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**Ellen Nerenberg** is Hollis Professor of Romance Languages & Literatures at Wesleyan University. Her current research focuses on issues of gender, postfeminism, girlhood, and Italian screen studies. She is associate editor of *gender/sexuality/italy*, an editor of the Italian Studies Channel on the New Books Network, and current president of the American Association for Italian Studies. Her current book project, authored with Nicoletta Marini-Maio, is *La Nazione Wins: Coltivare la future consumista* (forthcoming, Rubbettino Editore, 2021).

**Abstract:** This article describes and reflects upon a pedagogical project that depended on collaboration between the two authors, upper-level Italian students at Wesleyan University and the Bologna-based LGBTQ+ center, Il Cassero. The collaboration centered on and unfolded from an undergraduate course entitled "Coming Out/Coming of Age: Narratives of Becoming in Contemporary Italian Culture" taught by Ellen Nerenberg. The course sought to introduce students to a number of Italian coming of age literary and visual texts, as well as theoretical frameworks in Queer Studies and critical theory more broadly exploring subjectivity, becoming, gender, and sexuality. As part of the course, students participated in a *co-laboratorio* which focused specifically on a semester-long project in which students interviewed members of Bologna's thriving LGBT community about their personal stories of "coming out" and identifying as queer at different moments in recent Italian history. The *co-laboratorio* nested within the course and the authors supported students as they devised their own oral history project in the *co-laboratorio*. Support involved both logistics (putting students in contact with the interview subjects) as well as theory, as the authors helped students understand the parameters of conducting empirical research self-reflexively. The article locates this collaborative experiment within the broadlines of an Italian Studies curriculum and within the context of current debates about transnational approaches to teaching foreign languages in Northern American classrooms. In this sense, the authors attempted to foster "transcultural competence" and encourage students to think critically about their role as student researcher approaching a different culture through the medium of an acquired language.

**Keywords:** laboratory, pedagogy, queer, decolonial, Italian Studies, transcultural, civic engagement, outreach

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# Coming Out/Coming of Age: A Decolonial, Inter-Institutional, Co-Curricular Collaboration

ELLEN NERENBERG AND SERENA BASSI

## *Introduction*

What follows is a description of an inter-institutional pedagogical collaboration between Ellen Nerenberg (Wesleyan University) and Serena Bassi (Yale University) that included outreach to Bologna's Cassero, the LGBTQ+ union (facilitated by Sara De Giovanni, Cassero Director), and with Sergio Rigoletto (Univ of Oregon) contributing with a public presentation. While developing a new course, "Coming Out/Coming of Age: Narratives of Becoming in Contemporary Italian Culture," designed for advanced undergraduates in Italian Studies at Wesleyan and taught through the medium of Italian in Spring 2019, Ellen invited Serena, who had recently arrived at Yale, to contribute to it in a number of ways. In addition to co-conducting several class sessions and making a public presentation, in English and entitled "Mistranslating 'coming out', building queer commons: The LGBT movement in 1970s Italy," Serena led in the design of the "co-laboratorio" attached to the course. This was a semester-long project that depended on the host course (i.e. it was not a laboratory students could enroll in independent of the host course) and in which Wesleyan students conducted ethnographic interviews with volunteers from the Cassero to chronicle their coming out narratives. Sara orchestrated the recruitment of volunteers in Bologna, matching all ten enrolled students together with an interview partner.

## *Preparing and Assembling Collaboration*

"Coming Out/Coming of Age" featured six related collaborations of different durations which unfolded over a number of phases. These included 1) the instructors, 2) the students and the instructors, 3) the instructors and the community organizer, 4) the community organizer and the community volunteers, 5) the students and the volunteer interview partners, and 6) the instructor of record and student transcribers of the interviews. As the instructor of record at Wesleyan, where the course was mounted, Ellen designed a pliant model in Spring 2018 for a new course, to be offered in the spring semester of the following year. The published course description read as follows:

By examining narratives of "becoming" in Italian literary and screen texts, we will endeavor to read against a dominant "master" narrative of Italian culture that is prevailingly cis-male, patriarchal, and heteronormative. The literary and screen texts we will explore in depth include some "classic" narratives of coming of age in the Italian cultural tradition which we will lay alongside Italian cultural "coming out" narratives, some "classic," others less so. What can we learn from such adjacencies? What are the spaces of becoming? How are they constructed, coded, perceived, lived, endorsed, embraced, and contested? Is adolescence a "closet" out of which one emerges with a sexual identity? Does one come of age as an artist or "come out" as a practitioner of a particular artistic genre (filmmaker, poet, novelist)? How do artistic choices of practice subtend and inform sexual identity? What gets left behind in this "progress" of "becoming"? These are some of the questions we will entertain and explore.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please see the Appendix for the Course Syllabus, which lists required texts and assessments.

A principal element of this course is a *co-laboratorio*, a “co-laboratory,” where we will experiment with a semester-long, collaborative archival project in which we join the stories of lived experiences to the cultural articulations and texts we study. The *co-laboratorio* will be explained in greater detail in class.

The lengthy curriculum development period (roughly February-October 2018, when all details were finalized) allowed ample margins to develop the co-laboratory after announcement of the course. In Fall 2018, and in advance of pre-registration for the following semester, the addition of a sentence to the paragraph describing the *co-laboratorio* gives some indication of the development that had taken place in the meantime.

Working in conjunction with the Cassero (LGBTQ union) in Bologna, and with the assistance of Prof. Serena Bassi (Yale), we will interview volunteers who will share their own stories of coming out and coming of age.

Whereas they had been colleagues from a distance for a number of years, it was not until Fall 2018 that Serena and Ellen were offered a real opportunity for collaboration. Serena’s arrival at Yale in Fall 2018 coincided with Ellen’s return to the classroom following a three-year hiatus while serving as Wesleyan’s Dean of the Arts & Humanities. In addition to Ellen’s various other collaborative efforts, the deanship had helped convince her of the need to develop more numerous laboratory opportunities for students of the humanities, not so much in imitation of similar opportunities in the sciences as a way to create conditions in which students might make meaningful contributions to faculty research as it relates to curriculum in the humanities and adjacent social sciences, where some areas of knowledge—like cultural studies conducted in languages other than English—are vertically structured. Chances to contribute to research projects of faculty members are rare for students who begin their study of Italian as matriculates, the prevailing case for university students in North American institutions of higher education like Wesleyan. While it is undoubtedly the case that research in a large swath of humanities-based disciplines continues to be dispiritingly non-collaborative in nature at institutions of all types (four-year colleges and universities, in undergraduate and graduate programs alike, etc.), scaling projects to facilitate collaboration including, specifically, undergraduates, poses particular challenges. First, by the time most undergraduates attain the necessary linguistic proficiency to contribute in a significant way to a faculty member’s research, they are on their way out the door, Bachelor’s degree in hand. Second, and somewhat ironically, although Wesleyan students return from their study abroad experience (Wesleyan has run, in consortium with Vassar and Wellesley Colleges, a study abroad center in Bologna since 2000) with excellent skills in Italian and might therefore be well-positioned to contribute to research collaborations, they are typically in the last year of their degree programs: many students are understandably oriented toward senior capstone projects of their own devising that hew closely to their own interests.<sup>2</sup> The student-instructor collaboration, therefore, needed to be a constitutive element of an existing course, not as an “add-on” to another course, nor as an opportunity for an independent tutorial that may or may not have been available for credit toward their Major in Italian Studies.<sup>3</sup>

Knowing of Serena’s research agenda and her familiarity with the Cassero, Ellen applied for and was awarded a grant from Wesleyan’s Center for Pedagogical Innovation designed to modestly

<sup>2</sup> Majors in Italian Studies at Wesleyan frequently also complete a second Major. Students’ senior projects appropriately reflect their own interest, sometimes bringing together their secondary field with Italian Studies.

<sup>3</sup> As elsewhere, the Italian section of the department of Romance Languages & Literatures at Wesleyan does not wish to erode the healthy enrollments in its curricular offerings that are designed bearing in mind the needs for an undergraduate education in a subject that students have only begun to study at university. Independent tutorials on specific research topics could contribute to the narrowing of that knowledge base.

compensate Serena's time spent in curricular co-development, her travel from New Haven to Middletown, her four classroom visits during the course of the semester, and a public lecture, in English, on her research.<sup>4</sup>

### *Course Design and Objectives*<sup>5</sup>

A brief review of the course objectives helps to contextualize the *co-laboratorio* and its place within the course design and assessments. The collaboration aimed at several objectives. The course sought to expand the curricular canon of Italian Studies (at Wesleyan) by broadening its base and, by way of its co-laboratory project, decolonize the typical undergraduate-instructor relation, something aided also by the inter-institutional collaboration (which also sought to contribute to, fruitfully destabilizing notions of “mastery” as it pluralized ideas of “expertise”), and enabling students of the humanities and social studies to engage in the kind of lab experience that their peers have routine access to.

As concerns course design, “Coming Out/Coming of Age” began with preliminary considerations of readings in queer phenomenology and habitus that allowed preliminary exploration of notions about identity and how the negotiation and navigation of space and spaces bear on formation of social subjectivity.<sup>6</sup> Considerations of space and its embodied negotiation anchored each thematically delineated unit: liminal spaces and spaces of becoming (Marchesini and Obici's boarding schools, Saba's Trieste, Tondelli's extra/urban threshold spaces, Nicchiarelli's outer space, Ferreri's train stations, beaches, and hospitals, etc.), the city of erotic possibilities (the Milan of Pasolini, Bispuri, and Guadagnino), pastoral Italy and its erotic “non-nationalized” possibilities (Guadagnino's *Call me by Your Name*), islands as restrictive spaces but also sites for fluid formation and possibility (Pilati, Melissa P).<sup>7</sup> Theoretical readings in English alternated in the first two weeks with required screenings in Italian (with Italian subtitles) that introduced the configuring curricular *filoni*: “coming of age” (*Prima della rivoluzione*, Bertolucci [1960]) or “coming out” (*Le fate ignoranti*, Ozpetek [2001]). Significant effort was made to unseat the linguistic “miscue” at the beginning of the semester that positioning theoretical readings in English can sometimes produce. Throughout, the course generally sought to pivot between the different narratives of becoming, directing balanced focus to both *filoni*.

In addition to the thematics around which the course was organized, as outlined above (and in the course syllabus available in the Appendix), “Coming Out/Coming of Age” largely followed historical order within the thematic units. Thus, students encountered excerpts from Marchesini and Obici's 1896 *Le “amicizie” di collegio* and Saba's *Ernesto* before tackling Tondelli or, in the unit on the city as the site for erotic interruption and formation, Pasolini's *Teorema* (1968) preceded Guadagnino's 2009 remake *I am love*.

<sup>4</sup> The mechanics of funding co-teaching differ widely and according to institution. Co-teaching is already challenging to implement when both instructors come from within the Wesleyan community, where co- and team-teaching in the sciences happens routinely and where collaborations in the arts regular. For this collaboration, modest funding was available for the partial collaboration precisely because the course was new and experimental in nature. The funding of sustained teaching collaborations continues to be challenging, though one thing the 2020 pandemic may have transformed is colleagues' notions as to their own availability to visit remotely.

<sup>5</sup> Please see the Appendix for the course syllabus. It is clear that a course on this subject with a different constituency (e.g., a course for graduate students and/or for students whose familiarity with Italian was of longer duration, making different (or longer or a greater number of) readings possible could configure differently.

<sup>6</sup> Required readings which helped set preliminary considerations included: Ahmed, “Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology”; Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination”; Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol 1*; Sedgwick, “The Epistemology of the Closet.”

<sup>7</sup> Please see the course syllabus (Appendix).

The *co-laboratorio* constituted an integral element of the course and, in terms of student assessment, made up 15% of the student's global grade.

### Criteria for Assessment

Assignment	To be completed by (date)	Percentage of final grade	Notes
Discussion	Ongoing	20%	preparation of discussion questions, presentations of assigned readings
Short writing assignments	Ongoing	15%	
midterm exam	by March 8	15%	Take home, 3-hour, open -note exam
<i>Co-laboratorio</i> Interview 1	by Friday, March 29	(Included in 15% below)	
<i>Co-laboratorio</i> Interview 2	by Sunday, April 21	(Included in 15% below)	
Essay	by April 30	15%	5-7 pp., not before April 21
Presentations of Collaboratori	not before May 2	15%	
Oral final exam	final exam period	20%	Between 35-45 min

### *The Co-laboratorio*

During Serena's four visits, students focused specifically on the *filone* dedicated to the "coming out" story; and, specifically, on twentieth century Italian LGBTQ+ history, as well as theoretical questions having to do with the globalization of "coming out" narratives as a particular US-American cultural form. The main goal of this section of the course was for students to individually undertake an oral history project with members of Bologna's LGBTQ+ community as participants. The multiple class formats for Serena's visits—two hands-on oral history workshop, a seminar on translation studies and a public lecture—were all geared towards preparing students for this project.

Serena's first visit was scheduled toward the beginning of the semester, when students first discussed Saba's novel *Ernesto*, with the objective of introducing students to basic skills as oral historians of sexuality in an Italian context. Serena and Ellen decided to pursue a two-fold goal built around Saba's text. First, students interrogated *Ernesto* vis-a-vis the critical literature on subjectivity, performance, and space. In a second instance, they approached it as a historical document of sorts—a cultural representation of underground queer spaces in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Trieste. This approach allowed Serena to introduce the following question: What archives can we

access to study the history of nonconforming sexualities? More specifically, how can we—as critical readers and researchers—consciously construct archives that allow us to imagine the social beyond heteronormativity, while also exceeding sexological taxonomies that understand sexualities solely through the homo/hetero binary? What linguistic repertoires and registers can we access when we are striving to speak of another kind of *formazione*? By foregrounding these questions, first discussed in relation to *Ernesto*, we were able to encourage students to pursue their own empirical cultural history project on dissenting sexualities. The project entailed interviewing—in the medium of Italian—members of Bologna’s lively queer community, which largely gathers around the LGBT association, Cassero, and producing a critical account of the experience, which would then be presented to the class as a final course assignment.

The class discussion on *Ernesto* allowed us to introduce a transnational perspective from the outset. Because *Ernesto* is a bilingual text set in one of Italy’s most bitterly contested and politically loaded borderlands, our critical discussion of the text naturally centered upon the politics of naming in a multilingual context. As they discussed the book, students collectively asked: What does it mean to articulate one’s nonconforming sexuality in a language that’s labelled as a “local dialect” rather than in Italian? What’s different about a story of sexual liberation articulated in a national language versus one that code-switches between Italian and a minority language like Triestino?

With reference to the syllabus (Appendix), before Serena’s return to the class in Week 10, students read/screened and discussed Tondelli, Pasolini, Guadagnino, Ferrante, and Pilati. They had also attended Sergio Rigoletto’s presentation on campus, “*Call Me by Your Name* and the Lingering Specters of the Universal Story,” and had encountered their oral history partners from the Cassero for the first time. In the second and third classes that Serena facilitated, the entrenchment of language and power was discussed once again - this time in relation to transnational modes of knowledge production. By reference to her own work on contemporary Italian popular fiction in English translation and on 1970s queer feminist protest movements in Italy, Serena encouraged students to consider the “coming out” story—as they know it through mainstream media and literature in English—as a particular US-American cultural genre that has “gone global” over the past fifty years. To consider how locales outside the United States may write simultaneously with and against that genre, we looked at the English translation of the bestselling teen erotic novel *A Hundred Strokes of the Brush Before Bed* with particular reference to queer representation in the text. This class was crucial in preparing the students for their dialogue with Italian queer participants as far as it encouraged them to develop a self-awareness of their own positioning vis-à-vis popular American stories of progress and liberation that are seamlessly exported globally through translation. Thus, our discussion on the politics of translation and the hegemony of US-American queer tropes helped students be more self-reflexive oral historians, who strive to not superimpose their own narratives about desire, identity, oppression and liberation onto the research participants they were working with. In this sense, the classroom discussions leading up to their presentations were meant to support students in their projects by foregrounding “transcultural competence” as a key pedagogical objective. As several documents on responding to the crisis of the humanities (and of language learning in particular) in the United States produced by the Modern Languages Association emphasize, the modern multilingual campus demands that we increasingly rethink our learning objectives *transculturally* and that we teach students to operate *between* languages and cultures; that is, rather than think of themselves as neutral agents in the process of knowing the “foreign culture,” critically make sense of their own positioning vis-à-vis Italian queer cultures and, in this case, their informants. On Ellen and Serena’s part, they decided to deploy the oral history exercise to teach students to reflect upon themselves and their own assumptions as they enter a dialogue with queer-identified subjects who are located differently vis-à-vis dominant Anglophone LGBTQ representations. Finally, for Serena’s fourth visit, students presented their own projects. During their presentations, they did not simply focus on the content of

the interviews—rather, they critically presented the process of working transculturally and translingually on the very concept of “coming out,” as they attempted to piece together their own queer historical archives out of oral sources.

### *Collaboration 101*

While both Ellen and Serena naturally had their own motivations for seeking out collaboration, there were nonetheless several shared objectives. These included a desire to be generous thinkers, listeners, and collaborators, in the way that Kathleen Fitzpatrick has envisioned, and the commitment to work to decolonize the classroom and create circumstances in which to work alongside students on a common project with a level-appropriate scale, something not so simply accomplished in the pedagogical conditions already described.<sup>8</sup> Another shared aim was fusing collaborative pedagogical approaches, queer studies and transnational approaches to modern Italian culture.<sup>9</sup> For Serena, collaborating on the course also represented a unique opportunity to mentor and be mentored at once—by bringing cutting-edge Queer Studies and Translation Studies research frameworks to undergraduates under a senior colleague’s guidance and in a pedagogical setting different from those in which she had previously worked.

For her part, Ellen welcomed all the collaborations that the project afforded. These included the chance to collaborate in the classroom at *Wesleyan* with someone whose research field dovetailed closely with her own, something not frequently feasible given Wesleyan’s staffing strength in Italian Studies (3.0 Full time employees). Additionally, collaborating with students on a research-related deliverable like the interviews was an innovation. Further, given her efforts to integrate students’ experiences in Bologna with their Italian language coursework on the Middletown campus, the collaboration offered novel possibilities.

### *Considerations*

This multi-pronged endeavor offered opportunities for collaboration at a number of intersections, for students, instructors, community organizers alike. For the advanced students, virtually all of whom had previously studied in Bologna, this advanced course presented not only chances to collaborate with their Wesleyan peers in Italian both in and outside the classroom, but also the chance to reconnect with their study abroad experience by way of the co-laboratory partners. We often talk about community outreach and its role in a liberal arts college curriculum, but it’s useful to remember that

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<sup>8</sup> Please see Fitzpatrick, *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University*. We have drawn substantially and in general from such non-oppressive and decolonializing educational pedagogies described by, among others, Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; and Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. For a very useful synthesis of the contemporary stakes and challenges to decolonial pedagogies, please see McGlazer, *Old Schools: Modernism, Education, and the Critique of Progress*, esp. 1-23. For a useful review of recent thinking specifically on Fanon and pedagogy, see also Sefa Dei and Simmons, “The Pedagogy of Fanon: An Introduction.”

<sup>9</sup> For broader debates on queer pedagogies, please see Waite, *Teaching Queer: Radical Possibilities for Writing and Knowing*. For a detailed and insightful discussion of how Queer Studies can be dynamically introduced in the classroom and brought to bear to student-led empirical research and real-life experiences, see Brim, *Poor Queer Studies: Confronting Elitism in the University*. For a discussion of the challenges and opportunities of teaching modern languages in an increasingly globalizing society and multilingual campus, please see Kramsch, *The Multilingual Subject*; and Canagarajah, *Translingual Practices: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. For specific practical suggestions on how to introduce transnational approaches to Italian culture when teaching Italian as a foreign language, see Polezzi and Burdett, *Transnational Italian Studies*.

our students' communities are not limited to the locations of their North American campuses, especially if they have studied abroad. The course content took on greater resonance in its Wesleyan context with the university's generally civically engaged students who accepted the premise without requiring any of the acrobatics that may have been necessary in other contexts (whether regional within North America, institutional in terms of a private versus public institution, or national). Further, these students drew into proximity the content of the course with the life narratives of living subjects, encouraging connections both geographical and affective. Finally, with the interview partners, students enrolled in the course were invited to make connections and comparisons with and among the communities in which they participated, on Wesleyan's campus in Middletown, or at their one-time home, Wesleyan's consortial studies program in Bologna.

As instructors, Ellen and Serena were afforded the chance to work inter-institutionally, a relatively rare occurrence for colleagues (in humanities-based and related social sciences areas) each of whom teaches in a private institution of higher education (with its closed systems of curriculum development, assessment and accreditation, personnel, etc.). It is the case that public institutions, particularly those that may operate within the same large public university system (those of Texas, California, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and New York come to mind) might find ways of facilitating inter-institutional collaboration (or at least of forbearing it), at the same time, since collaborations and labs are not generally diffuse in humanities-based courses, private institutions might be interested, as Wesleyan was, in supporting by way of grants such collaborations for the possibilities they make available to students of the humanities, and this was indeed the case. The triangulated collaboration among non-students participants (faculty colleagues and community activists, Ellen, Sara, and Serena) capitalized on existing collegial relationships: Ellen and Sara knew each other from common research interests, the ECCO Program in Bologna had placed students at the Cassero in internships (not only from Wesleyan but from all its consortial partners including students from Wesleyan), and Sara and Serena knew each other from a variety of contacts over time including archival research Serena had conducted at the Cassero.

Two students carried on as research assistants in the academic year following the course, transcribing the interviews for archiving, which is the project's next phase.

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## Appendix

Italian 247

### **Coming Out/Coming of Age: Narratives and Locations of Becoming in Contemporary Italian Culture**

Spring 2019

Prof. Ellen Nerenberg  
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### **Course Description:**

By examining narratives of "becoming" in Italian literary and screen texts, we will endeavor to read against a dominant "master" narrative of Italian culture that is prevailingly cis-male, patriarchal, and heteronormative. The literary and screen texts we will explore in depth include some "classic"

narratives of coming of age in the Italian cultural tradition which we will lay alongside Italian cultural “coming out” narratives, some “classic,” others less so. What can we learn from such adjacencies? What are the spaces of becoming? How are they constructed, coded, perceived, lived, endorsed, embraced, and contested? Is adolescence a “closet” out of which one emerges with a sexual identity? Does one come of age as an artist or “come out” as a practitioner of a particular artistic genre (filmmaker, poet, novelist)? How do artistic choices of practice subtend and inform sexual identity? What gets left behind in this “progress” of “becoming”? These are some of the questions we will entertain and explore.

A principal element of this course is a “co-laboratorio” or, “co-laboratory,” where we will experiment with a semester-long, collaborative archival project in which we join the stories of lived experiences to the cultural articulations and texts we study. Working in conjunction with the Cassero (LGBTQ union) in Bologna, and with the assistance of Prof. Serena Bassi (Yale), we will interview volunteers who will share their own stories of coming out and coming of age. The “co-laboratorio” will be explained in greater detail in class.

### **Learning Objectives:<sup>10</sup>**

#### Culture/Context:

help students gain knowledge and understanding of modern and contemporary Italian culture through study of specific texts configured around the intersecting themes of coming out/coming of age; create cultural, social, historical, and political contexts by examining perspectives on themes and texts studied

#### Communication:

facilitate progress in Italian on all linguistic fronts (reading, writing, and speaking Italian) through the consideration of a variety of texts and by way of richly varied tasks and assignments

#### Connections:

help students connect their study abroad experience in Italy to their engagement with Italian Studies on campus; encourage connections with other courses taken/students’ other majors; encourage especially students’ evaluation of their own progress in Italian from 101 to 111 to advanced courses; link to possible co-curricular interests (e.g., social justice, activism, politics); help students recognize perspectives available only with access to Italian

#### Comparisons:

encourage comparisons between experiences in and outside the classroom, in and outside the US and North America or students’ home cultures; encourage comparisons between different texts and genres

#### Communities:

create a community within the classroom dedicated to the study of these themes, link that community to the wider community of students of Italian at Wesleyan, to still other communities on campus and beyond (Bologna)

### **Texts:**

Elena Ferrante, *L'amica geniale* (selections)

Giovanni Marchesini and Giulio Obici, *Le 'amicizie'*

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<sup>10</sup> For the 5 “C’s” of Foreign Language classrooms: <https://www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages/standards-summary>

Melissa P, *100 colpi di spazzola prima di andare a dormire*  
Giacomo Pilati, *Minchia di Re*  
Umberto Saba, *Ernesto*  
Pier Vittorio Tondelli, *Altri libertini*

### **Required Screenings:**

Bernardo Bertolucci, *Prima della rivoluzione*  
Bernardo Bertolucci, *Stealing Beauty*.  
Laura Bispuri, *Vergine giurata*.  
Saverio Costanzo, *L'amica geniale* (HBO)  
Marco Ferreri, *La storia di Piera*.  
Luca Guadagnino, *Io sono l'amore*.  
Luca Guadagnino, *Call me by Your Name*.  
Nanni Moretti, *Ecce bombo*.  
Susanna Nicchiarelli, *Cosmonauta*.  
Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Teorema*.

### Optional screenings:

Donatella Maiorca, *Viola di mare*  
Fernan Ozpetek, *Le fate ignoranti*  
Fernan Ozpetek, *Bagno Turco (Steam)*  
Alice Rohrwacher, *Le meraviglie*  
Monica Stambrini, *Benzina*  
*Suburra* (serie tv)

**Critical Readings** (available on Moodle, to be read at dates indicated on the syllabus/Moodle)

### **Course Calendar**

#### **Settimana 1: considerazioni preliminari/premesse**

##### lunedì 28 gennaio

Presentazione del corso

##### mercoledì 30 gennaio

leggere: Ahmed, "Queer Phenomenology"  
guardare prima della lezione: *Prima della rivoluzione* (obbligatorio)  
*Le fate ignoranti* (facoltativo)

#### **Settimana 2: considerazioni preliminari/premesse**

##### lunedì 4 febbraio

leggere:  
Marchesini e Obici, 'Le amicizie' (selezioni) (tutti)  
Foucault  
Sedgwick

Bourdieu

mercoledì 6 febbraio:

leggere:

Saba, *Ernesto* (selezioni)

**Co-laboratorio 1:** Visita: Prof.ssa Serena Bassi, memoria queer, storia orale

**Settimana 3: Liminalità I: mappare altri spazi/spazi degli altri**

lunedì 11 febbraio:

*Altri libertini*

mercoledì 13 febbraio

leggere: *Altri libertini*

**Settimana 4: La città I: disruptions/interruzioni e possibilità erotiche**

lunedì 18 febb

*Teorema*

mercoledì 20 febbraio

*Io sono l'amore*

**Settimana 5: Spazi pastorali e non-nazionali: possibilità italiane**

lunedì 25 febbraio:

*Call Me by Your Name*

mercoledì 27 febbraio:

*Stealing Beauty*

**Settimana 6: Il rione/la scuola: divenire e smarginare**

lunedì 4 marzo:

*L'amica geniale* (selezioni)

mercoledì 6 marzo:

presentazione (in inglese)

“*Call Me by Your Name* and the Lingering Specters of the Universal Story”

Sergio Rigoletto (U of Oregon)

**Settimana 7 Il rione/la scuola: divenire e smarginare**

lunedì 25 marzo:

*L'amica geniale*

mercoledì 27 marzo:

*L'amica geniale*

**venerdì 29 marzo: scadenza intervista 1 (co-laboratorio)**

**Settimana 8 Isole/isolat\*: spazi possibili**

lunedì 1° aprile

*Minchia di re*

mercoledì 3 aprile

*Minchia di re*

**FREQUENZA OBBLIGATORIA: 16,30**

Presentazione (in inglese):

“Mistranslating ‘coming out’, building queer commons: The LGBT movement in 1970s Italy.”

Serena Bassi (Yale University)

**Settimana 9 Isole/isolat\*: spazi ristrettivi/possibili**

lunedì 8 aprile

*Minchia di re*

mercoledì 10 aprile

*100 colpi*

**Settimana 10 Isole/isolat\*: spazi ristrettivi/ possibili**

lunedì 15 aprile

*100 colpi*

mercoledì 17 aprile

*100 colpi*

A lezione: Serena Bassi

**domenica 21 aprile by 3:00 pm: scadenza intervista 2 (co-laboratorio)**

**Settimana 11: Spazi liminali II: mappare altri spazi/spazi degli altri**

lunedì 22 aprile:

*Vergine giurata*

mercoledì 24 aprile:

*Cosmonauta*

**Settimana 12: La città II: disruptions/interruzioni erotico-politiche/ la politica come spazio per diventare**

lunedì 29 aprile

*Storia di Piera*

mercoledì 1° maggio

*Ecce bombo*

**Settimana 13**

lunedì 6 maggio (last day): **co-laboratorio 2**

LEZIONE LUNGA (da votare il primo giorno)

presentazioni co-laboratorio

guardare: *Cosmonauta*

**Class meetings:** MW 2:50-4:10.

Class is cancelled Wed, March 6.

Several out-of-class, **required** meetings for the **co-laboratorio**:

1. 60-min meeting with Prof. E. Paris-Bouvret: technical concerns of telephone/Skype interviews
2. Wed, March 6 @ 4:30 pm (lecture in English related to course)
3. Wed, April 3 @ 4:30 pm (lecture in English related to course)
4. “Co-laboratorio 2”: last week of class, exact time to be decided by vote during drop/add

### **Accommodation Statement**

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a disability as defined by the ADA. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact Accessibility Services in order to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College, rooms 021/022, or can be reached by email ([accessibility@wesleyan.edu](mailto:accessibility@wesleyan.edu)) or phone (860-685-5581).

### **Religious Observances**

Religious observances require that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required assignments/attendance. If this applies to you, please speak with me directly as soon as possible at the beginning of the term.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, ability, and nationality. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. As you know, Romance Languages, Italian included, assign gender to nouns and agreement (with adjectives) follows. Some of the texts we encounter in this course specifically address and problematize such gender non-neutrality. Please advise me of any preferences on the pledge that you turn in so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on the student code.

### **Discrimination and Harassment**

Wesleyan University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. Wesleyan will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this Wesleyan policy, **“Protected Classes”** refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office for Equity and Inclusion at 860-685-4771. The responsibility of the University Members has more information.

### **Honor Code**

All students of Wesleyan University are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council – Office of Student Affairs. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). The Honor Code Office has more information.

### **Time Commitment**

The exact time commitment for the class will vary individually and over the course of the semester. In calculating reading assignments, I take into consideration 1) that Italian is your acquired language and 2) the degree of difficulty of the text. A rule of thumb, for example, for reading the short novels is about 50 pp./class session. You are expected to see the films in their entirety, before the class session in which they are discussed.

I have noted the dates “by” which major assignments are due. This does not mean they are due at that time on those days. You are required to *complete* work by the dates and times indicated. Since your essays are meant to be analytical and synthetic, it would be premature to select a topic that you would be able to complete before April 21. Guidelines for the paper will follow.

I recommend that you budget approximately 3.5-3.7 out-of-class hours for every class hour to complete the reading, assignments, and projects. We meet for 160 min weekly, or 2.7 hours, with one class session cancelled in the semester. I have designed the class so that it should be feasible to satisfactorily complete the requirements in the time allotted. If you are spending more time than this *on a regular basis* I would encourage you to check in with me.