



**Course** ATCM 4334.001  
**Course Title** Topics in Critical Media Studies: Queer and Trans Media Cultures  
**Professor** Dr. Josef Nguyen (he/him/his)  
**Term** Fall 2021  
**Meetings** Mondays, 4:00-6:45PM in ATC 2.918

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### Professor's Contact Information

**Email Address** [jdn160330@utdallas.edu](mailto:jdn160330@utdallas.edu)  
Please allow up to 24 hours for responses to emails  
**Office Location** ATC 3.617  
**Office Hours** By appointment  
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### General Course Information

**Restrictions** Prerequisite: ATCM 2320, 2321, or 2322 *OR* Instructor Permission

**Description** This course explores how media technologies reinforce, challenge, and negotiate normative understandings and practices of gender and sexuality. In particular, this course provides an introduction to queer and trans theory in and through critical media studies, focusing on media production and consumption as key cultural practices in how we constitute and potentially reimagine gender, sexuality, and the worlds they shape.

**Learning Outcomes** Students will:

- Understand a range of topics at the interface of critical media studies and queer and trans studies/theory
- Become familiar with how queer and trans media producers and audiences negotiate normative gender and sexuality, including in relation to other axes of difference, such as race, class, ability, etc.
- Develop facility in sociohistorically situated close textual analysis of media of various forms and formats
- Advance proficiencies in critical thinking, research, and writing
- Incorporate insights from existing scholarship and media production into their own research and creative practice

**Required Texts & Materials** *But I'm a Cheerleader* (Jamie Babbit, 1999)  
Subscription or access to Netflix  
Selected films are available through the university library via Kanopy.  
All other readings, media, and materials are available online through Box.

Assignment submissions are handled on Box.

Course announcements are handled on eLearning, email, and Discord.

Discord will be used as an optional tool to facilitate community during and outside of class. To request to join the class Discord server, please email the instructor.

**Course Policies**

<b>Grading</b>	Thoughtful Class Engagement	45%
<b>Criteria</b>	Queer and Trans Media Cultures Journal	15%
	Midterm Paper	15%
	Final Project	25%

**Accommodation** Students with disabilities are encouraged to utilize the on-campus resources at the Office of Student AccessAbility. You can contact the office at 972-883-6104 or by email: [studentaccessability@utdallas.edu](mailto:studentaccessability@utdallas.edu). Their office is located in the Student Service Building (SSB), suite 3.200. They can provide documentation and details for accommodations to address your individual needs. If you need any special accommodations to complete this course successfully, please provide me with this information as soon as possible, so we can make appropriate arrangements.

**Classroom Conduct** It is our responsibility to work together to produce a classroom environment where everyone can share, discuss, and question the materials at hand as well as contribute their own work respectfully and productively. Conflicting perspectives are unavoidable. To ensure that participants feel comfortable contributing a diverse set of thoughts, comments, and views, we will not use oppressive or harmful language, tolerate harassment, personal attacks, and other forms of actions that unduly distract from the educational mission and inflict emotional, physical, or psychological harm on those involved.

Part of the role of encouraging a diverse learning environment is acknowledging that individuals should feel safe and respected to contribute to the classroom in good faith. This involves not only allowing everyone opportunities to contribute their thoughts but to be mindful of how we recognize and address others. Do not assume things about others' identities, backgrounds, or experiences—whether that is age, race, gender, sexuality, ability, class, etc... Address people by their names, pronouns, and other identifiers that they disclose. Avoid insisting on imposing identity markers onto others. Allow people to self-identify as they feel comfortable.

What you share with and create for this class reflects not only you as both a student and a civic subject, but it also reflects on me as your instructor, the class as a learning community, and UT Dallas as an academic institution.

Please discuss with me any concerns you have regarding an unsafe or hostile classroom environment, particularly if something arises that causes distress.

**Requirements Related to Public Health Measures** UT Dallas will follow the public health and safety guidelines put forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and local public health agencies that are in effect at that time during the Fall 2021 semester. Please consult [\[utdallas.edu/covid/\]](https://utdallas.edu/covid/).

**Class Attendance** Attend class regularly and in full. Any absences should include documentation of a valid excuse (family or medical emergency, for example). Unexcused absences may impact course grades. Discuss upcoming potential absences with me to make appropriate arrangements.

Arriving more than 30 minutes late or leaving more than 30 minutes early, without prior clearance, may be grounds for marking that day as an absence. Failure to prepare for class participation (such as not having done the necessary reading) will also be regarded as conditions for an absence.

- Technology in the Classroom** Laptops and computers can be used in the classroom solely for purposes directly pertinent to the activities and discussions at-hand. Excessive misuse of technology in the classroom will result in an absence for the day.
- Class Materials** The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- Class Recordings** Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- Late Work** Late work will be penalized 10% (a full letter grade) for each 24-hour period beyond the deadline and will not receive written feedback by default. For written feedback on a late assignment, please send an email request. If you need an extension, let me know in advance so we can make arrangements.
- Academic Honesty** All work must be original for this class. Plagiarism is using the words and materials of others as if they were your own. It is a serious offense with consequences. Use proper citation to indicate the use of other people's work to strengthen your own. All suspicions of plagiarism will be investigated. Please consult [[utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/gspolDishonesty.htm](http://utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/gspolDishonesty.htm)].
- Comet Creed** *This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."*
- Academic Support Resources** *The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please go to [[go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources](http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources)].*
- UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures** *The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) grading option and withdrawal from class. Please go to [[go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies](http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies)] for these policies.*

**Assignments & Academic Calendar**

**Week 01: Monday, 23 August 2021**

**Getting Started** IN CLASS:

Overview of Syllabus and Class Protocol  
Introduce Queer and Trans Media Cultures Journal  
Introductory Discussion on Redefining Queer and Trans

**Week 02: Monday, 30 August 2021**

**Queer(ing)** BEFORE CLASS:

**Subjects, Part I** READ: Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory”

WATCH: *Paris Is Burning* (Jennie Livingston, 1990), [Kanopy]

WATCH: *Girlhood* (Céline Sciamma, 2014), [Kanopy]

**Week 03: Monday, 6 September 2021**

**LABOR DAY** **NO CLASS MEETING**

**Week 04: Monday, 13 September 2021**

**Queer(ing)** BEFORE CLASS:

**Subjects, Part II** READ: Jenny Sundén, “On Trans-, Glitch, and Gender as Machinery of Failure,” [[firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5895](http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5895)]

READ: Julian Kevon Glover, “Redefining Realness?: On Janet Mock, Laverne Cox, TS Madison, and the Representation of Transgender Women of Color in Media”

WATCH: *Dirty Computer* [Emotion Picture] (Janelle Monáe, 2018), [[youtube.com/watch?v=jdH2Sy-BINE](https://youtube.com/watch?v=jdH2Sy-BINE)]

PLAY: *Cyborg Goddess* (Kara Stone and Kayte McKnight, 2014), [[karastone.itch.io/cyborg-goddess](http://karastone.itch.io/cyborg-goddess)]

**Week 05: Monday, 20 September 2021**

**Beginnings –** BEFORE CLASS:

**Closets and** READ: Eve Sedgwick, “Epistemology of the Closet,” *Epistemology of the Closet*

**Coming Out** PLAY: *Coming Out Simulator 2014* (Nicky Case, 2014), [[ncase.itch.io/coming-out-simulator-2014](http://ncase.itch.io/coming-out-simulator-2014)]

WATCH: *One Day at a Time*, Season 1, Episode 11: “Pride & Prejudice” (Netflix, 2017-2019; Pop 2020), [Netflix]

WATCH: *Schitt’s Creek*, Season 5, Episode 11: “Meet the Parents” (PopTV, 2015-2020), [Netflix]

**Week 06: Monday, 27 September 2021**

**Ends – Death and** BEFORE CLASS:

**Dying** READ: José Esteban Muñoz, “Pedro Zamora’s *Real World of* Counterpublicity: Performing an Ethics of the Self,”

*Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*

READ: Elizabeth Bridges, “A Genealogy of Queerbaiting: Legal Codes, Production Codes, ‘Bury Your Gays’ and ‘The 100 Mess’”

WATCH: *Call Her Ganda* (PJ Raval, 2018), [Kanopy] (contains transphobia and anti-trans violence)

PLAY: *We Are Here Because of Those That Are Not* (Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley, 2020), [[blacktransarchive.itch.io/transarchive](http://blacktransarchive.itch.io/transarchive)]

(contains flashing images and disorienting visuals)

IN CLASS:

Introduce Midterm Paper

**Week 07: Monday, 4 October 2021**  
**MIDTERM NO CLASS MEETING**  
**Midterm Paper due Monday, 4 October 2021 by 11:59PM**

**Week 08: Monday, 11 October 2021**  
**Desiring Queer Media, Part I**  
BEFORE CLASS:  
READ: bell hooks, “The Oppositional Gaze,” *Black Looks: Race and Representation*  
READ: Briana Lawrence, “Marginalized Audiences Are Allowed to Have Differing Opinions on Stories that Focus on Them and Their Experiences,” [[themarysue.com/marginalized-different-opinions/](http://themarysue.com/marginalized-different-opinions/)]  
WATCH: *The Watermelon Woman* (Cheryl Dunye, 1996), [Kanopy]  
WATCH: *Pose*, Season 2, Episode 9: “Life’s a Beach” (FX, 2018-2021), [Netflix]

IN CLASS:

Introduce Final Project

**Week 09: Monday, 18 October 2021**  
**Desiring Queer Media, Part II**  
BEFORE CLASS:  
READ: Mark Doty, “There’s Something Queer Here,” *Making Things Perfectly Queer*  
READ: Amber Muller, “Queering *Girl Talk* (*The Board Game*),” [[analoggamestudies.org/2015/07/queering-girl-talk-the-board-game/](http://analoggamestudies.org/2015/07/queering-girl-talk-the-board-game/)]  
WATCH: Amanda Phillips, “Bayonetta, Femme Disturbance, and AAA Queer Desires,” [[mediacommons.org/imr/2014/11/05/bayonetta-femme-disturbance-and-aaa-queer-desires](http://mediacommons.org/imr/2014/11/05/bayonetta-femme-disturbance-and-aaa-queer-desires)] (contains quick cuts and flashing images)  
READ: Sarah Karlan, “22 Queer Non-Canon Ships Worth Losing All Your Sleep Over,” [[buzzfeed.com/skarlan/ship-a-ship](http://buzzfeed.com/skarlan/ship-a-ship)]

**Week 10: Monday, 25 October 2021**  
**Camp and Excess**  
BEFORE CLASS:  
READ: Susan Sontag, “Notes on ‘Camp,’” *Against Interpretation*  
READ: micha cárdenas, “Blah, Blah, Blah: Ke\$ha Feminism?”  
WATCH: *But I’m a Cheerleader* (Jamie Babitt, 1999), [Student Is Responsible for Acquiring]  
PLAY: *Cry\$tal Warrior Ke\$ha* (Porpentine, 2013), [[slimeddaughter.com/games/twine/kesha/](http://slimeddaughter.com/games/twine/kesha/)]

**Week 11: Monday, 1 November 2021**  
**Histories and Archives** BEFORE CLASS:  
READ: Cait McKinney, “Crisis Infrastructures: AIDS Activism Meets Internet Regulation,” *AIDS and the Distribution of Crisis* (eds. Jih-Fei Cheng, Alexandra Juhasz, Nishant Shahani)  
READ: Whitney Pow, “A Trans Historiography of Glitches and Errors”  
EXPLORE: LGBTQ Video Game Archive (Adrienne Shaw, 2015–Present), [[lgbtqgamearchive.com/](http://lgbtqgamearchive.com/)]  
Watch: *I Remember Dancing* (Nguyen Tan Hoang, 2019), [[artforum.com/video/nguyen-tan-hoang-i-remember-dancing-2019-81496](http://artforum.com/video/nguyen-tan-hoang-i-remember-dancing-2019-81496)]

**Week 12: Monday, 8 November 2021**  
**Refusals** BEFORE CLASS:  
READ: Elizabeth Freeman, “Queer and Not Now,” *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*  
READ: Lee Edelman, “The Future Is Kid Stuff,” *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*  
WATCH: *The Half of It* (Alice Wu, 2020), [Netflix]  
WATCH: “Montero (Call Me by Your Name)” (Lil Nas X and Tanu Muino, 2021), [[youtube.com/watch?v=6swmTBVI83k](https://youtube.com/watch?v=6swmTBVI83k)]

**Week 13: Monday, 15 November 2021**  
**Utopias** BEFORE CLASS:  
READ: José Esteban Muñoz, “Feeling Utopia,” *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*  
READ: Cael M. Keegan, “Emptying the Future: Queer Melodramatics and Negative Utopia in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*”  
PLAY: *Queer Power* (Molleindustria, 2004), [[molleindustria.org/en/queer-power/](http://molleindustria.org/en/queer-power/)] (NSFW)  
PLAY: *Queers in Love at the End of the World* (Anna Anthropy, 2013), [[w.itch.io/end-of-the-world](http://w.itch.io/end-of-the-world)]

**Week 14: Monday, 22 November 2021 – Friday, 26 November 2021**  
**FALL BREAK NO CLASS MEETING**

**Week 15: Monday, 29 November 2021**  
**Workshop** IN CLASS:  
Workshop Draft of Final Project

**Week 16: Monday, 6 December 2021**  
**Futures** IN CLASS:  
Class Wrap-up

**FINALS WEEK Final Project due Wednesday, 15 December 2021 by 11:59PM**

*The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*