice. You must post a link to your piece on Canvas (on the “Be A Film Critic!” Discussion board) for others to read or view. You can complete this project any time throughout the course (and are highly encouraged to do so during the first half of term) *but no later than March 21*. Work posted after this date will be considered late and will not receive any credit.

Film Analysis (3-4 pages): A detailed analysis of one of the films screened in class. Your analysis is expected to show: 1) some degree of outside research on the film’s context, 2) original analysis of the aesthetic and/or social significance of the film, and 3) critical reflections on the film’s relation to global queer cinema. Your analysis is due **NO LATER THAN ONE WEEK** after we finish discussing the film in class.

Final Research Paper (8-10 pages): A research paper on any aspects of queer and/or trans cinema or screen culture.

Course Policies

- Late assignments will not be accepted unless an extension has been negotiated with me at least four days prior to the due date.
- All assignments should be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-pt font.
- Please use MLA documentation style in all your essay assignments to reference your sources accurately and consistently.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in an F in the assignment. Please keep all outlines and drafts and assignment backups in case questions of plagiarism arise.
- It is part of the participation requirement that you view films during class. Audience reception and the sociality of spectatorship are an integral part of our exploration. Please be aware that not all of the films shown in class are available for viewing outside of our class.
- A diversity of opinions is encouraged in the classroom and everyone is expected to be respectful of others’ viewpoints. Your openness, patience, and sense of humour will enhance our learning environment and will be greatly appreciated.
- Some of the films screened in class contain explicit language, nudity, and graphic sexuality. If you feel you may have concerns with such content, please come and talk to me as early as possible.

Reading & Screening Schedule

Please finish all readings assigned for the week before coming to class.

Week 1 **Jan 10**

Introduction

Week 2 **Jan 17**

Readings:

Karl Schoonover and Rosalind Galt, "Introduction: Queer, World, Cinema."

B. Ruby Rich, "What's a Good Gay Film?"

Helen Leung, "Film" (from *Transgender Studies Quarterly*)

Screening: *I Can't See Straight*

Week 3 **Jan 24**

Readings:

Karl Schoonover & Rosalind Galt, "Figures in The World: The Geopolitics of the Transcultural Queer"

Gayatri Gopinath, "Impossible Desires"

Week 4 **Jan 31**

Readings:

Nick Rees-Roberts, "Down and Out: Immigrant Poverty and Queer Sexuality in Sébastien Lifshitz's *Wild Side*"

Todd W. Reeser, "Transsexuality and the disruption of time in Sébastien Lifshitz's *Wild Side*"

Screening: *Wild Side*

Week 5 **Feb 7**

Screening: *Happy Together*

Week 6 **Feb 14**

Reading Break. No Class.

Week 7 **Feb 21**

Readings:

Carlos Rojas, "Queer Utopias in Wong Kar-wai's *Happy Together*"

Helen Hok-Sze Leung, "New Queer Angles on Wong Kar-wai"

Research Paper Topic Roundtable

Week 8 **Feb 28**

Screening: *The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros*

Week 9 **Mar 7**

Readings:

J. Neil C. Garcia, "Paradoxical Philippines: On *Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros*"

Martin Manalansan, "The Borders Between *Bakla* and Gay"

Ryan Thoreson, "Capably Queer: Exploring the Intersections of Queerness and Poverty in the Urban Philippines"

Week 10 **Mar 14**

Screening: *Drifting Flowers*

Week 11 **Mar 21**

Readings:

Zoran Pecic, "Sinophone Queerness and Female Auteurship in Zero Chou's *Drifting Flowers*"

Song Hwee Lim, "How to be Queer in Taiwan"

*** Last day to post your "Be A Film Critic!" project on Canvas**

Week 12 **Mar 28**

Screening: *I Don't Want To Sleep Alone*

Readings:

Song Hwee Lim, "Confessing Desire: The Poetics of Tsai Ming-liang's Cinema"

Song Hwee Lim, "Stillness"

Week 13 **Apr 4**

Final Paper Clinic and Wrap Party

*** Final paper due via Canvas submission at 5pm, Friday, April 7, 2017.**