

Anthropology 222: Sexuality and Eroticism in Global Perspective

Monday and Thursday, 10:55 -12:15, BIO-205, Douglass Campus

Instructor: Assaf Harel
Email: assaf@rutgers.edu
Phone: 848-932-4107
Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:15 - 3:15
Thursday, 12:30 - 1:30
Or, by appointment
Ruth Adams Building #313

Course Description:

Undoubtedly, sexuality is one of the most central, but highly contested arenas of human lives. This course explores multiple forms and meanings of sexuality within diverse sociocultural environments. For example, what do we mean when we speak about sexuality and eroticism? What are the differences and similarities between these two ambiguous and culturally-loaded concepts? To approach such questions, we will investigate how social order is defined, maintained and destabilized by sexual ideas and practices around the globe. Through an engagement with anthropological and multidisciplinary works on gender, race, kinship, nation, religion and sex work, to name a few, we will learn how societies construct hierarchies and norms of appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior. In addition, throughout the course, you will pursue individual research projects that will enable you to deepen your understanding of a specific question pertaining to sexuality and gain training in research, writing and presentation skills. In accordance, by the end of this course, you will gain theoretical knowledge and analytical tools that will enable you to critically examine sociocultural constructions of sex and situate them within historical and global context.

Course Objectives:

- * to introduce students to sexuality studies within anthropology and across a variety of disciplines [CITE 1 see <http://anthro.rutgers.edu/undergrad-program/departement-learning-goals>]
- * to give students an awareness of sexual cultures and diversity at national, international and transnational scales
- * to enable students to grasp sexuality as imbricated with social life
- * to encourage critical thinking on a range of dilemmas posed by readings and films [CITE 2]
- * to develop students' proficiency in speaking critically and effectively about sexuality issues [CITE 5]
- * to develop students' ability to research and write cogently and/or persuasively about sexuality and its sociocultural dimensions [CITE 3 & 4]
- * to encourage students to integrate issues of sexuality into their thinking about their future lives and Work

Required Text:

All reading assignments for this course will be available online through Sakai (please notify me if you can't find a reading). In addition, a few more readings might be added during the course. This syllabus is thus subject to a few minor changes.

Assignments and Grading Structure (see schedule below for due dates):

Attendance and Participation 25%

Class attendance is required. *No more than two absences will be accepted.* If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Active participation entails contributing thoughtful comments regarding presentations, readings, films, and group discussions during each class meeting.

Reading Notes 25%

Without a serious commitment to the readings, you will not learn as much about sexuality as you hoped and deserve. Students are expected to complete *all of the weekly readings before the first class* and come to class prepared to discuss the material. In addition, students *must bring the weekly readings to each class*. Furthermore, to help your learning, each week you will prepare readings notes that should not be longer than *one page*. These notes can include summaries of readings and main arguments; questions that probe into the author's arguments and methods and/or draw connections between that week's readings or the previous week; general questions concerning the readings; reflections. The notes will be used to facilitate class and group discussion. You are expected to bring the notes to *both of the weekly classes* and *submit them at the end of Thursday's class*. I will grade the reading notes as +√/√/-√.

Research Paper 30%:

Beginning in the first few weeks of the course, students are required to think about a final research project to be conducted during the semester. The final paper - which should be around 10 double-spaced pages - is to be a written analysis that illustrates how anthropological approaches for interpreting sexuality can be useful, or not, for further understanding a social issue of interest to you. The paper must demonstrate a grasp of the concepts you engage, contain a clearly stated research question, and provide a discussion of findings in relation to course readings. In addition, the paper must meaningfully cite at least 6 course readings. It is fine if you have no idea of what to explore. I will help you identify a topic that matches your interests. On *Thursday, 10/06*, you will submit a brief research proposal, of no more than one or two paragraphs, in which you present a research topic. On *Thursday, 11/10*, you will submit a preliminary draft, which should be no longer than 2 pages and will include a clear research question, a rough outline, and an initial list of sources. In addition, *you are encouraged to meet with me at least once to review your research project*. The final paper is due on *December 19th*.

Presentation 20%:

You will present in class your research project. The presentation assignment is aimed to allow you to share your project with the rest of the class, further conceptualize your research project, receive critical feedback, and gain the opportunity to develop your public speaking skills. The presentation needs to incorporate visuals or audiovisual elements that enrich and/or support the main argument. The topic of your presentation will be determined and approved along with your research project. More specific instructions will be handed out in class and posted on Sakai.

Course Policies:

Academic integrity: The work you submit must be your own. Cheating and Plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is the students' responsibility to be familiar with the rights and obligations associated with academic integrity. You are encouraged to read the full policy on academic integrity at the following website: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers> and to consult these resources for guidelines on producing academic work: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources>.

In Class: Please arrive on time for all class meetings. While in class, all mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced. Laptop usage is permitted only as long as it is not bothersome to other students. For example, do not surf through your private information while sitting in front of other students who may be distracted. If you miss a class, contact another student in the course to find out what you missed and how to prepare for the next meeting.

Submitting work for Evaluation: I will accept late work, but with a one grade reduction for each 24 hours period it is late.

Learning differences and support services: Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact me after class, during office hours or by email at the beginning of the semester. In addition, students will need to contact Disability Support Services in the Allen Center.

Note: Given the subject matter of this course, some of the material may be troubling to some students. If you have concerns about this, *please speak with me early in the semester*.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Thursday, 09/08 - Introduction and overview

Week 2 – Anthropological Classics

Monday, 09/12 - Early anthropology and “primitive” sexuality

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1929. *The Sexual Life of Savages*. Boston: Beacon Press, pp. 44-64, 140-145, 237-248, 260-289, 382-402.

Thursday, 09/15 – Sexual Morality

Mead, Margaret. 1928. “Formal Sex Relations,” In *Sexualities in Anthropology: A Reader*. Ed. Andrew P. Lyons and Harriet D. Lyons. Willey-Blackwell, Pp. 133-141.

Schoeffel, Penelope. 2005. “Sexual Morality in Samoa and its Historical Transformations,” in *Sexualities in Anthropology: A Reader*. Ed. Andrew P. Lyons and Harriet D. Lyons. Willey-Blackwell, Pp. 222-229.

Week 3 – Beyond Heterosexuality

Monday, 09/19 – Male Homosexuality without Identity

-Herdt, Gilbert. 1990. “Sambia Sexual Culture.” In *Intimate Communications: Erotics and the Study of Culture*, Gilbert Herdt and Robert J. Stoller. New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. 53-84.

Kimmel, Michael. 2006. Ritualized Homosexuality in a Nacirema Subculture, *Sexualities* 9(1). Pp. 95–105.

Thursday, 09/22 –Women Sexualities

Blackwood, Evelyn. 2003 (2000). “Culture and Women’s Sexualities,” In *Constructing Sexualities: Readings in Sexuality, Gender and Culture*, Ed. Suzanne Lafont. Pp. 273-284.

Week 4 – The Science of Sex

Monday, 09/26 – Pathologizing sexualities

Freud, Sigmund. 1966 (1920). “Introduction” and “The Sexual Life of Human Beings.” In *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*. New York: W.W. Norton., Pp. 21-24, 303-319.

Thursday, 09/29 – experimentation and American sexualities

-Kinsey, Alfred C. et al. 1976. “Sexual Behavior in the Human Male” and “Sexual Behavior in the Human Female”. In *Sex Research: Studies from the Kinsey Institute*. Martin S. Weinberg, ed. London: Oxford. Pp. 60-95.

In-class Film screening: Kinsey, 2005

Week 5 - Histories

Monday, 10/03 – Race and Colonialism

Fanon, Frantz. 1982 (1952). "The Woman of Color and the White Man" and "The Man of Color and the White Woman," In *Black Skin White Masks*, Pluto Press, Pp 41-82.

Stoller, Ann Laura Stoler. 1997. "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power," In *The Gender/Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*, Ed.. Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, Routledge, Pp. 13-36.

Thursday, 10/06 – On the classification of sexuality

Foucault, Michel. 1980. *The History of Sexuality Volume I*. New York: Vintage. Pp. 3-35.

* **Research Proposal Due**

Week 6 – Theorizing differences

Monday, 10/10 - Nature vs. Culture

Martin, Emily. 1991. "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles," In *Signs* 16.3, Pp. 485 – 501.

Ortner, Sherry B. 1972. "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?," In *Feminist Studies* 1(2), Pp. 5-31.

Thursday, 10/13 – Thinking Sex

Rubin, Gayle. 1993/1984. "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." In *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale and David M. Halperin, eds. New York: Routledge. Pp. 3-44.

Week 7 – Sexing Anthropology

Monday, 10/17 - Pasts and Futures

Vance, Carole S. 2005. "Anthropology Rediscovered Sexuality: A Theoretical Comment," In *Same-Sex Cultures and Sexualities: An Anthropological Reader* Ed. Jennifer Robertson Blackwell Publishing, Pp. 33-47.

Thursday, 10/20 – Fieldwork

Newton, Esther. 1993. "My Best Informant's Dress: The Erotic Equation in Fieldwork," *Cultural Anthropology*, 8 (1) pp. 3-23.

Altork, Kate. 1995. "Walking the fire line: the erotic dimension of the fieldwork experience," In *Taboo: Sex, Identity, and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork*, Kulick, Don.; Willson, Margaret Eds. Taylor & Francis Routledge. Pp. 107-139.

Bolton, Ralph 1995. "Tricks, friends, and lovers: erotic encounters in the field," In *Taboo: Sex, Identity, and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork*, Kulick, Don.; Willson, Margaret Eds. Taylor & Francis Routledge. Pp. 140-167.

In-class film screening: *Keep the River on Your Right: A Modern Cannibal Tale*, 2002

Week 8 – Alterations

Monday, 10/24 – Intersexual politics

Chase, Cheryl. 1998. "Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4(2): 189-211.

Thursday, 10/27 – Genital cutting

Abusharaf, Rogaia Mustafa. 1988. "Unmasking Tradition: A Sudanese Anthropologist Confronts Female 'circumcision' and its Terrible Tenacity," *The Sciences* 38(2):22–27.

Lyons, Harriet D. 2011. "Genital Cutting: The Past and Present of Polythetic Category," *In Sexualities in Anthropology: A Reader*. Ed. Andrew P. Lyons and Harriet D. Lyons. Willey-Blackwell Pp. 251-262.

Week 9 – Beyond Binaries

Monday, 10/31 – Trans-ism

Kulick, Don. 1997. "The Gender of Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes," *American Anthropologist* (3), Pp. 574-585.

Thursday, 11/03 – Being and not being both

Lang, Sabina. 1999 (1990). "Lesbians, Men-Women, and Two-Spirits: Homosexuality and Gender in Native American Cultures," *In Female Desires: Same-Sex Relations and Transgender Practices across Cultures*. Eds. Evelyn Blackwood and Saskia E. Wieringa. New York: Columbia University Press, Pp. 91–118.

Nanda, Serena. 2003 (2000). "Hijra and Sadhin: Neither Man nor Woman in India," *In Constructing Sexualities: Readings in Sexuality, Gender and Culture*, Ed. Suzanne Lafont, Prentice Hall Pp.192-201.

Week 10 – Love

Monday, 11/07 – Mother and Child

Scheper Hughes, Nancy. 1997. "Mother Love and Child Death in Northeast Brazil," *In The Gender/Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*, Ed.. Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, Routledge, Pp 82-88.

Thursday, 11/10 – Institutions

Kipnis, Laura. 2001. "Against Love: A Treatise on the Tyranny of Two," *The New York Times*.

Nanda Serena. 2003 (1992). "Arranging a Marriage in India," *In Constructing Sexualities: Readings in Sexuality, Gender and Culture*, Ed. Suzanne Lafont, Prentice Hall Pp. 149 – 155.

Smith, Daniel Jordan. 2011 (2006). "Love and the Risk of HIV: Courtship, Marriage & infidelity in Southeastern Nigeria," *In Sexualities in Anthropology: A Reader*. Ed. Andrew P. Lyons and Harriet D. Lyons. Willey-Blackwell Pp. 360 – 374.

In-class film screening: *In the Name of Love*, 2003

*** Preliminary draft due**

Week 11- The Nation

Monday, 11/14

Graff, Agnieszka . 2010 "Looking at Pictures of Gay Men: Political Uses of Homophobia in Contemporary Poland, " *Public Culture* 2010 (22)3: 583-603.

Guttman, Mathew, C. 1997. "Seed of the Nation: Men's Sex and Potency in Mexico," In *The Gender/ Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*, Ed.. Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, Routledge, Pp 194 – 206.

Thursday, 11/17

Katrak, Ketu H. 1992. "Indian Nationalism, Gandhian 'Satyagraha,' and Representations of Female Sexuality," In *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, Ed. Andrew Parker, Marry Russo, Doris Sommer and Patricia Yaeger, Routledge, Pp. 395-406.

In-class film screening: *Oriented*, 2015

Week 12 – Religion

Monday, 11/21

Boellstroff, Tom. 2005. "Between Religion and Desire: Being Muslim and Gay in Indonesia," In *American Anthropologist* 107(4), Pp.575-585.

Petchesky , Rosalind Pollack. 1997. Fetal Images: The Power of Virtual Culture in the Politics of Reproduction," In *The Gender/Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*, Ed.Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, Routledge, Pp. 134 – 150.

Thursday, 11/24 -Thanksgiving Recess

Week 13– Commodification

Monday, 11/28

Doezema, Jo. 2003. (1998). Forced to Choose: Beyond Voluntary v. Forced Prostitution Dichotomy," In *Constructing Sexualities: Readings in Sexuality, Gender and Culture*, Ed. Suzanne Lafont, Prentice Hall Pp. 318-328

Pruitt, Deborag and Suzanne Lafont. 2003 (1995). For the Love and for the Money: Romance Tourism in Jamaica," In *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(2),Pp. 422–440.

Thursday, 12/01 - First Panel of Presentations

Week 14 – Conclusions and Presentations

Monday, 12/05 – Second Panel

Thursday, 12/08 – Third Panel

Week 15 - Conclusions and Presentations

Monday, 12/12 – Fourth Panel

Final Paper due on Monday 12/19