

HS 195: The History of Sexuality in America

Professor Rodney Hessinger
Spring 2016
MWF 10:00-10:50
AD 232

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Office Hours: MWF 11:00-12:00; W 1:00-2:00



Course Description:

This course will survey some of the major issues in the history of American sexuality and gender. Several themes will organize this course: cross-cultural encounters, male-female sexual politics, and changing conceptions of homosexual and heterosexual identities. We will track these themes from the era of colonial settlement until the modern era. As settlers arrived in the colonies they found Indians to possess sexual practices at odds with their own. In what ways did such differences help support and subvert colonists' imperialist aims? Looking more squarely at the colonists' own communities we will witness a surprising degree of tolerance towards behaviors still taboo in many modern circles. Sodomy seems to have been accepted as part of man's fate in a fallen world. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries seem to have given birth to a vigorous assault on the female body by moral reformers and physicians in Northern society. Chastity was urged on women. Did this new ideal represent protection or repression? The nineteenth century also yielded contested visions of masculinity. How did single-sex organizations like the YMCA relate to popular notions of the family man? As we turn to the twentieth century we will consider the breakdown of Victorian mores, as well as the emergence of homosexual identity, both as imposed by outsiders as well as defined by the gay community. How does our world now look different in the wake of the so-called "sexual revolution"? How is gay marriage reconfiguring our notions of sexuality and the family?

Course Goals and Assessment:

This course is meant to familiarize and engage students with some of the most vital debates surrounding sexuality in America today. It is my conviction that a historical perspective will help students appreciate how "socially constructed," that is, how artificial, modern sex and

gender roles are in our society. It is our responsibility to critically evaluate the utility of inherited ideals from the past. In addition, this course has several broad aims consistent with the learning goals of John Carroll University, as expressed in the Issues in Social Justice requirement and in the goals of the History Department. This class will enable students to: 1) understand and evaluate the causes behind patterns of social injustice in the American past; 2) describe and evaluate patterns of cultural difference and similarity amongst the peoples of North America; 3) think critically by interrogating primary and secondary sources, using these sources to fashion their own historical argument; 4) become effective writers who can clearly and elegantly express a complex, thesis-driven historical argument.

The following chart suggests the way in which assignments will be aligned with, and measured against, course and University Goals:

University Goals for this ISJ and History class:

Develop habits of critical analysis.	Act competently in a global and diverse world.	Understand and promote social justice.	Communicate skillfully in multiple forms of expression.
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Corresponding Course Goals:

Think critically by interrogating primary and secondary sources	Evaluate patterns of cultural difference amongst peoples of North America.	Evaluate causes for patterns of social injustice in US past.	Write effective, thesis-driven historical arguments.
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Means of Assessment:

Paper 1: Theories of Sexual Identity applied to Early America	Paper 3: Love versus Sex in American subcultures; Quizzes	Paper 2: Politics of Interracial Sex in US past; Quizzes	Papers 1, 2, 3
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Course Readings:

Kath Peiss, ed. *Major Problems in the History of American Sexuality* (2002).
 Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the 19th Century South* (1997)
 Articles and chapters hosted in Canvas (see schedule below for specific readings).

Assignment Descriptions:

Class Participation and Discussion Questions:

Our class meetings will be largely driven by the discussion of assigned readings. Student participation is therefore a core component of your course grade. In addition, each student will once prepare 3-4 questions or comments on the assigned readings to jump start discussion for that particular class meeting. These questions can concern matters they wish to see clarified or elaborated upon by the instructor or fellow students. They can also be questions designed to encourage fellow students to articulate some of the central ideas expressed in the assigned readings. Students might also give reactions to the readings, encouraging fellow students to share their response. These questions or observations should avoid being both too broad and too narrow. For example, “I think this chapter was difficult to understand” is too broad and not

content-specific enough. On the other hand, asking, “In what year was Henry Bedlow tried for rape?” is trivial and not sufficient grounds for meaningful discussion. Students will be asked to pre-distribute their questions via Canvas by 9:00 pm the night previous to our scheduled meeting, so that other students might prepare answers.

Papers:

There will be 3 papers in this course. The 1st will be a short paper (4 pages) concerned with the nature of sexual identity in colonial America. The second paper (4-5 pages) will ask students to analyze the politics of interracial sex. The final paper (5-6 pages) will concern the relationship of sex and love over the course of American history. Specific guidelines for these papers will be distributed in class.

Grades will be calculated in the following way:

Class Participation	10%
Quizzes (5)	25%
Paper #1	20%
Paper #2	20%
Final Paper	25%

Late Assignments and Attendance Policies:

Papers (except the final, which will not be accepted after the scheduled final exam date) handed in late will be penalized one-third a letter grade per class (with proportional penalties for smaller intervals). More than four unexcused absences in a semester will result in an automatic grade reduction in participation. Each subsequent absence after fifth will result in another full grade reduction in participation.

Course Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic honesty supports good scholarship and research, critical thinking and reasoning, and the standards of professional ethics. Students who fail to practice academic honesty not only risk losing the trust of the academic community, they also fail to develop the most essential skills and abilities that characterize a college graduate.

Any student who violates the integrity of the academic process will be subject to punishment, including possible dismissal from the University. There are many forms of academic dishonesty, including the giving or receiving of help in any form on an examination, the sale or purchase of papers and test materials, the abuse of computer privileges and regulations, the misuse or abuse of online or library resources, and any other action which debases the integrity of the educational process.

The most common form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. Paper assignments are designed to develop a student’s own ability to think clearly and critically about a subject and to express ideas fluently. If a student confounds these purposes by receiving unacknowledged assistance from an outside source, he or she is guilty of plagiarism. To avoid any suspicion of plagiarism, students should acknowledge any work not their own; in other words, any language or information, which is not original must be documented. Such expectations apply to all submitted work, including rough drafts.

The instructor will classify academic dishonesty instances in one of two categories. Category I includes instances of submitted work in which there is clear intent to falsify, mislead, or misrepresent another’s work as one’s own. An obvious example would be an attempt to hide the source of plagiarized material

by not even including it in the paper's bibliography. Category II includes instances in which there is not clear intent. Instead, there is evidence that the student made a simple mistake in citation, or made a reasonable misjudgment of what constitutes plagiarism.

For Category I offenses, students should expect to fail the submitted assignment, but may be granted the opportunity to resubmit the work for partial credit. Category II offenses will always be penalized with a failure on the assignment, and, depending on severity, may be penalized with failure in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the CAS Dean's Office and the submitted report will be kept in the student's file. Penalties for repeat offenses will be determined by the CAS Associate Deans and may be as severe as expulsion from the school. Please consult the 2015/17 JCU Bulletin for further explanation of how findings of academic dishonesty are handled and how a student might appeal such a finding.

Weekly Schedule:

Week 1 (Jan. 20, 22): The Social Construction of Gender and Sexuality

Reading:

Friday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, Preface, ch. 1

Week 2 (Jan. 25, 27, 29): Gendered Encounters on the New World Frontier

Reading:

Monday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 2, Documents

Wednesday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 2, Essays

Friday: Gutierrez, "Women on Top: The Love Magic of the Indian Witches of New Mexico" [in Canvas]

Week 3 (Feb. 1, 3, 5): Colonial Sex and Gender Ways

Quiz #1 on Wednesday

Reading:

Monday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 3, Documents

Wednesday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 3, Essays

Friday: Cornelia Hughes Dayton, "Taking the Trade: Abortion and Gender Relations in an 18th Century Village" [in Canvas]

Week 4 (Feb. 8, 10, 12): Sexual Revolution in Early America

Paper #1 Due on Wednesday

Reading:

Monday: Bloch, "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America" [in Canvas]

Friday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 4, Essays

Week 5 (Feb. 15, 17, 19): Emergence of Bourgeois Values

Quiz #2 on Wednesday

Reading:

Monday: Hessinger, "Insidious Murderers of Female Innocence" [in Canvas]

Wednesday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 4, Documents;

Friday: Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, ch. 1 [in Canvas]

Week 6 (Feb. 22, 24, 26): Politics of Interracial Sex in Early America

Reading:

Monday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, chs. 1-2

In Class Viewing: *She's Gotta Have It* (Spike Lee)

Week 7: No Class; Spring Break

Week 8 (March 7, 9, 11): Politics of Interracial Sex in Early America

Reading:

Monday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, ch. 3

Wednesday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, ch. 4

Friday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, ch. 5

Week 9 (March 14, 16, 18): Sexual Reconstruction in the South

Quiz #3 on Friday

Reading:

Monday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, ch. 6

Wednesday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, ch. 7

Friday: Hodes, *White Women, Black Men*, ch. 8

Week 10 (March 21, 23): Same-Sex Intimacy in 19th Century

Reading:

Monday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 6, Documents

Wednesday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 6, Essays

Week 11 (March 29, 30, April 1): Politics of Marriage and Reproduction in Late 19th Century

Paper #2 Due on Friday

Reading:

Tuesday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 9, Essays

In class viewing: *Kinsey*

Week 12 (April 4, 6, 8): Early 20th Century Masculinities

Reading:

Monday: Robert Corber, “Rethinking Sex: Alfred Kinsey Now” [in Canvas]

Wednesday: Putney, “God in the Gym,” *Muscular Christianity*

Friday: Bederman, ch. 1 in *Manliness and Civilization* [in Canvas]

Week 13 (April 11, 13, 15): Invention of Homosexuality?

Quiz #4 on Wednesday

Reading:

Monday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 10, Essays

Friday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 11, Essays

Week 14 (April 18, 20, 22): Cold War Sexual Containment

Reading:

Wednesday: Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound*, Introduction [in Canvas]

Friday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 12, Doc. 7, Essays

Week 15 (April 25, 27, 29): Modern Sexual Revolutions

Reading:

Monday: Peiss, *Major Problems*, ch. 14, Doc. 2, Essays

In-Class Viewing: *And the Band Played On* (1993)

Week 16 (May 2, 4): Gay Marriage

Quiz #5 on Wednesday

Paper 3 (Final Exam) Due on Wednesday, May 11th

Syllabus Disclaimer: Students should understand that this syllabus is a set of guidelines for this course. Reading assignments and other matters are subject to change. Attendance in class is necessary to be fully up to date on course expectations and developments. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time if you have any questions.

General University Policies

Policy on Documentation and Accommodation of Disabilities:

In accordance with federal law, if you have a documented disability (learning, psychological, sensory, physical, or medical) you may be eligible to request accommodations from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). To make a request for accommodations, please contact SSD Director Allison West at (216) 397-4967 or visit the SSD office, located in Room 7A, on the garden (lower) level of the Administration Building. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive so it is best to register with SSD at the beginning of each semester. Only those accommodations approved by SSD will be recognized by your instructors. Please contact SSD if you have further questions.

Policy on Academic Honesty:

For the full JCU policy on academic honesty, please see the 2015-2017 [Undergraduate Bulletin](#). Academic honesty, expected of every student, is essential to the process of education and to upholding high ethical standards. Cheating, including plagiarism, inappropriate use of technology, or any other kind of unethical behavior, may subject the student to severe academic penalties, including dismissal.

All work submitted for evaluation in a course, including tests, term papers, and computer programs, must represent only the work of the student unless indicated otherwise. Material taken from the work of others must be acknowledged. Materials submitted to fulfill requirements in one course may not be submitted in another course without prior approval of the instructor(s).

Concerns about the propriety of obtaining outside assistance and acknowledging sources should be addressed to the instructor of the course before the work commences and as necessary as the work proceeds.

Statement on Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Bias

John Carroll University is committed to fostering a learning and working environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and ethical and moral values consistent with Jesuit and Catholic traditions. The University seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment, including sexual harassment. If you have experienced sexual harassment/assault/misconduct based upon gender/sex/sexual orientation, and you share this with a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator, Kendra Svilar, J.D., who will discuss options with you. She can be reached by email at ksvilar@jcu.edu or (216) 397-1559. For more information about your options and resources, please go to <http://sites.jcu.edu/hr/pages/resourcespolicies/title-ix/>.

If you have experienced bias or discrimination based on race, age, sex*, sexual orientation*, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, military or veteran status, genetic information or any factor protected by law, you are encouraged to report this via the Bias Reporting System at <http://sites.jcu.edu/bias> to Dr. Terry Mills, Assistant Provost for Diversity and Inclusion, or at tmills@jcu.edu, or (216) 397-4455. For more information about the University commitment to diversity and inclusion, please see <http://sites.jcu.edu/diversity>.

*You can report concerns anonymously through the Bias Reporting System.

