

Latinx Sexualities

CGS/ETHN 187

Fall 2023

Prof. Roy Pérez (he/him/his)

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Class time:

Pepper Canyon Hall room 240

MWF 1:00-1:50pm

Office Hours:

Mondays 2:30-4:30 by appointment via calendly.com/royperez.

Choose Zoom or in person at the Raza Resource Centro Library (Pepper Canyon Hall, Level 2, Room 264)

Please email if none of the available times work for you.

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Course Description:

How does US culture imagine Latinx sexuality? How have Latinx activists, artists, and thinkers interrogated, reclaimed, reimagined, and practiced sex, sexuality, and gender? In this class, we'll examine the representation of Latinx sexuality beginning with colonial encounters in the Americas and ending with contemporary representations and articulations of sexuality by Latinx artists, activists, writers, and thinkers. In this class, the word "Latinx" will be unstable: it can include or compete with Latina, Latino, Latine, Latin@, or Hispanic; Black, Asian, Indigenous, and white Latinx racial formations; and nationally geographically specific identities such as Afro-Dominican, Chicanx, Cuban American, and Puerto Rican (just to name a few). The intersections and contradictions of the word Latinx will be a fundamental problem in our class, and we'll be as specific as possible with each text and context. Some of our guiding questions include: How did European models of gender and sexuality enable imperial expansion? What forms of gender expression and sexuality have been lost (and recovered) since colonization? How have racist representations of Latinx sexuality perpetuated white US nationalism, including white Latinx culture itself? And most importantly, how have feminist, queer, and trans Latinx subjects interrogated the history of Latinx sexuality in order to reclaim and reinvent gender and sexuality for liberation and possibility? As part of the course, we'll also create our own creative engagements with Latinx gender and sexuality through art, writing, and media. Texts will include fiction, plays, poems, graphic novels, scholarly essays, visual art, film, and performance. In our analysis of racial representation, we will draw insights from the fields of gender, sexuality, and queer studies, performance studies, sociology, and literary theory.

Content Advisory:

The material in this class is designed to provoke meaningful conversations about issues of racial difference, gender, sexuality, and other sociopolitical dilemmas. Additionally, many of the topics we'll discuss in this class directly affect the lives of students—including issues of culture, sexual violence, citizenship, disability—and I ask that you be sensitive to this and each other's visible and invisible differences. At times, we may read or view material, like performance art, that is explicit, including profanity and nudity. These artistic strategies are important for understanding the entwined histories of race and sexuality, and we should engage them frankly and analytically, with respect for the emotional reactions we might have. In doing so I ask that you keep an open mind and help foster an intellectually rigorous and respectful level of conversation with these socially complex themes. I will provide trigger warnings whenever possible, and I am open to discussing alternative assignments for you if you are concerned about the content of a text.

Declaring a CGS minor or major:

Many students take a Critical Gender Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a university or college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of *interest* yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. A Critical Gender Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, education, public health, social work, non-profit work and many other careers. If you would like information about the Critical Gender Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Joje Reyes-Alonzo, Critical Gender Studies Program Advisor, via email at cgs@ucsd.edu.

Class Schedule (all PDFs and links on Canvas):

Dates	In-Class Activity	Due
Fri. Sept 29	Introductions, info cards, and ice breakers.	Info Cards
Module 1 Latinx/Latine/Latin@/Latina/o?		
Mon. Oct. 2	Review of reading schedule and course structure. How to Read Theory workshop. Introduction to Theories of Gender unit.	Engagement Journal
Wed. Oct. 4	Catalina de Onís et al, “What’s in an X?” Francisco Galarte, “Coda: Reading with the X”	Engagement Journal
Fri. Oct. 6	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 1
Module 2 Sexual Fantasy and Conquest		
Mon. Oct. 9	Constance Fenimore Woolson, “Felipa” Cartoons/caricatures depicting Latin America. In class: 🎬 Screening: Disney’s <i>The Three Caballeros</i> and <i>I Love Lucy</i>	Engagement Journal
Wed. Oct. 11	Deborah A. Miranda, “Extermination of the <i>Joyas</i> : Gendercide in Spanish California.	Engagement Journal
Fri. Oct. 13	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 2
Module 3		
Mon. Oct. 16	Coco Fusco, “The Other History of Intercultural Performance” 🎬 Screening: Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gomez- Peña, <i>Couple in the Cage</i> (1993) (trigger warning: nudity and sexual content)	Engagement Journal
Wed. Oct. 18	Alan Pelaez Lopez/migrantscribble, <i>Intergalactic Travels: Poems from a Fugitive Alien</i>	Engagement Journal
Fri. Oct. 20	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 3
Module 4 Latina Feminist Theory and Sexual Representation		
Mon. Oct. 23	Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, excerpts from <i>This Bridge Called My Back</i> .	Engagement Journal
Wed. Oct. 25	Cherrie Moraga, “Heroes and Saints” (trigger warning: non-violent sexual content)	Engagement Journal
Fri. Oct. 27	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 4
Module 5		

Mon. Oct. 30	Jillian Hernandez, “Reading Black and Latina Embodiment in Miami”	Engagement Journal
Wed. Nov 1	Juana María Rodríguez, “Carnal Knowledge, Interpretive Practices: Authorizing Vanessa del Rio”	Engagement Journal
Fri. Nov. 3	No Class	Mid-Term Self-Assessment Final Project Proposal Due by 11:59pm
Module 6 Queer Latinidad		
Mon. Nov. 6	Juana Maria Rodriguez, “‘Welcome to the Global Stage’: Confessions of a Latina Cyber-Slut	Engagement Journal
Wed. Nov. 8	Achy Obejas, “Wrecks”	Engagement Journal
Fri. Nov. 10	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 5
Module 7		
Mon. Nov. 13	Jose Esteban Munoz, “Introduction: Performing Disidentifications”	Engagement Journal
Wed. Nov. 15	Karma Chavez, “Coming Out as a Colonial Gesture?”	Engagement Journal
Fri. Nov. 17	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 6
Module 8 Intersexions		
Mon. Nov. 20	Sony Coráñez Bolton, “A Tale of Two ‘X’s: Queer Filipinx and Latinx Linguistic Intimacies”	Engagement Journal
Wed. Nov. 22	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 7
Fri. Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Break	
Module 9		
Mon. Nov. 27	Jaime Cortez, <i>Sexile</i>	Engagement Journal
Wed. Nov. 29	Caleb Luna, <i>Revenge Body</i>	Engagement Journal
Fri. Dec. 1	Virtual Writing Session	Virtual Writing Entry 8
Presentation Week		
Mon. Dec. 4	Presentations	
Wed. Dec. 6	Presentations	
Fri. Dec. 8	Presentations and Farewell Gathering	Final Self-Assessment Due by 11:59pm
Mon Dec 11.	Final Project Due on Canvas by 2:30pm.	

Assignments

Engagement Journal – 30%

At the end of every in-person class session, we will set aside time for everyone to make an entry in their Engagement Journal in the Discussion section of Canvas. Your entry will include the following:

1. 1-3 sentences reflecting on your engagement in class that day: How did you contribute? Were you having an off day, or an especially engaged day? What distractions were you experiencing? How would you like to engage next class? How can the class help you get more engaged?
2. A self-assessment of your engagement, using a 0 (did not engage), 1 (engaged sufficiently), or 2 (especially engaged).

While contributing substantively to class discussion should be your primary goal for engagement, I understand that speaking in class is a stressful mode of engagement for some students, and so I invite you to think about other ways you can engage. These can include: coming to class with a question about the reading prepared in advance, answering a question posed by the professor, discussion in a smaller group during break-out sessions, designated in-class writing time, helping another student with the material, taking thorough notes in class, and “a ha!” moments about the readings or your own assignments.

You will review your Engagement Journal as part of your Mid-Term Self-Assessment and again as part of your Final Self-Assessment, in which you will write about how your engagement evolved over the course of the quarter. Guidelines for the Self-Assessments will be distributed later this quarter and are part of your Engagement Journal grade percentage.

You are allowed two 0 days that will not be counted. These can be days you were in class but were having a rough day, or days that you have to be absent.

Virtual Writing Session Entries – 30%

There are eight (8) Virtual Writing Sessions scheduled this quarter and you are expected to attend a minimum of five (5). These will be held on Zoom during our regular class time and can be accessed through the Zoom link on Canvas.

At these sessions, I will provide optional writing prompts to help you return to the readings and make connections among texts and ideas. We'll write in timed units, with time to chat as a group or one-on-one in a break-out room. At the end of the writing session, you will post a minimum of 500 words to your Virtual Writing Session Entries thread in the Discussion section of Canvas.

Students are welcome to use our regular classroom as a homebase for these sessions, though I will be attending virtually.

You are expected to attend a minimum of 5 of these 8 sessions. Students who attend more than 5 sessions will receive extra credit. Writing session entries can only be completed live during Virtual Writing Session days, must be a minimum of 500 words, and must be submitted by the end of class time in order to be counted.

Final Project Proposal – 10%

Due Friday, November 3, by 11:59pm through the Assignments link on Canvas.

At the middle of the quarter you will submit a proposal for your final project. You will design your own final project choosing from among these options (or proposing your own alternative):

1. A research paper of 6-8 pages (guidelines to be distributed).
2. A creative project in a medium of your choosing, with a 3-page Artist's Statement that engages the learning objectives below as well as at least 2 readings.
3. A social project that can include attending or organizing an activist event, an interview with a family or community member, an excursion to a cultural venue like a museum or theater, or another kind of event you will propose by Nov. 3. This option should include a 5-page report on the event that engages the learning objectives listed below as well as at least 2 readings.

In your mid-term proposal for this project, you will answer the following questions about your proposed project:

1. Describe the form of your project in concrete terms (what is it?): Is it written? Video? An activity? How long will it be? Where will you go? Be as precise as possible, though it's okay if some elements of the idea are still uncertain.
2. How does this project engagement with ideas and readings from the course?
3. What is your goal with this project, not only for satisfying the assignment, but for your own intellectual growth?
4. What original research will you need to undertake to complete this project? Specifically, research outside of our course readings.
5. How will you present your project to the class in our presentation week?
6. Finally, provide a timeline for your project. This will vary according to your projects, but should include dates for the various elements your project will require, including research, draft deadlines, dates of activities, etc.

Final Project Presentation and Submission – 30%

You will be scheduled to present your project to the class on Dec 4, 6, or 8. You will submit your project on Canvas at the end of our schedule final exam period: Monday, Dec. 11, by 2:30pm.

Grade Distribution

Engagement: 30%

You and I will determine your engagement grade on an A-F scale together using your Engagement Journal scores (0-2) and Self-Assessments.

Virtual Writing Session Entries: 30%

Five complete writing session entries of 500 words or more submitted on time the day of the session will receive full credit. Additional entries will receive a .25% extra credit toward your final grade in the class.

Writing session entries can only be completed live during Virtual Writing Session days, must be a minimum of 500 words, and must be submitted by the end of class time in order to be counted. You cannot make up writing session entries, but you are permitted 3 no-shows.

Final Project Proposal: 10%

Due Friday November 3, by 11:59pm. I will grade your proposal on an A-F scale using the distributed guidelines.

Final Project Presentation and Submission: 30%

Presentations Dec. 4, 6, and 8. Final due Dec. 11 by 2:30pm.

A note on attendance:

You are allowed two 0s in your engagement journal that will be tossed out as part of your final grade, as well as 3 absences from a total 8 Virtual Writing Sessions. That is a total of 5 class sessions that you can be absent this quarter with no penalty. Please use these wisely, reserving some for emergencies.

Final Grade Rubric:

Grade	Points
A+	97-105
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	0-59

Course Resources and Policies

Class Accessibility and Inclusion:

I am committed to meeting the learning needs of all class participants. If, at any point in the term, you find yourself not able to fully access the technology, content, and experience of this course, you are welcome (and not required) to contact me by email or during office hours to discuss your specific needs. If you have a medical condition or disability, you may wish to contact the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), which is located in University Center 202 behind Center Hall: 858-534-4382; (TTY) – reserved for people who are deaf or hard of hearing; or email: osd@ucsd.edu. If you prefer to be called by a different name or referred to as a different gender than the one under which you are officially enrolled, please inform me so that we can adjust accordingly. If you are struggling, confused, or have fallen behind in class, it is always your right and responsibility as a student to meet with me so that we can strategize about how to address your concerns.

Sexual Misconduct:

Experiencing sexual harassment or other forms of sexual misconduct during your studies, including online, can be a profoundly marginalizing experience. As a member of faculty, I am a mandated Title IX reporter: this means that if I am told of an incident of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse I am required to report this to the university's Title IX coordinator. Should you want to speak to a confidential source, the following is an initial list of possible resources:

- You may contact the Counseling Center.
- The Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD <http://ophd.ucsd.edu>) provides information and assistance to students, faculty, and staff regarding reports of bias, discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.
- Students may receive confidential assistance at CARE at the Sexual Assault Resource Center at (sarc@ucsd.edu or <http://care.ucsd.edu>) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAP <http://caps.ucsd.edu>).

If you have other local resources to add to this list, and which may be useful to other students, please share them.

Academic Integrity:

I expect the most rigorous and honest work from you. This means I am willing to meet you at your level of preparation and that I hope you will feel comfortable reaching out to me if you are having trouble writing and reading for this class. This also means that I expect you to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. See UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship (<https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>).

A Note On Reading “Theory”

Theory is an effort by scholars to make sense of phenomena for which we don't yet have sufficient language. For this reason, reading theory can feel difficult, and the writing can seem unnecessarily complicated. However, the underlying premise of this class is that theory is worthwhile, so it is helpful to think about why and how we read theory. Below are some tips:

- **Be easy on yourself.** You might feel lost sometimes, and things might not make sense until class discussion (and still might not after). Grasping theory is an iterative process, which means ideas get stated over and over in different ways. Ideas evolve within an essay and from one essay to the next. For example, Judith Butler re-wrote many of her ideas from *Gender Trouble* in a later book, *Bodies that Matter*, because she felt many readers had misunderstood her thesis. She became a better writer and had new tools at her disposal, having established a conversation with the first book.
- **Theory is a poetic practice and an imaginative endeavor.** Theory is an imaginative endeavor. Style and language matter to theorists in ways that they might not to a scholar whose goal is to transmit data or information. Sometimes this gets in the way of clarity; or rather, in theoretical writing, clarity isn't always immediate and may require effort. Moreover, some theory is translated (sometimes poorly), or is poorly written and yet important, or very well-written but the ideas are unremarkable. Gaining clarity is something we do with the writer as best we can.
- **Reading closely and actively is more important than reading completely.** When time and energy are tight, you can get more out of working closely with five pages than you might pushing through 50. Make the most with what you are able to read in the amount of time you have.
- **Reading actively includes the following:** marking passages that are extra confusing or extra clear; writing notes in margins or in a notebook; establishing a practice of jumping around the reading including to the footnotes and back to passages you've already read; capturing questions as they cross your mind (these are great for discussion because such questions are closer to the text—less abstract and general), and finally, *writing* (in complete sentences) about the reading is enormously helpful and useful for later assignments.
- **Theory is a cumulative process.** This means that language we have now didn't exist when the authors were writing, and many of these authors gave us the language we have now. It also means that theory is a conversation, not a singular thesis: ideas move and change as writers take up each other's work and mold ideas.
- **Find and follow pleasure where you can.** Some ideas will blow your mind, so track down those conversations and read more about those ideas. You won't connect with all theory, but pay attention to your gut when you do connect. You'll write better about stuff you like.