

HIST72200 LGBTQ+ Public History and Memory
Professor Anne Valk
Wednesday, 2:00-4:00

Welcome! This course introduces the practice of public history and its intellectual foundations, with a specific focus on representations of the LGBTQ+ past. Through our readings, class discussions, and assignments, we will examine how scholars, documentarians, activists, and other public historians have preserved, interpreted and presented LGBTQ+ history in the U.S., Europe, Australia, Canada, and elsewhere. By examining case studies and select projects, we will discuss how theory plays out in practice and in a variety of arenas in which historians engage with historical sites and subjects, material objects, and publics. Our investigation of LGBTQ+ public history will encompass museums and historic sites; archives and oral history collections; films, podcasts, and digital displays; memorials; and festivals, gatherings, and public programs. The class aims to immerse students in a variety of methods used to collect, preserve, and memorialize aspects of LGBTQ+ history and educate the public.

Throughout the semester, we will discuss many questions relevant to the larger public history endeavor including: What is at stake when it comes to LGBTQ+ history? How does society decide what's worth remembering and saving? What LGBTQ+ narratives have been accentuated -- and what/whose histories have been silenced or ignored? Whose perspectives are reflected in public history and the audiences it engages? What is the relationship between public history and the historical discipline? How do politics -- personal, professional, collective -- shape the work of public historians and their decisions related to collaboration, interpretation, preservation, and presentation? What is the role of emotions (nostalgia and longing, anger, grief, desire, and joy, etc.) in shaping collective memory and public history? What roles have activists, amateurs and those acting outside of historical institutions (and often in opposition to them) played in public history? How has LGBTQ+ public history changed over time -- and how (if at all) is it shaped by national identities and nations? What is the impact of this work and how can it be assessed? And finally - most importantly - what do we mean by LGBTQ+ public history? In addition to readings, book reviews, and discussions, students will complete a final research project which can take the form of a traditional paper, a collaboration with a public history organization, or a publicly-accessible digital exhibit or display.

The class readings aim to provide an overview of the field that spans time and place, as well as represents a diversity of theoretical and historiographical approaches. The course readings (and their authors) span disciplines and include academic scholars and practitioners based within public history institutions. It also suggests distinct ways of defining and understanding LGBTQ+ and queer identities and experiences. Other readings are intended to demonstrate the variety of ways that scholars and researchers are writing about LGBTQ+ public history and some of the venues and platforms in which that scholarship is published and shared. As you read, I ask you to keep in mind:

- Who is the author(s) and what is their connection to the projects or institutions being discussed?

- Who is the audience for the reading? And how does that audience compare/connect to the audiences involved in the public history projects being described?
- Why might this research appear in a particular publication? What difference does the publication/venue/platform make?
- What format/form does this public history project take? In what ways does the form/format align with the subject and content? How, if at all, might this topic be suited to a different – or more effective – format?
- What roles and responsibilities are assumed by history professionals? And what skills are required for these roles?

WHAT WE'LL BE DOING:

Please know that I know that we're gathering as a class during a time full of uncertainty, risk, inconveniences, and discomfort, all of which makes our shared intellectual work more difficult. I hope that we can use this time together to build a community and to collectively think about the potential of public history to offer meaningful forms of engagement during times of crisis and disruption, as well as at other points in history.

The syllabus that I have prepared offers a roadmap for our work together. However, it is open to change depending on your needs and new developments as a result of the pandemic and other external factors. I invite you to recommend positive changes to this plan – and I strongly encourage you to let me (and your classmates) know how the class readings, assignments, discussions, and format can best suit your needs and interests.

For now, I am planning for us to meet weekly on Wednesday afternoons, from 2:00-4:00, for our seminar. As policies at the Graduate Center permit, we will meet in person some weeks, and other weeks will meet virtually and synchronously. Although this hybrid format is not ideal, I hope it will allow most of us the pleasure of safe face-to-face interactions. If you are not able to participate in this way, please contact me in order to discuss alternatives.

In addition, I'll be available to meet with you by appointment and on Monday afternoons from 2:00-3:30 for virtual office hours. Please drop in then to talk with me about the class, your graduate studies, or other matters.

REQUIREMENTS

Readings: over the course of the semester, we will read and discuss a variety of articles, texts, and projects that encompass the diversity and variety of public history approaches. Some materials are case studies; others convey some of the history of LGBTQ+ public history; and others focus on key methodological or theoretical issues. This includes the following books (in order of their appearance on the syllabus):

- Amy L. Stone and Jaime Cantrell, *Out of the Closet, Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories* (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2015).
- Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

- Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramirez, ed., *Bodies of Evidence: the Practice of Queer Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- Jennifer Tyburczy, *Sex Museums* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

Most of the books and articles are available through the GC Library; in addition, I have made most accessible through the class Blackboard site. Please ask if you cannot find something.

Active participation: Please try to attend every class, but if there are other engagements at class time that will be more useful to your professional development, it's up to you to determine which is more valuable. If you cannot make the class, please contact me and/or other students to catch up on class discussions.

The class only works if you participate. Please read the readings, read further in areas of your interest, and come to class prepared to discuss what you've read and thought about, ready to ask questions, and contribute to this group learning experience. Participation is evaluated by the quality of your comments. Rather than emphasizing critiques of the readings, in this class I am interested in what useful approaches and techniques you can gain from the material. Be constructive: refer to the readings, present new information from your experience and from outside readings and suggest new ideas. Although this course focuses on history, we are fortunate that the class includes students with a variety of backgrounds and disciplinary concentrations: this presents a valuable opportunity to learn from the insights and expertise of each other. Participation should be a dialogue, building on other students' contributions and facilitating everyone's shared learning experience.

Each of you will be responsible for working with a partner to lead two class discussions (including reading and reporting on the readings).

This class assumes no background expertise in public history or LGBTQ+ history, however some rudimentary familiarity with both areas, and with methods of historical research, will be helpful. Please ask if you would like recommendations for other readings and materials to help you build a solid foundation for our work together.

Analytic essay: write an essay of 1,000-1,500 words that compares/contrasts/considers side-by-side at least three LGBTQ+ public history *projects* of your choice. You should select from projects documented in the materials we discuss in this class, including exhibits, digital archives, podcasts, memorials, films, museum collecting policies, etc. Pick projects that you think will make for an interesting analysis of a specific theme, issue, or set of questions explored in this class. The essay might focus on a particular topic or theme (e.g., how bisexuals are represented within LGBTQ+ public history; or changes in museum collecting policies over time); an approach (e.g., models of community collaboration or engagement or the use of archival interviews in podcasts); or another issue of interest to you (e.g., how LGBTQ+ activists have used archives for political ends or how LGBTQ+ memorials draw on language and symbols from Holocaust commemorations). You can turn in your review essay any time before **November 24**. [You can find examples of public history project reviews in the *Oral History Review*, *Radical History Review*, and other journals.]

Public/Research project: option to complete a project, in collaboration with a public history organization or you may complete a solo-authored 25-30 page traditional research paper. All students should let me know by **September 25th** what option you select. By that date, submit a

very brief (e.g., one paragraph) description of your intended focus; if you opt to work on a project, your description should also detail the intended audience(s) and format. At our last class session, **December 8**, each student will prepare and present a brief (10-15 minutes) presentation of their project's methods and outcomes.

Assignments described in more detail:

- a. Public History Project you can elect to undertake a project that represents the application of some of the ideas and practices covered in class. The project should entail historical research that is shared directly with the public -- or with a public history organization. Projects should be completed by **December 10** along with a short (6-8 pages) report describing methods, outcomes, and possible next steps. You may partner with another student from the class and work on the project collaboratively; if you do so, you should individually submit final reports.
 - i. The [U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) in Washington, DC; and the [Pauli Murray Center](#) for History and Social Justice, in Durham, NC, are both interested in having students work on projects to support their ongoing activities. I can provide more information about these specific opportunities.
- b. Research paper: complete a scholarly research paper (approx. 25-30 pages) that describes and analyzes how a particular topic or issue related to LGBTQ+ history has been interpreted and presented in a variety of public history formats. The paper will be due on December 10, with a one-page précis due on November 5. For the last class session, December 8, each student also will prepare and present a brief (8-10 minutes) presentation of their paper's research and conclusions.

Your writing should be your original work, based on the class materials and discussions and your own research and exploration. Footnote anything you use from books, articles, online sources, interviews, etc. – and let me know if you have questions about how to do this. I'm open to other formats of presentation, too, especially for your final project: websites, exhibits, audio essays, etc.

I also encourage you to share your writing (drafts and completed products) with others in the class. Becoming comfortable with peer review is an essential (if sometimes difficult) component of academic scholarship. And public historians practicing in many sectors must welcome the act of sharing their research and ideas with various audiences and, in turn, receiving feedback. In addition to sharing your work with others in the class, you are strongly encouraged to share them beyond the class through other means (and with consent of any collaborators).

Accessibility resources are available through the GC's Office of Student Disability Services, <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/Prospective-Current-Students/Current-Students/Student-Disability-Services/Distance-Learning-Disability-Services?ext=>. Please let me know if there are any accommodations you require so that you can enjoy the benefits of full participation in this class.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

[*** indicate weeks when you may choose to attend an in-person class meeting]

***August 25: What do we mean by LGBTQ+ Public History?

Be ready to discuss: GVGK Tang, "Sexuality," in *Inclusive Historian's Handbook*, at <https://inclusivehistorian.com/sexuality/> and

Gerard Koskovich, "The History of Queer History: One Hundred Years of the Search for Shared Heritage," *Preservation and Place: Historic Preservation by and of LGBTQ Communities in the United States*, by Katherine Crawford-Lackey and Megan E. Springate, 1st ed., (New York: Berghahn Books, 2019): 30–84.

***September 1: Sex and the Archives

Amy L. Stone and Jamie Cantrell, *Out of the Closet, Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2015). Ebook available at: https://cuny-gc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CUNY_GC/e23v32/alma9994395320506140

Roundtable, "Queering Archives." *Radical History Review*, no. 122 (May 2015): 211–31.

September 8: No Class

September 15: No Class

September 22: Museums, the Holocaust, and LGBTQ+ History

At 3:00, we'll be joined by a team of scholars from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Dr. Jake Newsome will provide an overview of how museums and memorials (including USHMM) have approached LGBTQ+ stories over the years. They will also talk about *Experiencing History*, an ongoing pedagogical initiative, and we'll have time for discussion with them.

Read: Edward Phillips, "Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals: The Curator's View," *Museums & Social Issues*, v. 3, no.1 (2008):105-114.

<https://blog.history.ac.uk/2019/03/queer-history-and-the-holocaust/>

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/paragraph-175-and-the-nazi-campaign-against-homosexuality>

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/gay-men-under-the-nazi-regime>

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/lesbians-under-the-nazi-regime>

<https://perspectives.ushmm.org/item/photo-of-the-eldorado-club>

<https://perspectives.ushmm.org/item/protective-custody-order-for-herbert-froehlich>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX6Wj1ozQB8>

***September 29: Community and Activist Archives

Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003). Ebook available: https://cuny-gc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CUNY_GC/qt23uj/cdi_highwire_dukebooks_10_1215_9780822384434

Elsbeth H. Brown, "Archival Activism, Symbolic Annihilation, and the LGBTQ2+ Community Archive," *Archivaria* 89, (Spring 2020): 6-33.

Ajamu X, Topher Campbell, and Mary Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives, or Ruckus!: A Black Queer Archive for the UK," *Archivaria*, v. 68 (Fall 2009): 271-294.
<https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/queer-lives-public-history-and-the-queer-archive/>

Lauren Jae Gutterman, "OutHistory.org: An Experiment in LGBTQ Community History-Making." *The Public historian* 32, no. 4 (2010): 96–109.

April Sizemore-Barber, "Archival Moments: South Africa's Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action," *Safundi*, v. 18, no. 2 (2017): 117-130.

October 6: Queer Oral History

Nan Alamila Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramirez, ed., *Bodies of Evidence: the Practice of Queer Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Elizabeth Kennedy, "Telling Tales: Oral History and the Construction of Pre-Stonewall Lesbian History," *Radical History Review*, v. 62 (1995): 58-79.

Gavin Brown, "Listening to Queer Maps of the City," *Oral History*, Vol. 29, No. 1, (Spring, 2001): 48-61 at <http://lgbtqdigitalcollaboratory.org/2020/12/the-transgender-oral-history-project-of-iowa/>

James Valentine, "Narrative Acts: Telling Tales of Life and Love with the Wrong Gender," *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, v. 9, n. 2 (May 2008): 1–34.

Review: NYC [Trans Oral History](#) Project
Eric Marcus, [Making Gay History](#) podcast
[GRT LGBTQ+ Spoken History Archive](#)
[Mobile Homecoming](#)
[Queer Newark](#) Oral History Project
[LGBTQ History Digital Collaboratory](#)

October 13: Memorials, Counter-memorials and Place-based Memory Practices

Elizabeth Newton-Jackson, "Overlooked, Forgotten, Avoided: The LGBT Community and Public Art," *Women's Studies Journal*, v. 34, n. 1-2 (December 2020): 92–106.

Sean Curran, "Heritage and Queer Activism," in *Museum Activism* (NY: Routledge, 2019): 278–290.

Joseph Orangia, Jeannie Simms, and Sloane French, "The Cultural Functions and Social Potential of Queer Monuments: A Preliminary Inventory and Analysis," *Journal of Homosexuality*, v. 65, n. 6 (2018): 705–726.

Amy Boylan, "Unresolved Commemorations: Memorials to Victims of Homophobic Violence in Italy," *The Italianist*, v. 33, n. 1 (February 2013): 138–157.

Review: [ADDRESSES PROJECT](#)
[Pride of Place: England's LGBTQ Heritage](#)
[midwestqueerspaces.com](#)
[Eulogy for the Dyke Bar](#)
[Mapping the Gay Guides](#)
[Mapping LGBTQ St. Louis](#)
[The Lesbian Bar Project](#)
[Molly Street Sex Workers](#)
[AIDS Memorial](#)

*****October 20: Building Community and Representing Queerness: Festivals and Films**

Leanne Dawson and Skadi Loist, "Queer/Ing Film Festivals: History, Theory, Impact," *Studies in European Cinema*, v. 15, no. 1 (2018): 1–24.

Patricia White, et al, "Queer Publicity: A Dossier on Lesbian and Gay Film Festivals," *GLQ*, v. 5, no. 1 (1999): 73-93.

Joceline Andersen, "From The Ground Up: Transforming The Inside Out Lgbt Film And Video Festival Of Toronto," *Revue Canadienne D'Études Cinématographiques / Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, vol. 21, no. 1 (2012): 38–57.

Jon Binnie and Cristian Klesse, "The Politics of Age and Generation at the GAZE International LGBT Film Festival in Dublin," *Sociological Review*, v. 66, no. 1 (2018): 191-206.

Theresa Heath, "Saving Space: Strategies of Space Reclamation at Early Women's Film Festivals and Queer Film Festivals Today," *Studies in European Cinema*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Mar. 2018): 41–54.

October 27: Expanding Interpretations and Collections

Robert Mills, "Queer is Here? Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Histories and Public Culture," *History Workshop Journal*, v. 62, no.1 (Autumn 2006): 253–263.

D. McIntyre, "What to Collect? Museums and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Collecting," *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, v. 26, n. 1 (2007): 48–53.

K. Sender, "Selling Cosmopolitanism: Same-Sex Materials in Museums in Asia, Europe, and the United States," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian & Gay Studies*, v. 26, n. 1 (2020): 35–61.

Kate Davison, "Agents of Social Change? LGBT Voices in Australian Museums," 2011, <http://latrobejournal.slv.vic.gov.au/latrobejournal/issue/latrobe-87/t1-g-t13.html>

Lisa Yun Lee, "Peering Into the Bedroom: Restorative Justice at the Jane Addams Hull House Museum," in *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*, ed. Janet Marstine (New York: Routledge, 2011): 174-187.

Maura Reilly, "Challenging Hetero-Centrism " *On Curating*, v. 37, at <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-37-reader/challenging-hetero-centrism-and-lesbo-homo-phobia-a-history-of-lgbtq-exhibitions-in-the-u-s.html#.YRQhFecpBaQ>

Anthony Tibbles, "Hello Sailor! How Maritime Museums are Addressing the Experience of Gay Seafarers," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, v. 18, no. 2 (2012): 160-173.

Watch: Susan Ferentinos, "How Museums Can Expand Narratives with LGBTQ Interpretation," at: <https://www.museumnext.com/article/museums-expand-narratives-with-lgbt-interpretation/>

Review: [Wearing Gay History](#)
[Museums Australia -- Gay and Lesbian Policy Guidelines](#)
AAM LGBTQ [Alliance Resources and "Welcoming Guidelines,"](#)
[LGBTQ Working Group, Victoria & Albert Museum](#)
[American LGBTQ+ Museum](#)

November 3: Censoring LGBTQ Art and History

Forum Section focused on "Irreverent: A Celebration of Censorship." *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking* 2, no. 3 (2015): 59-99. (Read articles by Jennifer Tyburczy, Barbara Nitke, Alexis Donniss, Kimi Taylor, Michelle Handelman, Baris Barlas, and Hugh Ryan)

Jonathan Katz "Queer Curating and Covert Censorship," *On Curating*, v. 37 at <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-37-reader/queer-curating-and-covert-censorship.html#.YRQgDucpBaQ>

*****November 10: Museums and Sex**

Jennifer Tyburczy, *Sex Museums: the Politics and Performance of Display* (University of Chicago Press, 2015).

November 17: Stonewall in Public Memory

NPS Scholars Workshop, [On the National Significance of the Stonewall Uprising](#) — featuring David Carter, Lillian Faderman, Emily Hobson, Jen Manion and Eric Marcus, October 2017

Lisa Duggan, "'Becoming Visible: The Legacy of Stonewall,' New York Public Library, June 18-September 24, 1994," *Radical History Review*, v. 62 (1995): 188-194.

David Geer and Isaac Pool, "Love + Resistance: Stonewall 50," *QED*, v. 6 no. 2 (Summer 2019): 123-132.

Gabriel Mayora, "Her Stonewall Legend: The Fictionalization of Sylvia Rivera in Nigel Finch's Stonewall," *Centro Journal* 30, (2) (Summer 2018): 452-477.

Shuzhen Huang, "Fifty Years Since Stonewall: Beyond the Borders of the United States," *QED*, v. 6, no. 2 (2019): 69-75.

Megan Crutcher, "Reflections on Stonewall," January 2020, NCPH History @ Work blog, at <https://ncph.org/history-at-work/reflections-on-stonewall/>

Recommended:

Sylvia Rivera, "Y'all Better Quiet Down" Original Authorized Video, 1973 Gay Pride Rally NYC at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jb-JIOWUw1o>

QED, Summer 2019 issue on 50th Anniversary of Stonewall

National Park Service LGBTQ Heritage Theme Study, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbtqthemestudy.htm>

Stonewall has been remembered/retold in several films, including those critiqued by Gabriel Mayora. See also *Screaming Queens* (2005) about 1966 riot at Compton's Cafeteria, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-WASW9dRBU>

[The Stonewall 50 Consortium](#) is a collection of all the institutions with programming built around the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in 2019

[Stonewall National Park Service Site](#), park description and resources

November 24: No class

*****December 1: Remembering AIDS and ACT UP Through Archives and Film**

Sarah Schulman, *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP New York, 1987-1993* (NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021), Preface, and Part I: Change and Power (xiii-xxvii and p. 1-95).

Douglas Crimp, "Mourning and Militancy," *October* 51 (1989): 3-18.

Michael Specter, "In the Midnight Hour: How ACT UP Changed America," *New Yorker*, June 14, 2021, p. 62-68.

Capozzola, Christopher. 2002. "A Very American Epidemic: Memory Politics and Identity Politics in the AIDS Memorial Quilt, 1985--1993." *Radical History Review*, no. 82 (Winter): 91-109.

Roger Hallas, "The Witness in the Archive," *Scholar and Feminist Online*, v. 2 (2003), at <http://sfoonline.barnard.edu/ps/hallas.htm>

Tamara de Szegheo Lang, "Remediating AIDS Archives," *Radical History Review*, no. 140 (May 2021): 207-216.

Recommended Resources:

Films about ACT UP include *How to Survive a Plague* (streaming through GC library); *United in Anger*, and the films analyzed by Lang.

ACT UP Oral History Project at <http://www.actuporalhistory.org>

Podcast on <https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/aids-and-the-politics-of-grief/>

December 8: Wrap Up, Present final projects

December 10: Final projects and papers due