

SOCIOLOGY 135: SEXUAL CULTURES
Fall 2016

INSTRUCTOR

Jill Bakehorn, Ph.D. (Pronouns: she/her or they/them)

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Office: 479 Barrows Hall

Sign-up Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:30-11:30am

Sign-up: <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/xjanb>

Drop-in Office Hours: Thursdays 9:30am-11:30am

CLASS MEETING

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-3:30pm

60 Evans

GSIs AND SECTIONS

Tara Gonsalves (taragonsalves@berkeley.edu)

Sections: S101 MW 9-10am 475 Barrows

S102 MW 10-11am 475 Barrows

Karina Vasilevska-Das (karinadas@berkeley.edu)

Sections: S103 TR 8-9am 175 Barrows

S104 TR 9-10am 475 Barrows

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will be drawing upon social construction theory to examine the creation, reproduction, and stratification of sexualities and sexual cultures in particular social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. While many people think of sexuality as inherent, biological, and purely “natural”, we will be challenging the idea of a “pre-social” sexuality. You will come to see sexuality as something that is constructed and structured by and through social relations.

The course will begin with an examination of sociological theories of sexuality, including queer theory. How do sociologists approach the study of sexuality? What do we mean by sexuality? How has this definition changed over time? What implications does this have for people’s lives?

We will then unpack terms like heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, transgender, asexual, polyamorous, and others. We will spend a good deal of time deconstructing commonsense ideas about sexual identity categories, paying particular attention to the complexity of sexuality as it intersects with other identity categories.

In the last section of the semester, we will focus on the pornography industry. We will apply the theories and understandings of sexualities learned in the first part of the course to the modern day pornography industry in the United States. We will examine the history, laws, policies, public sentiment, debates, and politics of the industry, focusing on pornography made by women and the LGBTQ community. We will examine how the sex industry can be a reflection of and reinforce sexual inequalities, but can also be used to challenge these inequalities.

Some questions about sexuality and sexual cultures that will be addressed:

- ▶ What does it mean to say that sexualities are constructed?
- ▶ How have sexualities been constructed over time?
- ▶ How does sexual practice become sexual identity?
- ▶ How does queer theory inform our understandings of sexualities?
- ▶ What are the major debates about pornography?
- ▶ What is feminist porn?
- ▶ How are race, class, gender, and sexual identity represented in pornography?

Keep in mind this is a sociology course. Just to refresh your memory, sociology is the study of human social activity, organization, and interaction. Sociology is about the search for patterned behavior and social, rather than individual, explanations for this behavior. Sociologists look beyond the taken-for-granted notions of our social environment to examine the many layers of social meaning in the human experience. (If this doesn't sound familiar to you, or you are unclear about the *sociological perspective*, please refer to your introductory sociology text for a refresher.)

This class will be **challenging** on a number of levels:

- ❖ You will be expected to keep up with a number of readings for each class meeting.
- ❖ These readings will be challenging not only in terms of their length and number, but also in terms of the subject matter presented and the complex theories proposed.
- ❖ We will be challenging common sense, taken-for-granted notions of sexuality.
- ❖ We will be speaking frankly about issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Some topics may be challenging in the sense that you may find the subject matter embarrassing or difficult to discuss. Some of these topics will be graphic, controversial, or explicit. Frank discussions and presentation of material may include things that some find offensive.

This course challenges many taken-for-granted assumptions about sexuality and the social world. Keep in mind that your personal experiences may not match the general sociological insights discussed in the course. This does not negate the insights. Ask yourself why this might be the case. You may not agree with everything we read and discuss, but I expect you to have an open mind and demonstrate your knowledge of the sociological perspective. Disagreements and debates are expected and welcome in this class, however, I will not tolerate personal attacks.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of the semester you should be able to:

- ❖ Explain the social constructionist perspective in relation to sexuality
- ❖ Apply the main tenets of queer theory
- ❖ Connect sociological theories to the social world and your experiences
- ❖ Use an intersectional approach
- ❖ Critically analyze media/"common sense" understandings of sexuality
- ❖ Be conversant in the major debates around pornography

REQUIRED TEXTS

Ward, Jane. 2015. *Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men*. New York: New York University Press.

Taormino, Tristan et al, eds. 2013. *The Feminist Porn Book: The Politics of Producing Pleasure*. New York: The Feminist Press.

Course Reader: Available at Copy Central (2576 Bancroft Way) and on bCourses.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading Responses: Two 3-4 page response papers. Each is worth 20% of your final grade. Due dates are listed in the course outline. I will upload response paper prompts to bCourses. No late responses are accepted without prior approval.

These reading responses will test your comprehension of course readings as well as your ability to explain, synthesize, and make connections between the readings **in your own words**. Because you will not be able to rely on direct quotations of the material, you must focus on your own understanding and articulation of the texts. You will be asked to make connections between the course materials and your experience of the social world.

Exams: Take-home midterm and final exam--both are in essay format. Each is worth 25% of your final grade. You will be responsible for course readings, lectures, and any media presented in the class. No late exams are accepted without prior approval.

Participation: Attendance and participation in weekly section is required. In addition to in-class and section participation, you may also participate by posing questions, comments, or links to relevant videos or news stories in the chatroom or discussion board on bCourses. **If you post a link, be sure to contextualize it and make a connection to issues we are studying in the course.**

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Reading Responses (40%)

Exams (50%)

Participation in section and lecture (10%)

COURSE FORMAT AND POLICIES

Readings: Readings should be completed prior to class. You must keep up with the readings to participate in class discussions and complete assignments. Bring your reading materials to every class; you will likely need to refer to them in class discussions. All of your assigned readings (aside from the required books) are available on bCourses and as a reader from Copy Central.

Participation: This class will incorporate the use of lecture, films, music, visuals, and group discussions. I expect you to be an active participant in the course. Bring your questions and comments to class and don't be shy about bringing them up.

If you have a question about the readings, lecture, etc., please post your question to the chatroom or discussion board on bCourses where both your questions and my answers will be visible to other students, rather than e-mailing me. Feel free to answer each other's questions as well.

Missing Class: If you miss a class, do not ask me if you missed anything. Of course you did!--but don't expect me to fill you in. I suggest sharing contact information with a classmate early on in the semester and getting the notes you missed.

Course Slides: I use course slides which often incorporate media. I will post course slides after lecture, not before, but they will only contain the text. Keep in mind that these slides are meant to be a guide during lecture and are therefore not exhaustive or a substitute for attending class.

Course Etiquette: Do not read, listen to music, browse the Internet, text, or sleep during class. If you want to do these things, don't bother coming to class. All cell phones must be silenced and put away during class.

Laptop Policy: I encourage you to consider taking notes without a computer if you are able. If you need/want to use a computer during class, I ask that you **sit in the back four rows of the classroom** so that you do not distract and disturb other students.

Email: Clearly indicate to which class you are referring in your emails to me. I endeavor to respond to emails within 24 hours, but this is not always possible; please be patient.

GRADING POLICIES

For assignments turned in via bCourses, your feedback can be found there. Be sure to carefully consider the feedback; it is provided to help you improve on future assignments.

If you would like to request a re-grade or re-evaluation of an assignment, you must first, wait 24 hours after the assignment was returned and second, write up a statement detailing why you believe you deserve a higher grade. This statement should be about the substance of your work, not about effort. **You must request a re-grade within 7 days of the assignment being returned.** If you request that I re-grade your assignment rather than your GSI, my assessment and grade of your work will be used, even if that means you get a lower score than originally given for that work.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The University defines academic misconduct as “any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community” (UC Berkeley Code of Student Conduct).

Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is collaboration with other students on response papers or on exams or using notes during exams. Plagiarism includes turning in any work that is not your own as well as improper or missing citations of others' works. As a student of the University of California, you are bound by the Code of Academic Conduct. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will result in a referral to The Center for Student Conduct and a zero for that assignment.

Plagiarism is most likely to occur because students are unaware of how to cite their sources or because they feel desperate. If you get to this point in your writing, contact me or your GSI immediately rather than doing something you'll very likely regret.

OFFICE HOURS

I will be holding **Sign-up** office hours from 9:30am-11:30am on Tuesdays. Sign-up: <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/xjanb>

I will be holding **Drop-in** office hours from 9:30am-11:30am on Thursdays—no appointment necessary.

Your GSI will also be holding office hours. If you are having any difficulties with the material or assignments for the course or if you are having any personal problems that are affecting your ability to complete assignments on time, you should take advantage of office hours early in the semester. Your GSI and I will be much more amenable to granting extensions when I have been made aware of problems early on rather than at the last minute.

Remember that office hours are an important resource if for no other reason than getting to know your instructors could help you when you may need letters of recommendation.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Disability Accommodations

Please let me know early in the semester if you qualify for any disability accommodations.

Student Learning Center

“The primary academic support service for students at Berkeley, the SLC helps students transition to Cal; navigate the academic terrain; create networks of resources; and achieve academic, personal and professional goals.” Located in The Cesar Chavez Student Center on Lower Sproul Plaza. Front desk phone: 510 642 7332.

COURSE OUTLINE Readings are to be **completed** on the day listed below. Schedule is subject to change.

WEEKS ONE AND TWO: CONSTRUCTING SEXUALITY

Thursday, 8/25 **Introductions**

Tuesday, 8/30 **The Social Construction of Sexuality**

Seidman, Steven. 2010. "Social Constructionism: Sociology, History, and Philosophy." Pp 25-39 in *The Social Construction of Sexuality*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton.

Weeks, Jeffrey. 2010. "The Invention of Sexuality." Pp 12-45 in *Sexuality*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.

Thursday, 9/1 **Constructing Sexual Hierarchies/Critiques of Social Construction of Sexuality**

Rubin, Gayle. 1999. "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." Pp 143-178 in *Culture, Society, and Sexuality: A Reader*, edited by Richard Guy Parker and Peter Aggleton. London: UCL Press.

Vance, Carole S. 1998. "Social Construction Theory: Problems in the History of Sexuality." Pp 160-170 in *Social Perspectives in Lesbian and Gay Studies: A Reader*, edited by Peter M. Nardi and Beth E. Schneider. New York: Routledge.

WEEK THREE: QUEER THEORY AND SOCIOLOGY OF SEXUALITY

Tuesday, 9/6 **Queer Theory Meets Sociology**

Stein, Arlene and Ken Plummer. 1994. "I Can't Even Think Straight': 'Queer' Theory and the Missing Sexual Revolution in Sociology." *Sociological Theory* 12(2): 178-187.

Epstein, Steven. 1994. "A Queer Encounter: Sociology and the Study of Sexuality." *Sociological Theory* 12(2): 188-202.

Thursday, 9/8 **Queering Sociology**

Ingraham, Chrys. 1994. "The Heterosexual Imaginary: Feminist Sociology and Theories of Gender." *Sociological Theory* 12(2): 203-219.

Namaste, Ki. 1994. "The Politics of Inside/Out: Queer Theory, Poststructuralism, and a Sociological Approach to Sexuality." *Sociological Theory* 12(2): 220-231.

WEEK FOUR: CONSTRUCTING SEXUAL IDENTITIES

Tuesday, 9/13 Constructing the Homosexual and the Heterosexual

Weeks, Jeffrey. 1996. "The Construction of Homosexuality." Pp 41-63 in *Queer Theory/ Sociology*, edited by Steven Seidman. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc.

Wilkinson, Sue and Celia Kitzinger. 1994. "The Social Construction of Heterosexuality." *Journal of Gender Studies* 3(3): 307-316.

Thursday, 9/15 Catch-Up/Review

WEEKS FIVE-SEVEN: NOT GAY: SEX BETWEEN STRAIGHT WHITE MEN

Tuesday, 9/20 Homosexual Contact in Straight White Male Culture **READING RESPONSE 1 DUE**

Ward: Chapter 1: Nowhere Without It: The Homosexual Ingredient in the Making of Straight White Men

Thursday, 9/22 A History of "Not-Gay" Sex

Ward: Chapter 2: Bars, Bikers, and Bathrooms: A Century of Not-Gay Sex

Humphreys, Laud. 1970. "Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places." *Society* 7 (3):10-25.

Tuesday, 9/27 Heteroflexibility

Ward: Chapter 3: Here's How You Know You're Not Gay: The Popular Science of Heterosexual Fluidity

Anderson, Eric. 2008. "'Being Masculine is not About who you Sleep with...': Heterosexual Athletes Contesting Masculinity and the One-Time Rule of Homosexuality." *Sex Roles* 58 (1-2):104-115.

Thursday, 9/29 Homosexual Contact and Heterosexual Authenticity

Ward: Chapter 4: Average Dudes, Casual Encounters: White Homosociality and Heterosexual Authenticity

Tuesday, 10/4 Homosocial Hazing

Ward: Chapter 5: Haze Him! White Masculinity, Anal Resilience, and the Erotic Spectacle of Repulsion

Thursday, 10/6 Heterosexual Constructions of Queerness

Ward: Chapter 6: Against Gay Love: This One Goes Out to the Queers

WEEKS EIGHT-NINE: (DE)CONSTRUCTING SEXUAL IDENTITIES

Tuesday, 10/11 Negotiating Multiple Identities: Race and Gender

Hammonds, Evelyn. 1997. "Black (W)holes and the Geometry of Black Female Sexuality." Pp 136-156 in *Feminism Meets Queer Theory*, edited by Elizabeth Weed and Naomi Schor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Lim-Hing, Sharon. 2000. "Dragon Ladies, Snow Queens, and Asian-American Dykes: Reflections on Race and Sexuality." Pp 296-299 in *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice: An Anthology on Racism, Antisemitism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism, and Classism* edited by Maurianne Adams et al. New York: Routledge.

Thursday, 10/13 Negotiating Multiple Identities: Trans* Sexuality

Schilt, Kristen and Elroi Windsor. 2014. "The Sexual Habitus of Transgender Men: Negotiating Sexuality Through Gender." *Journal of Homosexuality* 61:732-748.

Valentine, David. 2007. "'I Know What I Am': Gender, Sexuality, and Identity." Pp 105-137 in *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Tuesday, 10/18 (Re)Defining Sexual Identities: Hook-Up Culture

****MIDTERM DUE**
NO CLASS, BUT CATCH UP ON READINGS**

Currier, Danielle M. 2013. "Strategic Ambiguity: Protecting Emphasized Femininity and Hegemonic Masculinity in the Hookup Culture." *Gender & Society* 27(5): 704-727.

Rupp, Leila J. et al. 2013. "Queer Women in the Hookup Scene: Beyond the Closet?" *Gender & Society* 28(2): 212-235.

Thursday, 10/20 Constructing New Identities

Scherrer, Kristin S. 2008. "Coming to an Asexual Identity: Negotiating Identity, Negotiating Desire." *Sexualities* 11(5): 521-641.

Ritchie, Ani and Meg Barker. 2006. "'There Aren't Words for What We Do or How We Feel So We Have To Make Them Up': Constructing Polyamorous Languages in a Culture of Compulsory Monogamy." *Sexualities* 9(5): 584-601.

WEEK TEN: GAY PLACES AND SPACES

Tuesday, 10/25 Gay Identity and Place: Gay Enclaves

Ghaziani, Amin. 2014. "Introduction." Pp 1-32 in *There Goes the Gayborhood?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Thursday, 10/27 Troubling Sexual Identities and Attractions: Drag

Rupp, Leila J. et al. 2010. "Drag Queens and Drag Kings: The Difference Gender Makes." *Sexualities* 13(3): 275-294.

WEEK ELEVEN: FEMINIST PORN

Tuesday, 11/1 The Feminist Sex Wars: Anti-Porn

Dworkin, Andrea. 2000. "Against the Male Flood: Censorship, Pornography, and Equality." Pp 19-38 in *Feminism & Pornography*, edited by Drucilla Cornell. New York: Oxford University Press.

Thursday, 11/3 Women Making Pornography

Penley, Constance, et al. 2013. "Introduction: The Politics of Producing Pleasure." Pp 9-20 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Bakehorn, Jill A. 2010. "Women-Made Pornography" Pp 91-111 in *Sex for Sale: Prostitution, Pornography and the Sex Industry*, 2nd edition, edited by Ronald Weitzer. New York: Routledge.

Tuesday, 11/8 In Their Own Words: Feminist Pornographers

Taormino, Tristan. 2013. "Calling the Shots: Feminist Porn in Theory and Practice." Pp 255-264 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Love, Sinnamon. 2013. "A Question of Feminism." Pp 97-104 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Ryan, Dylan. 2013. "Fucking Feminism." Pp 121-129 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Flores, April. 2013. "Being Fatty D: Size, Beauty, and Embodiment in the Adult Industry." Pp 279-283 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

WEEK TWELVE: LGBTQ PORN

Thursday, 11/10 Gay/Lesbian Porn

Butler, Heather. 2004. "What Do You Call a Lesbian With Long Fingers? The Development of Lesbian and Dyke Pornography." Pp 167-197 in *Porn Studies*, edited by Linda Williams. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Tuesday, 11/15 Genderqueer/Trans* Porn ****READING RESPONSE 2 DUE****

Lee, Jiz. 2013. "Uncategorized: Genderqueer Identity and Performance in Independent and Mainstream Porn." Pp 273-278 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Angel, Buck. 2013. "The Power of My Vagina." Pp 284-286 in *Feminist Porn Book*

Hill-Meyer, Tobi. 2013. "Where the Trans Women Aren't: The Slow Inclusion of Trans Women in Feminist and Queer Porn." Pp 155-163 in *Feminist Porn Book*

WEEK THIRTEEN-FOURTEEN: RACE AND CLASS IN PORN

Thursday, 11/17 Depicting Class

Kipnis, Laura. 1996. "Disgust and Desire: *Hustler Magazine*." Pp 122-160 in *Bound and Gagged: Pornography and the Politics of Fantasy in America*. New York: Grove Press.

Tuesday, 11/22 Depicting Race

Miller-Young, Mireille. 2013. "Interventions: The Deviant and Defiant Art of Black Women Porn Directors." Pp 105-120 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Cruz, Ariane. 2013. "Pornography: A Black Feminist Woman Scholar's Reconciliation." Pp 215-227 in *The Feminist Porn Book*

Thursday, 11/24 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

WEEK FIFTEEN: CATCH-UP/REVIEW

Tuesday, 11/29 Depicting Race (Cont)

Thursday, 12/1 Catch-Up/Review

WEEK SIXTEEN: READING, REVIEW, AND RECITATION

Monday, 12/5- Friday, 12/9

FINAL EXAM DUE: Tuesday 12/13 at 11am