

University of Western Ontario
Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies
Fall 2021 (PRELIMINARY)

GSWS3333F: Resisting Homophobia Across the Globe ©

We are located on the traditional land of Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawanaron peoples

Instructor:	Dr. Kate Korycki ¹
Email:	kate.korycki@uwo.ca
Class Meeting & Location:	Tuesday 1:30-4:30
Office hours & Location:	TBD
Class Website:	https://owl.uwo.ca/portal
Prerequisite:	GSWS2220E OR GSWS2273E OR permission of the Department

Course Description and Learning Objectives:

Homophobia - or a hostility towards persons not conforming to heterosexual norms - is old and new, global and local, and its apparent demise in some places and times is never assured. Despite its longevity, it varies in intensity both geographically and historically & it is not natural but created. It is created and maintained for various purposes, and by different means. It is also resisted, evaded, subverted. In this class, we explore these aspects of production, maintenance and resistance, and we do so by paying attention to both history and contemporary cases. More specifically, we investigate how homophobia was and is implicated in disciplining of gender, how it was and is a tool of orientalism; how it helped build nations/empires and grow religious orders, how it aided Cold War; and how it now organizes notions of terrorism. We also explore how it adapted and responded to ongoing resistance and how the resistance changed through time. Our class discussions touch on the intimate and the political and the way they intersect; and it is anchored in the empirical cases of France, Iran, USA, Uganda and Poland. Other cases of interest to students are welcome!

This class is built on an idea of active & participatory learning. This means that if a student chooses to engage, s/he/they will gain/deepen their knowledge about the political productivity of homophobia and its changing deployment, as well as challenge and transform commonsensical understandings of essentialized homophobia. Students will also summarize and critically analyze complex reading material; they will write with clarity and precision, explore ideas with others, pose analytically significant questions, and research answers to the questions. Finally, they will practice time and grade management.

¹ No materials generated in this class may be recorded or copied without permission. They may not be posted to commercial sites. They may be used, with attribution, in students' learning and writing.

Readings & Online content:

Students will read a biographical novel by Eduard Louis, *The End of Eddy*, and a comic novel by Alison Bechdel, *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For*. Students will also read Sarah Shulman's *Ties that Bind: Familial Homophobia and its Consequences*. All these can be bought used online or borrowed from the library. Students will be asked to watch the following: *United in Anger* (2012 - Kanopy, via the Library), *It's a Sin* (2021, Netflix) and *Homonationalism and Pinkwashing* (2013, YouTube).

Additional weekly readings will be available through the library & a schedule of topics is below.

Assignments and Expectations:

In this course, curiosity about the material, working through problems, struggling to understand, transforming the ways in which we see the world, analyzing and grappling with complexity are encouraged, nurtured and rewarded. This means that getting things right is less important than thinking deeply about them! Further, the students are expected to have read and thought about the assigned readings; they are expected to write about them weekly during class; and they are expected to talk/clarify their understandings in our weekly class.

Assignments will involve **in-class writing & talking** based on weekly readings, a **2500-word paper** submitted for review twice on October 29th and December 3rd, and an **optional open book quiz**, for those wanting to rise their grades, on December 7th. Details will be worked out by the class together.

Course Structure and Policies:

Weekly plan (more or less):

Weekly class meeting will happen on Tuesday between 1:30-4:30. In most classes, we will discuss important learning issues: 'how to read analytically,' 'how to summarize well,' 'what is a thesis,' 'what is academic integrity;' and also, 'what is causality,' 'how do we uncover meaning,' 'what are the cognitive errors we are most prone to make,' 'how to formulate a 'why' question,' 'how to write precisely?' In each class, we will address what you find unclear in the readings. Come ready with questions.

In **each class**, we will test your comprehension of the readings, and we will practice writing. Low-stakes writing may happen more than once in a class. The point is to sharpen your thinking and understanding, and also to practice writing with clarity. Each class will also involve small-group and whole class conversations.

In each class, there will be a short lecture, clarifying the readings, and/or a movie.

Discussion Etiquette: In assessing class participation, I look at a) the quantity, and b) the quality of remarks, as well as c) *listening and respect* for the views of others, and d) a spirit of discovery. Our class conversations are explorations, not a competition.

Absenteeism: The structure of this course is designed to discourage absenteeism and inattentiveness. This is reinforced by departmental policy at Gender, Sexualities and Women's Studies - persistent absenteeism may be grounds for failure in the course.

Communication with the Professor: all students are strongly encouraged to bring their questions to class, and I warmly invite students to weekly office hours! ALL points (grades) related questions have to be posed in office hours - not email! If you feel the need to email me, please use your UWO address. If your email requires a reply and if it concerns a topic of interest to all, I'll respond by making a class announcement. If your email requires a reply and it is personal, I'll respond within 2 days, excluding weekends. If you do not hear from me within that time, you may query (politely) whether your email has been received.

Weekly Topics & Required Materials

1. Introduction to each other and to the course (DO NOT MISS THIS CLASS!)
2. Framework: DO NOT MISS THIS CLASS!
3. Gender & Sex
4. The "East" & the "West"
5. The "East" & the "West"
6. Politics and Religion
7. Family
8. Education
9. Class
10. The most powerful resistance movement – ACT-UP
11. De-politicization
12. Review and/or Quiz

Western University & Arts and Humanities' General Policies

Our work in this course is guided by the University's Scholastic Discipline document, as well as the Student Code of Conduct.

Accommodation Policies: Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).