

Independent Study

Memoir Theory and Theory of the Subject: Twentieth-Century LGBTQ Literature

MEMOIR & NARRATIVE THEORY READING LIST:

- Timothy D. Adams, *Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography*
- Hillary L. Chute, *Graphic Women: Life Narrative and Contemporary Comics*
- Thomas G. Couser, *Memoir: An Introduction*
- Paul J. Eakin, *How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves*
- Gerald Genette, *Fiction and Diction*
- Leigh Gilmore, *Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women's Self-Representation*
- Franz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*
- Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge
- Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*

THEORY OF THE SUBJECT READING LIST:

- Sara Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*
- Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship*
- Judith Butler, *Senses of the Subject*
- Sigmund Freud, *Leonardo Da Vinci: A Memory of His Childhood*
- Sigmund Freud, *Three Case Histories*
- Jean Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis*

LITERATURE READING LIST: (READ OVER SUMMER, THEORY PAIRINGS TBD)

- Dorothy Allison, *Bastard Out of Carolina*
- James Baldwin, *Go Tell it on the Mountain*
- William S. Burroughs, *Junkie*
- William S. Burroughs, *Queer*
- William S. Burroughs, *The Yage Letters Redux*
- Dennis Copper, *Frisk*
- Mark Doty, *Heaven's Coast: A Memoir*
- Samuel Delany, *Times Square Red Times Square Blue*
- Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*
- Leslie Feinberg, *Stone Butch Blues*
- Audre Lorde, *Zami, a New Spelling of My Name*
- Carole Maso, *The Art Lover*
- Cherrie, Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings: Portrait of A Queer Motherhood*
- Joan Nestle, *A Restricted Country*
- Minnie B. Pratt, *S/He*
- John Rechy, *City of Night*
- Lauren Slater, *Lying: A Metaphorical Memoir*
- Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*
- A.K. Summers, *Pregnant Butch Blues*

AUXILIARY READING LIST:

- Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*
- Michelle Clilff, *Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise*
- Françoise Lionnet, *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture*
- Maggie Nelson, *Argonauts*
- Joan Nestle, *A Restricted Country*
- David Wojnarowicz, *In the Shadow of the American Drea*
- David Wojnarowicz, *Memories that Smell Like Gasoline*
- Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

COURSE DESCRIPTION & DRIVING QUESTIONS:

This course will focus on memoir theory and theory of the subject in order to probe at and problematize subjectivity and the constitution of the subject. Theoretical works will be paired and read in tandem with relevant 20th century LGBTQ literature (memoir and novel) in order to productively contextualize and ground the theory. Along with considerations regarding subjectivity, focusing on memoir may be a means to interrogate the potential and productive instability the LGBTQ autobiographical texts. Driving questions include: How might memoir shed light onto or complicate queer subjectivity and subject formation? Is there tension between the genres of memoir and novel? If so, how might that tension be telling? What makes a text part of the gay literature canon? What's the difference between canonical LGBTQ literature and literature to which a queer optic can be applied? What's the difference between LGBTQ literature and Queer literature? The course is reading and discussion intensive and includes a final paper.

Reading Schedule & Theory/ Lit Pairings

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| Week 1 | Theory: Tzvetan Todorov, <i>Genres in Discourse</i>
Literature: Jean Genet, <i>Our Lady of the Flowers</i>
Time and Date: XXX |
| Week 2 | Theory: Thomas Couser, <i>Memoir: An Introduction</i>
Literature: Mark Doty, <i>Heaven's Coast</i>
Time and Date: Fri. Sept 11, 1:00 |
| Week 3 | Theory: Gerald Genette, <i>Fiction and Diction</i>
Literature: Gertrude Stein, <i>The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas</i>
Time and Date: Tues. Sept 15, 5pm-7pm |
| Week 4 | Theory: Judith Butler, <i>Senses of the Subject</i>
Literature: John Rechy, <i>City of the Night</i>
Time and Date: Tues. Sept 22, 5pm-7pm |
| Week 5 | Theory: Paul J. Eakin, <i>How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves</i>
Literature: Cherrie Moraga, <i>Waiting in the Wings</i> *AND* Allison, <i>Bastard out of Carolina</i>
Time and Date: Fri. Oct 2, 1:00 |
| Week 6 | No Meeting this week |
| Week 7 | Theory: Sara Ahmed, <i>Willful Subjects</i> |

Literature: James Baldwin, *Go Tell it On the Mountain*

Time and Date: Tues. Oct 13, 5pm-7pm

Theory: Leigh Gilmore, *Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women's Self-Representation*

Literature: Carole Maso, *The Art Lover*

Time and Date: Fri Oct 16, 1:00

- Week 8 |** **Theory:** Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America*
Literature: Samuel Delany, *Times Square Red Times Square Blue*
Time and Date: Tues. Oct 20, 5pm-7pm
- Week 9 |** **No In-person meeting this week**
Proposal – First Draft DUE
- Week 10 |** **Theory:** Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography*
Literature: Pratt, s/he *AND* Feinberg, *Stone Butch Blues*
Time and Date: Fri. Nov. 6, 1:00
- Week 11 |** **Theory:** Sigmund Freud, *Leonardo Da Vinci* *AND* *Three Case Histories*
Literature: Dennis Cooper, *Frisk*
Time and Date: Tues. Nov. 10, 5pm-7pm
- Week 12 |** **Theory:** Jean Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis*
Literature: Burroughs, *Junkie* *AND* *Queer* *AND* *The Yage Letters Redux*
Time and Date: Tues. Nov. 17, 5pm-7pm
- Week 13 |** **Theory:** Hillary L. Chute, *Graphic Women*
Literature: A.K. Summer, *Pregnant Butch*
Time and Date: Tues. Nov. 24, 3:00 pm
- Week 14 |** **Theory:** Timothy Adams, *Telling Lies in Modern...*
Literature: Lauren Slater, *Lying*
Time and Date: Fri. Dec. 4, 1:00
- Week 15 |** *Revised Final Draft DUE
(Submitted via email)