

JNST-000 C Fall 2023

T Th 1:15-2:30

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Bekins Seminar Room 9

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Queer Literary Resistance

How does literature by queer writers—poetry, fiction, drama, and polemic—stand in resistance to authoritarian brutality? Can a literary work, in form or content, really fight against the forces of oppression? When is erotic expression revolutionary in itself? Questions like these feel crucial now, as certain of these United States adopt reactionary policies, against trans folks especially, proposed by politicians and media cranks.

Let's make this a genuine seminar, with everyone taking responsibility for our discussions. After I select some LGBTQ+ literature at the start for us to read, you'll choose the rest in concert with each other. My suggestions may include Audre Lorde's biomythographical *Zami*; Tony Kushner's play *Angels in America*; poetry by Ocean Vuong, Catherine Chen, Tommy Pico, and Ely Shipley; novels by Zeyn Joukhadar, *The Thirty Names of Night*, and Chinelo Okparanta, *Under the Udala Trees*.

I'll ask for plenty of writing from you, in whatever forms you like, as I urge you to undertake analytical argument, to sharpen your skills in that kind of essay. Your first writing task will be an exploration of what reading, research, and writing topic you'd like to focus on this semester. That will lead to your contract for the seminar, which may include whatever sort of political action you envision.

English majors and Women's & Gender Studies majors may add extra writing and research to their contracts if you're looking for a 300-level course. Instead of grades, all students will receive narrative evaluations of your work.