

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
Department of Sociology

Sociology 3U03E

The Sociology of Sexualities

Winter, 2018

Mondays: 7 – 10pm
Location: LR Wilson1055
Office hours: by appointment

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Course Description

Sociology of Sexualities is an examination of the various social, historical and cultural processes through which ideas about sexuality and gender have been and are continually constructed. This course takes the perspective that sexuality is not necessarily a biological certainty. Even what appears to be self-apparent in terms of sexuality, gender and the physical body can be attributed to cultural meaning and social practice rather than human biology. Ethnographic and historical research has demonstrated that human beings articulate varied ideas about sexuality and that these notions are inextricably tied to the cultural, religious, social and economic fabric of a given society. Finally, by examining the ways sexuality is tied to power relations this course will attend to the intersections of ethnicity, religion, gender, and race.

Readings

All readings are in the course kit available for sale at the University bookstore.

Learning Objectives

- to consider and critically evaluate competing theoretical approaches
- to dispel the many “common sense” ideas from which we understand sexualities in the world around us.
- to critically assess the relations of power in our society as they relate to sexualities.

Course Evaluation

- Exam #1 (Feb 12/18) 33%
- Exam #2 (April 2/18) 33%
- Assignment (due: April 9/18) 33%

Lecture Schedule

Jan 8/18

1) **Course Overview, Introductory Lecture: What is the Sociology of Sexualities?**

Film: *Historical Perspectives (with Ron Scott) - LGBTQ patients*

Jan 15/18

2) **What is Social Constructionism?**

Becker, Howard 1963 [1991], *Labelling Theory*

(Reprinted in *Constructions of Deviance*. 2003 (eds.) Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler, Belmont: CA, Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, pp. 70-74)

Lemert, Edwin. 1951. *Primary and Secondary Deviation*

(Reprinted in *Social Deviance*, 2005, Henry N. Pontell, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, pp. 74-77)

Film: *Further Off the Straight and Narrow*

3) Jan 22/18

The Sociology of (Homo)sexuality

McIntosh, Mary. Autumn, 1968. "The Homosexual Role" *Social Problems* 16:2, pp. 182-192.

Adam, Barry D. 1987. "Gay Liberation and Lesbian Feminism" in *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*. New York: Twayne Publisher. Chapter 5, pp.75-101.

4) Jan 29/18

The Social Construction of Homosexuality: The Role of Power

Blinde, Elaine M. and Diane E. Taub. May, 1992. "Homophobia and Women's Sports: The Disempowerment of Athletes" *Sociological Focus*. Vol. 25:2

Kimmel, Michael. 2005. "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity." In Michael Kimmel (ed.) *The Gender of Desire*.

5) February 5/18

Constructing Queer Families

Martin, Karin A. April, 2009. “Normalizing Heterosexuality: Mothers' Assumptions, Talk, and Strategies with Young Children” *American Sociological Review*, Volume 74, Number 2, pp. 190-207.

Ryan, Maura and Dana Berkowitz. June, 2009. “**Constructing Gay and Lesbian Parent Families ‘Beyond the Closet’**” *Qualitative Sociology*, Volume 32, Number 2. pp. 153-172.

6) February 12/18 **MID TERM EXAM**

NO CLASS FEBRUARY 19 – READING WEEK

7) February 26/18

Transgender Issues: Putting the “T” back in LGBT

Fausto-Sterling, Ann. 2000. “**The Five Sexes Revisited**” *The Sciences*: New York Academy of Sciences.

Film: *Transgender Film - TBA*

March 5/18

8) **Transgender Issues: Continued**

Yerke, A. F., & Mitchell, V. 2011. **Am I man enough yet? A comparison of the body transition, self-labeling, and sexual orientation of two cohorts of female-to-male transsexuals.** *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 13(2), 64-76.

Aramburu Alegría, C., & Ballard-Reisch, D. 2013. **Gender Expression as a Reflection of Identity Reformation in Couple Partners Following Disclosure of Male-to-Female Transsexualism.** *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 14(2), 49-65.

9) March 12/18

Intersections of Homosexuality and Ethnicity

Schnoor, Randal F. and Morton Weinfeld. 2005. “**Seeking a Mate: Inter-Group Partnerships among Gay Jewish Men.**” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Volume 31, Number 1, pp. 21-39.

Poon, Maurice Kwong-lai and Peter Trung-thu Ho. February, 2008. “**Negotiating Social Stigma Among Gay Asian Men**” *Sexualities*, vol. 11, no. 1-2, pp. 245-268.

10) March 19/18

Intersections of Homosexuality and Religion, Part A: Judaism

Brekhus, Wayne. [2003] 2008. “**Modes of Suburban Gay Identity**” (Reprinted in Earl Rubington and Martin S. Weinberg (eds.) *Deviance: The Interactionist Perspective*. Boston: Pearson Education. pp. 417-422).

Schnoor, Randal F. 2006. “**Being Gay and Jewish: Negotiating Intersecting Identities,**” *Sociology of Religion*, Vol. 67:1, 43-60.

Film: *Trembling Before God*

11) March 26/18

Intersections of Homosexuality and Religion, Part B: Christianity and Islam

Rodriguez, E. M. and S.C. Ouellette. 2000. “**Gay and lesbian Christians: Homosexual and religious identity integration in the members and participants of a gay-positive church**” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39(3):333-47.

Minwalla, Omar, B. R. Simon Rosser, Jamie Feldman and Christine Varga. March 2005. “**Identity Experience among Progressive Gay Muslims in North America: A Qualitative Study within Al-Fatiha**” *Culture, Health & Sexuality* (7:2), p. 113-128

Film: *For the Bible Tells Me So*

April 2/18

12) **FINAL EXAM**

April 9/18

13) Guest Speaker: Andi Yumansky – “Multi-Faith Perspectives to Transgender Inclusion”

HARD COPY OF ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS

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, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: Instructors, please remove the words in brackets. This is meant for you, not students.

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

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 and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 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 reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

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.

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 course websites 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.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.
