

Throughout the semester, we've read works of literature and theory within their historical contexts, focusing on how each text emerged from a specific place and time that shaped both its construction and reception. We've often focused on **the local** in our discussions: we learned about small direct action demonstrations throughout the country that eventually led to the larger gay liberation movement; we saw how queer people in San Francisco educated one another on the risks of HIV/AIDS when the national government failed to act; we considered the importance of disidentificatory performances that created a queer elsewhere, even if only for the few spectators gathered in the space. For any minoritarian group, it is especially important to record these local histories, which can sometimes be excluded from more traditional archival spaces. As Joan Nestle notes in her piece about the founding of the Lesbian Herstory Archive of New York, she created the archive to “end the silence of the patriarchal history about [lesbians],” and “so that future generations will have ready access to materials relevant to their lives.”



The National AIDS Memorial Quilt on display in Skillman Library, 2022. *Lafayette Today*.

For the final project in this course, we will have the opportunity to do this local archival work here on campus. Working in small groups, you will **write a narrative about local queer of color history at Lafayette College**, focusing on a specific story, event, or facet of campus life. The focus of your project is up to you (I have a few suggestions I'll share with the class), but your goal here is to capture a piece of queer of color history at the college in a public-facing document, which you will write by working directly with local sources.

Work on this project will begin with a brainstorming session in which we come up with potential topics. Once each group has their topic selected, you will conduct research to find relevant sources; I expect you to use *The Lafayette newspaper archives*, the [Queer Archives Project](#), other resources in the Special Collections & College Archives, and perhaps your best resource: Lafayette College students, faculty, and staff. Your narrative should **incorporate a journalistic interview with a subject** related to the chosen topic. By connecting with the people who took part in these local histories, you will be able to capture a side of the story that is likely not recorded anywhere else.

To emphasize the importance of preserving local queer of color history, **your completed narrative will be posted on the Queer Archives Project website**. This means your narrative should be written for the general public, so keep this audience in mind as you write. To make sure the narrative is ready for publication on the site, I will work closely with each group as an editor. I will also meet with each group at several points in the coming weeks to check in on group progress and offer suggestions.

LOGISTICS

- Each group must create a shared Google Doc where you keep your notes, compile sources, and draft the narrative. On the day you create the doc, make sure it is visible via a shared link and send me the link via email.

Archiving Local Queer History

DUE: May 8th

- The narrative should be around 2,000 words. In addition to the text, you should also include images. Feel free to take photographs/screenshots as you conduct your research/interviews!
- On the day the project is due, each student is required to submit a short Project Reflection (roughly 500 words) that details **each group member's contribution** to the project. Ideally, this document will reveal an equal contribution to the project by each student. This document will be shared only with me, so you should aim to be honest and accurate in your reflection.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **April 7th**: Research Proposal due date. Each group will be responsible for a proposal that includes a summary of the planned narrative, a research plan, guiding questions, and limitations of your project.
- **April 14th**: By this date, each group should have contacted an interview subject and have produced a draft of interview questions in their Google Doc for me to review. Please let me know whenever you have these questions ready. (In the interest of time, you should contact your potential interview subject *as soon as possible* after getting your group assignment.)
- **April 24th**: On this date I will meet with each group during class time to discuss your progress so far. You should come to our meeting with roughly ~800 words of your narrative written.
- **May 1st**: Penultimate day of class: Group meetings and in-class writing time.
- **May 3rd**: Last day of class: for our final class session, each group will give a brief presentation (~15 mins.) on their project. This will be an **informal presentation**, meant to educate your peers on your topic and discuss your research and writing process.
- **May 8th**: Project due by midnight; final draft should be clearly labeled in Group Doc; all members will post individual Project Reflections in their Course Journals.

FINAL PROJECT RUBRIC

For this assignment to be marked as satisfactory, it must satisfy ALL of the requirements listed below. If elements are missing, your work will be marked as unsatisfactory. Any assignment marked as unsatisfactory can be revised and resubmitted.

- Narrative centers on an aspect of queer of color history at Lafayette College and meets the minimum word requirement (2000 words).
- Narrative incorporates research to explain the topic's background and situate it within a larger context.
- Narrative includes an interview and/or appropriate archival sources that capture the voice of those who participated in the history presented in the narrative.
- Group demonstrates careful consideration for the narrative's organization; information is sequenced clearly and intuitively.
- By 5/8, final draft of narrative is posted in Group Doc and individual Project Reflections are posted in Course Journals.