

# Sociology of Sexualities

## SOCIOL 3U03

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Fall 2018  
Class meets: Fridays 11:30am-1:20pm  
Classroom: KTH-B135

Professor Tina Fetner  
Kenneth Taylor Hall 636  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11am-noon  
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### Course Description

Sexuality may seem to be a personal, private, intimate topic reserved for diaries and best friends. However, in this course, we will see that sexuality is really a social phenomenon, encompassing a broad range of emotions, actions, identities and communities. We use sexualities to define ourselves and the world we live in, to draw boundaries between types of people, and to mark borders between wrong and right. In this course, we will explore the social aspects of sexuality and consider how sexual experiences are shaped by, and interpreted through, historically specific social contexts.

Using the tools of sociology, we will analyze gender and sexual behaviors, identities and communities. We will examine the social organization of sexuality and how sexuality contributes to social organization. We will consider various types of social control over sexual behavior, as well as responses to that control. We will enter into the hidden worlds of sexual expression and exchange, and keep our eyes as much on the taboos themselves as on the actions they censure.

### Learning Outcomes

When you have successfully completed this course, you will be able to:

- discuss and evaluate sociological theories of sex and sexuality
- apply these sociological theories to a variety of social phenomena
- understand empirical approaches to examining sexuality, including behaviour, identity, desire, and community
- communicate concepts related to the sociology of sexualities clearly and effectively
- evaluate evidence and logic for claims relating to the sociology of sexualities

### Required Readings

The following textbook is available for purchase at Titles Bookstore. Other works will be made available on Avenue to Learn. Please note that all assigned readings must be completed by the beginning of class on the day they are listed.

Kathleen J. Fitzgerald and Kandice Grossman. 2018. *Sociology of Sexualities*. Sage Publishing.

### Grading

Grades will be calculated according to the following formula:

Weekly quizzes (select 8 weeks of 9):	16%
Weekly questions (select 8 weeks of 9):	24%
Midterm exam:	25%
Final exam:	35%

## **Additional Information on Assignments**

Assignments must be turned in electronically to Avenue to Learn by the deadline on the course schedule. This course will use the originality checking feature in Avenue to Learn to screen all assignments for plagiarism (see below). All pages must be numbered and have 1" to 1.25" 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, specifically Appendix 3, which can be downloaded from the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. 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. In this course, I encourage students to work together to understand concepts, discuss ideas, study for exams, etc. 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.

In this course, we will be using the "originality check" feature in Avenue to Learn.

## **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 brief (<1-page) memo describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. I recommend giving yourself a cooling-down period of 24 hours before submitting your request. Submit this memo to me via email. You may submit requests for review no later than two weeks 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 days, 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 your instructor as soon as possible.

For late assignments without approved excuses, you must make arrangements directly with your instructor to submit the assignment. Assignments will be marked down by five percentage points for each day it is late, including weekends and holidays.

### **Accommodations**

We are committed to making appropriate accommodations for students' observance of religious holidays. Please contact Professor Fetner 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 each student's specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Please submit a request for accommodations through the [SAS website](#) as early in the term as possible; these will be automatically sent to Dr. Fetner for approval. Please feel free to drop by Dr. Fetner's office hours or to stay after class to discuss individual arrangements or concerns. All discussions and 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. Fetner," and a closing that includes your full name, such as "Sincerely, Jane Lee." 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. All email communication must come from your mcmaster.ca email account.

### **Course Schedule**

<b>Week 1</b> <b>7-Sep</b>	<b>Introductions</b> No readings assigned. <b>Topics:</b> sexuality as social; social forces affecting sexuality; sexuality as identity, behaviour, desire, and community; sexual hierarchies
<b>Week 2</b> <b>14-Sep</b>	<b>Social construction of sexuality</b> <i>Sociology of Sexualities</i> , Chapter 1. Shamus Khan. 2015. "Not Born This Way." Published on Aeon.co (July 23). Available on Avenue. <b>Topics:</b> sexual identities; sexual fluidity; historical contexts and sexuality; sexual revolutions
<b>Week 3</b> <b>21-Sep</b>	<b>Theory, science, and sexuality</b> <i>Sociology of Sexualities</i> , Chapter 2. <b>Topics:</b> sexuality theory: evolving, competing; scientific approaches to sexuality; post-structuralist and feminist approaches to sexuality; science and sexual inequality
<b>Week 4</b> <b>28-Sep</b>	<b>Gender and sexuality</b> <i>Sociology of Sexualities</i> , Chapter 3. <b>Topics:</b> gender identity; gender and heterosexuality as social institutions

- Week 5**  
**5-Oct**      **Sexuality and inequality**  
*Sociology of Sexualities*, Chapter 4.  
Robin Jarvis Brownlie. 2005. "Intimate Surveillance: Indian Affairs, Colonization, and the Regulation of Aboriginal Women's Sexuality." Ch 7 in Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, eds. *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*. Vancouver: UBC Press. Available on Avenue.  
**Topics:** race and sexuality; class and sexuality; intersectional inequalities; colonialism; sexual regulation and social hierarchy
- 12-Oct**      **Fall break**
- Week 6**  
**19-Oct**      **LGBTQ activism**  
*Sociology of Sexualities*, Chapter 5.  
Tina Fetner. 2016. "U.S. Attitudes Toward Lesbian and Gay People are Better than Ever." *Contexts* 15(2):20-27. Available on Avenue.  
**Topics:** historical shifts in lesbian and gay communities; LGBTQ social movements; anti-gay social movements
- Week 7**  
**26-Oct**      **Midterm exam**
- Week 8**  
**2-Nov**      **Sexuality, school and work**  
*Sociology of Sexualities*, Chapter 7.  
**Topics:** gender and sexuality as institutional structures; LGBTQ youth experiences of schools; sexual harassment; sexuality and employment discrimination
- Week 9**  
**9-Nov**      **Religion, family, and sexuality**  
*Sociology of Sexualities*, Chapter 8.  
Senate of Canada. 2018. "The Shame is Ours: Forced Adoption of the Babies of Unwed Mothers in Post-war Canada." Available on Avenue.  
**Topics:** religion, morality and sexuality; religion and politics; marriage and family policy
- Week 10**  
**16-Nov**      **No class meeting today**  
You are warmly invited, but not the least bit required, to attend the SD Clark lectures in sociology at the University of Toronto today, where I will be speaking about sexual politics and the religious right in Canada and the United States.  
[Details are available here.](#)
- Week 11**  
**23-Nov**      **Sexuality and reproduction**  
*Sociology of Sexualities*, Chapter 9.  
**Topics:** reproduction and health inequality; sexual health and social problems; sexual health policy; reproductive rights
- Week 12**  
**30-Nov**      **Sexual violence**  
*Sociology of Sexualities*, Chapter 12.  
**Topics:** sexual violence as social institution; intersections of gender, race and sexual violence; anti-LGBTQ violence

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 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 his/her McMaster email and the Avenue to Learn course website weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### **Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

### **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.