

HSTAA 280/GWSS 290B: HISTORY OF SEXUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Kevin McKenna, Instructor

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MW, 12:40-2:50

ART 006

Summer Quarter 2015

Office: Smith 204E

Office hours by appointment

Course Description

This course looks at how sexuality is mobilized in social relations, cultural productions, and politics in the making of the United States. We will study the role of sexuality in constructions of race & racist ideology, class politics, the “American family,” gender & sexual identities, and US imperialism beginning with pre-Columbian conceptions of gender & sexuality in North America, Africa, and Europe. Roughly half the quarter will focus on the 20th century.

Course Expectations

In this course, you will be expected to complete written assignments and exams in addition to attending lectures, completing course readings, and participating in class discussions in a respectful and productive manner. There is one paper, a midterm exam, and a final exam. You will also be expected to complete a course journal.

Learning Objectives

- 1) Critically engage the centrality of sexuality to social, cultural, and political history
- 2) Develop argumentative writing and oratory skills through short written responses, a processed paper, and class discussion rooted in evidence from primary sources
- 3) Critically read and understand arguments made in secondary sources

Grading

Paper	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%
Journal	10%
Discussion	10%

Due Dates & Exam Dates

7/8 1st Journal turn-in date
7/20 Midterm Exam
8/10 Paper
8/19 Final Exam, 2nd Journal turn-in date

Participation

In-class participation is an important aspect of this course. The more you participate, the more you will get out of this class. Participation includes everything from asking questions to participating in class and small group discussions. Most Wednesdays will include a discussion that week's readings. To participate, you must be in class, having already completed the readings. Discussion counts for 10% of your overall grade in the course.

Some of the history of sexuality in the United States is sensitive and may be uncomfortable to discuss, so please be respectful of your classmates. If you find yourself uncomfortable, think critically about why you feel that way and feel free to share your sentiments with the class or in office hours. Listening is equally important to talking. Try to understand the perspectives of your classmates before discounting their opinions. Sharing differing opinions is encouraged so long as they are shared in a respectful manner.

Journal

In addition to discussing the readings, you will keep a course journal in a Blue Book, which you will turn in once on July 8 and then a second time at the final exam on August 19. Bring this Blue Book to every class. Most lecture days, you will write a response to a prompt or a cultural source such as a painting, cartoon, song, film clip, or music video. This journal counts for 10% of your grade in the course.

Paper

The paper for the course is due Monday, August 10 and should be 5-6 pages. While drafts will not be graded, the more effort you put in on the first draft and subsequent editing, the better your final draft will be. Papers should include proper citations of evidence used, which we will go over in class. The paper counts for 25% of your overall grade.

All history papers must present and substantiate a specific argument. This means that you will need to have a statement of your argument (generally referred to as a "thesis statement") early in your paper. One of the big challenges here is to distinguish a thesis statement proper from a mere restatement of the subject matter or prompt of the paper.

Once you have articulated your thesis statement, the rest of your paper should be devoted to developing and substantiating your argument. Extraneous information that does not relate to the topic as you are presenting it should be excluded. One helpful test is to outline your rough draft

after you have finished it (in addition to outlining the paper beforehand). This should show you whether each point flows from the one before it, whether the arguments you advance are adequately supported, and whether each paragraph in the paper has a reason for being there.

In order to substantiate your argument, you will need to cite evidence in support of the points you have identified as most important to establishing your position. Evidence should be taken from primary sources and must be grounded in your own reading and analysis of those sources.

Much of the challenge faced by any writer of history is establishing his or her authority in the eyes of the reader. It is simply not possible to do this if the paper is plagued by errors of grammar, diction, spelling, punctuation, or syntax. Essays must therefore be entirely free of such errors; they should also be organized in a way that is accessible and, optimally, stimulating for the reader. **I highly recommend William Strunk and E.B. White's *Elements of Style* as a useful writing guide.**

Papers are due on the date announced, unless I have given an extension in advance. A penalty of .3 per day late (weekends count as one day) will be assessed against papers submitted after the deadline without prior authorization. If you are seeking an extension, you must have a good reason and ask for the extension a week in advance of the announced due date. Emergency situations hopefully will not arise, but if they do, I will deal with those on a case by case basis.

Exams

There will be a midterm and final exam for this course. The midterm counts for 25% of your overall grade, and the final exam counts for 30% of your overall grade in the course. The midterm will be held in class on July 20, and the final exam will be held on the last day of class, August 19.

Readings

George Chauncey, *Gay New York*

In addition, a required course reader may be purchased from Rams Copy Center on the Ave

Course Schedule

Week 1: Sexuality in the Early Modern Atlantic World

Readings: Selected writings of Europeans on native peoples outside of a European gender binary; Gunlög Fur, "Weibe-Town and the Delawares-as-Women: Gender-Crossing and Same-Sex Relations in Eighteenth Century Northeastern Indian Culture"; Tracy Brown, "'Abominable Sin' in Colonial New Mexico: Spanish and Pueblo Perceptions of Same-Sex Sexuality"

M 6/22 Course Introduction; Pre-Columbian Conceptions of Sexuality on Three Continents

W 6/24 Sexuality in the Making of Race in the Early Modern Atlantic World

Week 2: Constructions of Sexuality in British North America

Readings: Selected documents from Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History* (pg. 16-24); Elizabeth Reis, "Hermaphrodites and 'Same-Sex' Sex in Early America"

M 6/29 Constructing Normative Gender & Sexuality in Settler Colonial North America; Constructing Racial Difference through Sexuality

W 7/1 Race, Class, and Sexuality in Revolutionary America

Week 3: Sex, Intimacy, and Violence in Nineteenth Century America

Readings: Selected writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Margaret Fuller; John D'Emilio & Estelle Freedman, "Race and Sexuality"; Harriet Jacobs, selection from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Ida B. Wells-Barnett, "A Red Record"

M 7/6 Families & Intimate Friendships in Antebellum Society; Race, Sexuality, and US Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

W 7/8 Policing Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the United States after Slavery
FIRST JOURNAL TURN-IN

Week 4: Industrialization, Imperialism & Sexuality

Readings: Chauncey, Intro, Ch. 1-4

M 7/13 Industrialization, Urbanization, and the Making of Sexual Cultures

W 7/15 Sexuality & US Empire at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Week 5: Constructing and Controlling Sexuality in the Early Twentieth Century

Readings: Chauncey, Ch. 5-9; Frances E.W. Harper, "A Double Standard"

M 7/20 MIDTERM; Policing Sexual Behavior in the Making of "Progressive" America

W 7/22 Modern Feminism & Sexuality in the Early Twentieth Century

Week 6: Regulating Sex, 1920-1965

Readings: Chauncey, Ch. 9-12, Epilogue

M 7/27 Sexual Culture in “Jazz Age” America; Regulating Sex in New Deal America & World War II

W 7/29 The “Lavender Scare” and Cold War Domesticity

Week 7: Resisting Sexual Regulation in Cold War America

Readings: Lyn Pederson (Jim Kepner), “The Importance of Being Different”; Allen Ginsburg, “Howl”; excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique*; Robin Morgan, “No More Miss America!”; Kate Millet, “Sexual Politics: A Manifesto for Revolution”; Frances M. Beal, “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female”; The Combahee River Collective Statement; Carl Wittman, “Refugees from Amerika: A Gay Manifesto”; Radicalesbians, “The Woman-Identified Woman”; Third World Gay Liberation, “What We Want, What We Believe”; Dean Gengle, “Gay American Indians”

M 8/3 Early Resistance to Cold War Constructions of Gender and Sexuality; The “Sexual Revolution” in Popular Culture

W 8/5 Women’s and Gay Liberation

Week 8: Race, Sexuality, and the “Culture Wars” of the Millennial Turn

Readings: Kevin Mumford, “The Trouble with Gay Rights: Race and the Politics of Sexual Orientation in Philadelphia, 1969-1982”; Andrea Dworkin, “Pornography: Men Possessing Women”; Lisa Duggan, “Censorship in the Name of Feminism”; ACTUP, “Post-Action Statement on its ‘Stop the Church’ Action”; Toni Morrison, “Bill Clinton as the First Black President”

M 8/10 Sexual Civil Rights and the Politics of AIDS; The “Culture Wars” from 1980 to 2004

W 8/12 *Paris Is Burning*

Week 9: Sexual Culture & Politics in the 21st Century

Readings: Andrew Sullivan, “The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage”; Queer Kids of Queer Parents Against Gay Marriage, “Resist the Gay Marriage Agenda!”; Natalie Baptiste, “It’s Not Just Uganda: Behind the Christian Right’s Onslaught in Africa”

M 8/17 Race, Class, Empire, and Contemporary Sexual Politics; *Fenced Out*

W 8/19 FINAL EXAM; SECOND JOURNAL TURN-IN

*This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.