

Queer theory is a field of critical theory that emerged in the early s out of the fields of queer studies and women's blog.quintoapp.com theory includes both queer readings of texts and the theorization of 'queerness' itself.

Starting in the s, a range of authors brought deconstructionist critical approaches to bear on issues of sexual identity, and especially on the construction of a normative "straight" ideology. Queer theorists challenged the validity and consistency of heteronormative discourse, and focused to a large degree on non-heteronormative sexualities and sexual practices. The term queer theory was introduced in , with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick , Judith Butler , Adrienne Rich and Diana Fuss all largely following the work of Michel Foucault being among its foundational proponents. Annamarie Jagose wrote *Queer Theory: An Introduction* in . Recently, this term has been used as an umbrella term for both cultural-sexual identifications and other times as a model for more traditional lesbian and gay studies. According to Jagose , "Queer focuses on mismatches between sex, gender and desire. For most, queer has prominently been associated with simply those who identify as lesbian and gay. Unknown to many, queer is in association with more than just gay and lesbian, but also cross-dressing, hermaphroditism, gender ambiguity and gender-corrective surgery. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. And it is easy to be misled by the utopian claims advanced in support of particular tactics. But the range and seriousness of the problems that are continually raised by queer practice indicate how much work remains to be done. Because the logic of the sexual order is so deeply embedded by now in an indescribably wide range of social institutions, and is embedded in the most standard accounts of the world, queer struggles aim not just at toleration or equal status but at challenging those institutions and accounts. The dawning realisation that themes of homophobia and heterosexism may be read in almost any document of our culture means that we are only beginning to have an idea of how widespread those institutions and accounts are". If identities are not fixed, they cannot be categorised and labeled, because identities consist of many varied components, so categorisation by one characteristic is incomplete, and there is an interval between what a subject "does" role-taking and what a subject "is" the self. This opposition destabilises identity categories, which are designed to identify the "sexed subject" and place individuals within a single restrictive sexual orientation. History The term "gay" normalized homosexuality. Most recently, in the late s and s, social constructionists conceived of the sexual subject as a culturally dependent, historically specific product. Writers Allan Berube and Jeffrey Escoffier drove home the point that Queer Nation strove to embrace paradoxes in its political activism, and that the activism was taking new form and revolving around the issue of identity. Out of this emerged queer theory. Their work however did not arise out of the blue. Teresa de Lauretis is credited with coining the phrase "queer theory". It was at a working conference on lesbian and gay sexualities that was held at the University of California , Santa Cruz in February that de Lauretis first made mention of the phrase. Lesbian and Gay Sexualities. Teresa de Lauretis, Judith Butler, and Eve Sedgwick arranged much of the conceptual base for the emerging field in the s. Along with other queer theorists, these three outlined a political hermeneutics, which emphasized representation. These scholars questioned whether people of varying sexual orientations had the same political goals, and whether those in the sexual minority felt that they could be represented along with others of different sexualities and orientations. Due to this association, a debate emerges as to whether sexual orientation is natural or essential to the person, as an essentialist believes, or if sexuality is a social construction and subject to change. In particular, queer theorists identified processes of consolidation or stabilization around some other identity labels e. Queer theory attempts to maintain a critique more than define a specific identity. Acknowledging the inevitable violence of identity politics, and having no stake in its own ideology , queer is less an identity than a critique of identity. However, it is in no position to imagine itself outside the circuit of problems energized by identity politics. Instead of defending itself against those criticisms that its operations attract, queer allows those criticisms to shape its "for now unimaginable" future directions. They insist that the field of normalization is not limited to sexuality; social classifications such as gender, race and nationality constituted by a "governing logic" require an epistemological intervention through queer theory"

Green The constructs are animated by futuristic fantasy designed to evade mortality" Green Whereas Fuss aims to discompose and render inert the reigning classifications of sexual identity, Eng. Intersex and the role of biology Queer theorists focus on problems in classifying individuals as either male or female , even on a strictly biological basis. This complicates the use of genotype as a means to define exactly two distinct sexes. Intersex individuals may for various biological reasons have sexual characteristics that the dominant medical discourse regards as disordered. While the medical literature focuses increasingly on genetics of intersex traits, and even their deselection , some key experts in the study of culture, such as Barbara Rogoff , argue that the traditional distinction between biology and culture as independent entities is overly simplistic, pointing to the ways in which biology and culture interact with one another. Morland contrasts queer "hedonic activism" with an experience of post-surgical insensate intersex bodies to claim that "queerness is characterized by the sensory interrelation of pleasure and shame". Queer theory became occupied in part with what effects " put into circulation around the AIDS epidemic " necessitated and nurtured new forms of political organization, education and theorizing in "queer". Role of language For language use as associated with sexual identity, see Lavender linguistics. Queer theory is likened to language because it is never static, but is ever-evolving. Richard Norton suggests that the existence of queer language is believed to have evolved from the imposing of structures and labels from an external mainstream culture. Early discourse of queer theory involved leading theorists: This discourse centered on the way that knowledge of sexuality was structured through the use of language. When in fact discourse about sexuality flourished during this time period. Foucault argues, "Western man has been drawn for three centuries to the task of telling everything concerning his sex; that since the classical age there has been a constant optimization and increasing valorization of the discourse on sex; and that this carefully analytical discourse was meant to yield multiple effects of displacement, intensification, reorientation and modification of desire itself. Not only were the boundaries of what one could say about sex enlarged, and men compelled to hear it said; but more important, discourse was connected to sex by a complex organization with varying effects, by a deployment that cannot be adequately explained merely by referring it to a law of prohibition. A censorship of sex? There was installed rather an apparatus for producing an ever greater quantity of discourse about sex, capable of functioning and taking effect in its very economy. Sex became a call for management procedures. It became a policing matter. Heteronormativity was the main focus of discourse, where heterosexuality was viewed as normal and any deviations, such as homosexuality, as abnormal or "queer". Even before the founding of "queer theory" the Modern Language Association MLA came together for a convention in for the first formal gay-studies seminar due to the rise of lesbian and gay writers and issues of gay and lesbian textuality. The convention was entitled "Gay Literature: Media and other creative works Many queer theorists have produced creative works that reflect theoretical perspectives in a wide variety of media. For example, science fiction authors such as Samuel R. Delany and Octavia Butler feature many values and themes from queer theory in their work. Nuria Perpinya , a Catalan literary theorist, wrote A good mistake, a novel about the awkward homosexuality in a London genetic engineering lab, between a young man and a black scientist. Ruby Rich as New Queer Cinema in continues, as Queer Cinema , to draw heavily on the prevailing critical climate of queer theory; a good early example of this is the Jean Genet -inspired movie Poison by the director Todd Haynes. In fan fiction , the genre known as slash fiction rewrites straight or nonsexual relationships to be gay, bisexual, and queer in a sort of campy cultural appropriation. And in music, some Queercore groups and zines could be said to reflect the values of queer theory. This is particularly noticeable in gangster films, action films and westerns, which never have "weak" read: Queer theory looks at destabilizing and shifting the boundaries of these cultural constructions. New Media artists have a long history of queer theory inspired works, including cyberfeminism works, porn films like I. The advent of social media is meaningful not only for the whole development of queer theory, but also significant for empowering queer people and helping them become the dominant role from a passive status. First, social media offers people a platform to tell their own stories. From that perspective, using social media encourages the queer equality, because everyone has the equal right to tell the personal stories sharing it with others if they want to. Second, social media creates a concept of "queer community"; for example, Facebook literally puts a human face on the LGBT civil rights movement. This network effect breaks down barriers

between queer people and those who might be enlisted as allies, or at the very least, as friends. As the number of queer people who are active online is increasing, they have built the "queer community" [33] on the Internet and keep in touch through social media. In the "queer community", people share information and talk about policies relevant to their lives. Third, social media enables queer people handle the dominant right of advocating and propaganda. Equality California, for example, uses different social media channels to engage different audiences. The organization uses Twitter for live updates from events such as bill hearings or marches. Facebook acts as more of a community hub where supporters can engage with Equality California directly, and allows the organization to target specific information to specific geographic regions. YouTube is often underutilized by nonprofits and is frequently viewed solely as a repository for videos about the organization. But Equality California has also found that YouTube can be a great way to tell personal stories of people affected by the work the organization does. Most people arrive at this position from their personal experiences with others around them. Sixth, social media serves as a more accessible platform to people outside of academia.

Criticism Typically, critics of queer theory are concerned that the approach obscures or glosses altogether the material conditions that underpin discourse. Thus, not all queer theoretical work is as faithful to its deconstructionist roots. Reflecting on this issue, Timothy Laurie suggests that "the desire to resist norms in some contemporary queer scholarship can never be entirely reconciled with an equally important challenge, that of producing both adequate and dynamic descriptions of ordinary events". Thus Green writes that, in an introductory section, [40] Michael Warner s draws out the possibility of queer theory as a kind of critical intervention in social theory radical deconstructionism ; despite this, he weaves back and forth between the reification and deconstruction of sexual identity. Green argues that Warner begins the volume by invoking an ethnic identity politics, solidified around a specific social cleavage and a discussion of the importance of deconstructing notions of lesbian and gay identities; but, despite its radical deconstructionism, it constructs the queer subject or self in largely conventional terms: So, one of the leading volumes of queer theory engages the subject via conventional sociological epistemologies that conceive of subject positions constituted through systems of stratification and organized around shared experience and identity. In other way, for Ian Barnard, [41] any consideration of sexuality must include inextricability with racialized subjectivities. Adam Green argues that Barnard implicitly rejects the queer theoretical conceptions of sexuality on the grounds that such work fails to account for particularity of racialized sexualities. He reasons that the failure arises because queer theorists are themselves white, and therefore operate from the particularity of a white racial standpoint. Barnard aspires to recuperate an analysis of race in queer theory, proposing that the deconstructionist epistemology of queer theory can be used to decompose a white queerness first in order to recover a racialized queerness second. His critique of the white subject position of queer theorists is itself a testimony to the stability of the social order and the power of social categories to mark a particular kind of experience, of subjectivity and, in turn, of queer author. He backs down the road of a decidedly sociological analysis of subject position and the self. Finally, Jagose [42] Green observes that Jagose aims toward an analysis of social cleavages, including those accruing by race and ethnicity. Thus, on the one, Jagose underscores the strong deconstructionist epistemological premise of the term queer and queer theory more generally. Yet, she goes on to analyze identities and sexualities "inflected by heterosexuality, race, gender and ethnicity". Thus Adam Green states that by advocating the incorporation of social contingency in this way, Jagose offers neither the critical edge of queer theory nor the clarity of standpoint theory.

Chapter 2 : 3 Differences Between the Terms 'Gay' and 'Queer' and Why It Matters - Everyday Feminism

Queer this word was a pejorative term throughout much of the twentieth century, used to describe homosexuals (particularly males) - using the Marxist technique of hailing the subject/interpellation, _____ theorists turned the word on its head, making it a respectable critical term in academic studies.

Eugene Wolters 3 Comments Queer theory is a rapidly growing field in the critical theory tradition. Often examining the intersection of capitalism, gender, heterosexism and the state, queer theory is constantly seeking to break down norms and question the status quo. We spoke to a few queer theory aficionados and came up with this list of 20 must-read queer theory texts. All book links are to Amazon. Rosemary Hennessy boldly reorients queer theory away from its preoccupation with psychoanalysis, language, and performance, instead insisting upon close analysis of the structures of late capitalism, labor, and commodification. She argues that sexual identity has always been linked to gender, race, and nationality, but these identities themselves arise from capitalism. As globalization transforms capitalism, it also transforms sexual identity, opening up both new forms of commodification and new opportunities for agency. On the one hand, middle-class gays and lesbians are enjoying unprecedented visibility, but on the other, society still relies on the gendered division of labor that renders certain subjects unequal. Read the article here. Puar argues that configurations of sexuality, race, gender, nation, class, and ethnicity are realigning in relation to contemporary forces of securitization, counterterrorism, and nationalism. She examines how liberal politics incorporate certain queer subjects into the fold of the nation-state, through developments including the legal recognition inherent in the overturning of anti-sodomy laws and the proliferation of more mainstream representation. These incorporations have shifted many queers from their construction as figures of death via the AIDS epidemic to subjects tied to ideas of life and productivity gay marriage and reproductive kinship. Puar contends, however, that this tenuous inclusion of some queer subjects depends on the production of populations of Orientalized terrorist bodies. Heteronormative ideologies that the U. Puar combines transnational feminist and queer theory, Foucauldian biopolitics, Deleuzian philosophy, and technoscience criticism, and draws from an extraordinary range of sources, including governmental texts, legal decisions, films, television, ethnographic data, queer media, and activist organizing materials and manifestos. Looking at various cultural events and phenomena, she highlights troublesome links between terrorism and sexuality: For Native studies in particular, queer theory points to the possibility of going beyond representing the voices of Native peoples, a project that can quickly become co-opted into providing Native commodities for consumption in the multicultural academic-industrial complex. The subjectless critique of queer theory can assist Native studies in critically interrogating how it could unwittingly re-create colonial hierarchies even within projects of decolonization. This critique also sheds light on how Native peoples function within the colonial imaginary—including the colonial imaginary of scholars and movements that claim to be radical. With respect to Native studies, even queer of color critique does not necessarily mark how identities are shaped by settler colonialism. Thus a conversation between Native studies and queer theory is important, because the logics of settler colonialism and decolonization must be queered in order to properly speak to the genocidal present that not only continues to disappear indigenous peoples but reinforces the structures of white supremacy, settler colonialism, and heteropatriarchy that affect all peoples.

Chapter 3 : Queer theory - Wikipedia

Queer theory follows feminist theory and gay/lesbian studies in rejecting the idea that 'sexuality is an essentialist category'¹⁰, something determined by biology or judged by standards of morality.

Queer Theory Historically, humans living outside of the heteronormative construct are silent and tyrannized. They function within an androcentric-heteronormative construct. Schneider defines Queer theory in the following statement: It is critical theory concerned principally with cultural deployments of power through social constructions of sexuality and gender. Queer theory also owes its existence to the result of work done by North American academic Teresa de Lauretis and others during a working conference in In the struggle against Empire, queer theory provides the foundation upon which queer communities now stand. The troubling of androcentric-heteronormative structures includes a critical review of the oppressive tools used within the power structure. Queer Hermeneutics is the field of study focused on interpretations of the Bible. Within the framework of queer hermeneutics, passages long used to intimidate and oppress are no longer interpreted through the lens of the oppressor. Queer hermeneutics is a hermeneutical approach that further develops the biblical hermeneutical tradition that tries to decipher what the Bible says about homosexuality. Thanks to the work of queer theorist like de Lauretis, queer hermeneutics takes seriously that queer does not apply to sexuality but is grounded in the stance of resistance against hegemonic powers. Hornsby and Ken Stone tackle specific biblical texts, like Leviticus 18, utilized against the LGBTQI community in an effort to reverse injustices suffered and offer a more inclusive reading. Queer hermeneutics breathes life into the damaged souls of many LGBTQI identifying individuals who turned away or were driven away from God by conservatively interpreted biblical text. The future of queer theory and queer hermeneutics is uncertain because of its own self-troubling. Queer theory widens the discourse to the point that everyone exists within a spectrum. There is no essentialism in queer theory. If resistance to the androcentric-heteronormative hermeneutical tactic is not the goal, queer theory does not apply to our world objective and queer theory organizes around categories that it resoundingly rejects. Queer refers to anything that resists normativity. It does not always refer to sexuality. Queer theory also considers the intersectionality of race, class, and economic status. Queer theory continues to morph. It broadens its own inclusivity and its queering of androcentric-heteronormative constructs about sexuality, race, class, economic, and educational status. However, queer inclusivity risks becoming so very broad that specific injustices and the means to right those wrongs are lost in the obscurities of identity. Queer hermeneutics, founded in queer theory, must continue working to raise the voices of the oppressed while simultaneously resisting the move from being a theory capable of concrete actions to a philosophy too broad and ethereal to explain anything, much less sexual identities and practices. Still, the conversion of the androcentric-heteronormative hermeneutic with which the Bible has been read to queer hermeneutical readings transforms the Bible to a guide for cultural, compassionate human behavior. Chalice Press, , Lesbian and Gay Sexualities an Introduction. A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies iii-xviii.

Chapter 4 : Queer theory – Assignment Example

Queer theory, in part, is a reaction to a school of feminism that believed each sex comes with its own essential characteristics. You know, girls are calm and thoughtful, while boys are spontaneous and passionate, that sort of thing.

This theory explored every deviant category of sexuality. Queer theory proposed a wider and more complex way of reading sexuality, trying to go beyond classical LGBT labeling. But if the theory is quite recent, the exploration of these themes on philosophy and social studies is much older. The same goes for gender exploration in film. One of the most interesting points about queer cinema is how critical reception is as important as the film. The social construction of gender is questioned in the films, and how these questions are seen by the audience tells us about the evolution of sexual notions according to context. From underground auteurs to mainstream films, queer films are still one of the most discussed issues in film theory. *Scorpio Rising* by Kenneth Anger, For many historians, the experimental short cuts by Kenneth Anger represent a milestone for queer cinematography. Without a major plot to follow, Kenneth Anger mixes different provocative elements in the film. The real importance of the film lives in the way Anger configures queer aesthetics. Different masculine icons surround this gang of gay men. From Marlon Brando to James Dean, the queer aesthetic drinks from over-masculinized symbols. As masculine as these actors are, the bikers preparing their leather clothes and going out on motorcycles are just as masculine. At the end, the queer community adopts the symbols of hyper-masculinity, and leather goes from this macho heterosexual clothing to the main accessory in gay clubs. *Cabaret* by Bob Fosse, For many years Judy Garland had been considered as the quintessential gay icon. Like her mother, Minnelli married a man who confessed to be a homosexual in the middle of their marriage. This event coincided with the relationship that her character sustains with a man who confesses his sexuality in a moment of intimacy. *Divine* could be the least wanted option to star in a 70s film, but John Waters chose her to incarnate this idea of disgust. With a classic scene where Divine eats real feces, the performer did what Waters needed for the film. *Fox and His Friends* by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Rainer Werner Fassbinder is recognized as one of the key filmmakers in developing what we can call a queer aesthetic. For Fassbinder, there was no distinction between subject matter and a way a film looks. For Fassbinder, this was a trick not related at all to reality. Gay love was as valued as heterosexual, and it was poisoned by power struggle. *The Times of Harvey Milk* by Rob Epstein, Most of the films on this list deal with the relationship between the queer community and normative society. Some films can have a proud profile on it, and others present instead a plea for acceptance. Both points of view never won more power in the United States until the efforts of Harvey Milk, the first openly homosexual supervisor elected to public office. The political campaign of Harvey Milk was centered on gay rights, but it also included any kind of minority in San Francisco. Milk won his place very slowly, winning the support of different non-gay sectors in order to win the election. The film presents the facts in a classical biographic documentary style, but its importance shows how much the life of Harvey Milk changed the face of its country toward queer community forever. After his punk films, his queer interpretation of New Wave, and especially his revisited historical figures, the biggest angst came in his latest films. After knowing about his AIDS diagnosis and his struggle with some of its physical consequences, the content and especially the form of his films became even more radical. After this law, Jarman filled the film with a homoerotic imaginary, made direct references to the clause, and released this abstract collage of scenes about what it means to be a declared homosexual in this context.

Chapter 5 : CULTURAL MARXISM IN THE CHURCH: QUEER THEORY

QUEER THEORY. Since the early s, the term queer has been strategically taken up to signify a wide-ranging and unmethodical resistance to normative models of sex, gender, and sexuality.

Drawing upon the social constructionist views prominent in the work of French philosopher-historian Michel Foucault, Butler argued that gender is neither a natural nor a stable element of biological or social identity, but rather is constantly brought into existence through a series of performative activities: Sedgwick similarly attacked foundational models of sexual identity, exploring the closet as more than merely a metaphor and revealing its omnipresence in American culture as a duplicitous social practice the open secret and juridical double bind with a legal system that demands the simultaneous erasure and production of homosexuality. Whereas the former defines homosexuals as a distinct minority, the universalizing view holds that queerness subtends all forms of sexual desire and practice, including heterosexuality. Foucault argued instead that a science of sexuality emerged as one element within the analytic of biopower—a set of 19th-century medical and social technologies that nation-states employed to control their populations. Most important among these was the AIDS epidemic, which decimated queer communities in the United States during the s. These organizations brought media attention to the disease and to the homophobic practices that slowed progress toward treatment and cure. Theory Queer Theory was, and remains, first and foremost a scholarly enterprise, although its adherents often explore the relationship between theory and practice by acknowledging the power relations inherent in the production of knowledge. Queer theorizing, for many, aims at disrupting and politicizing all presumed relations between and among sex, gender, bodies, sexuality, and desire. Is the Rectum a Grave? University of Chicago Press, He seeks to redefine sex as a practice that shatters the experience of the self rather than reinforcing it. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. From this standpoint, gender can productively be detached from the biological distinction between the sexes. Furthermore, enacting gender is a performative process: On the Discursive Limits of Sex. Butler extends her discussion of gender performativity by challenging the notion that the body and, specifically, anatomical sex functions as a material limit constraining performances of gender and race. Instead, she contends, the body is discursively produced as well. Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories. Seminal collection of essays demonstrating queer theoretical approaches to popular culture, literature, film, and history. Many of the essays became Queer Theory classics, including those by D. Miller, Patricia White, and Richard Meyer. Towards a Gay Hagiography. Oxford University Press, Some Foucault scholars denounce the work, arguing that Foucault would have rejected the use of his ideas for political organizing. Halperin, David, and Valerie Traub, eds. Turning gay pride on its end, this essay collection, which originated with a conference at the University of Michigan, seeks to reclaim emotion, embarrassment, and dissidence as central elements of queer practice. Epistemology of the Closet. University of California Press, Emphasizing the performative nature of speech acts—that is, the way language brings ideologies and practices into being—the author argues that hetero- and homosexualities are mutually constructed entities that subtend a homophobic culture. Originally published in Users without a subscription are not able to see the full content on this page. Please subscribe or login. How to Subscribe Oxford Bibliographies Online is available by subscription and perpetual access to institutions. For more information or to contact an Oxford Sales Representative click here.

Chapter 6 : Queer theory - Infogalactic: the planetary knowledge core

The role of queer theory, and specifically its replacement of historical and sociological scholarship on lesbian and gay people's lives with the theorising of lesbian and gay issues, and the displacement of gay and lesbian studies by gender and queer studies, has been criticised by activist and writer Larry Kramer.

Some argue that queer theory is a by-product of third-wave feminism, while others claim that it is a result of the valuation of postmodern minoritizing, that is, the idea that the smallest constituent must have a voice and identity equivalent to all others. Theorists claim that identities are not fixed – they cannot be categorized and labeled – because identities consist of many varied components and that to categorize by one characteristic is wrong. For example, a woman can be a woman without being labelled a lesbian or feminist, and she may have a different race from the dominant culture. She should, queer theorists argue, be classed as possessing an individual identity and not put in the collective basket of feminists or of colour or the like. Overview Edit

Queer theorists analyze texts to expose underlying meanings within and to challenge the notions of "straight" ideology, and in this way owes much of its drive to the tenets of post-structuralist theory, and deconstruction in particular. Queer theory should not be confused with queer activism, which developed as a response to the AIDS crisis of the s. Although there is overlap, queer theory became occupied, in part, with what effects necessitated and nurtured new forms of political organization, education and theorizing. Queer theory, unlike some feminist theories and studies, includes a wide array of previously considered non-normative sexualities and sexual practices in its list of identities. Because queer theory is grounded in gender and sexuality, there is debate as to whether sexual orientation is natural or essential, or if it is merely a construction and subject to change. The focus of theorists is the problem of classifying every individual by gender; therefore queer is less an identity than a critique of identity. The term "queer theory" was introduced in, with Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler, and Diana Fuss all largely following the work of Michel Foucault being among its foundational proponents. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick by David Shankbone. It was at a working conference on theorizing lesbian and gay sexualities that was held at the University of California, Santa Cruz in February that de Lauretis first made mention of the phrase. Background concepts Edit

In many respects, Queer theory is grounded in gender and sexuality. Due to this association, a debate emerges as to whether sexual orientation is natural or essential to the person, as an essentialist believes, or if sexuality is merely a social construction and subject to change. The essentialist feminists believed that both genders "have an essential nature e. The Constructivists counter that there is no natural identity, that all meaning is constructed through discourse and there is no subject other than the creation of meaning for social theory. In a Constructivist perspective, it is not proper to take gay or lesbian as subjects with objective reality; but rather they must be understood in terms of their social context, in how genealogy creates these terms through history. For example, as Foucault explains in *The History of Sexuality*, two hundred years ago there was no linguistic category for gay male. Instead, the term applied to sex between two men was sodomy. Over time, the homosexual was created through the discourses of medicine and especially psychiatry. What is conventionally understood to be the same practice was gradually transformed from a sinful lifestyle into an issue of sexual orientation. Foucault argues that prior to this discursive creation there was no such thing as a person who could think of himself as essentially gay. Queer identity, unlike the other categories labeled lesbian or gay, has no interest in consolidating or stabilizing itself. It maintains its critique of identity-focus by understanding the formation of its own coalition; this may result in exclusionary effects in excess of those intended. Acknowledging the inevitable violence of identity politics, and having no stake in its own ideology, queer is less an identity than a critique of identity. However, it is in no position to imagine itself outside the circuit of problems energized by identity politics. Instead of defending itself against those criticisms that its operations attract, queer allows those criticisms to shape its - for now unimaginable – future directions. This complicates the use of genotype as a means to define exactly two distinct sexes. Intersexed individuals may for many different biological reasons have ambiguous sexual characteristics. Some key experts in the study of culture, such as Barbara Rogoff, believe that the traditional distinction between biology and culture is a false dichotomy since biology and culture are closely related and

have a significant influence on each other. Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality, Anne Fausto-Sterling challenges many of the biological underpinnings surrounding how we constitute gender and sexuality. From genitalia to brain composition, "hormones and gender chemistry," "toward a theory of human sexuality. In contrast, some queer theorists are attempting to reconcile the biological and sociological bases of sexing, incorporating both models. Queer theory became occupied in part with what effects " put into circulation around the AIDS epidemic " necessitated and nurtured new forms of political organization, education and theorizing in "queer". Prostitution, pornography and BDSM Edit Queer theory, unlike most feminist theory and lesbian and gay studies, includes a wide array of previously considered non-normative sexualities and sexual practices in its list of identities. Not all of these are non-heterosexual. Sadism and masochism , prostitution, inversion, transgender , bisexuality , intersexuality and many other things are seen by queer theorists as opportunities for more involved investigations into class difference and racial, ethnic and regional particulars allow for a wide ranging field of investigation using non-normative analysis as a tool in reconfiguring the way we understand pleasure and desire. The key element is that of viewing sexuality as constructed through discourse, with no list or set of constituted preexisting sexuality realities, but rather identities constructed through discursive operations. It is important to consider discourse in its broadest sense as shared meaning making, as Foucault and Queer Theory would take the term to mean. In this way sexual activity, having shared rules and symbols would be as much a discourse as a conversation, and sexual practice itself constructs its reality rather than reflecting a proper biological predefined sexuality. This point of view places these theorists in conflict with some branches of feminism that view prostitution and pornography, for example, as mechanisms for the oppressions of women. Other branches of feminism tend to vocally disagree with this latter interpretation and celebrate pornography as a means of adult sexual representation. Richard Norton suggests that the existence of queer language is believed to have evolved from the imposing of structures and labels from an external mainstream culture. This discourse centered on the way that knowledge of sexuality was structured through the use of language. Heteronormativity was the main focus of discourse, where heterosexuality was viewed as normal and any deviations, such as homosexuality, as abnormal or "queer". In later years there was an explosion of discourse on sexuality and sexual orientations with the coming-of-age of the Internet. Prior to this, discourse was controlled by institutional publishing, and with the growth of the internet and its popularity, the community could have its own discussion on what sexuality and sexual orientation was. Homosexual and heterosexual were no longer the main topics of discourse; BDSM , transgender and bisexuality became topics of discourse. Although homosexuality and queer practices are nothing new, the association between queer practices and deviancy is taking on new meaning in the modern world as queer community and queer culture becomes more apparent. Queer culture is not limited to queer sex. Queer culture, from an ideological standpoint, represents the queer community and its arts, lifestyles, institutions, writings, politics, relationships and everything else encompassed in culture. Two common sects of queer culture are the " flamboyant " and " the closet. The closet side of the queer culture is more secretive with code words, separate social lives and rarely mixes with the flamboyant street culture. Media and other creative works Edit Many queer theorists have created creative works that reflect theoretical perspectives in a wide variety of media. For example, Science fiction authors such as Samuel Delany and Octavia Butler feature many values and themes from queer theory in their work. In film, the genre christened by B. Ruby Rich as New Queer Cinema in continues, as Queer Cinema , to draw heavily on the prevailing critical climate of queer theory; a good early example of this is the Jean Genet-inspired movie Poison by the director Todd Haynes. In fan fiction , the genre known as slash fiction rewrites straight or nonsexual relationships to be gay, bisexual, and queer in sort of a campy cultural appropriation. And in music, some Queercore groups and zines could be said to reflect the values of queer theory. This is particularly noticeable in gangster films, action films and westerns, which never have "weak" read: Queer theory looks at destabilizing and shifting the boundaries of these cultural constructions. Queer theorists also analyze texts to expose underlying meanings in texts and investigate the discrepancies between homosocial male bonding, homophobia and homosexuality in English literature. King Lear is often used as an example. New Media artists have a long history of queer theory inspired works, including cyberfeminism works, porn films like I. Criticism Edit Despite the popularity of

queer theory in recent years, this body of work is not without its critics. Typically, critics of queer theory are concerned that the approach obscures or glosses altogether the material conditions that underpin discourse. Edwards for instance, argues that queer theory extrapolates too broadly from textual analysis in undertaking an examination of the social. And similarly, Green argues that queer theory ignores the social and institutional conditions within which lesbians and gays live. In this vein, it is argued that queer theory cannot be a framework for examining selves or subjectivities—“including those that accrue by race and class”—but rather, must restrict its analytic focus to discourse. Hence, sociology and queer theory are regarded as methodologically and epistemologically incommensurable frameworks. Finally, it has been argued that queer theory underestimates the Foucauldian insight that power produces not just constraint, but also, pleasure. Barry Adam, for instance, suggests that sexual identity categories, such as "gay", can have the effect of expanding the horizon of what is imaginable in a same-sex relationship, including a richer sense of the possibilities of same-sex love and dyadic commitment.

Chapter 7 : Queer Theory – Queer Bible Hermeneutics

Queer Theory Buzzwords. BACK; NEXT ; Big Concepts from Big Minds Phallus. We know that the word "phallus" can simply mean blog.quintoapp.com to Sigmund Freud and other theorists, the phallus is the social power of the penis.

It might refer to something suspicious or "not quite right", or to a person with mild derangement or who exhibits socially inappropriate behaviour. Queer as a pejorative By the time "The Adventure of the Second Stain" was published, the term was starting to gain a connotation of sexual deviance, referring to feminine men or men who would engage in same-sex relationships. An early recorded usage of the word in this sense was in a letter by John Sholto Douglas, 9th Marquess of Queensberry. In the mid 20th century, the invert identity lost ground and shifted toward the homophile identity. In the 1950s and 60s, the homophile identity was displaced by a more radicalized gay identity, which at the time included trans and gender-nonconforming people. During the endonymic shifts from invert to homophile to gay, queer was pejoratively applied to men who were believed to engage in receptive or passive anal or oral sex with other men [5] as well as those who exhibited non-normative gender expressions. Ah, do we really have to use that word? Every gay person has his or her own take on it. For some it means strange and eccentric and kind of mysterious [It has its place. But when a lot of lesbians and gay men wake up in the morning we feel angry and disgusted, not gay. Using "queer" is a way of reminding us how we are perceived by the rest of the world. The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage. In this usage, queer retains its historical connotation of "outside the bounds of normal society" and can be construed as "breaking the rules for sex and gender". It can be preferred because of its ambiguity, which allows queer-identifying people to avoid the sometimes rigid boundaries that are associated with labels such as gay, lesbian, or even transgender. While initially used only to refer to radical homosexuals, opinions on the range of what queer includes can vary. For some people, the non-specificity of the term is liberating. Queerness thus becomes a path of political resistance against heteronormativity as well as homonormativity while simultaneously refusing to engage in traditional essentialist identity politics. Another concern is that the addition is only cosmetic, and that among groups that do this, LGBT goals are always prioritized over intersex ones. Queer studies and Queer theory In academia, the term queer and the related verb queering broadly indicate the study of literature, discourse, academic fields, and other social and cultural areas from a non-heteronormative perspective. It often means studying a subject against the grain from the perspective of gender studies. Queer studies is the study of issues relating to sexual orientation and gender identity usually focusing on LGBT people and cultures. Originally centered on LGBT history and literary theory , the field has expanded to include the academic study of issues raised in biology , sociology , anthropology , history of science , philosophy , psychology , sexology , political science , ethics , and other fields by an examination of the identity, lives, history, and perception of queer people. Organizations such as the Irish Queer Archive attempt to collect and preserve history related to queer studies. Applications of queer theory include queer theology and queer pedagogy. Queer theorists, including Rod Ferguson, Jasbir Puar, Lisa Duggan, and Chong-suk Han, critique the mainstream gay political movement as allied with neoliberal and imperialistic agendas, including gay tourism, gay and trans military inclusion, and state- and church-sanctioned marriages for monogamous gay couples. Puar, a queer theorist of color, coined the term homonationalism , which refers to the rise of American exceptionalism , nationalism , white supremacy , and patriarchy within the gay community catalyzed in response to the September 11 attacks. One such study was conducted in Melbourne in 2001 by Roffee and Waling. By using queer and feminist theories and approaches the researchers were better equipped to cater for the needs, and be accommodating for the vulnerabilities, of the LGBTIQ participants of the study. In this case, it was a specifically post-modern queer theory that enabled the researchers to approach the study with a fair perspective, acknowledging all the varieties of narratives and experiences within the LGBTIQ community. New Queer Cinema was a movement in queer-themed independent filmmaking in the early 1990s. The use of queer and Q is also widespread in Australia, including national counselling and support service Qlife [23] and Q News. Other social movements exist as offshoots of queer culture or combinations of queer identity with other views. Adherents of queer nationalism support the notion that the LGBT community

forms a distinct people due to their unique culture and customs. Queercore originally homocore is a cultural and social movement that began in the mids as an offshoot of punk expressed in a do-it-yourself style through zines, music, writing, art and film. The term queer migration is used to describe the movement of LGBTQ people around the world often to escape discrimination or ill treatment due to their orientation or gender expression. Organizations such as the Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees and Rainbow Railroad attempt to assist individuals in such relocations. Some LGBT people disapprove of using queer as a catch-all because they consider it offensive, derisive or self-deprecating , given its continuous use as a form of hate speech in English. They also disagree with how the deliberate use of the epithet queer by political radicals has played a role in dividing the LGBT community by political opinion, class, gender, age, and so on. The controversy about the word also marks a social and political rift in the LGBT community between those including civil-rights activists who perceive themselves as "normal" and who wish to be seen as ordinary members of society and those who see themselves as separate, confrontational and not part of the ordinary social order.

Chapter 8 : Queer theory and politics – International Socialism

Queer theory's origin is hard to clearly define, since it came from multiple critical and cultural contexts, including feminism, post-structuralist theory, radical movements of people of color, the gay and lesbian movements, AIDS activism, many sexual subcultural practices such as sadomasochism, and postcolonialism.

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Queer theory is derived largely from post-structuralist theory , and deconstruction in particular. In addition, it analyzes the correlation between power distribution and identification while understanding the multifarious facets of oppression and privilege. Feminist and Queer Theory are seen as applicable concepts that provide a framework to explore these issues rather than as an identity to those in the community. Queer is an umbrella term for those not only deemed sexually deviant, but also used to describe those who feel marginalized as a result of standard social practices. Annamarie Jagose wrote Queer Theory: An Introduction in Recently, this term has been used as an umbrella term for a coalition of sexual identities that are culturally marginalized, and at other times, to create discourse surrounding the budding theoretical model that primarily arose through more traditional lesbian and gay studies. According to Jagose , "Queer focuses on mismatches between sex, gender and desire. For most, queer has been prominently associated with those who identify as lesbian and gay. Unknown to many, queer is in association with more than just gay and lesbian, but also cross-dressing, hermaphroditism , gender ambiguity and gender-corrective surgery. There is an abundance of identities in which Queer Theory not only recognizes but also breaks down in relation to other contributing factors like race , class , religion , etc. It is merely reductive to view Queer Theory as a byname for Gay and Lesbian studies when the two fields have stark differences. Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. The desires that queer theory is centered in do not reference sexuality, however because the foundation of queer theory lies in the assessment and analysis of what is deemed normative and non-normative, sexuality intersects with the components that maintain the fundamentals of queer theory. And it is easy to be misled by the utopian claims advanced in support of particular tactics. But the range and seriousness of the problems that are continually raised by queer practice indicate how much work remains to be done. Because the logic of the sexual order is so deeply embedded by now in an indescribably wide range of social institutions, and is embedded in the most standard accounts of the world, queer struggles aim not just at toleration or equal status but at challenging those institutions and accounts. If identities are not fixed, they cannot be categorized and labeled, because identities consist of many varied components, so categorization by one characteristic is incomplete, and there is an interval between what a subject "does" role-taking and what a subject "is" the self. This opposition destabilizes identity categories, which are designed to identify the "sexed subject" and place individuals within a single restrictive sexual orientation. The independence of "queer" from "gay" came from the alignment of gay ideals with assimilationism and conservatism, while queer coincided with a radical approach. Assimilationists saw being nothing wrong with society; queer radicalism aspires to achieve nothing in reference to the status quo because societal acceptance is not essential because society is unacceptable. Josiah Flynt became one of the first sociologists to study homosexuality. Most recently, in the late s and s, social constructionists conceived of the sexual subject as a culturally dependent, historically specific product. Writers Allan Berube and Jeffrey Escoffier drove home the point that Queer Nation strove to embrace paradoxes in its political activism , and that the activism was taking new form and revolving around the issue of identity. Out of this emerged queer theory. Their work however did not arise out of the blue. Teresa de Lauretis is credited with coining the phrase "queer theory". It was at a working conference on lesbian and gay sexualities that was held at the University of California , Santa Cruz in February that de Lauretis first made mention of the phrase. Lesbian and Gay Sexualities. Teresa de Lauretis, Judith Butler, and Eve Sedgwick arranged much of the conceptual base for the emerging field in the s. Along with other queer theorists, these three outlined a political hermeneutics , which

emphasized representation. These scholars questioned whether people of varying sexual orientations had the same political goals, and whether those in the sexual minority felt that they could be represented along with others of different sexualities and orientations. Examination of Renaissance culture and literature, for example, has generated significant scholarship in the past 20 years. Due to this association, a debate emerges as to whether sexual orientation is natural or essential to the person, as an essentialist believes, or if sexuality is a social construction and subject to change. Social constructivism is a concept that proposes the realities we produce and the meanings we create are a result of social interaction; communicating and existing in a cultural context that conveys meaning to us. In this way, an identity is not born but rather constructed through repeated performative actions that are in turn informed by existing social constructions of gender. By thus analyzing and understanding the ways in which gender is shared and historically constituted, the production of gender can occur differently and beyond a socially constructed binary upon which heterosexuality depends. In particular, queer theorists identified processes of consolidation or stabilization around some other identity labels. Queer theory attempts to maintain a critique more than define a specific identity. These critiques are expressed through a whole range of notions in subfields such as ecotechnics within technology studies. Acknowledging the inevitable violence of identity politics, and having no stake in its own ideology, queer is less an identity than a critique of identity. However, it is in no position to imagine itself outside the circuit of problems energized by identity politics. Instead of defending itself against those criticisms that its operations attract, queer allows those criticisms to shape its "for now unimaginable" future directions. Fuss analyzes queer theory while surpassing the concept of identity politics to assert the nature in how to distinguish people who were not heterosexual from people who are without asserting the positionality of the two from the lens of a binary. They insist that the field of normalization is not limited to sexuality; social classifications such as gender, race and nationality constituted by a "governing logic" require an epistemological intervention through queer theory. The constructs are animated by futuristic fantasy designed to evade mortality. Whereas Fuss aims to discompose and render inert the reigning classifications of sexual identity, Eng. This complicates the use of genotype as a means to define exactly two distinct sexes. Intersex individuals may for various biological reasons have sexual characteristics that the dominant medical discourse regards as disordered. While the medical literature focuses increasingly on genetics of intersex traits, and even their deselection, some scholars on the study of culture, such as Barbara Rogoff, argue that the traditional distinction between biology and culture as independent entities is overly simplistic, pointing to the ways in which biology and culture interact with one another. Morland contrasts queer "hedonic activism" with an experience of post-surgical insensate intersex bodies to claim that "queerness is characterized by the sensory interrelation of pleasure and shame". He argues that an able-bodied identity functions as more of a subconscious mentality of normality than heterosexuality. McRuer argues that there is a system that is established to distinguish those who are able-bodied from those who have disabilities; that distinction that was instituted the disability concept. Following that same dynamic, the subjection of homosexuality in relation to heterosexuality founded the basis of homosexuality. McRuer asserts the nature of which that queer theory and disability theory benefit each other. The functions of the concept of able-bodiedness is utilized as an additional tool to strengthen and maintain the concept of heterosexuality and heteronormativity. Queer theory became occupied in part with what effects "put into circulation around the AIDS epidemic" necessitated and nurtured new forms of political organization, education and theorizing in "queer". Role of language[edit] For language use as associated with sexual identity, see Lavender linguistics. Richard Norton suggests that queer language evolved from structures and labels imposed by a mainstream culture. Early discourse of queer theory involved leading theorists: This discourse centered on the way that knowledge of sexuality was structured through the use of language. As a result of this repression, people sought outlets to release sexual feelings, building their own discourses of sex and thus liberating themselves from the confines of a sexually repressive society. In fact, discourse about sexuality flourished during this time period. Foucault argues, "Western man has been drawn for three centuries to the task of telling everything concerning his sex; that since the classical age there has been a constant optimization and increasing valorization of the discourse on sex; and that this carefully analytical discourse was meant to yield multiple effects of displacement, intensification, reorientation

and modification of desire itself. Not only were the boundaries of what one could say about sex enlarged, and men compelled to hear it said; but more important, discourse was connected to sex by a complex organization with varying effects, by a deployment that cannot be adequately explained merely by referring it to a law of prohibition. A censorship of sex? There was installed rather an apparatus for producing an ever greater quantity of discourse about sex, capable of functioning and taking effect in its very economy. Sex became a call for management procedures. It became a policing matter. Heteronormativity was the main focus of discourse, where heterosexuality was viewed as normal and any deviations, such as homosexuality, as abnormal or "queer". Even before the founding of "queer theory" the Modern Language Association MLA came together for a convention in for the first formal gay-studies seminar due to the rise of lesbian and gay writers and issues of gay and lesbian textuality. The convention was entitled "Gay Literature: Media and other creative works[edit] Many queer theorists have produced creative works that reflect theoretical perspectives in a wide variety of media. For example, science fiction authors such as Samuel R. Delany and Octavia Butler feature many values and themes from queer theory in their work. Nuria Perpinya , a Catalan literary theorist, wrote *A good mistake*, a novel about the awkward homosexuality in a London genetic engineering lab, between a young white man and a black scientist. Ruby Rich as *New Queer Cinema* in continues, as *Queer Cinema* , to draw heavily on the prevailing critical climate of queer theory; a good early example of this is the Jean Genet -inspired movie *Poison* by the director Todd Haynes. In fan fiction , the genre known as slash fiction rewrites straight or nonsexual relationships to be gay, bisexual, and queer in a sort of campy cultural appropriation. And in music, some Queercore groups and zines could be said to reflect the values of queer theory. This is particularly noticeable in gangster films, action films and westerns, which never have "weak" read: Queer theory looks at destabilizing and shifting the boundaries of these cultural constructions. New Media artists have a long history of queer theory inspired works, including cyberfeminism works, porn films like *I*. In "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens", Cathy Cohen critiques modern day queer politics, arguing that lack of recognition of LGBTQ people who face other forms of oppression results in many queers not being supported or acknowledged by Queer politics. Since this is the case, how then, can a Person of Color who is also LGBTQ-identifying feel welcomed, supported, and represented if they are being cast aside? Cohen attempts to explain this by stating: The concept was created out of the mentality that queerness equals deviance. It strives to display the error in assuming that everyone experiences one sole monolithic existence, which establishes the gay white male experience to be central to all other experiences, and that all other experiences derives from the gay white male experience. According to Sommerville, when there were aggressive attempts to separate and classify bodies as black or white , there was also the classification of bodies as heterosexual or homosexual. Havelock Ellis, an English physician, writer, progressive intellectual and social reformer , suggested that homosexuality is not a crime, but a congenital physiological abnormality; he believed that the "invert" was visually distinguishable from the "normal" body through anatomical markers like the difference between male and female bodies. This was the same as the ideas about the difference between racialized bodies. Black women were often referred to as the "Bushman race": Flower and James Murie constructed a site of racial difference by marking the sexual and reproductive anatomy of the African woman as "peculiar. Racialization of space[edit] Racism also exists within queer spaces. The gay community in New York is known to be held exclusively in Manhattan, as this is the area that most people who are not from New York City know.

Queer theory is a field of critical theory that emerged in the early s out of the fields of LGBT studies and feminist blog.quintoapp.com is a kind of interpretation devoted to queer readings of texts.

Theorist David Halperin wrote: There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. And it is easy to be misled by the utopian claims advanced in support of particular tactics. But the range and seriousness of the problem that are continually raised by queer practice indicate how much work remains to be done. Because the logic of the sexual order is so deeply embedded by now in an indescribably wide range of social institutions, and is embedded in the most standard accounts of the world, queer struggles aim not just at toleration or equal status but at challenging those institutions and accounts. The dawning realization that themes of homophobia and heterosexism may be read in almost any document of our culture means that we are only beginning to have an idea of how widespread those institutions and accounts are. For example, a woman can be a woman without being labeled a lesbian or feminist, and she may have a different race from the dominant culture. She should, queer theorists argue, be classed as possessing an individual identity and not put in the collective basket of feminists or of colour or the like. Starting in the s, a range of authors brought deconstructionist critical approaches to bear on issues of sexual identity, and especially on the construction of a normative "straight" ideology. Queer theorists challenged the validity and consistency of heteronormative discourse, and focused to a large degree on non-heteronormative sexualities and sexual practices. The term "queer theory" was introduced in , with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick , Judith Butler , Adrienne Rich and Diana Fuss all largely following the work of Michel Foucault being among its foundational proponents. Queer theory is not the same as queer activism , although there is overlap. Major aspects of this critique include discussion of: It was at a working conference on theorizing lesbian and gay sexualities that was held at the University of California , Santa Cruz in February that de Lauretis first made mention of the phrase. Due to this association, a debate emerges as to whether sexual orientation is natural or essential to the person, as an essentialist believes, or if sexuality is a social construction and subject to change. The essentialist feminists believed that both genders "have an essential nature e. The Constructivists counter that there is no natural identity, that all meaning is constructed through discourse and there is no subject other than the creation of meaning for social theory. In a Constructivist perspective, it is not proper to take gay or lesbian as subjects with objective reality; but rather they must be understood in terms of their social context, in how genealogy creates these terms through history. For example, as Foucault explains in *The History of Sexuality*, two hundred years ago there was no linguistic category for gay male. Instead, the term applied to sex between two men was sodomy. Over time, the concept " homosexual " was created in a test tube through the discourses of medicine and especially psychiatry. What is conventionally understood to be the same practice was gradually transformed from a sinful lifestyle into an issue of sexual orientation. Foucault argues that prior to this discursive creation there was no such thing as a person who could think of himself as essentially gay. There are three instances of mixed treatment of the subject in queer scholarship: For Barnard, any consideration of sexuality must include its inextricability with racialized subjectivities Green He reasons that the failure to incorporate racial specificity arises because queer theorists are themselves white, and therefore operate from the particularity of a white racial standpoint Green Barnard aspires to recuperate an analysis of race in queer theory, proposes that the deconstructionist epistemology of queer theory can be used to decompose a white queerness, in the first instance, in order to recover a racialized queerness, in the second Green His defense, reinstates, rather than deconstructs, what it means to be a person of color. He underscores the strong deconstructionist epistemological premise of the term queer and queer theory more generally Green Jagose is left with a muddy variant of feminist intersectional analysis that offers neither the critical edge of queer theory nor the clarity of standpoint theory. In particular, queer theorists identified processes of consolidation or stabilization around some other identity labels e. Queer theory attempts to maintain a critique more than define a specific identity. Acknowledging the inevitable violence of identity politics, and having no stake in its own ideology , queer is less an identity than a critique of identity. However, it is in no position to

imagine itself outside the circuit of problems energized by identity politics. This complicates the use of genotype as a means to define exactly two distinct sexes. Intersexed individuals may for many different biological reasons have ambiguous sexual characteristics. Scientists who have written on the conceptual significance of intersexual individuals include Anne Fausto-Sterling , Ruth Hubbard , Carol Tavris , and Joan Roughgarden. Some key experts in the study of culture, such as Barbara Rogoff , argue that the traditional distinction between biology and culture as independent entities is overly simplistic, pointing to the ways in which biology and culture interact with one another. The rethinking of traditional understandings of the workings of power in cross-hatched struggles over epidemiology, scientific research, public health and immigration policy [18] The material effects of AIDS contested many cultural assumptions about identity, justice, desire and knowledge, which some scholars felt challenged the entire system of Western thought, [19] believing it maintained the health and immunity of epistemology: Sadism and masochism , prostitution , sexual inversion, transgender , bisexuality , asexuality , intersexuality are seen by queer theorists as opportunities for more involved investigations into class difference and racial, ethnic and regional particulars. These practices are supposed to allow for a wide ranging field of investigation and reconfigure understandings of pleasure and desire. It is important to consider discourse in its broadest sense as shared meaning making, as Foucault and Queer Theory would take the term to mean. In this way sexual activity, having shared rules and symbols would be as much a discourse as a conversation, and sexual practice itself constructs its reality rather than reflecting a putatively proper, biologically predefined sexuality. This point of view places these theorists in conflict with some branches of feminism that view prostitution, and pornography, for example, as mechanisms for the oppressions of women. Other branches of feminism tend to vocally disagree with this interpretation and celebrate some pornography as a means of adult sexual representation. Queer theory is likened to language because it is never static, but is ever-evolving. Richard Norton suggests that the existence of queer language is believed to have evolved from the imposing of structures and labels from an external mainstream culture. This discourse centered on the way that knowledge of sexuality was structured through the use of language. Heteronormativity was the main focus of discourse, where heterosexuality was viewed as normal and any deviations, such as homosexuality, as abnormal or "queer". In later years there was an explosion of discourse on sexuality and sexual orientations with the coming-of-age of the Internet. Prior to this, discourse was controlled by institutional publishing, and with the growth of the internet and its popularity, the community could have its own discussion on what sexuality and sexual orientation was. Homosexual and heterosexual were no longer the main topics of discourse; BDSM , transgender and bisexuality became topics of discourse. For example, science fiction authors such as Samuel R. Delany and Octavia Butler feature many values and themes from queer theory in their work. In film, the genre christened by B. Ruby Rich as New Queer Cinema in continues, as Queer Cinema , to draw heavily on the prevailing critical climate of queer theory; a good early example of this is the Jean Genet -inspired movie *Poison* by the director Todd Haynes. In fan fiction , the genre known as slash fiction rewrites straight or nonsexual relationships to be gay, bisexual, and queer in sort of a campy cultural appropriation. And in music, some Queercore groups and zines could be said to reflect the values of queer theory. This is particularly noticeable in gangster films, action films and westerns, which never have "weak" read: Queer theory looks at destabilizing and shifting the boundaries of these cultural constructions. Queer theorists also analyze texts to expose underlying meanings in texts and investigate the discrepancies between homosocial male bonding, homophobia and homosexuality in English literature. *King Lear* is often used as an example. Tim Edwards argues that queer theory extrapolates too broadly from textual analysis in undertaking an examination of the social. Hence, sociology and queer theory are regarded as methodologically and epistemologically incommensurable frameworks [28] by critics such as Adam Green. Adam suggests that sexual identity categories, such as "gay", can have the effect of expanding the horizon of what is imaginable in a same-sex relationship, including a richer sense of the possibilities of same-sex love and dyadic commitment.