

SOC 389: Sociology of Sexualities

Spring 2017

MW 10-11:15am

Callaway S104

Dr. Brandy Simula

bsimula@emory.edu

Office Hours: MW 11:30-12:30 and by appointment (229 Tarbuton Hall)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How do we come to know ourselves as sexual beings? How do individuals develop attractions, make sexual choices, and define and enact their own sexuality? What is social about sexuality, and how do institutions and organizations influence understandings of human sexuality over time? What forms do sex and sexualities take in the modern U.S.? How and why have categories of sexual practices and identities developed? What are the relationships between categories of sex and sexualities and other social categories, including race, class, gender, age, and ability? We will take these questions as starting points for our explorations of the social aspects of sexualities.

Human sexuality is often thought of as a realm of experience outside of or unmarked by society. In contrast, this course introduces students to the myriad ways in which sexual desires, activities, and identities are structured by social relations, and to the ways that sexualities, sexual practices, and sexual identities vary across time and place. We will explore the emergence of sexuality as an identity category, the construction and performance of sexual selves, sexual scripts, the institutional nature of heterosexuality, and the intersections of sexuality with other major hierarchies of stratification including gender, race, class, and dis/ability. We will also explore the social organization of bodies, desires, and pleasures in a variety of sexual subcultures. Throughout the course, we will work to develop a clearer understanding of the complex ways in which sex and sexualities are shaped both by individual experiences and social structures.

Pre-requisite: SOC 225 (Sociology of Sex and Gender) OR WS 100 (Introduction to Women's Studies)
OR by permission of instructor.

Note on course content:

This course includes open and frank discussion of a variety of sexually explicit materials (language and imagery), some of which are controversial. Our readings and discussions will provide you the opportunity to develop a lexicon for and comfort level with discussing a full range of sexual topics in the classroom in a respectful and articulate way. As with any serious scholarly endeavor, the point of our inquiry is critical understanding. No one will be expected to reveal or discuss hir/her/his own sexual experiences, preferences, or desires; everyone will be expected to participate in our class discussions in a way that is respectful of others. If you do not feel comfortable hearing about, viewing, and discussing sex and sexualities in a frank way, please reconsider your intention to take the course.

COURSE MATERIALS:

Textbook: *Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader*. 4th ed. 2014. Edited by Mindy Stomblor, Dawn Baunach, Wendy Simonds, Elroi Windsor, and Elisabeth Burgess. New York: W.W. Norton.

All other readings available on ReservesDirect.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENT	WEIGHT
Participation	10%
Reading Response Papers (2 at 15% each)	30%
Discussion Facilitation (in pairs) (2 @ 10% each)	20%
Final Research Project and Presentation	40%

Participation (10%)

Preparation

The success of this class, and your success in it, depends on how you prepare for our class conversations. This class requires you to prepare materials, rather than just reading them—see the Preparing Course Readings handout. As you prepare for each class meeting, think about how the materials relate to other readings and discussions. In order to participate fully in class discussions, you will need to prepare in advance and bring with you discussion questions related to the readings for that day. The quality of your discussion questions will be a major component of your participation grade and will provide the basis for our class discussions each meeting. Participation grades are based on the *quality* (insightfulness, thoughtfulness, analytical thinking) rather than the *quantity* of your contributions. I will provide you with feedback on your participation at the mid-point of the semester.

Participation and Attendance Guidelines

The most effective way to participate in our class conversations involves preparing carefully for the course, listening to what others have to say, and responding to others in a respectful manner. Remember that participation in discussions means responding to questions and comments your classmates contribute, not delivering monologues. You are encouraged to make provisional comments and to revise your opinion throughout the course of the semester. Insightful questions are as important as comments.

One of the most important insights of sociology is that individual experiences are influenced by broader social systems. This means that we must work to understand our personal experiences through the broader lens of the socio-political contexts in which they take place. Thus, if you choose to share a personal experience with the class, please be sure to analyze your experience through the analytical lenses we have read together during the semester. Also remember that other participants in the conversation may have had different experiences and be respectful in how you share your opinions and experiences. Please remember to keep in mind the dangers of faulty generalization (treating an individual case as representative of a broader pattern); the experience of one individual neither proves nor disproves social patterns.

Obviously, you must be present in class in order to participate. I recognize that an emergency that prevents you from missing class may arise. To that end, you are allowed to miss two classes without

penalty on your final grade. Each absence beyond the two allowed will lower your final course grade by 1 point; your participation grade will also be negatively impacted by multiple absences. You must be present at the beginning of class when I pass around the sign-in sheet to sign in and be counted as present for the day. Late assignments will incur a 10 point penalty per 24-hour period from when they are due. Discussion facilitations may not be made up except in the case of a documented emergency.

If you miss class, please do not e-mail me to find out what you missed; get notes and any information you may have missed from a classmate:

Classmate #1 contact info: _____

Classmate #2 contact info: _____

Reading Response Papers (2 at 15% each)

At the beginning of the semester, you will sign up to write two reflection papers (worth 15% each) on two dates of your choice. Each reflection paper should critically engage at least one of the readings for that day. These are not summary papers, but opportunities to reflect on issues and questions raised by the readings and to link the issues and questions raised by the day's readings with other readings we have done during the semester, as well as conversations we had had together as a class. Further directions concerning how to prepare reflection papers are available in the Reading Response Papers handout. Papers should be approximately 1,500 words each (exclusive of the bibliography).

Discussion Facilitation (2 at 10% each)

Also at the beginning of the semester, you will sign up to facilitate discussion for two class dates of your choosing. Your first discussion facilitation will be with a partner; your second will be done individually.

Note that facilitating a discussion is *not* the same as delivering a presentation. Your responsibility as a discussion facilitator will be to develop insightful, challenging questions about the readings that facilitate a complex discussion of the arguments and questions raised by our shared readings. As a discussion facilitator, you should seek to foster a discussion that includes all of your classmates and makes room for intellectual disagreements. Avoid generic questions such as "What did you think about this reading? What other readings did this remind you of?" etc. Your questions should focus on the readings for that day, while also connecting those readings to other topics and readings we have covered in the semester.

Learning to speak comfortably about sexuality is an important skill for scholars of sexuality. Throughout the semester, you will have opportunities in class to work on your ability to speak comfortably as a participant in open discussions about sexuality; this assignment gives you the opportunity to practice *facilitating* open discussions about sexuality—in other words, creating a comfortable conversational space for others. Detailed instructions are available in the Discussion Facilitation handout.

Research Project (40%)

Your major project for our class will give you an opportunity to explore a topic in sexualities that is of particular interest to you and that we do not have time to explore together as a class. This project is designed to help you explore recent (within the last decade) sociological research and theory on sexualities and to produce an overview of current sociological knowledge on the topic of your choice.

You will complete parts of this project throughout the semester; the final result will be a paper of 15-20 pages, as well as a presentation of your project to your classmates.

As you begin to think about possible topics, remember that your topic should be narrow enough to allow you to engage it thoroughly. For example, "Casual sex" is too broad for you to be able to thoroughly explore sociological work in this area in one semester. Sociological research on college hook-ups or the swinging lifestyle, however, are topics that will allow you to get a good enough sense of the range of sociological work in this field that you will be able to say something meaningful about that body of work.

As you frame your project, keep these questions in mind:

- When and how did sociological work on this topic begin to develop?
- What have been the major findings in this field in the past decade?
- What methodologies have been used to develop these findings?
- Why is this topic of interest to sociologists of sexuality?
- What other fields and disciplines have influenced sociological thinking about this topic?
- What areas of disagreement exist among sociologists working on this topic?
- What remains to be explored in relation to this topic?
- What does this body of knowledge tell us about society and social systems more generally?

Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due Wed., Feb 15 (10%)

A one-page project proposal, describing the substantive area you will explore and the questions you will pursue in your research, along with a 10-item annotated bibliography of academic articles and/or monographs.

Paper Draft Due Wed., March 29 (10%)

Email a *polished* draft of your paper to myself and your two peer reviewers *before* class.

Final Papers Due by 10am on Wednesday, May 3rd (20%)

GRADING SCALE		
A	93-100	Achievement <i>outstanding</i> relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
A-	90-92	
B+	88-89	
B	83-87	Achievement <i>significantly above</i> the level necessary to meet course requirements
B-	80-82	
C+	78-79	
C	73-77	Achievement meeting the <i>basic</i> course requirements in every respect
C-	70-72	
D+	68-69	
D	63-67	Achievement <i>worthy of partial credit</i> that does not meet the basic requirements
D-	60-62	
F	60 and below	Performance <i>failing</i> to meet the basic course requirements

COURSE POLICIES

Electronic Devices

Please remember to turn off all electronic devices (e.g. mp3 players, cell phones, etc.) before coming into class. If you have a special situation that requires you to have a cell phone or beeper on during our class (e.g. sick family member, on-call sexual assault volunteer), please notify me before class. The use of laptops is permitted only by arrangement with ADSR.

Disability Accommodations

If you are in need of accommodation for this class, please notify me as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements that will facilitate your full participation in the course.

Honor Code/ Plagiarism

Every student enrolled in Emory College is bound by the university's honor code, which prohibits any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarizing. Violations of the honor code will immediately be referred to the Honor Council.

Office Hours and Instructor Availability

You are always welcome to use office hours or make an appointment to discuss questions or concerns about our class or any other issue that affects your life at Emory. Also remember that you can talk to a trained counseling staff member—free and confidentially—at the Emory counseling center at any point during your academic career. For more information, see <http://www.emory.edu/SCOUNSEL>.

It's fine to use e-mail for quick questions or to let me know you will not be able to make it to class, but questions about assignments, your course performance, or concepts from lectures, discussions, and readings should take place during office hours or by appointment. I check e-mail regularly and will do my best to reply to your messages promptly (usually within 48 hours).

Grade Review Policy

If you feel that the grade you have earned on an assignment/ assessment is inaccurate, you may request a grade review by submitting a written explanation of why you feel your grade is inaccurate along with the original graded assignment/ assessment within 2 class periods from when the grade is returned to you (e.g. if I return an assignment in class on a Monday, you must submit a written appeal by the following Monday Once I have reviewed your original grade and your written appeal, I will schedule an appointment with you to discuss the outcome of the review. I reserve the right to lower or raise the grade in question during the review process.

Syllabus Subject to Change

This syllabus is subject to change with advance notice.

COURSE SCHEDULE

* Note on readings: Most readings from *Sex Matters* will come from the textbook for this course, which is the 2014, 4th edition. However, some readings will come from the previous 2010/ 3rd edition of *Sex Matters*. Unless otherwise noted, *Sex Matters* readings come from the course textbook.

Wed Jan 11: Introductions

Mon Jan 16: MLK/ No Class

Wed Jan 18: What is Sex(uality)?

Kimmel, Michael. 2006. "Ritualized Homosexuality in a Nacirema Subculture." *Sexualities* 9(1): 95-106.

Attwood, Fiona. 2006. "Sexed Up: Theorizing the Sexualization of Culture." *Sexualities* 9(1):77-94.

Christina, Greta. 2014. "Are We Having Sex Now or What?" *Sex Matters*, p. 4-8.

Mon Jan 23: What is Sex(uality)? cont'd

Ward, Jane. 2014. "Straight Dude Seeks Same: Mapping the Relationship Between Sexual Identities, Practices, and Cultures." *Sex Matters*, p. 29-35.

Waskul, Dennis. 2004. "The Naked Self: Body and Self in Televideo Cybersex." *net.sexxx*. New York: Peter Lang. p.35-63.

What is Sex(uality)?, cont'd

Roberts, Celia, Susan Kippax, Catherine Waldby, and June Crawford. 2004. "Faking It: The Story of 'Ohh!'" *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, eds. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 266-274.

Smith, Sarah. 2002. "A Cock of One's Own: Getting a Firm Grip on Feminist Sexual Power." *Jane Sexes It Up*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press. p. 293-309.

Owens, Erica. 2004. "Race, Sexual Attractiveness, and Internet Personal Advertisements." *net.sexxx*. New York: Peter Lang. p. 217-234.

Wed Jan 25: On Naming, Language, and Visibility

- Katz, Jonathan Ned. 2004. "'Homosexual' and 'Heterosexual': Questioning the Terms." *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, eds. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 44-46.
- Clare, Eli. 2009. "Freaks and Queers." *Exile and Pride*. Cambridge: South End Press. p. 81-118.
- Steinbugler, Amy. 2014. "Visibility as Privilege and Danger: Heterosexual and Same-Sex Interracial Intimacy." *Sex Matters*, p. 422-431.

Mon Jan 30: Studying Sex

- Laumann, Edward, John Gagnon, Robert Michael, and Stuart Michaels. 2010. "Survey of Sexual Behavior of Americans." *Sex Matters, 3rd ed.*, eds. Mindy Stomblor et al. New York: Pearson. p. 57-63.
- Sanders, Teela. 2014. "Sexing Up the Subject: Methodological Nuances in Research the Female Sex Industry." 54-92 in *Sex Matters*, p. 100-107.
- Eriksen, Julia and Sally Steffen. 2004. "Asking Questions About Sex." *Sexualities: Identities, Behavior, and Society*, eds. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 46-51.

Wed Feb 1: The Social Construction of Sexualities

- Schwartz, Pepper. 2007. "The Social Construction of Heterosexuality." *The Sexual Self* (ed. Michael Kimmel). Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press. p. 80-92.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2010. "The Sexual Politics of Black Womanhood." *Sex Matters, 3rd ed.*, eds. Mindy Stomblor et al. New York: Pearson. p. 405-418.
- Kimmel, Michael and Rebecca Plante. 2004. "The Gender of Desire: The Sexual Fantasies of Women and Men." 123-136 in *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society, 1st ed.* p.123-136.
- Alavi, Allison Kavanagh. 2004. "Little White Lies: Race, Dildos, and American Culture" in *Sex Matters, 2nd ed.*, Eds, Stomblor et al. p. 157-161.

Mon Feb 6: Sexual Selves

- Plante, Rebecca. 2007. "In Search of Sexual Subjectivities: Exploring the Sociological Construction of Sexual Selves." *The Sexual Self* (ed. Michael Kimmel). Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press. p. 31-48.
- Esterberg, Kristin. 1996. "A Certain Swagger When I Walk: Performing Lesbian Identity." *Queer Theory/ Sociology* (ed. Steven Seidman). Cambridge: Blackwell. p.259-279.
- Plante, Rebecca. 2010. "Sexual Spanking, the Self, and Deviance." *Sex Matters, 3rd ed.*, eds. Mindy Stomblor et al. New York: Pearson. p. 338-345.

Wed Feb 8: Sex Q&A and Project Workshop

Mon Feb 13: Identities and Orientations

- Rust, Paula. 2001. "Two Many and Not Enough: The Meanings of Bisexual Identities." *Journal of Bisexuality* 1(1): 31-68.
- Klesse, Christian. 2014. "Polyamory: Intimate practice, identity, or sexual orientation?" *Sexualities* 17(1/2):81-99.
- Scherrer, Kristin. 2008. "Coming to an Asexual Identity: Negotiating Identity, Negotiating Desire." *Sexualities* 11(5):621-641.

Wed Feb 15: Intersecting Identities

- Heaphy, Brian. 2011. "Gay Identities and the Culture of Class." *Sexualities* 14(1): 42-62.
- Better, Allison and Brandy Simula. 2015. "How and For Whom Does Gender Matter? Rethinking the Concept of Sexual Orientation." *Sexualities* 18(5-6): 665-680.
- Han, Chong-Suk. 2014. "Geisha of a Different Kind: Gay Asian Men and the Gendering of Sexual Identity." *Sex Matters*, p. 109-118.

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due

Mon Feb 20: Intersecting Identities

- Lehrer, Riva. 2012. "Golem Girl Gets Lucky." *Sex and Disability*, eds. Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow. Durham: Duke University Press. p. 231-255.
- Gonzalez, Alfredo. 2010. "Latinos On da Down Low." *Sex Matters, 3rd ed.*, eds. Mindy Stompler et al. New York: Pearson. p. 323-337.
- Dworkin, Shari and Lucia O'Sullivan. 2007. "It's Less Work for Us and It Shows She Has Good Taste: Masculinity, Sexual Initiation, and Contemporary Sexual Scripts." *The Sexual Self*, ed. Michael Kimmel. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press. p.105-121.

Wed Feb 22: Sexual Fields

- Adam, Barry and Adam Isaiah Green. 2014. "Circuits and the Social Organization of Sexual Fields." *Sexual Fields*, ed. Adam Isaiah Green. Chicago: Chicago University Press. p. 123-142.
- Espiritu, Ten Le. 2001. "We Don't Sleep Around Like White Girls Do: Family, Culture, and Gender in Filippina American Lives." *Signs* 26(2):415-440.
- Sumerau, J. 2015. "Somewhere Between Evangelical and Queer: Sexual-Religious Identity Work in a LGBT Christian Church." *Selves, Symbols, and Sexualities*, eds. Thomas Weinberg and Staci Newmahr. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. p. 123-134.

Mon Feb 27: Sexual Communities and Subcultures

- Siebers, Tobin. 2012. "A Sexual Culture for Disabled People." *Sex and Disability*, eds. Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow. Durham: Duke University Press. p.37-53.
- Newmahr, Staci. 2011. "Geeks and Freak: Marginal Identity and Community." *Playing on the Edge*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. p. 39-55.

Wed Mar 1: Sexual Communities and Subcultures

- Nero, Charles. 2005. "Why Are the Gay Ghettos White?" *Black Queer Studies*, eds. E. Patrick Johnson and Mae Henderson. Durham: Duke University Press. p. 228-245.
- Carrigan, Mark. 2011. "There's More To Life Than Sex? Difference and Commonality Within the Asexual Community" 462-478 *Sexualities* 14(4):462-478.

Mon Mar 6: Spring Break

Wed Mar 8: Spring Break

Mon Mar 13: (In)Visibility, Closets, and Coming Out

- McLean, Kirsten. 2010. "Hiding in the Closet? Bisexuals, Coming Out, and the Disclosure Imperative." *Sex Matters, 3rd ed.*, eds. Mindy Stompler et al. New York: Pearson. p. 38-45.
- Samuels, Ellen. 2003. "My Body, My Closet: Invisible Disability and the Limits of Coming-Out Discourse." *GLQ* 9(1-2): 233-255.

Seidman, Steven. 2010. "In the Closet." *Sex Matters*, 3rd ed., eds. Mindy Stomblor et al. New York: Pearson. p. 444-457.

Wed Mar 15: Beyond the Closet

Seidman, Steven, Chet Meeks, and Francie Traschen. 1999. "Beyond the Closet?: The Changing Meaning of Homosexuality in the United States." 184-199 in *Sexualities* 2(1): 9-34.

Clare, Eli. 2009. "Losing Home." *Exile and Pride*. Cambridge: South End Press. p. 31-49

Gray, Mary. 2014. "Out in the Country." *Sex Matters*. p.556-565.

Mon Mar 20: Sex, Education, and Youth

Solebello, Nicholas and Sinikka Elliott. 2011. "We Want Them To Be as Heterosexual As Possible: Fathers Talk about Their Teen Children's Sexuality." *Gender & Society* 25(3): 293-315.

Miceli, Melinda. 2010. "In the Trenches: LGBT Students Struggle with School and Sexuality Identity." *Sex Matters* 3rd ed., eds. Mindy Stomblor et al. New York: Pearson. p. 185-193.

Wed Mar 22: Sex, Education, and Youth

Bogle, Kathleen. 2010. "The Hookup Culture on Campus." *Sex Matters*, 3rd ed., eds. Mindy Stomblor et al. New York: Pearson. p. 306-313.

Fasula, Amy, Kim Miller, and Jeffrey Wiener. 2014. "Sexual Risk and the Double Standard for African American Adolescent Women." *Sex Matters* p. 245-253.

Sweeney, Brian. 2014. "Masculine Status, Sexual Performance, and the Sexual Stigmatization of Women." *Symbolic Interaction* 37(3):369-390.

Mon Mar 27: BDSM and Kink

Langdridge, Darren and Meg Barker. 2013. "Sadomasochism: Past, Present, Future." *Safe, Sane, and Consensual*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. p.3-13.

Newmahr, Staci. 2010. "Rethinking Kink: Sadomasochism as Serious Leisure." *Qualitative Sociology* 33(3):313-331.

Califia, Pat. 2000. "A Secret Side of Lesbian Sexuality" (p.158-167) and "Feminism and Sadomasochism" (p.168-180). *Public Sex*. San Francisco: Cleis Press.

Wed Mar 29: BDSM and Kink

Sheff, Elizabeth and Corie Hammers. 2011. "The Privilege of Perversities: Race, Class, and Education Among Polyamorists and Kinksters." *Psychology and Sexuality* 2(3):198-223.

Sloan, Lorca. 2015. "Ace of (BDSM) Clubs: Building Asexual Relationships Through BDSM Practice." *Sexualities* 18(5-6):548-563.

Paper Draft Due (before class by email to me and your two peer reviewers)

Mon Apr 3: Research Paper Workshop

Wed Apr 5: BDSM and Kink

Simula, Brandy. 2015. "Give Me a Dominant of Any Gender Over Any Kind of Non-Dominant." *Selves, Symbols, and Sexualities*, eds. Thomas Weinberg and Staci Newmahr. Los Angeles: Sage. p. 163-177.

Highleyman, Liz. 1997. "Professional Dominance: Power, Money, and Identity." *Whores and Other Feminists*, ed. Jill Nagle. New York: Routledge. p.145-155.

Lindemann, Danielle. 2012. "Is That Any Way to Treat a Lady?: (Re)production of Gender on the Dungeon Floor." *Dominatrix*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 153-173.

Mon Apr 10: Sex Work

O'Connell Davidson, Julia and Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor. 2004. "Fantasy Islands: Exploring the Demand for Sex Tourism." *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, eds. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 331-341.

Abbott, Sharon. 2004. "Creating a Scene: The Work of Performing Sex." *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, eds. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 380-389.

Pendleton, Eva. 1997, "Love for Sale: Queering Heterosexuality." *Whores and Other Feminists*, ed. Jill Nagle. New York: Routledge. p. 73-82.

Wed Apr 12: Sex Work (Guest Lecture by Michael Vaughn)

Bernstein, Elizabeth. 2001. "The Meaning of the Purchase: Desire, Demand, and the Commerce of Sex." *Ethnography* 2(3): 389-420.

Mon Apr 17: Sex Work

Frank, Katherine. 2004. "The Production of Identity and the Negotiation of Intimacy in a Gentleman's Club." *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, eds. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 300-309.

Escoffier, Jeffrey. 2014. "Gay-for-Pay: Straight Men and the Making of Gay Pornography." *Sex Matters*, p. 119-132.

Erickson, Loree. 2014. "Out of Line: The Sexy Femmegimp Politics of Flaunting It." *Sex Matters*, p.135-140.

Bernstein, Elizabeth. 2014. "Sex Work for the Middle Classes." *Sex Matters*, p. 652-658.

Wed Apr 19: Paper Presentations

Apr 24: Paper Presentations/ Last Day of Class

Wed May 3: Final Papers Due by 10am