

**English 4396: Sexuality and Culture**  
**Senior Experience Research Seminar**

Maria C. Gonzalez

Office: 205 Cullen

Phone: (713)743-2938

email: [mgonzalez@uh.edu](mailto:mgonzalez@uh.edu)

**Course Description:** Sexuality as a framing device will be the focus of the course. The students will be reading foundational texts on Queer Theory as well as texts focused on sexuality. They will develop their own questions, be introduced to sexuality studies in other fields, explore texts on their own, and produce a research paper on a text.

**Learning Outcomes:** Sexuality and its implications to society and culture represent an important field of knowledge. This course begins with recognizable foundational texts that begin much of the discussion of sexuality for Continental Western thought. We will explore some of the thinkers in the field of sexuality and follow with cultural texts that explore the representation of sexuality. This will include novels, films, and mass cultural texts.

By studying one of the major frames that has recently organized cultural production, the student will formulate a question about sexuality and explore it in texts they will choose on their own.

We will begin with a seminar format, introducing theoretical texts as well as literary and cultural texts. Following this introduction, students will begin to develop their research topics by exploring possible other texts not included in the syllabus.

**Readings/Texts:**

Selections from Sigmund Freud

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol 1, An Introduction*

Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction*

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*

Foucault's *Herculine Barbin: Being the Recently Discovered Memoirs of a Nineteenth-Century French Hermaphrodite*

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness*

Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle*

Selected films, *The Crying Game* and a film identified in the seminar

**Writing Requirements and other Assignments:** Initial short papers (approximately 2-3 pages) explicating some of the theory on sexuality from Freud, Foucault, and Butler, followed by a final research paper applying the theory to a research topic and text (approximately 10-15 pages).