

Sociology 135: Sexual Cultures Fall 2019

INSTRUCTOR Jill Bakehorn, Ph.D. (Pronouns: she/her or they/them)
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Drop-in Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:15-11:15am
Sign-up Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11:30am
Sign-up: <http://www.wejoinin.com/JillBakehorn>

CLASS MEETING Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 1:00-1:59pm
141 McCone

GSIs AND SECTIONS Miranda Smith (msmith13@berkeley.edu)
Sections: S101 MW 3:00-3:59pm 220 Wheeler
S102 MW 4:00-4:59pm 104 Wheeler

Margaret Eby (margaret_eby@berkeley.edu)
Sections: S103 8:00-8:59am 155 Barrows
S104 MW 9:00-9:59am 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 begins with an examination of sociological theories of sexuality. 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 also examine queer theory and the challenges it poses to common-sense understandings of sexuality and identity.

Utilizing these theories, we will explore the tension between our sense of self or subjectivity and the larger social structures, cultures, and communities in which we are embedded. How do people make sense of sexual feelings, behaviors, and identities within larger sociocultural contexts? We will discuss structural dynamics like gender norms, heteronormativity, racial hierarchies, class cultures, scientific knowledge, institutional constraints, and cultural spheres and how these impact individuals’ understandings of their own sexuality and what is possible. How do collective groups challenge, expand, and transform the boundaries of sexuality and sexual identities?

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 or that differ greatly from your own experiences, preferences, and beliefs. It is important that we maintain a non-judgmental attitude.

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
- Understand how our sexualities are shaped by sociocultural forces as well as how we may contribute to changing societal understandings of sexuality
- Write succinct papers that effectively synthesize course materials and apply theory

REQUIRED TEXTS

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

Course Reader: Available at Copy Central (2411 Telegraph) and on bCourses. The book is on reserve at Moffitt Library and may be available online—check the library website.

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.

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 essay midterm and final exam. Each is worth 25% of your final grade. The essays will require you to use course content to explain a particular social problem or phenomenon.

Participation: Attendance and participation in weekly section is required. **Sections will meet on Wednesdays** every week. Mondays will be scheduled as needed for extra help with assignments, material, and other issues that may come up. Your GSI will inform you when these sections will be held.

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 (10%)

GRADE SCALE

| Grade Range | Grade |
|-------------|-------|
| 97-100 | A+ |
| 93-96 | A |
| 90-92 | A- |
| 87-89 | B+ |
| 83-86 | B |
| 80-82 | B- |
| 77-79 | C+ |
| 73-76 | C |
| 70-72 | C- |
| 67-69 | D+ |
| 63-66 | D |
| 60-62 | D- |
| 0-59 | F |

COURSE FORMAT AND POLICIES

Readings: Readings should be completed prior to class. You must keep up with the readings to participate in class/section discussions and complete assignments. Bring your reading materials to every class; you will likely need to refer to them.

All of your assigned readings (aside from the required book) are available on bCourses and as a reader at Copy Central on Telegraph.

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.

I will give unannounced writing assignments to be completed in class. These are an important component of your participation grade. They will be used for both in-class and section discussions.

You can also participate by posting links to news stories or videos, as well as any relevant thoughts on issues related to sexuality in the discussion board on bCourses. Be sure to contextualize any posts by connecting them to issues in the class. Provide **content warnings** where appropriate.

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

Course Slides: I use course slides which often incorporate media. I will post course slides, 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 Notes and Recordings: Course notes should not be disseminated. That means you are forbidden from posting them online on forums like Course Hero. You must obtain permission from me to record lectures.

Course Etiquette: I expect you to be engaged and focused during class time. That means you should avoid distractions—the biggest is typically our phones. All phones must be silenced and put away during class.

Laptop Policy: I strongly encourage you to take notes without a computer if you are able. If you need 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 course 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.

Names and Pronouns: You have the right to be referred to by the name you prefer and the correct gender pronouns. Because the name listed in University records may not correspond to your preferred name, please inform me of your name (and pronunciation) and your pronouns so that I can ensure you are properly recognized and respected.

GRADING POLICIES

No **late assignments** will be accepted without prior approval.

Turnitin: All of your assignments will be checked by TurnItIn for plagiarism. Keep in mind, this program keeps a database of previously submitted papers as well.

Be sure to carefully consider assignment feedback; it is provided to help you improve. For in-text feedback, **click on the link “View Feedback”** which may not be visible if you are not in full-screen mode.

Revise and Resubmit: You will be given the opportunity to revise and resubmit your papers for Reading Responses 1 and 2 and the Midterm. Instructions will be uploaded to bCourses.

Re-Grade Policy: If, after you submitted your revised work, you would still 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. Be sure to make specific reference to your work, don't simply say that you responded to the questions asked. Demonstrate how you did so.

You must request a re-grade within 7 days of the revised assignment being returned. 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 and 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 ASAP rather than doing something you'll very likely regret.

OFFICE HOURS

Please see Page 1 for information about my office hours.

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, please take advantage of office hours—we are here to help! Just keep in mind that we will be much more amenable to granting extensions when we 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 in the future when you may need letters of recommendation.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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

Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Services

To learn more about these issues, how to support survivors, or how to file a report and receive support services, start here: <http://survivorsupport.berkeley.edu>. **Please note that I am not a confidential advocate; I am a mandated reporter.** To speak to a confidential care advocate: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/dean/confidential-care-advocate/>

Economic, Food, and Housing Support

If you are in need of economic, food, or housing support, you can find help at basicneeds.berkeley.edu. You may be eligible for money to buy groceries via calfresh.berkeley.edu or our [Food Assistance Program](#). If you are in need of food immediately, please visit our UC Berkeley Food Pantry at pantry.berkeley.edu/.

Course Outline: Readings are to be **completed** on the day listed below. Schedule is subject to change.

WEEKS ONE—THREE: CONSTRUCTING SEXUALITY & QUEER THEORY

Wednesday, 8/28 Introductions

Friday, 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.

Foucault, Michel. 1990. "We 'Other Victorians.'" Pp 3-13 in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Vol 1. New York: Vintage.

Monday, 9/2 NO CLASS: LABOR DAY

Wednesday, 9/4 Sexuality: Discourse, Power, and Knowledge

Foucault, Michel. 1990. "The Incitement to Discourse." Pp 17-35 in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Vol 1. New York: Vintage.

———. "Domain." Pp 103-114 in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Vol 1. New York: Vintage.

Friday, 9/6 Constructing Sexual Hierarchies

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.

Monday, 9/9 Critiques of the Social Construction of Sexuality

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.

Wednesday, 9/11 Queer Theory Meets Sociology

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

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.

Friday, 9/13 **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

Monday, 9/16 **Constructing the Homosexual**

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

Wednesday, 9/18 **Constructing the Heterosexual**

Ghaziani, Amin. 2017. "Heterosexualities." Pp 86-127 in *Sex Cultures*. Malden, MA: Polity.

Friday, 9/20 **Catch-Up/Review**

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

Monday, 9/23 **Homosexual Contact in Straight White Male Culture**

Jane Ward: Chapter 1: Nowhere Without It: The Homosexual Ingredient in the Making of Straight White Men in *Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men*

Wednesday, 9/25 **A History of "Not-Gay" Sex**

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

Friday, 9/27 **A History of "Not-Gay" Sex**
READING RESPONSE 1 DUE

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

Monday, 9/30 **Heteroflexibility**

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

Wednesday, 10/2 Homosexual Contact and Heterosexual Authenticity

Jane Ward: Chapter 4: Average Dudes, Casual Encounters: White Homosociality and Heterosexual Authenticity in *Not Gay*

Friday, 10/4 Homosexual Contact and Heterosexual Authenticity

McCune Jr, Jeffrey Q. 2008. "Out' in the Club: The Down Low, Hip-Hop, and the Architecture of Black Masculinity." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 28 (3): 298-314.

Monday, 10/7 Homosocial Hazing

Jane Ward: Chapter 5: Haze Him! White Masculinity, Anal Resilience, and the Erotic Spectacle of Repulsion in *Not Gay*

Wednesday, 10/9 Heterosexual Constructions of Queerness

Jane Ward: Chapter 6: Against Gay Love: This One Goes Out to the Queers in *Not Gay*

Friday, 10/11 Catch-up/Review

WEEKS EIGHT-ELEVEN: (DE)CONSTRUCTING SEXUAL IDENTITIES

Monday, 10/14 Negotiating Multiple Identities: Race, Place, Gender, and Sexuality

Carrillo, Hector. 2017. "Shifting Sexualities and the Dynamics of Cross-Racial Attraction." Pp 179-215 in *Pathways of Desire: The Sexual Migration of Mexican American Men*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Wednesday, 10/16 Negotiating Multiple Identities: Race, Place, Gender, and Sexuality

Carrillo, Hector. 2017. "Power, Vulnerability, and Passion." Pp 233-256 in *Pathways of Desire: The Sexual Migration of Mexican American Men*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Friday, 10/18 Negotiating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, and Sexuality: Sexual Labor, Stigma, and Community

Ferguson, Jason L. 2017. "From the Heart': Sex, Money, and the Making of a Gay Community in Senegal." *Gender & Society* 31 (2):245-265.

Monday, 10/21 **Negotiating Multiple Identities: Race, Sexualities,
and the Creation of a Category**

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.

Wednesday, 10/23 **Negotiating (Trans) Gender, Nationality, Race,
Ethnicity, and Sexuality in an Online Marketplace**

Vartabedian, Julieta. 2019. "Bodies and Desires on the Internet: An Approach to Trans Women Sex Workers' Websites." *Sexualities* 22 (1-2):224-243.

Friday, 10/25 **TAKE HOME MIDTERM
NO CLASS**

Monday, 10/28 **Constructing New Identities: Asexuality**

Przybylo, Ela. 2016. "Introducing Asexuality, Unthinking Sex." Pp 181-191 in *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies, Third Edition* edited by Nancy L. Fisher and Steven Seidman. New York: Routledge.

Scherrer, Kristin S. 2008. "Coming to an Asexual Identity: Negotiating Identity, Negotiating Desire." *Sexualities* 11 (5):621-641.

Wednesday, 10/30 **Constructing New Identities: Polysexualities and
Language**

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.

Friday, 11/1 **Beyond Monogamy: Polyqueer Sexualities**

Schippers, Mimi. 2016. "Introduction: Polyqueer Sexualities." Pp 1-28 in *Beyond Monogamy: Polyamory and the Future of Polyqueer Sexualities*. New York: New York University Press.

Yates, Carolyn. 2018. "Six Queers on Polyamory and Identity." *Autostraddle*. May 15. <https://www.autostraddle.com/six-queers-on-polyamory-and-identity-419254/>

Hines, Alice. 2019. "Polyamory Works for Them." *The New York Times*. August 3. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/03/style/polyamory-nonmonogamy-relationships.html>

Monday, 11/4 (Re)Defining Sexual Identities: BDSM and Consent

Fanghanel, Alexandra. 2019. "Asking for It: BDSM Sexual Practice and the Trouble of Consent." *Sexualities* 3 (4):1-18.

Wednesday, 11/6 (Re)Defining Sexual Identities: BDSM and Taboo

Cruz, Ariane. 2016. "Chapter 1: The Dark Side of Desire: Racial-Sexual Alterity and the Play of Race." Pp 29-73 in *The Color of Kink: Black Women, BDSM, and Pornography*. New York: New York University Press.

Friday, 11/8 Catch-up/Review

WEEKS TWELVE-THIRTEEN: THE CULTURES OF HOOKING UP

Monday, 11/11 VETERANS DAY: NO CLASS

Wednesday, 11/13 Campus Hook Up Culture

Wade, Lisa. 2017. "Introduction: The New Culture of Sex." Pp 13-25 in *American Hookup: The New Culture of Sex on Campus*. New York, NY: Norton.

—. "Hooking Up: A How-To." Pp 27-49 in *American Hookup: The New Culture of Sex on Campus*. New York, NY: Norton.

Friday, 11/15 Unequal Pleasures in Hook Up Culture

Wade, Lisa. 2017. "Unequal Pleasures." Pp 158-179 in *American Hookup: The New Culture of Sex on Campus*. New York, NY: Norton.

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

Monday, 11/18 Social Structure, Race and Romantic Preferences

Robinson, Russell K. 2008. "Structural Dimensions of Romantic Preferences." *Fordham Law Review* 76 (6):2787-2819.

Wednesday, 11/20 Asian American/White Interracial Relationships and Power

Nemoto, Kumiko. 2009. "The Good Wife." Pp 39-72 in *Racing Romance: Love, Power, and Desire among Asian American/White Couples*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Friday, 11/22 **Sexual Racism in Online Dating**
READING RESPONSE 2 DUE

Kao, Grace et al. 2018. "Asian American Men in Romantic Dating Markets." *Contexts* 17 (4):48-53.

Shaw, Yowei and Abby Wendle. 2019. "A Very Offensive Rom-Com." *Invisibilia*. April 5. <https://www.npr.org/2019/04/04/709948132/a-very-offensive-rom-com>

WEEKS FOURTEEN-FIFTEEN: ACTIVISM, CULTURE, AND PORN

Monday, 11/25 **Women Making Pornography**

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

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.

Taormino, Tristan. 2013. "Calling the Shots: Feminist Porn in Theory and Practice" Pp 255-264 in *The Feminist Porn Book: The Politics of Producing Pleasure*. New York: The Feminist Press.

Wednesday, 11/27 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS**

Friday, 11/29 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS**

Monday, 12/2 **Genderqueer/ Trans* Activism & Subjectivity in Porn**

Barriault, Marcel. 2016. "Bucking Heteronormativity: Buck Angel as Porn Performer, Producer and Pedagogue." *Porn Studies* 3 (2):133-146.

Trouble, Courtney. 2014. "Finding Gender through Porn Performance." *Porn Studies* 1 (1-2):197-200.

Lee, Jiz. 2015. "They Came to See the [Queer] Porn Star Talk." *Porn Studies* 2 (2-3): 272-274.

Wednesday, 12/4 Constructing Authentic Sexuality?

Young, Madison. 2014. "Authenticity and its Role within Feminist Pornography." *Porn Studies* 1 (1-2):186-188.

Bakehorn, Jill. 2016. "Making Politics Explicit: Depicting Authenticity in Women-Made Pornography." Pp 456-467 in *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies, Third Edition* edited by Nancy L. Fisher and Steven Seidman. New York: Routledge.

Friday, 12/6 Conclusions/Review

WEEK SIXTEEN: READING, REVIEW, AND RECITATION

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9-FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM: Due WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18 AT 10PM