MAINSTREAMS OF QUEER STUDIES

In the Fall 1990 issue of OUT/LOOK, Jeffrey Escoffier's "Inside the Ivory Closet: The Challenges Facing Lesbian & Gay Studies" and its accompanying diagram, "The Mainstreams of Lesbian & Gay Studies," reflected on two generations of scholarship since Stonewall and mapped the intellectual origins of university-based programs such as CLAGS (now the Center for LGBTQ Studies), housed at the Graduate Center, CUNY since 1991.

Answering Escoffier's call for queer academics to stay accountable to their communities, CLAGS's annual Kessler Award recipients chart their own map through the continuing and at-times contentious development of queer studies in the last quarter decade.

Curated by CLAGS
(www.clags.org)

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ACADEMIC

MALE CULTURAL FEMINISM

LESBIAN FEMINISM

FEMINISM

AMERICAN GAY LEFT

BRITISH GAY LEFT

FRENCH POST-STRUCTURALISM

RADICAL FEMINISM

WOMEN OF COLOR FEMINISM

Radicalesbians, "The Woman-Identified Woman" (1970)
One of the founding documents of lesbian-feminism.

Kate Millet, Sexual Politics (1970)
One of the great American texts of feminist theory.

Dennis Altman, Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation (1970)
The first contribution to the theory of gay liberation.

Mary McIntosh, "The Homosexual Role" (1969)
The first formulation of the historical and social construction of the homosexual identity.

Michael Foucault, History of Sexuality (1978)
Rewrote the history of sexuality in Western Europe without relying exclusively on the role of repression and by emphasizing the creation of sexual identities.

Arthur Evans, Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture (1978)
Argued that pagans, witches, and gay people were brutally repressed by Christianity in the Middle Ages. One of the inspirations for the radical faery movement.

John Boswell, Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality (1980)
A history of the treatment of gay people in the late classical and early Middle Ages.

Adrienne Rich, Compulsory Heterosexuality and the Lesbian Continuum" (1980)
Theorized that compulsory heterosexuality destroyed the natural solidarity of women.

Gay Left (1975 – 1979)
This periodical brought together Mary McIntosh's analysis of the homosexual role with a left analysis of capitalism and the social regulation of sexuality.

The Gay Academic Union (1973)
Gay and lesbian scholars and writers organized to promote feminism and gay liberation in the academic world.

Jeffrey Weeks, Coming Out (1977)
One of the editors of Gay Left, Weeks wrote the first "social constructionist" history of homosexual politics.

Combahee River Collective (1974 – 1997)
Black feminist organizers and writers defined Black politics and culture.

Conditions (1977 – 1980)
One of the major vehicles for development of feminist thinking by women of color, especially Conditions 5: The Black Women's Issue.

Jonathan Katz, Gay American History (1976)
The pioneering collection of lesbian and gay historical documents.

Homosexuality: Power and Politics (1980)
An anthology that brought together the most important articles from Gay Left.

Monique Wittig, "The Straight Mind" (1980)
Social criticism by French novelist and pioneer of radical feminist literature.

Edmund White, A Boy's Own Story (1982)
First in a trilogy of semi-autobiographical novels about growing up gay in the Midwest before Stonewall.

Janet R. Jakobsen & Ann Pellegrini, Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance (2003)
Case studies on the religious regulation of sexuality and the failed separation of church and state.

George Chauncey, Gay New York (1994)
Historical portrait of urban gay men, 1890-1940.

Robert Reid-Pharr, Black Gay Man (2001)
Personal and political essays about being a black gay intellectual.

Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men (1980)
The history of romantic friendships among women.

Barbara Smith, "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism" (1977)
Explored the importance of Black women novelists and poets for feminism.

Audre Lorde, Zami (1982)
An original synthesis of autobiography, history, and mythology by a Black lesbian.

All the Women Are White, All the Blacks are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Woman Studies (1982)
A landmark survey in the gaps of women's studies and Black studies with a vision of the future.

The Bridge Called My Back (1983)
An anthology of essays, poetry, and personal narratives that proposed a new way of thinking about identity and difference.

Esther Newton, Mother Camp (1972)
An early ethnography of drag queens that influenced later theories of gender performance.

Powers of Desire (1983)
Brought together many key essays on sexuality as well as some important gay contributions by D'Emilio, Bérubé, Rich, Hollibaugh, and Moraga.

Amber Hollibaugh & Cherrie Moraga, "What We're Rollin Around in Bed With: Sexual Silences in Feminism" (1981)
Working-class lesbians, white and Chicana, develop "sexual theory."

Gayle Rubin "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality" (1984)
Argued against sex negativity in any form.

Joan Nestle, The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader (1992)
An anthology of oral history, poetry, and fiction edited by founder of the Lesbian Herstory Archives.

J. Jack Halberstam, Female Masculinity (1998)
First book-length study of butch identities and drag king performance.

Gayatri Gopinath, Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures (2005)
Explored how queer and women's relationships challenge patriarchal and nationalistic ideologies.

Kevin Nadal, That's So Gay!: Microaggressions and the LGBT Community (2013)
Linked subtle forms of discrimination to negative mental health outcomes, especially for youth.

Cheryl Clarke, "The Failure to Transform: Homophobia in the Black Community" (1983)
Criticism of black heterosexual privilege in academia and cultural politics by a poet.

E. Patrick Johnson, "'Quare' Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know About Queer Studies I Learned from My Grandmother" (2001)
Reformed black cultural significance to the umbrella term, queer.

John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity" (1983)
Argued that industrialization altered traditional family structures and made gay and lesbian lives possible.

The Denver Principles (1983)
Statement of rights by the People with AIDS Coalition that rejected the label of "victim."

Queer Nation Manifesto (1990)
Revolutionary pamphlet handed out by ACT UP marchers during NYC Pride.

Martin Duberman, Stonewall (1993)
First historical account of the Stonewall riots by historian, novelist, and founder of CLAGS.

Urvashi Vaid, Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay and Lesbian Liberation (1995)
Warned the movement not to settle for social visibility instead of full civil equality.

Isaac Julien, Looking for Langston (1989)
An experimental film about gay male desire and the Harlem Renaissance by British black artist. Marlon Riggs's Tongues Untied released the same year.

Michael Warner, "Homo-Narcissism: or, Heterosexuality" (1990)
Questioned the prioritization of sexual difference by Freud and queer theorists.

Lee Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave?" (1987)
Analysis of anti-gay rhetoric and sexual power during the AIDS crisis.

Carole S. Vance, "Social Construction Theory: Problems in the History of Sexuality" (1989)
Much-cited guide to early debates between essentialism and social construction.

Judith Butler, Gender Trouble (1990)
Presented a theory of gender performativity that disputes the sex/gender paradigm.

Samuel R. Delany, Times Square Red, Times Square Blue (1999)
A memoir about public sex and a critique of gentrification by acclaimed science fiction writer.

Juana Maria Rodriguez, Queer Latinidad (2003)
Named a new cultural paradigm for studying queer Latino/Latina/Latinx identity.

Jeffrey McCune, Jr. Sexual Discretion: Black Masculinity and the Politics of Passing (2014)
Discussed the sexual cultures of men on the "down-low." C. Riley Snorton's Nobody is Supposed to Know published in the same year.

Siobhan Somerville, Queering the Colorline: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture (2000)
Explored how homosexuality was understood in relation to the racial binary in the late 1800s.

Roderick Ferguson, Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique (2003)
Argued that the attribution of social deviance to African Americans is a matter for queer critique.

Jasbir Puar, Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times (2007)
Argued that anti-terrorism discourse deploys homophobia and transphobia against people of color.

Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé & Martin Manalansan, Queer Globalizations: Citizenship & the Afterlife of Colonialism (2002)
Brought together postcolonial and queer scholarship by King, Gopinath, Patton, Sandoval, and others.

Scott Lauria Morgensen, Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization (2011)
Presented the historical activism of Native queer and Two-Spirit people in the US as a source of theory.

Richard Fung, "Looking for My Penis: The Eroticized Asian in Gay Video Porn" (1991)
Criticism of anti-Asian racism in gay male communities by a video artist.

David L. Eng, The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy (2010)
Argued that queer immigrant labor is especially exploited in the "colorblind era" of LGBTQ politics.

Sara Ahmed, The Cultural Politics of Emotion (2004)
Theorized about feminist/queer emotional responses to migration, asylum, terrorism, and reparations.

Ann Cvetkovich, An Archive of Feelings (2003)
A sex-positive approach to trauma and memory in queer and lesbian public culture.

Cathy J. Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" (1997)
Called for a queer coalition to include all socially and economically marginalized

Richard Kim & Lisa Duggan, "Beyond Gay Marriage" (2005)
Argued the early marriage equality movement to recognize all kinds of relationships and households.

Lee Edelman, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive (2004)
Argued that the figure of the child represents a future that is opposed to the queer.

José Esteban Muñoz, Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity (2009)
Presented queer literature, art, and performance as utopian and future-oriented.

Gay Shame (2009)
An anthology of essays that questioned profiting from gay and lesbian pride, with work by Siebers, Love, and others, edited by Halperin and Traub.

Sarah Schulman, Israel/Palestine and the Queer International (2012)
Solidarity with Palestinian liberation struggle described by novelist and Lesbian Avengers co-founder.

Shiri Eisner, Bi: Notes for a Bisexual Revolution (2013)
Manifesto on radical bisexual politics by genderqueer

Dean Spade, Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of the Law (2011)
Argued that the system of rights fails to protect trans people from unjust treatment by the state.

Donna Haraway "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1984)
Introduced the model of the cyborg to expand feminist thought beyond identity and essentialism.

Susan Stryker, "My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage" (1994)
First published academic work by a trans scholar to engage with queer theory.

Leslie Feinberg Transgender Warriors (1996)
Broad historical survey of gender nonconformity in many cultures.

Ki Namaste, Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People (2000)
Challenged queer theory to be more relevant to trans lived experience.

Postposttranssexual: Key Concepts for a 21st century Transgender Studies (2014)
Inaugural issue of Transgender Studies Quarterly with 80 contributors, edited by Currah and Stryker. Later notable volumes include: Decolonizing the Transgender Imaginary (1.3), Transmalities (2.2), and The Issue of Blackness (4.2).

What's Queer About Queer Studies Now? (2005)
Special issue of Social Text that reassesses a third generation of scholarship, edited by Eng, Halberstam, and Muñoz.

Asexualities: Feminist and Queer Perspectives (2014)
First book-length collection of academic essays on asexuality as a valid sexual orientation and source of theory, edited by Cerankowski and Milks.

Blogs, including
BullyBloggers.wordpress.com
QWhistory.org
NYCTransOralHistory.org
MobileHomecoming.org
AsexualAgenda.wordpress.com

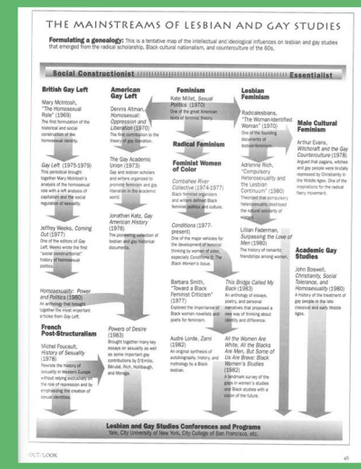
Desiring Disability: Queer Theory Meets Disability Studies (2003)
Special issue of GLQ journal edited by McRuer and Wilkerson, with work by Chinn, Clare, and others.

Eva Hayward, "More Lessons from A Starfish" (2008)
Argued that trans-species life can teach us to unlearn trans-phobia.

Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire (2010)
Anthology of essays on sexuality and environmental studies by Alaimo, Gaard, and others, edited by Sandilands and Erickson.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Epistemology of the Closet (1990)
Literary criticism that introduced "queer" as an alternative to the homosexual/heterosexual binary.

Douglas Crimp, Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics (2002)
Explored how unresolved mourning led to gay conservativism after radical AIDS activism in 80s-'90s.



CLAGS KESSLER AWARD WINNERS

1992	Joan Nestle
1993	Edmund White
1994	Barbara Smith
1995	Monique Wittig
1996	Esther Newton
1997	Samuel R. Delany
1998	Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick
1999	John D'Emilio
2000	Cherrie Moraga
2001	Judith Butler
2002	Jonathan Ned Katz
2003	Gayle Rubin
2004	Isaac Julien
2005	Carole S. Vance
2006	Adrienne Rich
2007	Douglas Crimp
2008	Susan Stryker
2009	Sarah Schulman
2010	Urvashi Vaid
2011	Kessler Conversation
2012	Martin Duberman
2013	Cheryl Clarke
2014	Cathy J. Cohen
2015	Richard Fung
2016	Dean Spade
2017	Sara Ahmed