

Trans and LGBTQ+ Autonomy and Equality: A Syllabus from the History Department of the University of North Texas

Course Description:

This resource syllabus presents a curriculum on the history of variation in gender and sexuality. It starts with free, accessible materials about trans-related expression, hostility to gender variation, and trans activism anchored in broader U.S. LGBTQ+ history. Then the syllabus points out some of the best historical works in LGBTQ+ history for the U.S. and the world as a living syllabus, which faculty can update with their favorites.

The field of history is too often confined to an analysis of the past. Historical study, however, reveals the roots and patterns of problematic aspects of the present, making the past extremely relevant to the current status of LGBTQ+ lives and how we can take practical steps toward an affirming society. History Department faculty designed this syllabus to reach beyond UNT to any continuing learner. Learners can use it to devise methods to critically understand transphobia and homophobia, and to undermine violence and complacency within biased structures. The educational process begins with listening to those who are most affected. The list of course materials here (online, in print, and organizations) amplifies LGBTQ+ voices while placing the work of education in the hands of individuals. Provided below are accessible histories on ways authorities have condemned variation by gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation as sinful, criminal, and mentally ill. There are sources about activism and how to become an intentional, productive ally in uprooting such entrenched ideologies.

Course Learning Objectives:

After engaging with the resources listed below continuing learners:

1. Will recognize LGBTQ terms and be able to explain the significance of varied ways of understanding gender and sexuality.
2. Will be able to summarize how and why transphobia and homophobia have shaped American gender and sexuality norms.
3. Will recognize and be able to describe their personal position and measure of privilege within U.S. gender and sexuality systems that link to other hierarchies.
4. Will have holistic understanding from history to apply to do active ally work.

Course Materials:

1. **Start with these free, accessible materials about trans-related expression, hostility to gender variation, and trans activism in broader U.S. LGBTQ+ history.**
 - a. Why is it important that terms change over time?
 - b. Consider the significance of varied ways of understanding gender and sexuality among Indigenous peoples and the suppression of variation by European and American colonists.
 - c. What do 19th-century children's books tell us about views and practices of gender?
 - d. What did trans Americans like Alan Hart, Reed Erickson, Sylvian Rivera, and Marsha Johnson do for their own well-being and to contribute to society? How does Willi Ninja's life connect us to past cultural and social history?

Free Online Trans History within LGBTQ+ History

[Terminology](#) from Trans Student Educational Resources

[Overview of LGBTQ+ history](#): Clark A. Pomerleau, “U.S. LGBTQ History,” Deborah Amory and Sean Massey, eds., *Introduction to LGBTQ+ Studies: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach* (SUNY Press, 2022).

[Lecture about historical views of gender and transgender](#): Professor Susan Stryker, “Transgender Histories: From Sickness to Citizenship?” (2016. 77 min.)

[Podcast](#): Want to know more about Dr. Stryker, how terms have changed, the importance of intersectional feminism, and the persistence of trans history? *Graying Rainbows*, episode 12: Susan Stryker, author of *Transgender History* (2019. 55 min.)

[Transgender U.S. History Chronology](#), *OutHistory*

[European explorer accounts did not understand](#) Indigenous gender or sexuality systems: “Native Americans/LGBTQ+ Americans: 1528-1976,” *OutHistory*

[Children’s books about gender transgression in pre-Civil War America](#): Jen Manion, “Transgender Children in Antebellum America,” *OutHistory*

[Short article on trans man Alan Hart who transitioned in 1917](#): Ari Mejia, “Alan L. Hart,” *OutHistory*

[Short article on El Paso trans man Reed Erickson](#): Ada Bello, “Reed Erickson,” *OutHistory*

[Video about 1966 trans activism](#): KQED, “Screaming Queens”: Trans struggle at Compton’s Cafeteria against police brutality (2005. 56 min.).

[Sources on 1969-1970 trans activism](#): Trans Activist History Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) 1970 document descriptions and audio clips

[Short article on Harlem Drag Ball voguer](#): Ana Herrera, “Willi Ninja: Voguing Butch Queen,” *OutHistory*

Consider putting your knowledge of trans history in the context of U.S. LGBTQ+ history by exploring these free, online sources.

2. How has homophobia shaped American gender and sexuality norms?
3. What have LGBTQ+ Americans done to live with autonomy and equality?

Free Online LGBTQ+ History

Overviews

GLBTQ: [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer Encyclopedia](#)

Jonathan Ned Katz’ [OutHistory](#)

People with a History: [An Online Guide to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans* History](#)

Library of Congress: [LGBTQIA+ Studies: A Resource Guide](#)

Videos, Podcasts, and Oral History Projects

Making Gay History [Podcast](#)

StoryCorps: Outloud is an NPR project to record LGBTQ elders’ stories with [some featured stories](#)

LGBTQ History Digital Collaboratory is a guide to [over 40 digital oral history collections](#)

AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, New York [ACT UP Oral History Project](#)

LGBTQ Religious Archives Network [Oral Histories](#)

University of North Texas [Oral History Collection](#) includes Dallas LGBTQ Interviews *to access in person*

Online Primary Sources and Archives

Digital Transgender Archive, [Trans History, Linked](#)

GLBT Historical Society [Online Collections](#)

Lesbian Herstory [Digital Archive](#)

Bay Area Reporter [1971-2005 Archive](#)

Independent Voices: An Open Access Collection of an Alternative Press – [LGBT periodicals](#)
New York Public Library [Digital Collections](#)
LGBT History in Government Documents: [Timeline of Viewable Documents](#)
University of North Texas [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Archive](#)
Society of American Archivists: Diverse Sexuality and Gender Division: Lavender Legacies [by state](#)
ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives [at the USC Libraries](#)
The June L. Mazer [Lesbian Archives](#)
The LGBT Community Center [National History Archive](#)

Dive deeper with books and articles by professional historians on trans-related and LGBTQ history. For example, if you are particularly interested in the history of trans children, consider Julian Gill-Peterson's [Histories of the Transgender Child](#) (2018) about children facing transphobia and racism for over one hundred years.

4. What is your personal position and measure of privilege within American hierarchical systems?
5. How can you apply this holistic understanding from history to do active ally work?

U.S. Reading List

Histories of Affirming Gender Variation and Same-Gender Affection

Jen Manion, *Female Husbands: A Trans History* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Harvard University Press, 2004).

Will Roscoe, *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

Susan Stryker, *Transgender History: The Roots of Today's Revolution* (Seal Studies, 2017).

William E. Benemann, *Male-Male Intimacy in Early America: Beyond Romantic Friendships* (Routledge, 2006).

Julio Capo, *Welcome to Fairyland: Queer Miami before 1940* (U. of North Carolina, 2017).

George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (Basic Books, 1995).

Rachel Hope Cleves, *Charity & Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America* (Oxford, 2014).

Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (Columbia University Press, 2012).

John Howard, *Men Like That: A Southern Queer History* (U. of Chicago, 2001).

Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Chris Packard, *Queer Cowboys: And Other Erotic Male Friendships in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Leila Rupp, *A Desired Past: A Short History of Same-Sex Love in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America." *Signs* 1, no. 1 (1975): 1–29. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3172964>.

Martha Vicinus, *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women, 1778-1928* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Histories of Transphobia and Homophobia

Reina Gossett, ed., *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility* (The MIT Press, 2017).

Vivian Namaste, *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People* (University of Chicago Press, 2000).

Julian Gill-Peterson, *Histories of the Transgender Child* (University of Minnesota Press, 2018).

C. Riley Snorton, *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity* (University of Minnesota Press, 2017).

Susan Stryker, *Transgender History: The Roots of Today's Revolution* (Seal Studies, 2017).

Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

Casey Charles, *The Sharon Kowalski Case: Lesbian and Gay Rights on Trial* (University Press of Kansas, 2003).

Martin Duberman, *Cures: A Gay Man's Odyssey* (Basic Books, 1991).

Jay Hatheway, *The Gilded Age Construction of American Homophobia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America* (State University of New York Press, 2012).

LGBTQ+ Activism and Community

J. Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York University Press, 2005).

Allan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (Free Press, 1990).

Dale Carpenter, *Flagrant Conduct: The Story of Lawrence v. Texas* (Norton, 2013).

David Carter, *Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution* (St. Martin's Press, 2010).

Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney, *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America* (Simon and Schuster, 2001).

John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (University of Chicago Press, 2004).

John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (University of Chicago Press, 1998).

Jim Downs, *Stand By Me: The Forgotten History of Gay Liberation* (Basic, 2016).

Martin Baumi Duberman, *Stonewall* (Plume, 1994).

Lillian Faderman, *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* (Simon and Schuster, 2016).

Lillian Faderman, *Harvey Milk: His Lives and Death* (Yale University Press, 2018).

Marcia M. Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement* (Seal Press, 2007).

Deborah B. Gould, *Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP's Fight Against AIDS* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

David K. Johnson, *Buying Gay: How Physique Entrepreneurs Sparked a Movement* (Columbia University Press, 2019).

Cleve Jones, *When We Rise: My Life in the Movement* (Hachette, 2016).

Aaron Lecklider, *Love's Next Meeting: The Forgotten History of Homosexuality and the Left in American Culture* (University of California Press, 2021).

Craig M. Loftin, *Letters to ONE: Gay and Lesbian Voices from the 1950s and 1960s* (State University of New York Press, 2012).

Eric Marcus, *Making Gay History: The Half Century Fight for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights* (Harper, 2002).

Kevin Mumford, *Not Straight, Not White: Black Gay Men from the March on Washington to the AIDS Crisis* (University of North Carolina, 2019).

Randy Shilts, *The Mayor of Castro Street: The Life and Times of Harvey Milk* (St. Martin's, 2008).

Timothy Stewart-Winter, *Queer Clout: Chicago and the Rise of Gay Politics* (University of Penn., 2017).

Brock Thompson, *The Un-Natural State: Arkansas and the Queer South* (University of Arkansas Press, 2010).

Religion and the LGBTQ+ Community

Daniel A. Helminiak, *What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality* (Alamo Square Press, 2000).

Troy D. Perry and Thomas L. P. Spicewood, *Don't Be Afraid Anymore: The Story of Reverend Troy Perry and the Metropolitan Community Churches* (St. Martin's Press, 1992).

Matthew Vines, *God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships* (Convergent Books, 2015).

We encourage you to study beyond the United States context. This syllabus developed to address current conditions in the U.S., but world events affect the past and present. This syllabus is a living document to which our History faculty can contribute further scholarship. LGBTQ+ history is fascinating everywhere and cultural views in the world affect Americans through immigration and media. Here are some great articles and books to get you started.

6. What terms and ways of understanding gender and sexuality do you encounter here?
7. How and why have transphobia and homophobia shaped these countries' gender and sexuality norms?

LGBTQ+ History in the World Reading List

Articles and Open Access

[Notches: Blog on the Histories of Sexuality](#) (peer-reviewed blog that covers all periods, regions, genders, sexualities, etc.).

Journal Special Issue: "Visions of Medieval Trans Feminism", ed. by Dorothy Kim and M.W. Bychowski, *Medieval Feminist Forum*, 55:1 (2019), all articles are [open access](#).

Journal Special Issue: "[Early Modern Trans Studies](#)", ed. by Simone Chess, Colby Gordon, and Will Fisher, *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 19:4 (2019).

Evelyn Blackwood, "Gender Transgression in Colonial and Postcolonial Indonesia." *The Journal of Asian Studies*.

M.W. Bychowski, Howard Chiang, Jack Halberstam, Jacob Lau, Kathleen P. Long, Marcia Ochoa, and C. Riley Snorton, "[Trans* Historicities: A Roundtable Discussion](#)", *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 5:4 (2018), 658-85.

Adnan Hossein, "De-Indianizing Hijra: Intra-regional Effacements and Inequalities in South Asian Queer Space."

Kate Imy, "Kidnapping and a 'Confirmed Sodomite': An Intimate Enemy on the Northwest Frontier of India, 1915-1925," *Twentieth Century British History*, 28.1 (2017): 29-56.

Kate Imy, "Queering the Martial Races: Masculinity, Sex and Circumcision in the Twentieth-Century British Indian Army," *Gender and History*, 27.2 (August 2015): 374-396.

Tamara Loos, "Transnational Histories of Sexualities in Asia," *The American Historical Review*.

Marilyn Morris, "The Chevalière d'Eon, Transgender Autobiography and Identity," *Gender and History* 31.1 (March 2019): 78-90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0424.12405>.

Books

Anjali Arondekar, *For the Record: On Sexuality and the Colonial Archive in India*.

Sa'ed Atshan, *Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique* (Stanford University Press).

Evelyn Blackwood and Saskia E. Wieringa, eds. *Female Desires: Same-Sex Relations and Transgender Practices Across Cultures*.

John Boswell, *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982).

Howard Chiang, *After Eunuchs: Science, Medicine, and the Transformation of Sex in Modern China*.

Leah DeVun, *The Shape of Sex: Nonbinary Gender from Genesis to the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021).

Gary Ferguson, *Same-Sex Marriage in Renaissance Rome: Sexuality, Identity, and Community in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016).

Louise Fradenburg and Carla Freccero, eds., *Premodern Sexualities* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

Dina Georgis, *The Better Story: Queer Affects from the Middle East* (Syracuse University Press).

Noreen Giffney, Michelle M. Sauer, Diane Watt, eds., *The Lesbian Premodern* (New York: Palgrave, 2011).

Jonathan Goldberg, ed., [*Queering the Renaissance*](#) (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).
Jessica Hinchy, *Governing Gender and Sexuality in Colonial India: The Hijra, c. 1850–1900*.
Ula Lukszo Klein, *Sapphic Crossings: Cross-Dressing Women in Eighteenth-Century British Literature* (U. of Virginia Press, 2021).
Ian McCormick, *Secret Sexualities: A Sourcebook of 17th and 18th Century Writing* (Routledge, 1997).
Rachel Mesch, *Before Trans: Three Gender Stories from Nineteenth-Century France*.
Ghassan Moussawi, *Disruptive Situations: Fractal Orientalism and Queer Strategies in Beirut* (Temple University Press).
Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Professing Selves: Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Iran* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).
Anna Klosowska Roberts, [*Queer Love in the Middle Ages*](#) (New York: Palgrave, 2005).
Khaled al-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800* (University of Chicago Press).
Chelsea Shields and Dagmar Herzog, *The Routledge Companion to Sexuality and Colonialism* (Routledge, 2021).
Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt, eds., [*Trans and Genderqueer Subjects in Medieval Hagiography*](#) (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021).
Valerie Traub, [*The Renaissance of lesbianism in early modern England*](#) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai, *Same-Sex Love in India: Readings from Literature and History*.

Getting Involved

If you are in the Denton or DFW area, consider supporting or joining organizations that are working for LGBTQ+ people's autonomy and equality.

UNT and Local Community Projects

Pride Alliance at [UNT](#)
Gender and Sexuality Employee Resource Group at [UNT](#)
LGBT Faculty Network group at [UNT](#)
OUTreach Denton in [Denton, TX](#)
Trans Pride Initiative in [Dallas, Texas](#)
The Resource Center in [Dallas, Texas](#)
The Dallas Way in [Dallas, Texas](#)

National Projects

[It Gets Better](#)
[The Trevor Project](#)
[Campus Pride](#)
[Forge Forward](#)
[GSLEN](#): See especially for integrating LGBTQ+ into curriculum with:
[Allyship in Action](#)
ThinkB4YouSpeak [Educator's Guide](#)
[Unheard Voices](#) All Transcripts and Lessons
[Knowles Teacher Initiative](#)

Where to Buy Books:

You can support LGBTQ+ bookstores at these links to company websites:

In Texas or Louisiana: BookWoman, Austin, www.ebookwoman.com; Beausoleil Books, Lafayette, www.beausoleilbooks.com; Tubby & Co's Mid-City Book Shop, New Orleans, www.tubbyandcoos.com

Elsewhere in the U.S.: **Alabama:** Burdock Book Collective, Birmingham; www.burdockbookcollective.com. 1977 Books, Montgomery; www.1977books.com. **Arizona:** Antigone Books, Tucson, www.antigonebooks.com. **Arkansas:** Dog Ear Books, Russellville, www.ilovedogear.com. **California:** Rakestraw Books, Danville, www.rakestrawbooks.com. A Seat at the Table, Elk Grove, www.aseatatthetablebooks.org. The Salt Eaters, Inglewood, www.thesalteatersbooks.com/. Reparations Club, Los Angeles, www.rep.club. The Ripped Bodice, Los Angeles, www.therippedbodice.com. Lavender Library, Sacramento, www.lavenderlibrary.com. Dog Eared Books, San Francisco, www.dogearredbooks.com. Omnivore Books on Food, San Francisco, www.omnivorebooks.myshopify.com. **Florida:** hello again, Cocoa Village, www.helloagainbooks.com. Tombolo Books, St. Petersburg, www.tombolobooks.com. **Georgia:** Bookish, Atlanta, www.bookishatl.com. Charis Books & More, Decatur, www.charisbooksandmore.com/. **Hawaii:** Kona Bay Books, Kailua, www.konabaybooks.com. **Illinois:** Women & Children First, Chicago, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com. Unabridged Books, Chicago, www.unabridgedbookstore.com. Lit. on Fire Books, Peoria, www.litonfirepia.com. **Maryland/Washington D.C.:** Red Emma's Bookstore Coffeehouse, Baltimore, www.redemmas.org. Kramers, Washington D.C., www.kramers.com. Loyalty Bookstores, Silver Spring, MD & Washington D.C., www.loyaltybookstores.com. **Massachusetts:** East End Books, Provincetown, www.eastendbooksptown.com. Womencrafts, Provincetown, www.womencraftsptown.com. All She Wrote, Somerville, www.allshewrotebooks.com. **Minnesota:** Black Garnet Books, Minneapolis, www.blackgarnetbooks.com. The Irreverent Bookworm, Minneapolis, www.irrevbooks.com. **Mississippi:** Violet Valley, Water Valley, www.violetvalley.org. **Missouri:** Left Bank Books, St. Louis, www.left-bank.com. **Montana:** Montana Book Company, Helena, www.mtbookco.com. **New Jersey:** Here's the Story, Union, www.heresthestorybooks.com. **New York:** Rust Belt Books, Buffalo, www.rustbeltbooks.com. Bluestockings Bookstore, Cafe & Activist Center, New York, www.bluestockings.com. Bureau of General Services—Queer Division, New York, www.bookshop.org/shop/bgsqd. W. Whitman Books, Middleburgh, www.facebook.com/bestreads304. One Grand Books, Narrowsburg, www.onegrandbooks.com. Astoria Bookshop, Queens, www.astoriabookshop.com. **North Carolina:** Firestorm Books & Coffee, Asheville, www.firestorm.coop. Foggy Pine Books, Boone, www.foggypinebooks.com. Rofhiwa Book Café, Durham, www.rofhiwabooks.com. **Oregon:** Another Read Through, Portland, www.anotherreadthrough.com. Broadway Books, Portland, www.broadwaybooks.net. **Pennsylvania:** Big Blue Marble Books, Philadelphia, www.bigbluemarblebooks.com. Philly AIDS Thrift @ Giovanni's Room, Philadelphia, www.queerbooks.com. **Utah:** Under the Umbrella, Salt Lake City, www.undertheumbrellabookstore.com. **Washington:** Village Books, Bellingham, www.villagebooks.com. Main Street Books, Monroe, www.mainstreetbooksmonroe.com. Left Bank Books, Seattle, www.leftbankbooks.com/index.php. King's Books, Tacoma, www.kingsbookstore.com. **Wisconsin:** A Room of One's Own, Madison, www.roomofonesown.com. Outwards Books, Milwaukee, www.outwardsbooks.com. Kismet Books, Verona, www.kismetbookshop.com.

Bookstore list courtesy of Michelle Hart, "56 LGBTQ-Owned Bookstores You Can Be Proud to Support," *Oprah Daily* (June 22, 2021), <https://www.oprahdaily.com/entertainment/books/a36741294/queer-lgbtq-owned-bookstores/>.