Francophilia: Literature and Sexuality in Modern France (Taught in English)

Cross-listed with 01:420:242

T/Th 1:40-3:00 - BRR-2071 / LIV

Professor Andrew Parker

Francophilia explores the literary representation of non-conforming sexualities in France from the late-nineteenth century to the present. Since the modern history of sexuality passes through France at its origins, Francophilia provides students with the means (critical and historical) to make sense of the emergence of contemporary categories of sexual identity—straight, lesbian, gay, bi, trans—along with the challenging 19th- and 20th-century literary works in which these categories were first imagined and tested. What makes French writing queer? What makes queer writing French?

Writers will include many of the giants of modern French literature: Balzac, Flaubert, Sand, Huysmanns, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Proust, Gide, Yourcenar, Colette, de Beauvoir, Genet, Wittig, Brossard, Taïa, and Foucault, among others. We will also be viewing a selection of films that explore the impact of the AIDS pandemic and the legacy of French colonialism.

Francophilia is a general education humanities course intended especially for first- and second-year students; more advanced non-majors are welcome as well. No previous college-level experience with literary or historical analysis is required. The course will be taught in English and all readings will be in translation, though students who have the ability to read French will be encouraged to consult the original texts as well.