

Fall 2018
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Office hours: W11:00-1230 and by appt

SOCIOLOGY OF SEXUALITIES

This advanced seminar examines the fast-growing field of sexuality studies. Sexuality appears to be a very private and personal matter. We often assume that it is a "natural" expression of our biological nature. But sexuality follows certain patterns; it may be experienced personally and intimately, but there is a social dimension as well. This course examines how sexuality is "constructed" in society. While the course focuses on sociological studies, it takes side trips into other disciplines, including history, anthropology, psychology, and politics. We will ask: What is "sexuality" and how has it been studied? We'll examine a number of streams in contemporary social research on sexuality, including the political economy of sexualities, the construction of bodies and identities, race and globalization, bodies and intimacies, and sexuality and the state. And we'll consider different methods social scientists have used to study sexuality, and the ethical questions that emerge at points.

The course will consist of lectures and discussions, and include a guest or two. Participation will be key, and students will be responsible for helping to lead class discussions, with one or two people co-facilitating each session with me. We will also workshop our research projects. Students will be assessed on the basis of written work and participation in the class discussions.

Learning goals:

Students will acquire broad understanding of the major theoretical debates and areas of substantive concern within the subfield of sexualities. They will learn how social scientists have studied sexual desire, identities and behaviors. They will gain insight into the relationship between dominant and minority sexual formations, and the linkages among gender, race, class, and nation as they relate to sexual matters. And they will try their hand at an original research project!

REQUIREMENTS

1) *Participation/ Weekly Questions* (40% of grade)

Students are expected to attend class, read carefully and participate actively in discussion each week. On the basis of the readings, you will develop at least three analytic question that you will upload to Sakai the day before class (Monday) by noon. Everyone should read each other's questions before class. You are exempt from this assignment if you are responsible for the week's class presentation.

2) *Class Discussion Leader* (10% of grade)

Each student will be expected to help lead at least one discussion during the semester. As a co-facilitator, your job is to critically introduce the material, discuss some key themes that emerge in the readings, offer a critique or appreciation of the reading(s). Co-facilitators will post a brief analytic overview (2-3 pages) to all students. This statement should highlight the core themes and arguments, salient questions, and points of confusion/contradiction in the week's readings. Feel free to show how the articles/book reflects the themes of the course, drawing links with previous readings, discussions where appropriate. Do not summarize the readings. Post on Sakai by Monday at 6pm.

3) *Paper or Research Proposal* (50% of grade)

Students taking the course for credit are expected to submit a 20-25 page paper on a topic related to this course. The paper can be analytical, critically reflecting on a substantive issue related to the sociology of sexuality. Or you may choose to write a research proposal, drawing on theoretical perspectives and existing empirical work to identify an interesting research question relating to the course theme.

A preliminary statement of your research project is due October 9. Email a short project description to me. Be as specific as possible and include citations to a few key reference works. If you are undecided about your focus, send ideas for two possible projects. At this time you should make an appointment to discuss this paper with me further—if you have not already spoken with me about it. To get final approval for your topic, you will submit a 2-3 page memo describing your project, complete with a brief bibliography by October 23, which you will share with the class.

Students will present their research in progress in class on November 13. This is an opportunity to share your work with the class and to receive feedback on your project. Final presentations of research will take place on December 4 and 11. Students taking the course for credit are expected to submit a paper (20-25 pages) by December 15.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change.

BOOKS

Kimberly Hoang, *Dealing in Desire*, California, 2015.

Kristen Schilt, et. al *Other: Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology*. California, 2018.

Arlene Stein, *Unbound: Transgender Men and the Remaking of Identity* Pantheon, 2018 (I will order discount copies.)

Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality: Key Ideas, 4th edition*, Routledge, 2017

**Additional readings listed on the syllabus will be available on Sakai.

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

September 4. INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW:

What do we study when we study sexualities?

Janice Irvine, "The Sociologist as Voyeur: Social Theory and Sexuality Research, 1910– 1978, *Qualitative Sociology*, 2003

Peruse 2018 ASA sexualities pre-conference program

<https://asasexualitiespreconf.com>

Peruse last few issues' tables of contents of *Sexualities*

<http://journals.sagepub.com/loi/sex>

September 11. No Class (Jewish holiday)

Though there's no class meeting, read Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality*. By September 11, share your reactions to the book with your classmates on Sakai. Say what you learned, questions that the book raised for you, and how the book might help contextualize the work we do in this course. We will continue to discuss the book next week, along with the other assigned readings. Before September 18, read what others have posted on Sakai, respond to others's comments, and come prepared to discuss Weeks and additional readings.

Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality*.

September 18. CONTEXTUALIZING SEXUALITY RESEARCH

What is "sexuality"? What are some different traditions of sexuality research?

Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality*.

Julia O'Connell Davidson and Derek Layder, *Methods: Sex and Madness*, 1994, excerpt.

Kathleen Bogle, *Hooking Up*, 2008, excerpt.

Paula England, et. al. "Hooking Up and Forming Romantic Relationships on Today's College Campuses"

<http://www.nyu.edu/classes/jackson/sex.and.gender/Readings/England%20-%20Hooking%20Up.pdf>

Recommended:

Arlene Stein, "Three Models of Sexuality," in *Sociological Theory*, 1989.

Julia Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell: Surveying Sex in the Twentieth Century*, Harvard 1999

Janice Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 2005.
Ethel Spector Person, "A Psychoanalytic Approach" in J. Geer and W. O'Donoghue, *Theories of Human Sexuality*, 1987

September 25. SEXUAL SCRIPTS, LABELS, NARRATIVES

How is sexuality "constructed" in everyday life? How does scripting theory help us to understand this? How have feminists and analysts of gay/lesbian life employed the notion of sexual scripts, and to what effect? What "work" does sexual storytelling do?

William Simon and John Gagnon and, "A Sexual Scripts Approach" in J. Geer and W. O'Donoghue, *Theories of Human Sexuality*, 1987
Ken Plummer, "Homosexual Categories: Some Research Problems in the Labeling Perspective of Homosexuality," 1981.
Ken Plummer, *Telling Sexual Stories*, excerpt, 1995
Patricia Zavella, "Playing with Fire: The Gendered Construction of Chicana/Mexican Sexuality," 2003.

Recommended:

Ying-chao Kao, "The Rise of BDSM (Sub)culture and Its Discontents: A Literature Review," academia.edu

October 2. SEXUALITY, POWER, DISCOURSE

How is sexuality is a form of discourse, and discourse a form of power? How do feminists think about sexual power? How have such ideas informed queer theory's critique of heteronormativity?

Catherine MacKinnon, "Sexuality" in J. Geer and W. O'Donoghue, *Theories of Human Sexuality*, 1987
Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes Toward a Radical Theory of Sexuality," 1984.
Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, "Sex in Public" in R. Corber and S. Vallochi, *Queer Studies: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, 2003
Judith Butler, "Critically Queer" in *Bodies that Matter*, 1993.
Cathy Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens," from *The Boundaries of Blackness*, 1999.
Arlene Stein and Ken Plummer, "I Can't Think Straight: Queer Theory and the Missing Sexual Revolution in Sociology," *Sociological Theory*, 1994

Recommended:

Steven Epstein, "An Incitement to Discourse: Sociology and The History of Sexuality," *Sociological Forum*, 2003
Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol 1*, 1978.
Joshua Gamson, "Must Identity Movements Self-Destruct? A Queer Dilemma," 1995.
Lynne Layton, "Trauma, Gender Identity and Sexuality: Discourses of Fragmentation," *American Imago*, 1995.

Michael Warner, *The Trouble with Normal*, 1999.

October 9. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF SEXUAL INTERACTIONS

How is sexuality socially organized in everyday life?

Adam Green, "The Social Organization of Desire: The Sexual Fields Approach," 2008

Elizabeth Armstrong, Laura Hamilton, Brian Sweeney, "Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape," 2006.

Etienne Meunier, "No Attitude, No Standing Around: The Organization of Social and Sexual Interaction at a Gay Male Private Sex Party in New York City," 2012.

Barrie Thorne and Zella Luria, "Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds," 1986.

Oct. 16. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SEXUALITY

How has industrial capitalism, and contemporary forms of "advanced" capitalism enabled certain kinds of sexuality to proliferate, and foreclosing other forms of sexuality?

John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity," 1983.

Melinda Cooper, *Family Values*, 2017, excerpt.

Elizabeth Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours*, 2007, excerpt.

Roger Lancaster, *The Trouble with Nature*, 2003, excerpt.

Recommended:

Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy*, 1992

Rosemary Hennessy, *Profit and Pleasure*

**Please get your proposed paper topic approved by submitting a short written description no later than October 16.

Oct. 23. SEXUAL STATES

What is the relationship between race, sexuality, and nationhood? What is "sexual citizenship"? How have conceptions of nationhood been deployed by social movements concerned with sexual matters?

George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 1997, excerpt.

Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in 20th c America*, 2011, excerpt.

Nancy Whittier, Introduction, *The Politics of Child Sexual Abuse*, 2009.

Sasho Lambevski, "Suck My Nation: Masculinity, Ethnicity, and the Politics of (Homo)sex," 1999.

Niina Vuolajarvi, "Governing in the Name of Caring—the Nordic Model of Prostitution and its Punitive Consequences for Migrants Who Sell Sex". 2018.

Recommended:

Eithne Luibheid, *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border*, 2002.
Diane Richardson, "Sexuality and Citizenship," 2018
M. Jacqui Alexander, "Erotic Autonomy as a Politics of Decolonialization," 2005.
Roger Lancaster, *Sex Panic and the Punitive State*, 2011.
Joanne Nagel, *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality*, 2003.

** Students will present work in progress

October 30. THINKING ABOUT METHODS

How do researchers study sexuality? What are some strengths and weaknesses of different methods? What does it mean to "queer" research methods?

Julia Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell: Surveying Sex in the Twentieth Century*, 1999, excerpt.
David Valentine, "Ethnography as an Activist Strategy," *Imagining Transgender*, 2007.
Kristen Schilt, et. al, eds, *Other: Please Specify: Queer Methods in Sociology*, 2018

November 6. TRANSNATIONAL INTIMACIES

To what extent can we say that sexuality has been "globalized"?

Kimberly Hoang, *Dealing in Desire*

Recommended:

Sealing Cheng, *On the Move for Love: Migrant Entertainers and the US Military in South Korea*, 2010.
Ghassan Moussawi, "Queering Beirut, the Paris of the Middle East: Fractal Orientalism and Essentialized Masculinities in Gay Travelogues," 2013.

November 13. GENDER, EMBODIMENT, AND TRANS IDENTITIES

How has the growing visibility of transgender people, and transgender studies impacted the study of sexuality? What new and not-so-new technologies are being deployed to shape emergent gender identities?

*Work-in-progress presentations.

Arlene Stein, *Unbound*

Recommended:

Rogers Brubaker, *Trans: Gender and Race in an Age of Unsettled Identities*, 2016
Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body*, 2000
Tey Meadow, *Trans Kids*, 2018.
Don Kulick, *Travesti: Sex, Gender and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes*, 1998

November 20—no class

November 27. RESEARCH ETHICS

What are some ethical issues that may be raised by sexuality research? Does sexuality pose particular challenges?

Laud Humphreys, *Tearoom Trade*, 1970, excerpt.

Peter Nardi, "The Breastplate of Righteousness: Twenty five Years After Laud Humphreys' Tearoom Trade," 1996.

Bolton, Ralph. "Mapping Terra Incognita: Sex Research for AIDS Prevention" in *Culture, Society and Sexuality* ed. Parker and Aggleton, 1999

Elizabeth Bernstein, "Appendix: Note on Methodology," in *Temporarily Yours*, 2007.

Arlene Stein, "Sex, Truths, and Audiotape," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 2010.

Janice Irvine, "Can't Ask, Can't Tell: How IRBs Keep Sex in the Closet," *Contexts*, 2012

December 4. SUMMING UP, RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Comparing theories, reflecting upon the state of the field, thinking about our own research.

Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality*, ch. 6

Arlene Stein, "Professionalization and Subversion," 2018.

Possible additional reading TBA

****RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**

December 11. RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

****Final papers due: December 15**