CULTURES OF AFRICAN QUEER REPRESENTATIONS

ENG 3882 / WS 3358F

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Office Hours: TBA
Venue: TBA
Time: Tuesday 3.30-5.30 Thursday 4.3—5.30

This syllabus will be revised. The final version will be up by July 1.

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to representations of queer figures in African literature, film, and political discourse. That figure—incarnated as lesbian, gay, inter-sexed, transgendered, or indeterminate—has recently gained a new visibility in the political dialogue of African democracies, in circulating ideas of Africa, and the claims of new national and transnational networks criticizing the legal and social predicaments faced by African sexual minorities. This course will provide students with an opportunity to read, discuss, analyze, and write critically about creative responses to these developments. We will analyze novels, short stories, life writing, essays, films, blogs, videos, legislation, and some critical work published by scholars in the field of African queer studies.

Learning Objectives:
The course will provide a forum to:

1) Analyze and write about LGBTQ themes in African literatures and film. A key component of this course will be documentation of concepts that speak to African LGBTQ narratives.

2) Understand the rise of African queer studies and develop knowledge of the specific histories and dialogues about LGBTQ advocacy in African countries.

3) Analyze the circulation—reception, adaptations, and contestations—of queer theory in the African studies.
4) Understand anxieties around sexual minorities in the contexts of decolonization, anti-imperialism, and the global circulation of rights-based identity discourses.

5) Understand the aesthetic forms through which new narratives about divergent sexual identities are disseminated.

Reading List: (This list is provisional.)

Brutus, Denis. *Letters to Martha.*
Okparanta, Chinelo. *Under the Udala Tree.*
------------------------------. *Happiness, Like Water.*
Osman, Diriye. *Fairytales for Lost Children.*

Viewing List

*Confusion Na Wa.* Dir. Kenneth Gyang.
*Rag and Tag.* Dir. Adaora Nwandum.

Requirements:
Attendance: 10%
Research essay 1 25%
Research essay 2: 30%
Final Exam: 35%

Note: We will only be reading selected chapters from titles marked with *. Those selections will be available in a course pack. Please do not purchase the entire books for the class, unless you are interested in reading them for your personal study.