



Rethinking Berlin: An Intersectional and Queer Perspective against the Far-Right

Winter Semester 2024/25: 14 October 2024 – 14 February 2025

CATEGORY

Gender Studies

COURSE STRUCTURE

2 contact hours à 45 min per week (winter semester: 16 weeks)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time

Thursday 16-18 c.t. (16:15-17:45)

Place

Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, Room 0323-26

COURSE LANGUAGE

This course is taught in English. Language level B2 is required to understand the texts and discussions in class. The workshops and excursions will also be conducted in English, but having basic German language skills would enhance comprehension of the context.

Language requirements (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

English: B2

German: A2 (recommended)

TARGET GROUP

This course is open to international exchange students from all academic backgrounds who have a strong interest in the exploration of social and political movements from intersectional, queer, and feminist perspectives. We will study the impacts of the rise of far-right movements for marginalized communities, with a particular emphasis on the LGBTQIA+ community in Berlin.

Berlin Perspectives courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees. Regular degree-seeking students can select the course within the elective part of their study program (überfachlicher Wahlpflichtbereich üWP).

CREDITS = 5 ECTS

The Berlin Perspectives courses are offered by the Career Center as part of the elective program üWP. Registration takes place via Humboldt-Universität's course catalogue *Agnes*. All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Why has Berlin become one of the foremost LGBTQIA+ capitals in the world? What social and political challenges does the Berlin queer community face, such as the emergence of a new wave of far-right movements? We will use Berlin as a case study to analyze the origins of hate discourses and the so-called "gender ideology" by integrating key concepts of queer theory and gender studies into our discussions to explore the cultural politics of emotions and affect.

Together, we will navigate the evolution of a contemporary, multicultural, and artistic Queer Berlin. Starting with a look back at the 1920s, the rise of fascism and Nazi atrocities, the division of Germany, and its different approaches to sexual liberation movements. We will consider the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the Reunification of Germany and the 1990s to understand today's vast and diverse queer scene. We will explore recent theoretical advancements in critical queer and gender studies, complemented by workshops and cultural excursions, covering topics such as body politics, queer diaspora and migration, and critical solidarity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The objective of this Bachelor-level course is to provide students with an understanding of the rise of far-right movements and its impacts on marginalized communities through queer and gender analysis and enable them to read, understand, and critically reflect on the most recent theoretical and empirical research in the field. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Knowledge:

- Understand, describe, and explain key concepts in queer theory and gender studies, by using Berlin as a case study.
- Critically analyze the challenges posed by the rise in popularity of far-right movements in Germany, specifically, for the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Understand and describe the origins of the production of hate discourses and deepen their analysis of the cultural politics of emotions and affect.
- Provide an overview of recent theoretical advancements in critical queer methodologies and authored works from the global south by understanding and analyzing insights into the topics of queer diaspora and migration, and critical solidarity.

Transferable Skills:

- Producing assignments such as presentations, written essays, and, class debates from gender studies and critical queer methodologies perspective.
- Collaborate in an intercultural team, being aware of their own positionality and issues such as race/racism, coloniality/decoloniality, and gender identity and expression.

- Reflect and apply critical thinking methodologies such as critical cartography and reflexivity.

Academic Skills:

- Integrating knowledge from different disciplines into the analysis of society, paying special attention to the studies of gender.
- Critically discuss the most recent theoretical and empirical research on topics of cultural politics of emotions, queer diaspora and migration, and critical solidarity.

ASSIGNMENT INFO

Workload and assignments

In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions), and prepare and revise all sessions and, hand in the following **assignments**:

- **Reflection Paper:** Students will write a reflection paper individually about their experiences on our excursion to the Schwules Museum. They will connect the topics of cultural politics of emotion and include authors and texts covered during the semester in their papers.
- **Collective Mapping:** Students will use critical cartography tools to create a map in class that represents their emotions and experiences as queer persons or allies in Berlin. The map will portray their knowledge and analysis on the topic of intersectional solidarity and should include at least one cultural or artistic activity they attended and took field notes from, for example, a drag show in Neukölln, or a queer-refugees art exhibition.
- **Final Presentation:** Students will work in groups to prepare a final presentation based on one of the topics covered during the seminar. Each presentation should include supplementary information, such as research findings or case studies, critical analysis of the topic, and the introduction of new authors or scholars whose work is relevant to the chosen topic.

Failure to fulfill one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the three above-mentioned assignments.

READINGS

Altay, T. (2024). Translating difference: whiteness, racialisation and queer migration in Berlin. *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, 7(1), 27-44. Retrieved Jun 19, 2024, from <https://doi.org/10.1332/25151088Y2023D000000012>

Altay, T., Yurdakul, G., & Korteweg, A. C. (2020). Crossing borders: the intersectional marginalisation of Bulgarian Muslim trans*immigrant sex workers in Berlin. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(9), 1922–1939. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1862646>

Ahmed, S. (2014) *The Organization of Hate*. In Ahmed, S (2014) *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press. ProQuest Ebook Central, Retrieved from: <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/huberlin-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1767554>

Bergmann, S. (2022, June) Before the terror, there was glitter: The queer haven that was 1920's Berlin. *The Game Magazine*. <https://the-game.imago-images.com/articles/pride-1920s-berlin/>

Butler, J. (2003) *Violence, Mourning, Politics*. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 4:1, 9-37, DOI:10.1080/15240650409349213

Butler, J. (2024) Introduction: Gender Ideology and the Fear of Destruction. In *Who's Afraid of Gender*. (1st ed., pp. 3-36). Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Crenshaw, K. (1989) "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8. Available at:

<http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>

Domínguez, H. (2016). Introduction: Troubles and Travels of the Queer. In *Translating the Queer: Body Politics and Transnational Conversations*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Lewis, H. (2016) Introduction. *The Politics of Everybody: Feminism, Queer Theory and Marxism at the Intersection*. (1st ed., pp. 1-15)

Lewis, H. (2016) Terms of Debate. *The Politics of Everybody: Feminism, Queer Theory and Marxism at the Intersection*. (1st ed., pp. 17-35)

Whisnant, C. (2016) Nazi Persecution in *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History, 1880-1945*. (pp. 204-238). Harrington Park Press.

Mole, R. C. M. (2021). Rethinking diaspora: queer Poles, Brazilians and Russians in Berlin. In R. C. M. Mole (Ed.), *Queer Migration and Asylum in Europe* (pp. 57–77). UCL Press.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv17ppc7d.11>

Tudor, A. (2018) Cross-fadings of racialisation and migratisation: the postcolonial turn in Western European gender and migration studies, *Gender, Place & Culture*, 25:7, 1057-1072, DOI: 10.1080/0966369X.2018.1441141

Tormos, F. (2017). Intersectional solidarity. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 5(4), 707–720.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2017.1385494>

Whisnant, C. (2016) Gay and Lesbian Life after 1945 in *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History, 1880-1945*. (pp. 242-254). Harrington Park Press

Yurdakul, Özvatan, and Forchtner (2019) Bikinis, Blondes, and Burkas: Gender and Islam in the German Far Right. Retrieved from: <https://epicenter.wcfia.harvard.edu/blog/bikinis-blondes-and-burkas-gender-and-islam-german-far-right>

Yurdakul and Kortweg (2020). Boundary Regimes and the Gendered Racialized Production of Muslim Masculinities: Cases from Canada and Germany
DOI:10.1080/15562948.2020.1833271

Podcasts and videos:

Jinae West, Sylvie Douglis, Andrea Gutierrez, and Liam McBain. (June 18, 2021). ACT UP: A History Of AIDS/HIV Activism [Podcast Audio Episode]. NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/2021/06/16/1007361916/act-up-a-history-of-aids-hiv-activism>

DW (2022) How Berlin became a hub for trans people. DW History and Culture.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPPE3jrPGE8>

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Marco T. Picazo (he/they)

I am conducting research on the Latin American LGBTQIA+ immigrant community in Berlin as part of the Research Training Program in Social Sciences at HU-Berlin. I hold a B.A. in International Relations from Tecnológico de Monterrey, México, and an M.A. in Political Analysis from the Complutense University of Madrid. I have practical experience in the private sector with international companies and I have worked with Latin American immigrant advocacy organizations in Washington, D.C., and in Berlin. My areas of interest encompass comparative politics, migration research, social movements, and antiracism and decoloniality.

COURSE SCHEDULE

2 hours à 45 min per week (16 weeks)

Christmas Break: 23 December 2024 – 3 January 2025

Week 1: Introduction to the class

During this introductory session, students and lecturer will have the opportunity to introduce themselves. We will cover the course structure, our objectives, and expectations for the topics to be discussed during the semester. Students will be provided with comprehensive details regarding the final assignments and the evaluation methods.

We will watch together the short documentary:

DW (2022) How Berlin became a hub for trans people. DW History and Culture.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPPe3jrPGE8>

Week 2: Before the terror, there was glitter

Students will work in groups to gather articles, pictures, and videos depicting queer history and life in Berlin from the 1920s through the Nazi regime and the division of Germany. They will prepare a brief presentation based on their findings.

Readings:

Bergmann, S. (2022, June) Before the terror, there was glitter: The queer haven that was 1920's Berlin. *The Game Magazine*. <https://the-game.imago-images.com/articles/pride-1920s-berlin/>

Whisnant, C. (2016) Nazi Persecution in *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History, 1880-1945*. (pp. 204-238). Harrington Park Press.

Week 3: Love at First Fight: Queer Movements in Germany since Stonewall - Cultural Excursion to Schwules Museum

A great way to deeply engage with the rich history and legacy of the queer movement in Berlin is to take a guided tour of The Schwules Museum (SMU). Established in 1985, the SMU is a vital international hub dedicated to researching, preserving, and showcasing the culture and history of queer individuals and sexual and gender diversity. We will pay special attention to the exhibition "Love at First Fight," which opens up new paths and perspectives on (more than) 50 years of queer resistance in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and finally, in a reunited Germany.

Website:

<https://www.schwulesmuseum.de/?lang=en>

Reading:

Whisnant, C. (2016) Gay and Lesbian Life after 1945 in *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History, 1880-1945*. (pp. 242-254). Harrington Park Press

Week 4: Queer Liberation Movements

We will introduce the current academic conversations about the politics of affect and emotions by exploring the historical context of the Stonewall riots and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which sparked liberation movements for queer and sexual rights worldwide. Our study will initially focus on Berlin's inaugural Christopher Street Day (Pride Demo) and the reunification of Germany in the 1990s before moving into contemporary discussions on this subject, such as the instrumentalization of queer lives through the so-called "rainbow capitalism."

Reading:

Judith Butler (2003) *Violence, Mourning, Politics*. *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, 4:1, 9-37, DOI:10.1080/15240650409349213

Podcast:

Jinae West, Sylvie Douglis, Andrea Gutierrez, and Liam McBain. (June 18, 2021). *ACT UP: A History Of AIDS/HIV Activism* [Podcast Audio Episode]. NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/2021/06/16/1007361916/act-up-a-history-of-aids-hiv-activism>

Week 5: The Cultural Politics of Emotions

Sara Ahmed argues that hate becomes attached or 'stuck' to particular bodies, often through violence, force, and harm. In this session, we will continue with the topic of the cultural politics of emotions and affect. We will try to understand the dangers of the construction of hate discourses and their effects on those bodies designated as "the hated." We will introduce the discussion on the current political situation in Germany, the rise of far-right movements, and the threats, in particular for the LGBTQ+ community and other minorities.

Readings:

Ahmed, S. (2014) *The Organization of Hate*. In Ahmed, S (2014) *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press. ProQuest Ebook Central, Retrieved from: <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/huberlin-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1767554>

Week 7: The "New" Far-Right Movements in Germany - Guest Lecture

Our guest lecturer, Luis Kliche, is a research fellow and lecturer at the Institute for Latin American Studies of the Freie Universität Berlin. He will help us understand the German political and party system. Together, we will analyze the dangers associated with the rise of far-right and neo-fascist groups in Germany, the increasing popularity of the AfD, and its implications for immigrants, refugees, BIPOC, and queer individuals.

Reading:

Yurdakul, Özvatan, and Forchtner (2019) *Bikinis, Blondes, and Burkas: Gender and Islam in the German Far Right*. Retrieved from: <https://epicenter.wcfia.harvard.edu/blog/bikinis-blondes-and-burkas-gender-and-islam-german-far-right>

Week 6: Who is afraid of Gender?

In this session, we will delve into the concept of gender through Judith Butler's literature. We will analyze from a global viewpoint what the author calls "phantasms," a term to refer to the rise of new authoritarian regimes, far-right movements, and trans-exclusionary feminisms fighting against what they call "gender ideology." Our focus will be on placing ourselves in the context of recent theoretical developments from critical queer theory, with a specific emphasis on Germany and Berlin.

Reading:

Butler, J. (2024) Introduction: Gender Ideology and the Fear of Destruction. In *Who's Afraid of Gender*. (1st ed., pp. 3-36). Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Week 8: The Politics of "Everybody"?

Holly Lewis uses a Marxist approach to examine gender politics. She calls for a new materialist queer theory that is intersectional, transnational, and trans-inclusive, emphasizing the relevance of international solidarity and the relevance of Marxist theory for queer scholars.

Readings:

Lewis, H. (2016) Introduction. *The Politics of Everybody: Feminism, Queer Theory and Marxism at the Intersection*. (1st ed., pp. 1-15)

Lewis, H. (2016) Terms of Debate. *The Politics of Everybody: Feminism, Queer Theory and Marxism at the Intersection*. (1st ed., pp. 17-35)

Week 9: Boundary Regimes and the Racialization of Gender

Yurdakul and Kortweg describe how "boundary regimes" consist of multiple discursive and material registers in media, politics, law, and everyday interaction, creating symbolic boundaries to perceive which groups of society are related to a "safety" or a "danger" register. Together, we will analyze the dangers of the discursive production of these symbolic boundaries towards marginalized communities and how they intersect with racialization and gender.

Reading:

Yurdakul and Kortweg (2020). Boundary Regimes and the Gendered Racialized Production of Muslim Masculinities: Cases from Canada and Germany
DOI:10.1080/15562948.2020.1833271

Tudor, A. (2018) Cross-fadings of racialisation and migratisation: the postcolonial turn in Western European gender and migration studies, *Gender, Place & Culture*, 25:7, 1057-1072, DOI: 10.1080/0966369X.2018.1441141

Week 10: Intersectional Solidarity

Let's delve into the definitions and concepts of intersectionality from Kimberlé Crenshaw to the present day and analyze its practical implications for social movements. How can we show solidarity? What does critical solidarity entail? And why is intersectional solidarity crucial for minorities?

Readings:

Tormos, F. (2017). Intersectional solidarity. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 5(4), 707–720. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2017.1385494>

Crenshaw, K. (1989) "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8. Available at: <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>

Week 11: Rethinking (Queering) Diaspora

As Richard Mole argues, diasporas can play a vital role in facilitating cross-border migration and subsequent integration in the destination society, yet for queer people, the risk of double marginalization exists: as ethnic minorities within the host society and as sexual minorities within the ethnic diaspora. In this session, we will analyze diasporic queer communities in contemporary Berlin.

Readings:

Mole, R. C. M. (2021). Rethinking diaspora: queer Poles, Brazilians and Russians in Berlin. In R. C. M. Mole (Ed.), *Queer Migration and Asylum in Europe* (pp. 57–77). UCL Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv17ppc7d.11>

Week 12: Queer Migration in Berlin

Through his fieldwork in Berlin between 2018 and 2022, analyzing Turkish queer migrants, Tunay Altay explores how racism is ambiguously attached to migration and sexual difference. In this session, we will try to understand, based on his research, the narratives of belonging or non-belonging of queer migrant communities in this city.

Readings:

Altay, T. (2024). Translating difference: whiteness, racialisation and queer migration in Berlin. *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, 7(1), 27–44. Retrieved Jun 19, 2024, from <https://doi.org/10.1332/25151088Y2023D000000012>

Altay, T., Yurdakul, G., & Korteweg, A. C. (2020). Crossing borders: the intersectional marginalisation of Bulgarian Muslim trans*immigrant sex workers in Berlin. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(9), 1922–1939. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1862646>

Week 13: Queering the Map - Activity

In this class, we will use Critical Cartography tools to create a collective map of our emotions and experiences as queer individuals or allies in Berlin. We will create a register and take field notes of one or more activities related to queer life and stories of Berlin, paying particular interest in the topic of Intersectional Solidarity and community-building.

This map could include activities such as attending a drag show in Neukölln, visiting a queer-refugees art exhibition in Kreuzberg, visiting one the locals of the Schwulenberatung Berlin, spending a night out in Nollendorfkiez, or exploring Quarteera Community-Zentrum in Marzahn, for example.

Week 14: Translating the Queer: Body Politics and Transnational Conversations

Our goal is to study the critique from counter-hegemonic queer methodologies to modernity, the binary gender system, coloniality, and the global capitalist system, as proposed by queer author Héctor Domínguez.

Reading:

Domínguez, H. (2016). Introduction: Troubles and Travels of the Queer. In *Translating the Queer: Body Politics and Transnational Conversations*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Week 15: Final Presentations I

Students will present in groups on one of the topics covered during the seminar. Each presentation should include additional information, such as research findings or case studies, a critical analysis of the topic, and the introduction of new authors or scholars relevant to the chosen topic.

Week 16: Final Presentations II

Students will present in groups on one of the topics covered during the seminar. Each presentation should include additional information, such as research findings or case studies, a critical analysis of the topic, and the introduction of new authors or scholars relevant to the chosen topic.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

in case of online sessions

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Preparation for lively discussions: be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and have points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

Commitment: pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinion in this international classroom.

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies. **Plagiarism** in even a small assignment will result in failing the entire course. See **ZSP-HU** (Fächerübergreifende Satzung zur Regelung von Zulassung, Studium und Prüfung der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), **§ 111** (Täuschung).

Attendance policy: Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work. To excuse absence, please contact the lecturer.

The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 30.08.2024