History 5591/Gender, Feminist, and Women's Studies 6130  
History of Sexuality in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe  
York University - Winter 2013 - Marc Stein

Seminar: R230-530, McLaughlin College 101A  
Contact Information: 234 Founders College, 416-736-5123, x33218, mrstein@yorku.ca

This course introduces graduate students to the history of sexuality in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. The primary focus is 18th, 19th, and 20th century history. Among the topics discussed are:

- definitions of sex, gender, and sexuality;
- sexual desires, behaviours, identities, communities, and movements;
- relationships between sexual discourses and practices;
- intersections of sexuality with age, class, (dis)ability, gender, ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, and sex;
- links between sexuality and capitalism, colonialism, nationalism, and imperialism;
- connections between sexuality and culture, economics, law, politics, and society.

The readings focus on same-sex and cross-sex sexualities; reproduction, abortion, birth control, and fertility; commercial sex, pornography, prostitution, and sex work; sexual health and disease; sexual violence; and sex and gender change. Most of the assigned texts were authored by historians, but works by scholars in other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields are also considered. Readings and discussions are informed by feminism, marxism, psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, critical race theory, queer theory, trans theory, crip theory, affect theory, and other theoretical frameworks.

Readings

Except where indicated, all readings on the syllabus are required. Most books are available on reserve at Scott Library. Several copies of the main books are available at the York Bookstore.

Grade Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Reaction Papers (750-1000 Words)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Paper (15-20 Pages)</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reaction Papers:** In reaction papers, you are invited to think creatively and critically about the works assigned, present an argument clearly and coherently, and demonstrate that your writing skills will put you in a position to prepare a successful major paper. Above all, you should show that (1) you understand the works and (2) you have developed a perspective on the works. Reaction papers may cover one course reading or multiple readings, and they may refer back to previous readings. You are encouraged to focus on a particular idea or argument presented; highlight tensions, contradictions, and gaps within an author's work; explore points of agreement and disagreement between and within texts; consider definitions and language; and discuss theoretical assumptions of historical works and historical applications of theoretical works. Reaction papers are due at the beginning of class on the day a particular reading or set of readings is assigned; papers will not be accepted after the seminar discussion. You are free to select which texts to cover, but I recommend that you allow time to review my comments on a previous paper before turning in the next. Reaction papers are not formal reviews or summaries. Unlike reviews and summaries, they may assume that the reader is familiar with the
text(s) under discussion and they need not provide a comprehensive review and evaluation of the
text(s).

**Participation:** You are expected to attend all class meetings and participate actively in seminar
discussions. Silent attendance is not acceptable. Most seminars will begin with each student being
asked to highlight what they would like to discuss. At a minimum, each student should be prepared to
summarize the main arguments and contributions of the readings assigned. Discussion questions
generally will be circulated in advance and individual students will be asked to prepare brief
responses. Participation is especially valued when students (1) distill the main arguments of the
readings, (2) refer to specific passages in the readings, (3) respond to one another, (4) make links
between different readings, (5) show that they are thinking independently, and (6) show that they are
thinking collectively.

**Major Paper:** Your assignment is to present a primary, historiographic, or theoretical essay on a
topic related to the subject of the course. Primary research papers that offer an in-depth analysis of a
limited set of texts are encouraged. Historiographic papers are expected to review critically the
development of historical scholarship on a particular subject. Theoretical papers should define,
discuss, and analyze a conceptual problem in the history of sexuality. Historiographic and theoretical
essays must review five or more books (with two articles or book chapters counting as the equivalent
of one book); at least two of the books (or the equivalent in articles) must not be assigned course
readings. All paper topics must be approved by 1 March (preferably after consulting with me earlier).
Papers are due on 18 April.

10 Jan.: Introduction

Note: The following readings are taken from the *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and
access to the encyclopedia and the other readings is available through York University
libraries.

Nichole Prescott, "Essentialism and Constructionism," ELGBT
Bruce Freeman, "Gender and Sex," ELGBT
Kevin White, "Homosexuality and Heterosexuality," ELGBT
Lisa Duggan, "Sexual Orientation and Preference," ELGBT

17 Jan.: Marxist and Feminist Histories of Sexuality in the 1970s

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*

Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in
*Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly

Nancy F. Cott, "Passionlessness: An Interpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850,"

Sexuality*, ed. Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson (New York:

24 Jan.: Foucault's History of Sexuality

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York:
31 Jan.: Class, Gender, and Race in Histories of Sexuality in the 1980s

7 Feb.: Gay and Lesbian History in the 1980s and Early 1990s

14 Feb.: The Queer Turn

28 Feb.: New Histories of Sexual Violence in the 1990s
7 Mar.: New Histories of Heterosexuality in the 1990s


14 Mar.: New Histories of Same-Sex Sexuality in the 1990s and 2000s

Steven Maynard, "Police/Archives," Archivaria 68 (Fall 2009): 159-182.

21 Mar.: Historicizing Sexually-Transmitted Diseases


28 Mar.: Transgender and Intersex Histories


4 Apr.: Colonial, Imperial, and Transnational Histories of Sexuality