

**Georgetown University**  
**Sociology 160 – Sociology of Sexualities**  
Spring 2015

Note:

Class meets in Car Barn 204

**Instructor:** Prof. Kathleen Guidroz

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00am—12:00; other times by appointment

*“We are the recorders and reporters of facts – not the judges of the behaviors we describe.”*

Alfred C. Kinsey

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to Sociology of Sexualities. In this course, we will examine sexual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors from a sociological perspective. We will also consider how the biology of sex gets sociologically constructed, and the myriad ways in which sexual desire and sexual activity are structured by social relations. Cross-cultural and historical accounts of sexual practices and sexual identities will be considered, as well as the contemporary theories and methods in sexuality studies. The course also focuses on the ways in which sexuality as social institution and identity intersects with other major hierarchies of privilege and inequality, specifically race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. The course entails extensive reading and writing.

**LEARNING GOALS**

The following Learning Goals are derived from the Department of Sociology’s website:

- ◆ To understand the relationship between social theory and research on sexuality
- ◆ To apply sociological concepts to real life conditions involving different sexual practices
- ◆ To examine critically social issues of importance that contribute to or impede sexual health and expression
- ◆ To begin to analyze quantitative and qualitative data on sexuality-related topics
- ◆ To interpret already analyzed data to generate conclusions about sexuality

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS**

- ◆ **REQUIRED** – *Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Michael S. Kimmel and The Stony Brook Sexualities Research Group, eds. Oxford University Press, 2015. (“**Kimmel**”)

- ◆ **REQUIRED** – *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Alison Bechdel. Mariner Books, 2006. (“**Bechdel**”; also on Reserve)
- ◆ **RESERVE** – *Sex is Not a Natural Act & Other Essays*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Leonore Tiefer. Westview Press, 2004. (“**Tiefer**”; optional purchase; also on Reserve)
- ◆ Articles and other readings on **Library Reserve** and **Blackboard** (see schedule)

## **CLASS POLICIES**

1. **Attend class, and be on time.**
  - a. There is a demonstrated positive relationship between classroom involvement and grades!
  - b. Attendance will be taken regularly; and you are responsible for ensuring that you have been included on the roster.
  - c. Excessive absences (10%, or 2 or more classes—excused or unexcused) may lead to a lowered grade.
  - d. If you need to miss class due to a religious holiday or University student-athlete obligation, please provide the dates in writing at the start of the semester.
2. **Engage with the class.**
  - a. Do this by reading, thinking, writing, and speaking.
  - b. Overall, attendance and participation make up 10% of your grade.
  - c. Habitual lack of preparedness will be considered when final grades are computed.
  - d. Using electronics for non-course related matters will result in an absence.
3. **Complete your work on time.**
  - a. Please make sure you are set up for printing (collating and stapling) your written assignments before they are due.
4. **Refrain from distracting behaviors.**
  - a. Cell/mobile phones or any other communication devices are not allowed during class.
  - b. Please turn your phones OFF (not vibrate), and keep them put away during class.
5. In general, **computer laptops will not be needed** during regular class sessions. Please see me immediately if you need a laptop or other assistance for note taking.
6. **Demonstrate academic integrity** (see the University’s policy below). You will be expected to sign an Honor System pledge on all written work.

## **GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY’S ACADEMIC HONOR SYSTEM**

Standards of academic integrity are set forth in the University’s **Honor Code**, and all students are bound by this Code. In other words, you must **do your own work**, use proper citations when necessary, and not receive or provide unauthorized assistance. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code.

You may review a copy of our Honor Code at: <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>.

Violations of academic integrity will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. For example, cheating, plagiarism, recycling of one's own or another's paper are considered violations of the Code and will have serious consequences for your standing at the University.

### **POLICY ON INSTRUCTIONAL CONTINUITY**

The following policy is on maintaining instructional activities during unforeseen disruptions:

Instructional activities will be maintained during University closures. In the possibility of an interruption of face-to-face instruction, instructional continuity will take place via online and/or out-of-class assignments. During a campus "closure" the regular class time schedule must be honored by everyone. Students must remain available for synchronous distance instruction.

### **ASSIGNMENTS, EXERCISES, AND EXAMINATIONS**

1. Background ("Sexual Socialization") Essay	10%
2. Annotated Bibliography (5 sources)	10%
3. Data/Evidence Collection Assignment	10%
4. Exam #1	15%
5. Exam #2	15%
6. In-class exercises and participation	10%
7. Recommendation Memorandum	<u>30%</u>
a. Revised Data Collection Assignment	
b. Revised Annotated Bibliography	
TOTAL	100%

\*\* Details on the Assignments will be provided in class and/or posted to Blackboard \*\*

### **GRADING**

*No extensions will be granted without prior proper documentation. Without this documentation, graded work will be penalized accordingly.*

#### **GRADING STANDARDS\***

Evaluation of each student's performance in this course will be guided by the following criteria:

**A** = Excellent work in fulfillment of all course requirements with constant improvement and superb quality.

**B** = Very Good work in fulfillment of all course requirements with some improvement during the semester.

**C** = Satisfactory work in fulfillment of all course requirements and little improvement during the semester.

**D** = Assigned work is Not Satisfactory or not completed.

**F** = Unsatisfactory work and failure to meet minimum course goals and requirements.

\* \* \*

- A letter grade will be assigned for each of the grading components, using the University's standard grading system (A, A-, B+, etc.). The final grade will be weighted as per the percentage distribution given above.
- Papers and written answers are evaluated on the basis of comprehensiveness and precision, effective and persuasive argument, organization, evidence of editing, and use of (reference to) course materials. All papers and research work should include full citations, in proper academic format of all sources used and consulted.
- Written work submitted after the deadline will not be accepted and the grade F will be entered for that particular project/assignment. Papers may not be rewritten or resubmitted for extra credit.
- No Incomplete Grade will be given for this course except in cases of **documented** reasons of health or emergency beyond the student's control.

\*Thanks to Prof. Leslie Hinkson for model syllabus content.

### **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSIGNMENTS**

Written assignments will be evaluated according to the following criteria: (1) organization, (2) logic and coherence, (3) clarity and effectiveness in presentation, (4) thoroughness, (5) thoughtfulness, and (6) originality.

All papers are to be formatted according to the following:

All margins (top, bottom, and sides) are to be one (1) inch

Font size is 11-12 pt.

Double-spaced

Page numbers

Stapled

Bibliography when using course readings and outside sources (including websites)

### **THE WRITING CENTER**

If you would like some guidance on tackling your writing assignments I strongly encourage you to visit the **Writing Center**: Lauinger Library 217A (next to the Midnight Mug Coffee Shop). You may contact The Writing Center using the email below for its spring semester hours.

“The Writing Center offers assistance in topic development, general organization, guidance on paper revisions, and specific or recurring structural problems with writing. Consultants are not trained to proofread papers for grammar or spelling errors, but rather to help individuals improve their own critical thinking, revision, and editing skills.”

Visit <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/> for more information.

### **Course Ground Rules**

Be advised that this course includes open and sometimes explicit discussion of a variety of sexually explicit materials (language and imagery), some of which are controversial and may be thought offensive. As with any scholarly endeavor, the point of our inquiry is critical understanding – not advocacy or outright dismissal of positions. No one will be expected to reveal or discuss his/her/hir own sexual experiences. You are expected, however, to engage with the course materials in a thoughtful manner and to offer insights, questions, and critiques regarding them. We are free to disagree with each other, as long as we do so *respectfully*. Please do not interrupt one another (or me), and refrain from talking with others during lectures or discussions or while others are speaking. Please relate any news events or observations to course materials. We need to be *reflexive* about (and willing to scrutinize) our positions and feelings.

*If you do not think that you can abide by these ground rules,  
please reconsider your intention to take this course.*

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
Jan. 7	Overview of Sociology of Sexualities	<b>Read in class:</b> “With Some Dating Apps: Less Casual Sex Than Casual Text” ( <i>New York Times</i> , November 7, 2014)	<b>Discuss in class:</b> What is sexuality?
<b>Consider for upcoming week:</b> What is the “commonsense” thinking on sexuality? How does “sexology” challenge our thinking on sexuality? What is scripting theory? Is it helpful?			
Jan. 12	History and Sexology	<b>Kimmel:</b> 1.1—“Conceptualizing Sexuality” (Jackson & Scott) <b>Kimmel:</b> 1.2—“The Social Origins of Sexual Development” (Gagnon & Simon) <pp. 26-end>	<b>Discuss in class:</b> What is our bias? What are the implications of bias?

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
Jan. 14  <b>Note:</b> Last day to drop is 1/17	Sexology and Research	<p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 1 By the Numbers—“The Kinsey Code Book” &lt;skim&gt;</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> 1.3—“How to Get Valid Answers from Survey Questions” (Das &amp; Laumann)</p> <p><b>Tiefer:</b> Part One (Ch. 2)—“Social Constructionism and the Study of Human Sexuality” &lt;Reserve&gt;</p> <p>→ Look at sex survey— National Health and Social Life Survey: <a href="http://popcenter.uchicago.edu/data/nhsls.shtml">http://popcenter.uchicago.edu/data/nhsls.shtml</a> (Univ. of Chicago, 1992; additional research 1995, 1997)</p>	<p>Film: “Alfred Kinsey: Social Science in America’s Bedroom”</p> <p><b>Guidelines</b> for Interview Questions (must be typed)</p> <p><b>Background Essay</b> assigned</p>
<p><b>Consider:</b> Why is it important to collect data/evidence about sexuality? What are some challenges to researching sexuality (for example, “going native”)?</p> <p>Refer to questions on p. 75.</p>			
Jan. 19	[Holiday]	[Holiday]	[Holiday]
Jan. 21	Research on Sexuality; Introduction to Sexual Socialization	<p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 2 By the Numbers—“Gender Convergence in Rates of Sexual Activity”</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> 2.2—“The Ambiguity of ‘Having Sex’” (Carpenter)</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 2 Personal Voice—“My First Time”: Him and Her (Sanders)</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 3 By the Numbers—“Four Factoids”</p> <p><b>Tiefer:</b> Part One (Ch. 1)—“‘Am I Normal?’ The Question of Sex”</p>	<p><b>In-class:</b> Mock Interviews (5 questions max)</p> <p><b>Submit:</b> 6-7 interview questions</p>
<p><b>Consider for next week:</b> How is/was your socialization similar to or different from your parent’s/parents’ experiences? Your peers? How “strong” of a norm is heterosexuality? In what ways does bisexuality conflict with our understandings of homosexuality and heterosexuality?</p>			
Jan. 26	Sexual Socialization	<p><b>Kimmel:</b> 2.1—“Primary School ‘Studs’” (Renold)</p> <p><b>Tiefer:</b> Part Two (Ch. 3)—“From Niagara to</p>	<p>Film: “Buying into Sexy: The Sexing Up of Tweens”</p>

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
		Viagra" <Reserve> <b>Article</b> —"She's 16 Years Old and There's Boys Calling Over to the House" (Raffaelli & Ontai) <Reserve>	Film: What are some examples of "age compression"?
Jan. 28	Prevailing Norms/Standards: #1. <i>Heterosexual</i>	<b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 5 By the Numbers—"Sexual Behavior Chart" <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 6 By the Numbers—"How Many People are LGBT?" <b>Kimmel:</b> 5.3—"The Not-so-straight Path To Heterosexuality" (Morgan) <b>Kimmel:</b> 6.3—"The Gay-Friendly Closet" (Williams, Giuffre, & Dellinger) <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 5—Box 5.1 and Personal Voices <All> <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 6—Box 6.1, "Nine Stupid Myths About Bisexuals"	Film: "Bi the Way"  <i>What is your Recommendation Memo topic?</i>  (Submit topic Feb. 9; typed)
Jan. 30			<b>Background Essay due Friday, Jan. 30, by 12: 00 noon</b>
<b>Consider:</b> Do you think that romance is overrated or underrated in sexuality? In what ways does marital sexuality remain a dominant standard? What is a "hook-up" culture? <b>Respond:</b> There is/is not a hook-up culture at Georgetown.			
Feb. 2	#2. <i>Romantic</i>	<b>Kimmel:</b> 3.1—"The Gender of Desire" (Kimmel & Plante) <b>Kimmel:</b> 2.3—"Dating and Romantic Relationships Among Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youths" (Savin-Williams) <b>Article</b> —"Hetero-Romantic Love and Heterosexiness in Children's G-Rated Films" (Martin & Kazyak) <Reserve>	<b>Examine</b> Age of Consent for Sex: See <a href="http://www.ageofconsent.us/">http://www.ageofconsent.us/</a>  (Submit typed Rec. Memo topic Feb. 9)
Feb. 4	#3. <i>Marital</i>	<b>Kimmel:</b> 3.3—"Gender, Agency, and Sexual Decision Making in Collegiate Hookups" (Kalish)	Film: "Fornication: A Religious Perspective"

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
		<p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 3—“A Personal Story About Hooking Up”</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 4 By the Numbers—“How Would You Describe Your Sex Life Before and After...”</p> <p><b>Article</b>—“Sexual Infidelity Among Married and Cohabiting Americans” (Treas &amp; Giesen)</p> <p>&lt;Reserve&gt;</p>	<p><b>Annotated Bibliography</b></p> <p>assigned</p>
<p><b>Consider:</b> Compare monogamy and non-monogamy. Are there similarities? What were your reactions to this topic? How significant is masturbation in individuals’ lives? Is coitus still a dominant sexual standard? Why or why not?</p>			
Feb. 9	#4. <i>Two-Person</i>	<p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 7 By the Numbers—“The Janus Report”</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> 7.2—“Whatever Happened to Non-Monogamies?” (Barker &amp; Langdridge)</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> 8.1—“The Lives and Voices of Highly Sexual Women” (Blumberg) &lt;See Table, p. 385-386&gt;</p>	<p>Film: Strange Sex—“Two Boyfriends and a Baby” (Season 1, 3)</p>
Feb. 11	#5. <i>Coital</i>	<p><b>Article</b>—“Gender and Ethnic Differences in the Timing of First Sexual Intercourse” (Upchurch, Levy-Storms, Sucoff, &amp; Aneshensel) &lt;Reserve&gt;</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> 9.1—“Cybersexuality in MMORPGs” (Valkyrie) &lt;skim&gt;</p> <p><b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 9 Personal Voice—“No Body is ‘Doing It’” (Wiley)</p>	<p>Film: “First”</p>
<p><b>Consider:</b> Why are orgasms considered important for sexuality? What are your reactions to the readings?</p>			
Feb. 16	[Holiday]	[Holiday]	[Holiday]
Feb. 18	#6. <i>Orgasmic</i>	<p><b>Kimmel:</b> 8.3—“Faking It” (Roberts, Kippax, Waldby, &amp; Crawford)</p> <p><b>Article</b>—“Orgasm” (Richters) &lt;tba&gt;</p>	<p>Film: “Passion and Power”</p>
Feb. 23			<b>Exam #1</b>
Feb. 25		<p>Begin <i>Fun Home</i> (“<b>Bechdel</b>”)</p> <p>Ch. 1—“Old Father, Old Artificer”</p>	<p><b>Data/Evidence Collection</b> assigned</p>



DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
Feb. 27			<b>Annotated Bibliography due by Fri, Feb. 27, 12:00 noon</b> (hard copy)
<b>Consider:</b> Bechdel reveals more about her family and her father’s sexuality. Use a Sociology of Sexuality approach to explain these dynamics.			
March 2		<b>Bechdel</b> —Ch. 2 “A Happy Death” <b>Kimmel:</b> 5.2—“Critique of Compulsory Heterosexuality” (Seidman)	<i>Has your Recommendation Memo topic changed?</i>
March 4		<b>Bechdel</b> — Ch. 3 “That Old Catastrophe” <b>Kimmel:</b> 8.2—“Dude Sex” (Ward)	Film: “Men in Affairs”
<b>** Spring Break **</b> [No class on March 9 & 11]			
<b>Consider:</b> More of Bechdel’s father is revealed in the upcoming chapters. Why do you think she compares her experiences as a lesbian with those of her father?			
March 16		<b>Bechdel</b> —Ch. 4 “In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower” <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 6 Personal Voice—“Transgender Dinosaurs and the Rise of the Genderqueer” <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 11 By the Numbers—“Porn Data”	Film: “Out in America”
March 18		<b>Bechdel</b> —Ch. 5 “The Canary-Colored Caravan of Death”	In-class writing <tba>
<b>Consider:</b> Why is [girls’ and] women’s sexuality such a taboo topic? Respond to Bechdel’s inclusion of her first orgasmic experience.			
March 23		<b>Bechdel</b> —Ch. 6 “The Ideal Husband” <b>Kimmel:</b> 13.1—“They Think You Shouldn’t Be Having Sex Anyway” (Allen)	Film: “The Purity Myth”
March 25		<b>Bechdel</b> — Ch. 7 “The Antihero’s Journey” <b>Kimmel:</b> 7.3—“Is Pedophilia a Sexual Orientation?” (Seto)	<b>Recommendation Memo</b> assigned

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
March 27			<b>Data Collection</b> <b>Assignment due by</b> <b>Fri, March 27, 12:00</b> <b>noon</b> (hard copy)
<b>Consider:</b> Sexuality can be combined with various social categories. What are the various cultural messages we receive regarding sex and sexuality? How important is religion? How do “intersections” affect your own understanding of sexuality?			
March 30	Intersections: Religion and Culture	<b>Article</b> —“Queer as Intersectionality” (Rahman) <Reserve>	Film: “Cure for Love”
April 1	Intersections: Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Social Class	<b>Kimmel:</b> 11.3—“Putting Hypersexuality to Work” (Ciclitira) <b>Kimmel:</b> 10.1—“Sex Work for the Middle Classes” (Bernstein)	<i>Are you revising your Data Collection (Appendix A) and Annotated Bibliography (Appendix B)?</i>
<b>Consider:</b> What are the roles of media in this commodification? What are the major debates surrounding pornography? Do you have a stance on it? <b>Respond:</b> It is/is not possible to separate commodified sexuality from non-commodified sexuality.			
April 6	**No class due to Easter Break**		
April 8	Commodified Sexuality	<b>Kimmel:</b> 9.3—“Twenty-One Moves Guaranteed to Make His Thighs Go up in Flames” (** <b>Kimmel:</b> 11.1—“Pornography and Media” (Dines and Jensen) <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 8 Personal Voice—“Fifty Shades of Grey...” <skim>	Film: “Teens Hooked on Porn”
<b>Consider:</b> Why is it important to examine control and exploitation when looking at sexuality? Why is it important to consider disabilities when examining sexuality? What did you learn from this week’s topics?			
April 13	Exploitation	<b>Kimmel:</b> 10.3—“Human Trafficking” (Limoncelli) <b>Kimmel:</b> 12.2—“Male Sexual Victimization” (Weiss)	Film: “Lives for Sale: Human Trafficking” <tba>

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
April 15	Sexual Control vs. Exploitation	<b>Kimmel:</b> 4.3—“Relationships, Sexuality, and Adjustment Among People with Physical Disability” (Taleporos and McCabe) <b>Kimmel:</b> Ch. 4 Personal Voice—“I Had Polio. I Also Have Sex” (Zulu)	Film: “Disability and Sexuality: Exploring the Intimacy Option”
<b>Consider:</b> After studying sexuality for a semester, what are your thoughts on asexuality? Also, what else is there to examine with regard to sexuality (i.e., topics not covered in the course)?			
April 20	No or Little Sexuality	<b>Kimmel:</b> 7.1—“There’s More to Life than Sex?” (Carrigan) <b>Article</b> —“Coming to an Asexual Identity” (Scherrer) <Reserve>	Film: “(A)sexual”
April 22			<b>Exam #2</b>
April 27	Wrap-up	Course evaluations	<b>Laptops needed for class</b>
<i>Study Days April 28 – April 30: Office hours will be announced.</i>			
(01) May 7	Due by 4:00pm	Turn in final Recommendation Memorandum → Sociology Department: Car Barn 209	<b>FINAL PROJECT</b> (hard copy)
(02) May 9	Due by 9:00am	Turn in final Recommendation Memorandum → Sociology Department: Car Barn 209	<b>FINAL PROJECT</b> (hard copy)

***Please refer to the Course Ground Rules periodically throughout the semester.***

*Schedule Revised: 1/\*\*/15*