

SOCIOLOGY 3U03
Sociology of Sexualities

COURSE SYLLABUS – Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Rhona Shaw

Email: shawrm@mcmaster.ca

Lectures: Thursdays 11:30 – 1:20

Office: KTH 632

Lecture Hall Location: KTH B132

Office Hours: Mondays 11:00 – 12:00 & by appointment

Course Description

Historically sexuality has received less attention from sociologists than other aspects of social life, and to some extent it remains marginalized and stigmatized within the discipline. However, within the last several decades, the sociology of sexualities has experienced tremendous growth as well as attention. In this class we will sample from the rich and diverse research and literature that has come to characterise this sub-discipline, and will introduce students to some of the more important and interesting contributions that have shaped the sociology of sexuality to date. We begin with an understanding of sexuality as an aspect of social life that is worthy of sociological inquiry, and one that it is impossible to understand in isolation from other aspects of social experience including gender, social class, race/ethnicity including other social relationships of power.

In this course we will explore how sexuality has been conceptualised in the West. We will examine some of the foundational contributions to the social and scientific study of sexuality, focusing on a range of theoretical and empirical approaches. Some of the topics we will address in this course include: early sexology and the construction of sexual deviance, the interrelationship between hetero, homo and bisexual sexual experience and identity, transsexuality and transgenderism, and contemporary sexual practices.

Course Learning Objectives

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, <http://csl.mcmaster.ca/COU/pdf/Undergraduate%20Degree%20Level%20Expectations.pdf>). First, theories of sexuality are multiple and diverse in their conceptualizations and truth claims. Acquiring knowledge of these diverse theories will expand students' depth and breadth of knowledge of this field of inquiry. Second, there is no single theory (including sociological theories) that has been accepted as the final or best approach to explaining the complexities of human sexuality. As such, this course requires that students consider and critically evaluate all competing theoretical approaches. In so doing, students will gain an awareness of the complexities and limits of knowledge. Finally, this course will encourage students to discuss theoretical and practical issues in class. Grading for this course will be based on one major term paper and 2 examinations. In each case, the student's communication skills will be challenged as well as enhanced.

Important Note: Introductory Sociology (1A06) is a prerequisite for this class and 2Q06 Sociology of Gender is strongly recommended, as this course assumes an understanding of key sociological perspectives including gender as socially constructed.

Required Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the Bookstore. Please be aware that you are responsible for completing all assigned readings by the beginning of class on the day they are listed (unless otherwise noted).

- Courseware package
- Additional required readings may be assigned, and links will be made available on AVE.

Evaluation

1. Tutorial attendance and participation (10%)

Students are expected to regularly attend tutorial, *sine qua non* (i.e. attendance is *necessary*). Failure to do so will result in a loss of this grade. Students must attend a minimum of 75% of tutorials in order to receive partial marks. **Full attendance is necessary in order to receive the full 10%.**

1. Paper Proposal (10%)

A proposal for a term paper is a 2-3pg writing plan that lays out the goal, scope and organization of the research paper and identifies some of the sources and methods that will be used. A detailed handout on “How to write a research proposal” and other details will be provided on Avenue to Learn. **The assignment is due Thursday October 19th 2017 at the beginning of class.**

2. First Examination (25%)

This examination will cover lectures, required readings, films and guest speakers if any. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, true & false, short answer. **It will be held during class on Thursday November 2nd in class. CLASSROOM TBD.**

3. Research Paper (30%)

Your research paper will build on the topic of your research proposal. It will involve a synthesis and critical analysis of sociological research on a particular topic. A detailed handout on “How to write a research paper” and other details will be provided on Avenue to Learn. **The assignment is due on Thursday November 30th at the beginning of class.**

4. Final Examination (25%)

The format for the final exam will be the same as that for the mid-term. You will be responsible only for the material covered after the midterm exam only. **The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar’s Office.**

Additional Information on Assignments

Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class All pages must be numbered and have 1" margins on all sides. All text should be double-spaced in an easy-to-read 12-point font. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will be reflected in the mark for the assignment.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"),

and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/students/typeofad/plagiarism/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. The submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. In assignments, complete citations are required for all quotes and paraphrases. Consult the required writing style guide for information on how to properly cite the work of others.
2. Improper collaboration in group work. Improper collaboration would be defined as using the work of others to get out of doing your own work, claiming the work of others as your own, etc.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Review of Marks

I will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Nonetheless, occasionally students disagree with the marks they receive. When this occurs, I will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.***

To request a review of a mark, write a 1-page memo (on paper, not email) describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. Submit this memo, with the original marked assignment to me. **You may submit requests for review no sooner than one week and no later than one month after assignments/exams are handed back to the class.**

Late Assignments and Absences

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf>) is a self-reporting tool for undergraduate students to report absences that last up to 3 days. This form allows students to request accommodation for any missed academic work. This tool cannot be used during any final examination period. You may submit a maximum of one Academic Work Missed request per term. It is your responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation. If you are absent more than 3 classes, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a non-medical reason, you must visit the office of the Associate Dean of your Faculty. You may be required to provide supporting documentation. Any disruption this causes to turning in assignments on time, completing exams, and so forth, must be addressed directly with me as soon as possible. **For late assignments without approved excuses, you must make arrangements directly with me to submit the assignment.** Assignments will be marked down 5 percentage points for each day it is late, including weekend days and holidays. **I will NOT accept late papers that are 3 or more days late, and you will be given a mark of 0 for this assignment.**

Accommodations

We are committed to making appropriate accommodations for students' observance of religious holidays. Please contact your instructor as early in the term as possible to make individual arrangements.

We are also committed to working with students with disabilities to make individualized accommodations according to your specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through the Student Accessibility Services department. Please drop by the instructor's office hours at the beginning of the term to make individual arrangements and to complete the necessary paperwork. All such arrangements will be kept confidential.

Email

Please consider email equivalent to any other form of written communication. Students who write to their professors and teaching assistants are expected to follow rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition, please include a proper greeting, such as "**Dear Dr. Shaw,**" and a closing that includes your full name, such as "**Sincerely, Anita Kociale.**" Email failing to meet these standards may be returned unanswered. Email containing questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus or to Avenue to Learn may not be answered. I do check the separate Avenue to Learn email, but only intermittently, so please do not try to contact me that way. *All email communication must come from your mcmaster.ca email account.*

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in certain or extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster & AVE emails and AVE course content section weekly during the term in order to note any changes.

Sociology Department Policies

The Sociology staff will NOT date-stamp assignments or monitor the submission or return of papers. Turn in assignments via Avenue to Learn. Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (e.g., class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

Week No.	TOPICS & READINGS
Week 1 Sept 7 th	Introduction - Overview of course
Week 2 Sept 14 th Discussion of Proposal in tutorial	Conceptualizing the Sexual – Theoretical Traditions & Sex Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexuality as a Social Experience & Early European Sexology Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Seidman, S. Theoretical perspectives (ii) Stein, A. Three models of sexuality: drives, identities and practices.
Week 3 Sept 21 st	Conceptualizing the Sexual – Theoretical Traditions & Sex Research Movie: Kinsey (Docudrama account of his life and research on human sexuality)
Week 4 Sept 28 th	Conceptualizing the Sexual – Theoretical Traditions & Sex Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Sexology: Kinsey Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A. Kinsey et al. Excerpts from Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male & Female
Week 5 Oct 5 th	Conceptualizing the Sexual – Theoretical Traditions & Sex Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Sexology: Masters & Johnson Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) W Masters & V Johnson. Excerpts from Human Sexual Response
Week 6 Oct 12 th	READING WEEK – NO CLASSES
Week 7 Oct 19 th Proposals due in class	Conceptualizing the Sexual – Theoretical Traditions & Sex Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociological Approaches: Symbolic Interactionism & Feminism Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) K Plummer. Symbolic Interactionism and Sexual Conduct: an emergent perspective. (ii) Ferguson et al. Forum: The Feminist Sexuality Debates.
Week 8 Oct 26 th Exam Review	Conceptualizing the Sexual – Theoretical Traditions & Sex Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociological Approaches: Queer Theory & Foucault Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Stein, A and K Plummer. “I can’t even think straight”. “Queer Theory and the missing sexual revolution in Sociology. (ii) Foucault, M. We Other Victorians & The Repressive Hypothesis.
Week 9 Nov 2 nd	MIDTERM EXAM – IN CLASS CLASSROOM TO BE DETERMINED
Week 10 Nov 9 th	Sexuality, Gender & Identity – Heterosexuality Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Dean, J. Straight Men. (ii) LaMarre, N. Sexual narratives of straight women.

Week 11 Nov 16th	Sexuality, Gender & Identities – Homosexuality, Bisexuality & Sexual Fluidity Readings: (i) Hoy, J. Secret sex and the down low brotherhood. (ii) Excerpt from Humphreys L. Tearoom Trade. Impersonal sex in public places
Week 12 Nov 23rd	Sexuality, Gender & Identities – Transsexuality & Transgenderism Documentary: Danny: Escaping My Female Body Readings: (i) Tauches, K. Transgendering: challenging the ‘normal’. (ii) Sojka, C. Partners of transgender people.
Week 13 Nov 30th Exam Review Term Paper due	Contemporary Sexual Practices Documentary: The Virgin Daughters Readings: (i) The Negative Implications of the Purity Movement on Young Women. (i) Hardy, S. Anal sex: phallic and other meanings.