Sociology of Sexuality: The Social Organization of Sexuality

Mr. Mattson

SOCI/GSFS 203  •  Fall 2016

King 337, TuTh 3-4:15pm

Course Description
Sociologists study the social organization of sexuality: how shared beliefs shape our desires, what is taboo or what shames us. Historical and cross-cultural research illuminates the emergence of modern sexuality and the ways it transformed systems of dating, marriage, homosexuality, government and racial classification. Learn why sociologists are skeptical of essentialist or biological explanations and favor theories that recognize sexuality as a diverse, changeable function of culture and institutions.

This course fulfills a gateway course requirement in Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies (GSFS) and counts toward the anthropology major.

Contact me (in order of usefulness)
1) Catch me after class
2) Office hours: King 305c: M 1:30-3pm, W 10am-11:50pm
3) greggor.mattson@oberlin.edu; put SOCI 203 in the subject line

Goals
• learn the concepts and methodologies sociologists use to study sexuality
• understand the relationships among sex, sexuality, gender, race, bodies and culture
• create and analyze empirical data about sexuality
• analyze book-length studies, journal articles, and theoretical pieces such as Foucault
• compare sociology’s approach to studying sexuality against other disciplines
• understand sexuality as something that exists outside the body among us

Assessment (TBD)
Participation ___% (attendance, homework, free-writes, quizzes, group discussion)
Two assignments ___%
Guest speaker news story ___%
Final project/exam ___%

Required books

Office hours
Come! Welcome! You should visit my office hours at least twice during the semester as a matter of habit: it helps you get the most out of the course, cements your learning, and builds relationships. They are the only place I will discuss grades or what you missed in class during an absence. Come!

Disability Accommodations
If you are a student with a disability, make sure you’ve registered with the Office of Disability Services (Peters G-27/28 x55588) to develop a plan to meet your academic needs. Bring their recommendations to me at least two weeks before any due date or exam.
Off-campus Assignments
Assignments may invite you to make observations or attend events off campus. Off-campus assignments are done at your own discretion; alternate assignments are available if you prefer.

Honor Code: [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/honorcode.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/honorcode.html)
Remember to sign each assignment—it is your pledge to know the boundaries of cheating (not doing your own work) plagiarism (taking credit for someone else’s work) and fabrication (making up sources, quotations or observations). All quotations must be attributed properly:

Sources & Citations (APA format)
You need not make a works cited for course readings but you must cite them properly in the text in APA format. Wikipedia is not an academic source, but may lead you to primary sources.

Paraphrasing primary sources (preferred):
   Media in the 1950s catered to the rising middle class, giving a misleading impression of America’s families (Coontz 1990, p. 31).

Direct quotations (use sparingly) must be introduced:
   Stephanie Coontz cites the enduring power of the media for creating a new American tradition during the baby boom: “The happy, homogenous families that we 'remember' from the 1950s were... a result of the media’s denial of diversity” (1990, p. 31).

Assignments
Assignments are evidence of your comprehension of the course materials, your ability to synthesize them with our discussions, and your contribution to the intellectual discussion. Do not mistake the length of these assignments for their importance.

1) Observing sexuality in public: (4 pages max) DUE:______________________________________
   Make at least 2 hours of observations of a public place to analyze how institutional factors shape sexuality as defined by our authors. These could involve observations of courtship norms, hetero- or homonormativity, abstinence, marriage, etc. The scene you choose to analyze may be a party, performance, furniture store, sports event, church service, bar, interactions in a cafe, a shopping mall, etc. Identify norms (informal rules), cite your observations that support them (data), and use concepts from Weeks, Freud and Foucault to interpret your findings.

2) Courtship norms interview (4 pages max) DUE: ________________________________
   Interview an elder about the courtship norms when they were teenaged. How did they know someone was interested in them? How did they let someone know they were interested? What were acceptable and unacceptable courtship activities? How closely did their friends follow these norms? What did the community think of someone who broke the rules? Openly? Use at least four concepts from Schaelet and Steinbugler to interpret and contextualize the experiences of your interviewee. Attach your interview schedule, with their probes, to your assignment.

Guest speaker analysis: (600-800 words) ONE due before Fall break, OTHER due before Dec 5.
   Review, as if for a newspaper or blog, a guest speaker, public film screening, or public performance. Post your review within 24 hours of the event. Using quotes from the speaker, apply core course concepts to explore the ways that sexuality is articulated, by the speaker and perhaps via the reactions of the audience as well (bodies, gender, race, class, pleasures, sex, culture, etc.). You DON’T have to cite concepts, but you DO have to explain them and contextualize the speaker using authors we are reading. Ensure that your observations have a single “lede” (thesis sentence) that unites them into the journalistic form of the “reverse pyramid.”
Group discussions and "beyond the book"
By the end of Add/Drop we will form discussion groups that will stay constant. The book discussion guide on the following page will help guide your conversations and questions for when we reform as an entire class at the end of each session. At the end of each book, each group will present to the class on a theme you have explored together by each reading a journal article to connect the reading to an interest you have collectively decided upon.
Key questions: How are the following concepts related in this author’s analysis: sexuality, gender, sex (noun), body, race, sex (verb), and culture?

For the sexual culture analyzed by this author, how are the institutions (politics, economy, kinship) and practices (regulation and resistance) of sexuality organized?

Concepts the author uses:

Questions within the text you want to discuss:

Questions beyond the text you want to discuss:

How this book contributes to your learning goals for this class:

How this book contributes to course-wide learning goals:

How will your group go beyond this book to present on fundamental course concepts?
**Week 1: Aug 29**

* Introduction to the course; watch part of *Paris is Burning* (Mudd: DVD-5063)
* Bailey, Butch Queens Up in Pumps: Chapters 1, 2, Notes, and Glossary

**Week 2: Sept. 5**

* Jeffrey Weeks’ PERKR institutions and practices framework (blackboard).
* Bailey’s Butch Queens Up in Pumps, Chapter 3
* Butch Queens Up in Pumps chapter 4
  *Bring laptops. Receive discussion group; plan for “beyond the book” selection.*

**Week 3: Sept. 12**

* Butch Queens Up in Pumps: Chapters 5 + Epilogue
* Butch Queens Up in Pumps: Presentations
  *Present in class your group’s “beyond the book” selection.*

**Week 4: Sept. 19**

* Foucault’s History of Sexuality 1
* Foucault 2

**Week 5: Sept. 26**

* Foucault 3
* Foucault 4

**Week 6: Oct. 3**

* Not Gay Chapters 1-2
* Not Gay Chapters 3-4

**Week 7: Oct. 10**

* Not Gay Chapters 5-6
  *EXTRA FILM: Humpday (2009)*
  * Presentations Beyond the Book and using Foucault to understand Not Gay*

**Week 8: Oct 17: FALL BREAK**

**Week 1: Oct. 24**

* Schalet’s Not Under My Roof 1
* Not Under My Roof 2

**Week 1: Oct. 31**

* Not Under My Roof 3
* Not Under My Roof 4

**Week 1: Nov. 7**

* Steinbugler’s Beyond Loving 1
* Beyond Loving 2

**Week 1: Nov. 14**
* Beyond Loving 3
* Beyond Loving 4

**Week 1: Nov. 21**

* Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: 1

* Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: 2  
  FILM: Happy Endings Mudd DVD 6778

**Week 1: Nov. 28**

* Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: 3
* Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: 4

**Week 1: Dec. 8**

Tu: Wrapup

**FINAL EXAM: Saturday, Dec. 17  7-9pm**