

## Women's Studies 430 -- Sexuality Prof. Gotell

Thurs. 1-3:50

Hours: Wed 10:30-12:30 /Thurs 11-12 [or by appt.]

Office:14-23 Tory

ph: 492-0326

email: [lise.gotell@ualberta.ca](mailto:lise.gotell@ualberta.ca)

---

### Description:

In recent years, feminist and gay scholars have taken the lead in putting sexuality on the academic agenda and in developing research and theory in this field. This new scholarship differs radically from the older sexological tradition in emphasizing the social and cultural shaping of human sexuality. Instead of treating hetero-patriarchal relationships as the unproblematic norm, these perspectives have subjected this norm to critical scrutiny.

Deploying insights from diverse social construction approaches, this course will first explore and deconstruct the dominant discourses that have defined [women's] sexuality. In particular, we will examine the shift away from religious and moral regulation towards medical, scientific and psychoanalytic definition. The creation and invention of sexual identities is a fundamental legacy of turn of the century science and medicine. The politicization and/or disruption of these identity categories have been a central project for twentieth century feminists and sexual minorities. The second objective of the course is to analyze the various theoretical strategies used by feminists to displace the phallogentrism, essentialism and heteronormativity of dominant discourses. These strategies have ranged from the embrace of sexual identity categories to their radical deconstruction.

This is a fun course where we confront some fascinating issues. It is also a challenging course. Space will be made to discuss our experiences but the purpose of the course is to contextualize, historicize and theorize experiences of sexuality.

### Texts:

Kit – will be available in bookstore

Readings not in the kit are available on **ejournal** – use online library database *Academic Search Premier*. *These articles are required readings unless otherwise noted.*

### Requirements:

Attendance/Participation [small and large group]	10%
Seminar Question Assignment	5%
Research Paper Abstract [due Oct. 21]	15%
Conference Talk [Nov. 4]	5%
Research Paper, 12-15 pages [due Nov. 18]	30%
Exam [in exam period]	35%

**Discussion Assignment [5%]:**

Working alone or with another classmate, prepare a discussion exercise related to the week's seminar topic. The discussion exercise will take place at the beginning of each class and will be used as a means of entering the seminar topic. You might want to isolate a key question raised by the readings. You might want to bring an overhead or copies of a magazine or newspaper article that relate/s to the seminar topic. You might want to show a video clip intended to provoke discussion. We will spend the first 20-25 minutes of class on the discussion exercise. The format will alternate between a go-around in which each class member makes a brief contribution and small group discussions.

**Research Paper: [Abstract 15%], Conference Talk [5%], Paper [30%]**

These assignments are intended to give you a taste of the activities [outside teaching] that dominate the lives of your feminist professors.

You are required to define and research a topic related to the theme of sexuality. Your research may explore in more depth a topic we cover in the course. It may also analyze one of the myriad of issues that is not covered [some examples, the legal regulation of women's sexuality, religious constructions of women's sexuality, commercial sex work, sexuality and sport ...].

After completing preliminary research, **write a 350 word abstract of your research paper. Your abstract must:**

- define the title and topic;
- define the objective of the paper;
- lay out theoretical perspectives employed;
- identify the central argument and the manner in which you intend to proceed with your analysis;
- attach a bibliography (including at least 10 sources not on the course outline) to abstract.

Submit to conference organizer [me] by **Oct. 21**

I will organize papers into panels.

You are to present your paper in our Feminism and Sexuality Conference held in class on **Nov. 4. Each panel member will have no more than ten minutes to summarize the arguments and findings of their research.**

After each Panel, there will be time for discussion, critiques and comments.

Using insights raised in conference to deepen your analysis, write a **12-15 page paper**, due in class **Nov. 18.**

- Length: 12-15 pages typed, double-spaced (lengthy indented quotes, single spaced), 12 point font, 1.25" top and bottom margins, 1" left and right margins
- Type: argumentative; develop and support a thesis
- Reference Style: MLA with bibliography
- Sources: use course materials and at least 10 other sources (books or articles) in completing this research essay. Materials from the web can be used **in addition** to

these 10 academic sources. This means that **10 external academic sources must be used.**

***Papers will be graded using the following criteria:***

- Did it address all requirements of the assignment?
- Was the material presented clearly and coherently?
- Were arguments well supported and defended?
- Was good use made of sources?
- Was the paper referenced in a consistent manner?
- Was the approach used innovative?
- Was attention paid to style: sentence structure; paragraph structure; grammar; spelling?

**Late Assignments:**

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day (without a doctors note or some other documented reason). Extensions need to be arranged at least one week in advance. Papers will not be accepted by email without permission. Late papers can be handed in to me or to 13-15 Tory, where they will be date stamped.

**Academic Honesty:**

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm](http://www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

In this course, plagiarism will be treated seriously. As the University of Alberta Code of Student Behaviour states,

No student shall represent another’s substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as their own.

No student shall submit in any course or program of study, without the written approval of the course instructor, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project assignment, presentation or poster for which credit has been obtained by the Student or which has been or is being submitted by the Student in another course or program of student in the University or elsewhere.

No Student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the Student's own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study.

Online resources at the University of Alberta can help you to avoid plagiarism. A useful resource is the Truth in Education website.  
<http://www.ualberta.ca/student-services/tie>

## Women's Studies Program Grading Scale

<b>Excellent</b>	<b>A+</b>	<b>94-100%</b>
	<b>A</b>	<b>88-93%</b>
	<b>A-</b>	<b>82-87%</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>78-81%</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>74-77%</b>
	<b>B-</b>	<b>70-73%</b>
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>66-69%</b>
	<b>C</b>	<b>62-65%</b>
	<b>C-</b>	<b>58-61%</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>54-57%</b>
<b>Minimal Pass</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>50-53%</b>
<b>Fail</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0-49%</b>

## History

Sept. 9      **Introduction**

Sept. 16      **Social Constructionism and the History of Sexuality/Historicizing the Clit**

Foucault, selections from the *History of Sexuality*

Jana Sawicki, "Identity Politics and Sexual Freedom"

Nancy Tuana, "Coming to Understand: Orgasm and the Epistemology of Ignorance," *Hypatia*, 2004, Vol. 19:1, p.p. 194-233, available in fulltext from *Academic Search Premier*

Recommended:

Rachel P. Maines, selection from *The Technology of Orgasm*, "The Job Nobody Wanted"

Sept. 24      **Turn of the Century Sexology: Science, Medicine and the "Creation of Sexual Identities"**

Lynne Segal, "The Coital Imperative," pp. 70-79

Lillian Faderman, "The Contributions of Sexologists"  
 Siobhan Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body"

Recommended:

Havelock Ellis, excerpts from "The Sexual Impulse in Women" and "Sexual Inversion in Women"

Sept. 30        **No Class (I am away at a research team meeting. This is a good time to spend in library, choosing a research topic)**

Oct. 7         **The Impact of Freudian Theory on the Construction of Women's Sexuality**

Lynne Segal, "Laws of Desire: Psychoanalytic Perspectives and Disputes"

Luce Irigaray, "The Sex which is Not One"

Jane Gerhard, "Revisiting 'The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm': The Female Orgasm in American Sexual Thought and Second Wave Feminism," *Feminist Studies* vol. 26:2, pp. 449-476 (read 449-459) **ejournal: available online .**

Oct. 14        **Twentieth Century Sex Research**

Lynn Segal, "The Coital Imperative," 85-115

William Masters and Virginia Johnson, "The Female Orgasm"

Lenore Tieffer, "The Human Sexual Response Cycle"

Shannon Bell, "Feminist Ejaculations"

Jane Gerhard, "Revisiting 'The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm': The Female Orgasm in American Sexual Thought and Second Wave Feminism," *Feminist Studies* vol. 26:2, pp. 449-476 (read 459-473) **ejournal: available online**

## **Sexual Identities: Construction and Debate**

Oct. 21        **Abstract Due/Heterosexuality: Social Construction/Sleeping with the Enemy??**

Stevi Jackson, "Heterosexuality and Feminist Theory"

Andrea Dworkin, "Occupation/Collaboration"

Lee Maracle, "Isn't Love a Given"

Robin Rowland, "Politics of Intimacy"

Oct. 28        **Lesbian Identity**

Kathleen Martindale, "The Making of an Unpopular Culture: From Lesbian Feminism to Lesbian Postmodernism"

Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination"

Suzanna Danuta Walters, "From Here to Queer: Radical Feminism, Postmodernism and the Lesbian Menace (Or, Why Can't a Woman Be More Like a Fag)," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, (1996), v.21:4, pp. pp. 830-869 **ejournal: available online**

- Nov. 4            **Feminism and Sexuality Student Conference – please note, with your agreement, the class may meet from 1-4:50 pm.**
- Nov. 11           **Remembrance Day no class**
- Nov. 18           **Essay Due/Unsettling Binaries: Bisexuality**  
 Paula Rust, “Bisexuality: A Contemporary Paradox for Women,” *Journal of Social Issues*, (2000), Vol. 56:2, pp. 205-221 **ejournal: available online.**  
 Sue Wilkinson, “Bisexuality as Backlash”  
 Jo Eadie, “Activating Bisexuality: Toward a Bisexual Politics”
- Nov. 27           **Crossing – Intersex and Transgender**  
 Katrina Roen, ““Either/Or” and “Both/Neither”: Discursive Tensions in Transgender Politics” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, (2001), v.27:2, pp.501-522 **ejournal: available online.**  
 Sandy Stone, “The Empire Strikes Back: Posttranssexual Manifesto”  
 Sharon E. Preves, “Sexing the Intersexed: An Analysis of Sociocultural Responses to Intersexuality,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, (2001), v.27:2, pp.523-556 **ejournal: available online.**
- Dec. 2            You pick the topic (and I will assemble the readings) /review Possibilities – sex work, pornography, s/m, “Female sexual dysfunction” and medicalization of women’s sexuality, sexual citizenship