

FW 2024-25

AP/EN 4192 6.0A (Y)	Gay Male Literature
Course Director:	Thomas Loebel Office: Atkinson 706 e-mail: loebel@yorku.ca Office hours: M 2:30 – 3:30 or by appointment
Time:	Monday 11:30 – 2:30
Delivery Format:	SEMINAR
Description:	<p>Gay male literature and its history forms only one part of the cultures of a 2SLGBTQ+ community, albeit a long and important one in the ever-reconfiguring world of heteronormativity. In an age of “don’t say gay” legislation and the criminalization of gay life in an increasing number of countries worldwide, taking a specialist approach to the study of gay male literature feels more urgent and political than minoritizing and exclusionary at this moment. But a specialist approach involves critical examination, for instance, of cis-gender homosexuality and where gay male thought works within the binaristic onto-logic of heteronormativity, whether emulating, appropriating and revising, or simply opposing it. Perhaps too simply put: <i>gay</i> isn’t always super <i>queer</i>, but when is, it’s runs the gamut of outrageously fabulous to strategically elusive, while otherwise finding ways of stitching itself between norms. By bringing together a diversity of texts, this course explores the complex aesthetics and politics of various inter-relations, including generation, race, nation, religion, class, sex, and body type.</p> <p>In a 4000-level literature course, necessarily we will pay close attention to literary elements, including generic and formal distinctions and novelties, syntax, diction, tone, and style – in part to inquire as to whether there is such a thing as gay male aesthetics, but also to develop our own skills when perceiving, thinking, writing, and speaking. Assignment formats, for instance, aim to promote how seminar participants want to develop as a thinkers and communicators; for instance, as academic researchers, critics and public intellectuals, creative writers and artists.</p> <p>Important: Because of the realities of gay male history, the content of many of the works in this course can be challenging emotionally. There are explicit renditions of sexual, physical, verbal and emotional violence, including racism, anti-religion, as well as the negative effects of trauma and the long road of working through trauma. From “coming out” narratives to</p>

	<p>dealing with the reality of the AIDS crisis and its uneven, shifting aftermath (sexual, psychological, political, economic, ideational as well as ideological, and very much generational), the literary works can present a minefield of triggers to many readers. The presence of explicitly sexual material can be challenging for some readers, yet simultaneously liberating and necessary for others. All of what is hard to process exists side-by-side with euphoria, joy, great humour, and world-affirming models of friendship. Even these, however, may induce melancholia and sadness to some people as ideals not yet part of one's life. Fear of and concern over the minefield are valid. This course, however, seeks to provide the most supportive place for navigating the minefield with expert guides and diversely knowledgeable peers.</p>
Category:	B
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	<p>Idea Expansion 10%</p> <p>Scene Analysis 15%</p> <p>Seminar Presentation + write-up 20%</p> <p>Research Paper or Creative Work with annotated research bibliography 35%</p> <p>Review article/blog/vlog 20%</p>
Reading List:	<p>André Aciman, <i>Call Me by Your Name</i> (2007)</p> <p>James Baldwin, <i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> (1954)</p> <p>Leo Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave" (1987) & "The Gay Daddy" (1995)</p> <p>Mart Crowley, <i>The Boys in the Band</i> (1968)</p> <p>Samuel Delaney, "Times Square Red" (1999)</p> <p>E. M. Forster, <i>Maurice</i> (1914 / 1971)</p> <p>Sigmund Freud, <i>Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality</i> (1905/1915) excerpts)</p> <p>Andrew Holleran, <i>Dancer from the Dance</i> (1978)</p> <p>Larry Kramer, <i>The Normal Heart</i> (1985)</p> <p>Matthew Lopez, <i>The Inheritance I & II</i> (2018)</p> <p>Thomas Mann, "Death in Venice" (1912)</p> <p>Bruce Nugent, "Smoke, Lilies and Jade" (1926)</p> <p>Plato, <i>Symposium</i> (385-370 BC)</p> <p>Manuel Puig, <i>Kiss of the Spider Woman</i> (1976)</p> <p>Abdella Taïa, <i>Infidels</i> (2016)</p> <p>Brandon Taylor, <i>The Late Americans</i> (2023)</p> <p>Justin Torres, <i>Blackouts</i> (2024)</p> <p>Ocean Vuong, <i>On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous</i> (2019)</p> <p>Selected poetry by Francisco X. Alarcón, Thom Gunn, Randall Mann, Joshua Nguyen, Ocean Vuong and others.</p> <p>Additional materials may be added via eClass.</p>
Open To:	Yr 4 Honours (EN, ENPR, CRWR, SXST, WMST, GWST students only)