

HIST 387-010 / WOMS 387-010 / SGST 387-010: History of Sexuality in the United States

Fall 2014

Tuesday and Thursday, 11 AM – 12:15 PM, Memorial Hall 109

Professor Rebecca L. Davis, History Department

Contact Information

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Course Description

Sexuality has a history. That statement expresses both the premise and the argument for this course. Because sexuality has a history, it changes across time. As a term of historical study, sexuality encompasses ideas about erotic desire, selfhood, gender expression, bodily performances, human reproduction, and more.

Sexuality is political. It intersects with ideas about gender, race, class, religion, and region. The stakes involved permeate social, cultural, and political issues. Conflicts over sexuality occasionally turn violent.

Sexuality is personal. In the modern age, sexuality has become a form of self-identification and a core component of identity. Sexuality matters to each of us, often for different reasons and in different ways.

This course focuses on the history of sexuality in the United States because understanding this history is essential to understanding who we are and what is happening around us. We will examine a variety of topics, ranging from the history of marriage and the family, pregnancy and childbirth, contraception, abortion, rape, prostitution, erotica/pornography, sexual reform and “social purity” movements, sexuality and racial conflicts, sex during wartime, transsexuality, same-sex desires and communities, the sexual politics of women’s emancipation, sexual diseases, sex education, sexual liberation, and the gay rights movement.

This course will teach you about historical analysis, how to read and evaluate primary documents, and how to construct a cogent argument about the past. Especially on a topic as politically and emotionally volatile as sexuality, it is imperative that we speak not simply from our “guts” or based upon feelings but that we rely upon evidence to build our arguments and form a respectful academic community. I am so glad that you have decided to spend time with me this semester learning this history, and I welcome you to a unique learning experience.

Assigned Texts

The following books are at the University Bookstore and on 1-day reserve at Morris Library:

Required

Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide-Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965*

Elizabeth Alice Clement, *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900-1945*

Thomas Foster, ed., *Documenting Intimate Matters*

Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South*

Written Assignments

Unless otherwise specified, students will submit all written assignments via the course SAKAI site.

Article Debates (Written and In-Class): The goal of this assignment is to help students learn to identify a historical argument, understand how historians use primary sources to make their arguments, and understand how and why two historians might make *different* arguments about the same topic. Students will be placed into groups of four and assigned two articles to read. Individually, each student will write (and submit via SAKAI) summaries of each article. *Those summaries must clearly state the argument of each article.* Prof. Davis will grade those summaries according to a rubric that evaluates students' understanding of the articles' main ideas, arguments, and goals, and, secondarily, that assesses the clarity of students' writing. Students will meet in their groups during class to discuss their articles and to prepare a presentation that evaluates the authors' different approaches. These group presentations will receive a *peer review* grade that reflects the quality and clarity of the presentation about how and why the two articles reached different conclusions.

Reflective Papers: Throughout the semester we will have “topical interludes” during which we discuss current events that relate to the content of this course. Students will write brief reflective papers (500-750 words) following each of these class sessions. These papers will be due within a day of the class session, via SAKAI, and will receive grades of satisfactory/unsatisfactory. They will count toward the participation grade for the course.

Research Project: Following the midterm exam, students will select a topic for their research paper. Students may choose one of the topics we have discussed in class, or they may select a different topic *with Professor Davis's approval.*

Examples include: the ongoing controversy surrounding colleges' and universities' handling of sexual assault allegations; the marriage equality movement and recent changes in state law; efforts to pass federal and state anti-discrimination laws that include gender identity; efforts in many states (see esp. Texas and Alabama) to restrict access to abortion; efforts of Catholic Church and various religious organizations to obtain exemptions from reproductive healthcare provisions of Affordable Care Act.

A Research Proposal, due October 21, should explain the topic, pose a research question, and present the primary and secondary sources the student plans to consult in order to answer that question. The proposal will count toward 10% of the final grade for this assignment.

The paper itself will have two main sections, a “topic discussions” and a “historical research investigation.”

Topic discussion (3-5 pages): This section of the paper should explain the nature and stakes in a current issue, such as the ones mentioned above, and cite respected sources (newspapers, magazines, credible websites, government websites, etc.) to demonstrate understanding of the issue's parameters.

Historical Research investigation (5-8 pages): The paper should then place that topic into historical context, tracing either a longer historical arc or a particular series of events that led up to the current conversation. This portion of the paper should cite scholarly works.

Additional requirement: The paper should include a list of works cited following the guidelines from the *Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition.*

Exams

In-Class Book Quizzes: To ensure that students understand the core argument(s) of the books we will read, we will have a short (30 minute) quiz in class for each book (Hodes, Clement, and Boyd). Students should prepare for this assignment by having a clear understanding of the books' core arguments. *Which* kinds of changes does the author demonstrate between the first chapter and the final chapter? *How* does the author explain those changes? *What* is at stake in those changes? Students may consult their books during the quiz. The quizzes will receive grades satisfactory or unsatisfactory, which will factor in the final participation grade for the class.

This course also includes a **midterm exam**, which will cover the readings and lectures to date with short-answer identifications and a document-based question, and a **final exam**, which will have the same format as the midterm and will address material we have covered since the midterm.

Grading

Class Participation	20%
Article Debate	15%
10% for article summaries, 5% group project	
Midterm Exam	20%
Research Paper	25%
Final Exam	20%

A	94-100	B-	80-82.9
A-	90-93.9	C+	77-79.9
B+	87-89.9	C	73-76.9
B	83-86.9	(AND SO FORTH)	

Policies

Participation: Active participation in class discussions is a vital part of learning. I expect each of you to contribute your ideas, questions, and arguments to our class conversations. Any student who is concerned about being able to meet this requirement should speak with the professor to discuss techniques that will enable him or her to join the conversation.

Academic Honesty: I expect all students to uphold the university's standards of academic honesty and integrity. **If I find any student to have plagiarized any portion of any written assignment for this course, or to have given or received assistance during an exam, I will report that student to the Office of Student Conduct and recommend him or her for a failing grade for this course.** Students should consult the website of the University of Delaware's Code of Conduct to understand how the university defines and sanctions plagiarism and other violations (<http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/> and <http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/14-15/index.html>).

To avoid plagiarism, always attribute ideas, interpretations, and quotations to their original sources with parenthetical citations or footnotes. A source might be a book, article, radio or television program,

website, faculty member, or fellow student. For an excellent description of what plagiarism is, and how it can be avoided, go to <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>.

Cutting and pasting material from a website into your paper is a form of plagiarism!

Due dates: Turn in all papers and other assignments on the due date **via SAKAI**. I will not accept emailed papers. I will not grant any extensions unless you provide documentation for a hospital admission notice, religious observance, or major family crisis. **If you use an unusual word processing program, please “save as” a Word file before you upload to SAKAI. Failure to do so will count as a late submission. I will deduct a letter step (A to A-) for each half day after the due date that a paper is late, and the next half day will start immediately following the deadline. For example, if the paper is due at 11am and the student uploads it at 3 pm, I mark it down a letter step. If it is due at 11 am and the student submits it at 9 am the following morning, I will mark it down two letter steps.**

Absences: I require students to attend all class meetings. I grant each student one “pass” for an unexcused absence. In other words, if your car breaks down, you get the flu, you have a religious observance to attend, or you otherwise cannot attend lecture, you may, once, be absent without penalty. Each subsequent unexcused absence from class will result in **an automatic 2% deduction** from your final grade. For grounds for an excused absence, see above.

*** You will be responsible for turning in a hard copy of any written work due on the day of your missed class by noon the following day. Late assignments should be delivered to my office in John Munroe Hall.*

*** Three late arrivals and/or early departures will count as an absence.*

*** Any student who joins this course after the first day will be responsible for all reading and writing assignments on the day on which they are due.*

Class Etiquette: You may not use a cell phone, ipod, ipad/tablet, or text messaging gizmo during class. I will ask anyone who violates this common courtesy to leave class and count him or her absent for that day. **You may not use a laptop during class unless you have documentation from DSS that you require one, or unless I have asked you to bring / use them for a particular class project.**

Special Situations: Any student who requires accommodations should go to the Office of Disability Support Services (<http://www.udel.edu/DSS/>). You may find additional resources from the Office of Academic Enrichment (ae.udel.edu) and the Writing Center (<http://www.cas.udel.edu/writing-center/Pages/default.aspx>).

CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments
Week 1	8/26	Introduction	
	8/28	Encountering Sexualities	Foster, Part I
Week 2	9/2	Slavery	Hodes, Chapters 1 and 2
	9/4	Marriage and Family life, 17 th and 18 th centuries	Hodes, Chapter 3
Week 3	9/9	Reproduction	Hodes, Chapters 4 and 6
	9/11	Sexual Violence and Women’s Activism in the 19 th century	Hodes, Chapter 7

Date		Topics	Reading	Assignments
Week 4	9/16	Book Quiz (Hodes) and Discussion	Hodes, Chapter 8 and Epilogue; Foster, Part III, Doc. 4	
	9/18	Topical Interlude: Sexual Assault on Campus	Articles (SAKAI)	Reaction paper due by 12 pm 9/19
Week 5	9/23	Same-Sex Desires, 18 th and 19 th centuries	Foster, Part II	Assignment of 2 articles for article debate
	9/25	Class Cancelled		
Week 6	9/30	Article Debates	Two articles for your small group debate topic	Summaries of two articles (via SAKAI) by start of class period (bring copies to class)
	10/2	Obscenity and Censorship	Foster, Part II, Docs. 13-14; Part III, Docs. 1, 8, and 9; Part IV, Doc. 3	
Week 7	10/7	What is modern sexuality? / Midterm Review	TBA	
	10/9	Midterm Exam		
Week 8	10/14	Birth Control and venereal diseases in the early 20 th century	Clement, Chapters 2 and 3	
	10/16	Topical Interlude: Access to Contraception and Abortion in 2014	Clement, Chapter 5; Foster, Part III, Docs. 13 and 14	Reaction paper due by 12 pm on 10/17
Week 9	10/21	New gay identities, 1890-1930s	Clement, Chapters 6 and 7	Proposals due for research papers
	10/23	Book Quiz (Clement) and Discussion	Clement, Conclusion	
Week 10	10/28	Changing ideals of heterosexuality, 1930-1950	Boyd, Intro, Oral History: José Sarria, Chapter 1 (pp. 25-38, 52-62), Oral History: Reba Hudson	
	10/30	WWII, the Lavender Scare, and the Homophile Movement	Boyd, Oral History: Joe Baron and Chapter 3; Foster, Part IV, Docs. 6-7	
Week 11	11/4	NO CLASS – ELECTION DAY		

Date	Topics	Reading	Assignments
11/6	Feminisms, 1967-1975	Boyd, Oral History: Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon and Chapter 4; Foster, Part IV, Docs. 8, 10-15	
Week 12 11/11	Gay Liberation / Gay Rights	Boyd, Oral History: George Mendenhall and Chapter 5	
11/13	Book Quiz (Boyd) and Discussion	Foster, Part IV, Docs. 9, 13	
Week 13 11/18	Sex Wars / Sex Panics		
11/20	Topical Interlude: marriage equality, employment nondiscrimination, and trans rights	Articles (SAKAI)	Research papers due Reaction papers due by 12 pm on 11/21
Week 14 11/25	Catch-Up Day / Current Controversies	Foster, Part V	
Week 15 12/2	Review		
Final Exam	Date TBD		