

THE AMERICAN PRESS AND ISSUES OF SEXUAL DIVERSITY
(J-468m)
Fall 2007

Laura Castañeda

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

The movement for gay rights is one of the most hotly contested issues of the last 30 years. The 1990s saw an explosion of news coverage, talk show discussion and rhetorical controversy over sexual orientation and its social, religious, political and ethical impact. What is the prospect for the new millennium?

This course will examine the ways in which news (and other) media treat these and other related issues and how that treatment influences public perceptions. It will provide historical and contemporary context through the lens of journalism, while preparing students to evaluate intelligently and dispassionately the issues regardless of what profession they ultimately choose.

The course aims to stimulate critical thinking about gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender, intersex issues and other issues revolving around sexuality (such as abstinence) in the framework of American culture, ethics and public interest. Through lecture, interactive discussion, guest speakers, readings and TV/film it will tackle stereotypes, arming students to wade through claims, charges and rhetoric toward a professional journalistic evaluation of the facts.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

You are required to complete all of the readings from the texts, that have been placed on reserve, or that are on Blackboard (please check Blackboard each week to see what, if any, new articles have been posted). Reserve readings can be found in the Annenberg Resource Center in ASC 104-D.

Class participation will count as part of the final grade; specifically, preparation, leading and participating in class discussions, and questioning of guest lecturers and panels. I place a high value on listening to students' opinions regardless of what these opinions might be. Learning is a collaborative and social experience, and students learn from each other. Therefore you owe it to your classmates to attend class and make your contribution to their learning. I hope you are prepared to be challenged and to challenge the readings. I do not personally endorse every reading I have assigned. The views you read are those of the authors.

You will be required to write three papers during the semester. The first will be 5-7 pages long, the second will be 10-12 pages long, and the final paper will be 15-20 pages long (each using 12-point type, one-inch margins, Times Roman typeface). You can pick any topic for these papers, but they must be pre-approved by me.

In these papers you will be asked to review how the media covered an event by reading first-hand accounts of that event, and synthesizing scholarly works about that event. These papers are expected to reflect sophisticated thought and analysis. As you write your papers you should ask: Was media coverage accurate? Was it fair? Why? Why not? Did the country's sensibilities at the time affect coverage?

USC libraries have on microfilm copies of the Los Angeles Times beginning in 1881, and for The New York Times going back to 1857. The Washington Post is available starting in 1959, and Time magazine is available beginning in 1923. The One Institute on Adams Blvd. also has old copies of gay and lesbian newspapers, or can help you track them down. (A tour of the One Institute is scheduled early in the semester).

In addition, the Leavy Library has a document known as the Readers Guide to Periodical List. These books – known for their green binding and jackets – list every article ever written on a particular subject or news event and the publication in which it appeared and the date it appeared. These documents are available in the Leavy Library's lower commons area. Please ask the person manning the reference desk for their location. In addition, the journalism research librarian, who will be a guest speaker in class early in the semester, has compiled a journalism search page at <http://jusc.wordpress.com>.

Each student will also be required to lead class discussions during the semester about either the readings for the week, or a GBLTI topic in the news. I will hand out guidelines in class about how to lead a class discussion, and I will help you prepare if you feel that this might be a stretch for you. If we have more than 14 students enrolled in the course, I will allow you to team up with each other to lead these discussions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

"Come out Fighting: A Century of Essential Writing on Gay & Lesbian Liberation," by Chris Bull. Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books (2001).

"News and Sexuality: Media Portraits of Diversity," edited by Laura Castañeda and Shannon Campbell. Sage Publications (2005).

OTHER READINGS:

In addition to the required readings from texts, on Blackboard, and on reserve, regular scrutiny of local and national print media, online, broadcast news, and other forms of entertainment will be expected, for purposes of analysis and comparison among different publications or programs.

VIDEO VIEWING:

Documentaries, sit-coms or feature films (or parts of them) will be viewed in-class.

GRADING:

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation (including leading a discussion)	10 percent
Paper # 1 (5-7 pages)	20 percent
Paper # 2 (10-12 pages)	30 percent
Final Paper (15-20 pages)	40 percent
Total	100 percent

MISCELLANEOUS:

Several Web sites can help you research and write papers, and to stay on top of the news. Many are included in our textbook. They include the ONE Institute & Archives near USC at www.onearchives.org; the Intersex Society of North America at www.isna.org; and GLAAD's site at www.glaad.org, especially the "Eyes on the Media," "Stories to Watch," "Entertainment News," and "POC (People of Color) Media Project" features.

You also should regularly check Greg Hernandez' blog for the Los Angeles Daily News at <http://www.insidesocal.com/outinhollywood/>; Christine Daniels' blog for the Los Angeles Times at <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/womaninprogress/>; Curve Magazine at www.curvemag.com, and The Advocate magazine at www.advocate.com. If you're interested in advertising and marketing to gays and lesbians, check out www.commercialcloset.org.

DO NOT QUOTE WIKIPEDIA.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is required for all classes, and roll will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting. Missed classes due to work, travel, job interviews, car troubles, etc., will not be tolerated. If you expect to miss class due to a family emergency, a medical problem, or a religious holiday, you will only be excused if you contact me beforehand (either send me an e-mail or give me a call). You must also bring a note from your doctor if you miss class due to a medical emergency. Tardiness is unacceptable, even during class breaks. If you expect to be more than 15 minutes late to class, don't bother coming. **Missed assignments, such as quizzes, due to absences cannot be made up.**

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Late assignments will not be accepted. You must turn in assignments on the day they are due even if you know you will miss class and have contacted me beforehand. You can either give it to another student to hand in for you, leave it in my mailbox with a time stamp from Student Services, or send it to me via e-mail attachment. **They must arrive by the beginning of that day's class session.** If you miss class, it is up to you to contact someone in the class (another student, not me) to find out what you've missed and what's due next. The most successful students aren't always the most talented. They tend to be the ones who can manage their time effectively. So plan ahead and work ahead.

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own; in journalism, this includes appropriating the reporting of another without clear attribution. The following is the School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity as published in the University catalog: "Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to this policy."

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is

delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

INTERNSHIPS:

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course who undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to one percent of the total available semester points for this course.

STRESS AND ANGST:

Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, contact the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The free service is confidential.

INSTRUCTOR'S BIO:

I have been a staff writer and columnist for *The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The Dallas Morning News*, and a staff writer and editor at *The Associated Press* in San Francisco, New York and Mexico. I have worked as a freelance journalist, and have written for *The New York Times*, *Business Week Online*, *The Los Angeles Times* Op-Ed page, *Women's Wire*, *Solloella.com*, and *Hispanic Business*, *Latina*, *Latina Style*, *Latin Girl*, *Online Journalism Review*, *American Journalism Review* and *Columbia Journalism Review* magazines. Scholarly articles have appeared in the journals *Media Studies* and *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*. I am the co-author of "The Latino Guide to Personal Money Management," which was published by Bloomberg Press in 1999, and translated into Spanish in 2001. I co-edited a book with Dr. Shannon Campbell titled "News and Sexuality: Media Portraits of Diversity," which was released by Sage Publications in 2005. I hold undergraduate degrees in journalism and international relations from USC, a master's degree in international political economy from Columbia University, and was awarded a Knight-Bagehot Fellowship in business and economics reporting from Columbia University.

COURSE OUTLINE: (Readings are to be done prior to the class on the indicated date. The syllabus is subject to change based on news events, guest speaker availability).

**WEEK ONE (Aug. 28) – Intro to Class, Review Syllabus
(Aug. 30) -- Historical Overview**

Gay and Lesbian issues from the 1880's to World War II; basics of communications theory.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 1: A Tremendous Sensation: Cross-Dressing in the Nineteenth Century San Francisco Press, by Clare Sears.

Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 2: Life as a Drag Ball: Gay Men and Lesbians in the Media: 1920-1942, by Kevin Menken.
Bull, (Pgs. 1-18)

WEEK TWO (Sept. 4) – Historical Overview

The WWII period; basics of journalism.

Readings: Bull, Pgs. (19-23; 189-205).

On Reserve: "Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay & Lesbian Past," by Duberman, Vicinus and Chauncey (Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II).

(Sept. 6) – Historical Overview

The McCarthy period.

Guest Speaker: Grace Xu, Social Work librarian and journalism bibliographer, to discuss research sources and methods.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 3: From Invisibility to Subversion: Lesbian and Gay Representation in News Media During the 1950s," by Marc J.W. de Jong.

Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 5: Publications of a Dangerous Tendency, by John Watson.
Bull, (Pgs. 24-51).

WEEK THREE (Sept. 11) – Historical Overview

The Stonewall Riots

Readings: Bull, (Pgs. 67-95).

On Reserve: "Stonewall," by Martin Duberman (Part Six: Stonewall).

(Sept. 13) – One Institute Tour

Meet at the One Institute at 10:20 a.m. for a one-hour tour (so class will end at 11:20 a.m., which should give you plenty of time to your next class, work, etc). The address is: 909 West Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007. (213) 741-0094.

WEEK FOUR (Sept. 18) –

Historical Overview

Post Stonewall civil rights movement.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 4: The Oliver Sipple Story: A Case Study in Homophobia,” by Rodger Streitmatter. Bull, (Pgs. 115-154; 163-186)

(Sept. 20) –

Coverage of Gays and Lesbians in Sports

How have professional and amateur athletes been covered by the media?

Readings: Bull, (Pgs. 155-162).

Blackboard: “The Glass Closet,” by Sandra Kobrin and Jason Levin. Los Angeles Times Magazine, 2005.

“Young and Out on the Field,” by David Wharton. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

On Reserve: “Outsport Revolution: Truth & Myth in the World of Gay Sports,” by Jim Buzinski and Cyd Zeigler, Chapter 1.

WEEK FIVE (Sept. 25) –

Coverage of U.S. Transgendered People

One of the newest social movements in the United States.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 7: Transgender Images in the Media, by Willow Arune.

Blackboard: “When Debbie Met Cristina, Who Then Became Chris,” by Sara Corbett, The New York Times Magazine. Oct. 14, 2001.

(Sept. 27) – Coverage of Transgendered Individuals in Different Cultures

How are the transgendered viewed in other nations and cultures?

Blackboard: “Curvaceous Challenge to Tradition,” by Reed Johnson. Los Angeles Times. 2004.

“Third Gender (Muxe) in Mexico,” by Julie Pecheur. Oaxaca Times. 2007.

On Reserve: “Gender Diversity: Crosscultural Variations,” by Serena Nanda. Chapter 1 (Multiple Genders Among North American Indians).

PAPER # 1 IS DUE TODAY

WEEK SIX (Oct. 2) –

Guest Speaker

Nick Adams, GLAAD, to discuss transgender issues.

Blackboard: “On Campus, Rethinking Biology 101,” by Fred A. Bernstein. New York Times. 2004.

On Reserve: “Normal: Transsexual CEOs, Crossdressing Cops, and Hermaphrodites with Attitude,” by Amy Bloom (The Body Lies: Female-to-Male Transsexuals, Pgs. 3-47).

(Oct. 4) –

Guest Speaker

Christine Daniels, Los Angeles Times Sports Writer, to discuss transgendered issues.

Blackboard: “A Writer’s Transformation Makes the Personal Public,” by James Rainey. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

“Old Mike, New Christine,” by Mike Penner. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

“When Jane Becomes Jack,” by Paul Vitello. New York Times. 2006.

On Reserve: “She’s Not There: A Life in Two Genders,” by Jennifer Finney Boylan (The Ice Storm, Pgs. 119-132).

WEEK SEVEN (Oct. 9) – Coverage of AIDS

Review of press coverage during the ‘80s and ‘90s.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 6: Framing the AIDS Epidemic: From ‘Homo’

genous Deviance to Widespread Panic," by
Jamel Bell.
Bull, (Pgs. 206-210).

- (Oct. 11) – Coverage of AIDS, continued**
Contemporary coverage of AIDS
Blackboard: "Double Lives on the Down
Low," by Benoit Denizet-Lewis. New York
Times Sunday Magazine. Aug. 3, 2003.
On Reserve: "Livin' on the Down-Low," by Eric
Gutierrez, Tu Ciudad magazine. 2007.

- WEEK EIGHT (Oct. 16) – Coverage of Intersex Individuals**
Intersex individuals are people who are born
with both sex organs, and used to be
commonly referred to as hermaphrodites. What
kind of coverage, if any, do the intersex get in
the U.S.?
Blackboard: "The Unkindest Cut," by
Katherine A. Mason, The Advocate Magazine.
Aug. 14, 2002.
"About a Boy, Who Isn't," by Benoit Denizet-
Lewis. New York Times Magazine. May 26,
2002.
"A Question of Gender," by Emily Nussbaum.
Discover Magazine 2000.
"The Rights of Intersex Babies," by Elizabeth
Weil, New York Times Magazine, 2006.

- (Oct. 18) – Coverage of Intersex issues, continued**
Documentary about Intersex Individuals
On Reserve: "Normal: Transsexual CEOs,
Crossdressing Cops, and Hermaphrodites with
Attitude," by Amy Bloom (The Intersexed, Pgs.
101-127).

- WEEK NINE (Oct. 23) – Coverage of Gays and Family Issues**
How the media covers adoption and other
family issues revolving around the GLBTI
communities.
Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter
12: Proving the Case: Psychology, Subjectivity,
and Representations of Gay and Lesbian
Parents in the Media, by Damien W. Riggs.
Bull, (Pgs. 225-239; 251-263; 330-332)

Blackboard: “An Extended Nuclear Family? Gay Men, Lesbians and the Kids They Are Making and Raising, Sort of Together,” by John Bove, New York Times Magazine, 2006.
“After Gay Parents Split Up,” by Maura Dolan, Los Angeles Times, 2004.
“Fathers in the Making,” by Kevin Sack. Los Angeles Times. 2006.

(Oct. 25) – Coverage of Bisexuality

Bisexuality can be controversial. How has the media handled the topic?

Blackboard: “Why Can’t My Mother Accept my Bisexuality?” By Cary Tennis. Salon Magazine. 2006.

“Survey Finds More Women Try Bisexuality,” by Martha Irvine. AP. 2006.

“Bisexual Label Causes Confusion, Controversy,” by Kathleen O’Brian, Newark Star-Ledger. 2007.

On Reserve: “Look Both Ways: Bisexual Politics,” by Jennifer Baumgardner (Chapter 2, What is Bisexuality?)

WEEK 10 (Oct. 30) –

Coverage of Violence against the GLBT Community.

Members of the GLBT communities are disproportionately victims of violence. How does the news media cover this violence?

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 9: Small Murders: Rethinking News Coverage of Hate Crimes Against GLBT People, by Kim Pearson.

Bull, (Pgs. 305-329).

Blackboard: “Assault Heightens Tensions in S.F.,” by John Glionna. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

“Why Do Straights Hate Gays?” by Larry Kramer. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

(Nov. 1) – GBLT Advertising and Marketing

The Gay and Lesbian Market is an advertiser’s dream due to their higher-than-average expendable income. How are advertisers capturing that market?

Blackboard: “BP Chief Quits Over Revelations About Sex Life,” by Alan Cowell. New York Times. 2007.

“Gay Newspapers Adapt to the Times,” by Keith Darce, The San Diego Union-Tribune. 2007.

“Marketing Comes out of the Closet,” by Carolyn Said. San Francisco Chronicle. 2006.

On Reserve: “Business, Not Politics: The Making of the Gay Market,” by Katherine Sender (Chapter 1).

PAPER # 2 IS DUE TODAY!

WEEK 11 (Nov. 6) –

Coverage of Gays in the Military

Gay men and women are hounded out of the military – unless the nation is at war. This week, we look at the more recent history of the ban on gays in the military.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 10: Media Coverage of the U.S. Ban on Gays in the Military, by Rhonda Gibson.

(Nov. 8) –

Coverage of Gays in the Military, Continued

Contemporary issues about gays in the military.

Blackboard: “For Gays, Secrecy in Love, War,” by Patricia Ward Biederman. Los Angeles Times. April 17, 2003.

“Attitudes on Gays and Military Shifting,” by Peter Spiegel and Joel Rubin. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

WEEK 12 (Nov. 13) –

Coverage of Entertainment and GLBTI Communities.

How has Hollywood and Television covered GLBTI issues?

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 13: From Zero to 24/7: Images of Sexual Minorities on Television, by Rhonda Gibson.

On Blackboard: “Gay-Themed TV Gaining a Wider Audience,” by Bernard Weinraub and Jim Rutenberg. New York Times. July 29, 2003.

PLEASE NOTE: Nov. 10 is the last day to drop a class with a mark of "W."

(Nov. 15) – Guest Speaker

Damine Romine, Entertainment Media
Director, GLAAD.

Blackboard: "An Emmy Nominee Plays it Straight," by Scott Collins. Los Angeles Times. 2007.

WEEK 13 (Nov. 20) – Entertainment coverage, continued

Documentary excerpts.

Nov. 22 – No Class. Happy Thanksgiving!

WEEK 14 (Nov. 27) – Coverage of Marriage Equality

Gay marriage is one issue at the cutting edge for the gay movement, and for politicians.

Readings: Castañeda & Campbell: Chapter 11: Same-Sex Marriage in Cultural and Historical Context: A Guide for Beginning Journalists.

Bull (Pgs. 240-250).

(Nov. 29) – Guest Speaker

Ali Bay, Communications Manager, Equality California

Blackboard: "N.Y. Times to Print Same-Sex Unions," by Mark Jurkowitz, The Boston Globe.

"Gay Weddings in Mainstream Media," by Meg Moritz.

"Gay Marriage Losing Punch as Ballot Issue," by Kirk Johnson. New York Times, 2006.

"Line in Sand for Same-Sex Couples," by Teresa Watanabe, 2007.

WEEK 15 (Dec. 4) – Final Paper # 3 is due today! We will begin our brief in-class presentations.

(Dec. 6) – Final Paper #3 presentations continue ... pizza party!

Dec. 7 – Classes End

Dec. 8-11 – Study Days

Dec. 12-19 – Exams

Dec. 20-Jan. 13 -- Winter Break