

# Queer Theory (in) Latin America

Jorge Sánchez Cruz



*Madame Satã* (2003), by Karim Aïnouz

**Course Description:** What do we mean by *queer*? How is it different or new? If *queer* has been thought as unfixed and unsettling, then how can we furtherly understand this concept from a Latin American perspective? In this sense, Latin America has been a prominent producer of *queer* art, literature and culture that contributes to our understandings of *queer* resistance, movements, and sexualities. This course explores (dis)encounters between the production of queer theory in the Global North and Latin America, while also unpacking tensions between dominant structures of power and disempowered identities in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Latin America literature and visual culture.

**Course Objectives:** In this course students will differentiate between queer from *cuir*, theory emerging in the Global North in relation with Latin America. Students will be introduced to critical intersections: queerness and historicity, feminism, performativity, monstrosity, indigeneity, masculinity, and revolution.

**Course Requirements:** Must attend all lectures. A paper proposal and a bibliography will be due before the final paper submission. It is also mandatory to come to class prepared and ready to dialogue with classmates and the assigned readings. Participation is key.

**Class Expectations:** There is absolutely no late work accepted, nor any make-up work. In case of emergency or extenuating circumstances, proof must be submitted for verification. Disruptive behavior such as leaving class unannounced or continuously arriving late will affect your grade.

**Weekly Reactions:** Students will write an engaging one-page reaction relating the weekly theoretical/critical readings along with the aesthetic practices (film, narrative, performance, etc.). The reaction should not be a summary of the readings nor a collage of citations, but rather a critical reflection and observation of the student's approach and perspective. Late submissions will count as no-submission. These reactions are exercises leading towards your final paper.

**Final Paper:** A final 7-9-page paper in MLA format (see Purdue Owl for quick guidelines) is due on finals week. The paper can be comparative (analyzing two aesthetic forms) or non-comparative

(focusing on one aesthetic practice). The paper should cover ideas and readings covered in class. Papers to be written on an aesthetic object not seen in class must first be approved. Papers can be submitted in Spanish or English. You will submit two copies: one through Turnitin via Canvas (as text) and the other via e-mail (as word or .pdf). **No extensions will be given.**

**Academic Integrity:** Suspected violations of this university policy will be immediately reported to the Dean's office. All student work in this class may be analyzed electronically for violations of the University's academic integrity policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content. For further details on academic dishonesty refer to the *Academic Integrity: Basic Guide* found online.

**Disability Accommodation:** Any student requesting accommodations related to disability or other condition is required to register with AccesibleNU ([accesiblenu@northerstern.edu](mailto:accesiblenu@northerstern.edu); 847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation from AccesibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

**Electronic Devices:** Laptops are allowed in class (for readings only), but you must refrain from using cell phones (with the exception of proven emergency).

### Grading Scale

20%: Attendance & Participation

20%: Weekly reactions (1page)

10%: Abstract/Paper Proposal (1-page)

50%: Final paper (7-9 pages)

## WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION & POSING AS 'QUEER'

**TUE:** Rancière, Jacques. "The Distribution of the Sensible: Politics and Aesthetics," *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 12-25.

Margolles, Teresa. "Pista de baile de la discoteca 'Tlaquepaque'."

**THU:** Molloy, Sylvia. "The Politics of Posing," *Hispanisms and Homosexualities*, 141-159.

Sedgwick, Eve K. "Axiom 4," *Epistemology of the Closet*, 40-44.

"The Kingpin Strategy," *Narcos*, Season 3, Episode 1, Streaming on *Netflix*.

## WEEK 2: DEBATES

**TUE:** Sigal, Pete. "Latin America and the Challenge of Globalizing Sexuality," *The American Historical Review*, 1340-1353.

Mikdash, Maya and Jasbir K. Puar. "Queer Theory and Permanent War," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 215-222.

**THU:** Gómez-Barris, Macarena. "How Cuir is Queer Recognition," *Beyond the Pink Tide*, 46-67.

Perlongher, Néstor. "Minoritarian Becomings." *Hemispheric Institute*.

<http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/en/e-misferica-102/perlongher>

WEEK 3: TRANSITING TRANSVESTISMS

**TUE:** Donoso, José. *Hell Has No Limits*, Trans. Suzanne Jill Levine, 1966, 1-50.  
Sifuentes, Jauregui, Ben. "Introduction," *Transvestism, Masculinity, and Latin American Literature*, 1-14.

**THU:**  
Sifuentes, Jauregui, Ben. "Gender Without Limits." *Transvestism, Masculinity, and Latin American Literature*, 87-118.

WEEK 4: MASCULINITIES (AND ITS FAILURES)

**TUE:** Donoso, José. *Hell Has No Limits*, 51-142

**THU:** Fischer, Carl. "The Monstrous Masculinities of Chile's Agrarian Reform, 1965-1970," *Queering the Chilean Way*, 33-72.

WEEK 5: RACE & PERFORMATIVITY

**TUE:** Muñoz, José Esteban. "Introduction," *Disidentifications*, 1-34.  
Lopes, Denison. "In Search of a New Invisibility," 165-182.

**THU:** *Madame Satã* (2002), directed by Karim Aïnouz.  
Lehnen, Jeremy. "Unapologetically Queer," *Luço-Brazilian Review*, 77-94.

WEEK 6: EMERGING EMBODIMENTS

**TUE:** Cornejo, Giancarlo. "For a Queer Pedagogy of Friendship," *TSQ*, 352-67.  
Puar, Jasbir. "Bodies with New Organs," *Social Text*, 45-73.

**THU:** *Sin Vagina, Me Marginan*, directed by Wesley Verastegui.  
DiPietro, Pedro. "Of Huachafería, Así, and M'e Mati," *TSQ*, 65-73.

WEEK 7: QUEER EXPOSURE

**Paper Proposal is Due**

**TUE:** Cervantes, Vincent D. "Risky Faces, Bodies at Risk," *A Body Exposed: The Aesthetics of Sex, Death, and Mexicanness* (forthcoming).

**THU:** Trimegisto, Lechedevirgen. *Inferno Varieté*.  
Guest Speaker: Dr. Vincent D. Cervantes, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

WEEK 8: QUEER REVOLUTION

**TUE:** Quiroga, José. "Revolution," *Tropics of Desire. Interventions from Queer Latino America*, 124-144.  
Chambers-Letson, Joshua. "A Manifesto of a Communist Party," *After the Party. A Manifesto*

for *Queer of Color Life*, xi-xxii.

**THU:** *Fresa y chocolate* (1993), directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea  
Invited Speaker: Dr. Joshua Chambers-Letson

WEEK 9: QUEER INDIGENEITY
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**TUE:** Domínguez Ruvalcaba, Héctor. “Queer Decolonization,” *Translating the Queer*, 19-53.  
Sigal, Pete. “Queer Nahuatl: Sahagún’s Faggots and Sodomites, Lesbians and Hermaphrodites,” *Ethnohistory*, 9-34.

**THU:** *Atempa: Sueños a orillas del río*, directed by Edson Caballero Trujillo  
Invited Speaker: Dr. Ramón Rivera Servera

WEEK 10: UNDOCU-QUEER
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**Symposium**

**TUE:** Paez, Alan. “Speak” & “An Artist Manifesto: For Brown Folx Surviving the Empire.”  
**Symposium, Part I**

**THU: Symposium, Part II**