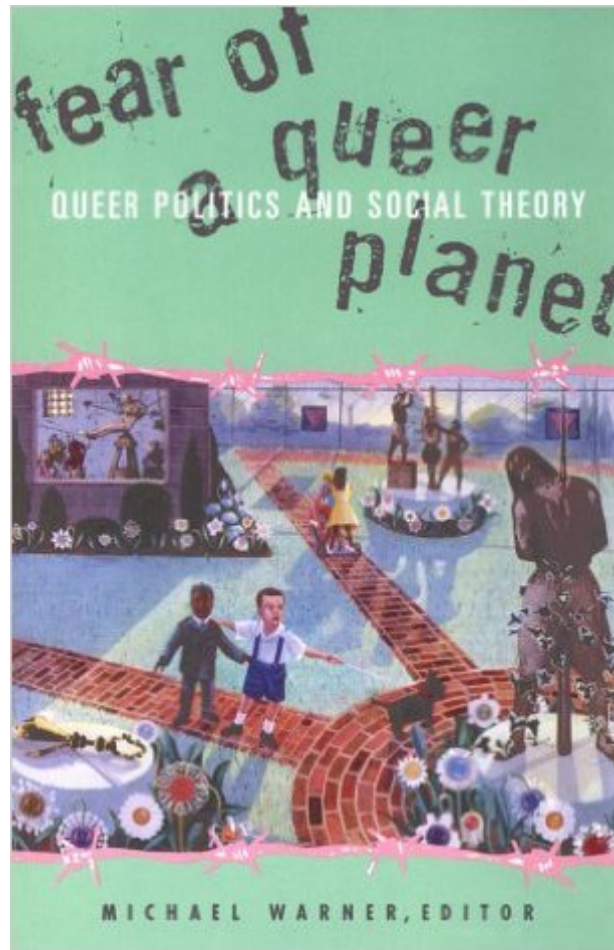


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Fear Of A Queer Planet: Queer Politics And Social Theory (Studies In Classical Philology)



Synopsis

Fear Of A Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory (Studies in Classical Philology) 1/E by Michael Warner

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Customer Reviews

Queer as used in this title means sexual conduct that deviates from established norms. It is not gender limited. The question then is who is afraid and how does that fear involve the planet? Those who fear, evidently, are those burdened with imposing the norms. The first essay in this anthology tells the story of Balboa's encounter with Panamanian "sodomy." The burden in that case fell upon political and religious figures. The next-to-last essay tells how the defeat of Quebec's bid for sovereignty was blamed on its tolerance of homosexuality, thus situating the burden in the domain of the general culture. The last essay recounts the "outing" in the US pop media of a female entertainer with attendant public anxieties, thus situating the locus in the general culture. But how does that make the fear planetary? The introduction, best read as a postscript, attempts to connect the theme with the planet through the device of Pioneer 10's spacecraft design. But the connection is superficial, and the reader is left to find it in the issues raised by postmodernism, which heavily undergirds much of the volume's ponderosity. Eleven of its 15 contributors are teachers of English, with a lit-crit approach heavily freighted with fashionable structuralism-destructuralism jargon; but the diligent reader can find a rich cornucopia for reflection here and food for thought; but he/she

must look for the planetary connection (and it does exist, we have no doubt) in the areas of ontology and epistemology that postmodernism leaves us floundering in. Howard of Athens

The title *Fear of a Queer Planet* is a play on the famous essay on race, *Fear of a Black Planet*; only readers deaf to history would fail to make the connection. This is a pioneering book, with essays by Eve Sedgwick, Henry L. Gates, and Michael Warner, among others, the first to push gay identity politics beyond its limitations within "gay and lesbian studies" and into social, economic, and transcultural theory. It is indeed "planetary" in its attempt to take gay and lesbian theory past the blindness of American identity niche-marketing and and fashion magazine triumphalism.

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