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SEX AND SCIENCE: THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE

Fall 2014

Course Overview and Goals:

Have you ever wondered why people trust science as a source of truth about sexual difference and sexuality? Or why it is we think people are “born” with their sexual orientations, desires, and preferences? Are sexual identities “natural” phenomena? And do bodies serve as the “real” foundation of supposedly binary sexual differences? *Sex and Science: The Power of Knowledge* explores these very questions. In this course, we will adopt an historical perspective to investigate how science has influenced our views regarding sexual difference and sexuality, and how science has claimed authority over questions regarding sex and sexuality. We will also examine how scientific knowledge about sexuality is informed by beliefs about gender, race, ethnicity, ability, and class, how the creation of scientific knowledge about sex has been shaped by broader social, political, and economic events, and how sexual science has been created through transnational exchanges.

Our course will be organized around three thematically distinct units, namely:

Unit 1: What is Sexual Science? Who creates it, and where?

Unit 2: Varieties of Sexual Science

Unit 3: Areas of Investigation

This course aims not only to introduce you to the history and contemporary practice of sexual scientific knowledge creation, but also to encourage you to critically analyze *how* this knowledge has been (and is produced), *what* counts as knowledge, and *who* gets recognized as an “expert” (and why). Furthermore, it invites you to evaluate the merits and worth—to individuals and society at large—of sexual scientific research.

Readings and Course Structure:

This seminar is an upper-level undergraduate/graduate level class; as such, it involves a considerable amount of reading. Reading, discussing, and critically reflecting on these readings therefore constitute the core work of this course. To cover the material, class meetings will alternate between two different formats. On some weeks, we will all read the same texts. For these weeks, one (possibly two) of our classmates will present the readings with a few introductory comments regarding the texts and their authors; prepare questions to guide our discussion; and facilitate our discussion. The presenter(s) should circulate discussion questions at least 24 hours in advance of our meeting to give the rest of the class a chance to prepare thoughts, commentary, and follow-up questions.

On other weeks, we will read a (small) common set of readings, *as well as* a set of readings assigned to different groups determined in the first meeting. Thus, Group I will read the texts listed under the Roman Numeral I; Group II will read the texts listed under the Roman Numeral II; and Group III will read the texts listed under the Roman Numeral III. During these meetings, each group will take 30 minutes to present their readings to the rest of the group, with an eye to relating their texts to the common readings as well as other readings undertaken in the class. (Preparation for presentation will involve group work outside of class time). We will then use the remaining time to discuss and make connections between all the texts, including the common readings.

Required Texts:

Most readings are available via Moodle and (especially) UMass libraries' E-reserves system; please see the attached information sheet regarding how to access E-reserves. Use the course password "sex592".

The following two texts are recommended for purchase for all class participants:

- Anne Fausto Sterling, *Myths of Gender: Biological Theories About Men and Women*, Revised Edition (Basic Books, 2008)
- Rebecca Jordan Young, *Brain Storm: The Flaws in the Science of Sex Differences* (Harvard University Press, 2010)

Depending upon your group assignment, one of these three texts is recommended for purchase:

- Group I. Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (Basic Books, 2000)
- Group II. Elizabeth Reis, *Bodies in Doubt: An American History of Intersex* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010)
- Group III. Katrina Karkazis, *Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experience* (Duke University Press, 2008)

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance and Participation: 40%
Writing Assignments: 60% (in total)

Attendance and Participation (40%):

The attendance grade is based upon multiple components, including your solo/pair presentation of readings, your participation in and presentation of group readings, and your regular attendance and participation in seminar meetings.

Attendance and Participation are taken very seriously. I view the seminar meeting to be a critical site of learning and intellectual development. For this reason, all participants are expected to attend all class meetings with the reading completed, thoughts and questions prepared, and, on certain weeks, presentations of group-specific readings ready. If you have to miss a class, please be sure to email me, preferably beforehand. If you miss more than two classes, please arrange to meet with me in order to discuss how to make up the work missed.

Writing Assignments (60%)

"Position Papers" (3 x 5 = 15%): Three times during the course—once at the beginning, once in the middle, and once at the end—you will prepare a 2-3 page double-spaced paper that addresses the following question:

"On the whole, do you think that scientific research into and writing about sexual difference and sexuality undertaken over the past centuries has provided objective yet socially beneficial knowledge?"

These papers should be written in an informal style, akin to a journal entry. They provide a way for you to record and gauge the development of your thoughts over the course of the semester. Papers will be evaluated based on their completion, and on evidence of engagement and thoughtful reflection upon the readings. Papers should be submitted via email by 5pm EST on their due date (provided below).

Literature Reviews (3 x 15 = 45%): As mentioned earlier, the course is divided into three thematically distinct units. You will write three literature reviews, each worth 15% of your final grade, about each of the sections. Each paper should be between 8-10 pages, and should be submitted via email by 5pm EST on its due date (provided below).

There are many detailed guides online that can help you write a literature review; see for example <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/> or <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/ReviewofLiterature.html>.

For the purpose of this assignment, your literature review should:

- provide a concise summary and survey of the literature on a given topic or theme, grouping literature according to certain common denominators (e.g. similar arguments, methods, points of view, gaps in analysis, etc...)
- track changes over time in the literature (i.e. how scholarship about Topic A written in 2014 is different from that written in 1990 or 1970) and highlight major turning points (e.g. introduction of new arguments/perspectives, new methodology, new kinds of evidence, etc...)
- offer synthetic commentary on all of the surveyed literature, pointing out major points of agreement and disagreement
- express the author's own (critical) viewpoint, specifically on the following questions: Upon reviewing the literature about Topic A, what is missing? What gaps exist in the literature? What subjects relating to Topic A require further research/analysis? What viewpoints have been overlooked and should inform further research? What are some potentially fruitful methods yet to be deployed?

For help with your writing or to discuss structuring papers, please feel free to consult with me, or with The Writing Center [<http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/>].

Due Dates:

- Sept. 12: Position Paper # 1
- Oct. 10: Literature Review #1
- Oct. 24: Position Paper # 2
- Nov. 7: Literature Review # 2
- Dec. 5: Position Paper # 3
- Dec. 12: Literature Review #3

Students with Disabilities: To arrange accommodation, please contact Disability Services (<http://www.umass.edu/disability/index.html>).

Academic Dishonesty: This course follows the university guidelines for academic honesty. According to the Dean of Students Office, **academic dishonesty is the attempt to secure unfair advantage for oneself or another in any academic exercise.** For our course, this includes plagiarism and facilitating dishonesty. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty and require further information regarding the Dean of Students' policy, please see http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/#A

Schedule

Sept. 8 Syllabus overview; Getting to Know You; Presentation Sign-Up; Group Assignment

Sept. 12 **Position Paper 1 Due**

Sept. 15 What is “sexual science”? How do scholars account for the increasing “scientization” of sex?

-Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol I*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 1-15, 51-74

-Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, eds., *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science: The History of Attitudes Towards Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), Introduction

-Howard Chiang "Liberating Sex, Knowing Desire: *Scientia Sexualis* and Epistemic Turning Points in the History of Sexuality," *History of the Human Sciences* 23, no. 5 (2010): 42-69

See also: <http://www.hirschfeld.in-berlin.de/index.html> [click on British flag, and on link, “From Then Until Now”]

Sept. 22 Who produces sexual science? And why? Competing Narratives

I. *Liberating and Modernizing Experts*

-Alfred Kinsey et al., *Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behaviour* (1949), 11-32

-Paul Robinson, *Modernization of Sex* (1977), Introduction

-Vern Bullough, *Science in the Bedroom* (1994): Introduction

-*Kinsey*, dir. Bill Condon (2004) [**available to stream through Moodle**]

II. *Practitioners of Disciplinary and Restrictive Governance*

-Jennifer Terry, “The Seductive Power of Science in the Making of Deviant Subjectivity,” in Vernon Rosario, ed., *Science and Homosexualities* (Routledge, 1997), 271-296

-Lillian Faderman, “The Morbidification of Love between Women by 19th Century Sexologists,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 4, no. 1 (Fall 1978), 73-88.

-Sheila Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies: Feminism and Sexuality, 1880-1930* (Spinifex, 1997), Introduction, 7, 10

III. *Diverse Actors Producing Contested, Complex, Polyvalent Knowledge*

-Harry Oosterhuis, “Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s Stepchildren of Nature: Psychiatry and the Making of Homosexual Identity,” in Vernon Rosario, ed., *Science and Homosexualities* (Routledge, 1997)

-Judy Greenaway, “It’s What You Do With It That Counts: Interpretations of Otto Weininger,” in Lucy Bland and Laura Doan, eds., *Sexology in Culture: Labeling Bodies and Desires* (University of Chicago Press, 1997)

-Steve Epstein, “Democratic Science? AIDS Activism and the Contested Construction of Knowledge,” *Socialist Review* 91, no. 2 (April-June, 1991): 35-64

Sept. 29 Geographies of Sexual Science: Why does place matter in the production of knowledge?

-Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (University of California Press, 2003), Ch. 3

-Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (University of California Press, 2002), Ch. 1

-Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan* (University of California Press, 2003), Introduction

-Liat Kozma, "We the Sexologists..." Arabic Medical Writings on Sexology, 1879-1943," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22, no. 3 (September 2013): 426-445

Oct. 6 Varieties of Sexual Science: Sexology

-Rita Felski, "Introduction," in Lucy Bland and Laura Doan, eds., *Sexology in Culture: Labeling Bodies and Desires*

I. *Foundations*

Richard v. Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1894), 1-23

Cesare Lombroso, *The Criminal Woman, The Normal Woman, and the Prostitute* (2004; 1895), 58-72

II. *Emerging Science, Canonical Texts*

August Forel, *The Sexual Question* (1908; 1905), Chapter 5, 104-143

Iwan Bloch, *Sexual Life of Our Times* (2006; 1907), 1-6, 407-452

III. *Neglected Voices: Gendering Sexology*

Lesley Hall, eds., *Outspoken Women An Anthology of Women's Writing on Sex, 1870–1969* (Routledge, 2005), 37-94

Oct 10 ****Literature Review 1 Due****

Oct. 14 Varieties of Sexual Science: Psychoanalysis

-Eli Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis* (Vintage, 2004), Introduction, Ch. 2

-Frank Sulloway, *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend* (Basic Books, 1992), Ch. 3

-Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), in *Freud Reader* (239-258)

-Karen Horney, "The Dread of Woman," in *Feminine Psychology* (W. W Norton, 1967), 133-146

[As an aide], see:

-Elizabeth Auchincloss and Eslee Samberg, eds., *Psychoanalytic Terms and Concepts* (American Psychoanalytic Association, 2012)

- Salman Akhtar, *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (Karnac, 2009)

-Psychoanalysis and Its Legacy (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00545cg>)

-One Hundred Years of Psychoanalysis: A Timeline (<http://vimeo.com/7298918>)

Oct. 20 Varieties of Sexual Science: Eugenics

-Sir Francis Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development* (1883), 1-25

-“Eugenics” in Lucy Bland and Laura Doan, *Sexology Uncensored* (1997)

-Alison Blashford and Philippa Levine, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* (2010), Introduction and Epilogue

I. Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (University of California Press, 2001), Chapter 1

II. Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and US Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (University of California Press, 2002), Ch. 3

III. Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny After Reconstruction* (University of North Carolina Press, 2004), Prologue and Chapter 3

Oct. 24 **Position Paper 2 Due**

Oct. 27 Varieties of Sexual Science: Biology and Natural Sciences

-Erika Millam, *Looking for a Few Good Males: Female Choice in Evolutionary Biology* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), Introduction and Ch. 1

-Paul R. Abramson and Steven Pinkerton, eds., *Sexual Nature/Sexual Culture* (University of Chicago Press, 1995), Introduction, Part 1

Nov. 3 Arenas of Investigation: History of Research into Sexual Difference

-Thomas Laquer, "Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology," in Catherine Gallagher and Thomas Laquer, eds., *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century* (University of California Press, 1987), 1-41

-*Sexology Uncensored* (1998), Part I: Gender and Sexual Difference

-Elisabeth Lloyd, "Pre-Theoretical Assumptions in Evolutionary Explanations of Female Sexuality," in Evelyn Fox Keller and Helen E. Longino, eds., *Feminism and Science* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 91-120

Nov. 7 **Literature Review 2 Due**

Nov. 10 Areas of Investigation: The Persistence of Research into Sexual Difference

-Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer, *A Natural History of Rape: Biological Bases of Sexual Coercion* (MIT Press, 2000), Preface, Ch. 1

-Podcast: CBC, *Delusions of Gender* Pts 1 and 2

-Anne Fausto Sterling, *Myths of Gender: Biological Theories About Men and Women*, Revised Edition (Basic Books, 2008), Chs. 1-7

Nov. 17 Areas of Investigation: Challenging Sexual Binaries

-Germaine Greer, "Caster Semenya sex row: What makes a woman?" *Guardian* 21 (2009): 13

-Katrina Karkazis and Rebecca Jordan-Young, "Rip up new Olympic Sex Test Rules," *New Scientist* 215, no. 2874 (21 July 2012), 26-27

I. Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (Basic Books, 2000)

II. Elizabeth Reis, *Bodies in Doubt: An American History of Intersex* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010)

III. Katrina Karkazis, *Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experience* (Duke University Press, 2008)

Nov. 24 Areas of Investigation: Investigating Desires, Constructing Subjectivities—The Critical *Fin-de-Siècle*

-"Homosexualities," *Sexology Uncensored* (1998), 39-72

-Sigmund Freud, "The Psychogenesis of a Case of Female Homosexuality," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 1 (1920), 125-149

- Johanna Elberskirchen, "What Is Homosexuality," *Revolution and the Emancipation of Women* (1904), 3-10 [**uploaded to Moodle**]

-Anna Rüling, "What Interest Does the Women's Movement Have in the Homosexual Problem?" *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics* (Routledge, 1997)

I. Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (University of Chicago Press, 1999), Ch. 2

-Lisa Duggan, *Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence and American Modernity* (Duke University Press, 2000), Ch. 5

II. Siobhan Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Duke University Press, 2000), Introduction, Ch. 1

-Julian Carter, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America* (Duke University Press, 2007), Ch. 3

III. Hubert Kennedy, "Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, First Theorist of Homosexuality," in Vernon Rosario, ed., *Science and Homosexualities* (Routledge, 1997), 26-45

-Chiara Beccalossi, *Female Sexual Inversion: Same-Sex Desires in Italian and British Sexology, c. 1870-1920* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), Part II

Dec. 1 Areas of Investigation: Investigating Desires, Constructing Subjectivities—Sexuality Research in our own Turn of the Century

-Podcast: Alix Spiegel, "81 Words," *This American Life* (18 January 2002) [available online]

-*Scientific American* (May 1994), 44-55

-Ian Sample, "Male sexual orientation influenced by genes, study shows," *Guardian* (13 February 2014)

-Rebecca Jordan Young, *Brain Storm: The Flaws in the Science of Sex Differences* (Harvard University Press, 2010)

WATCH: *Orgasm, Inc* (2009) [<http://orgasminc.org/>] [**available through Moodle**]

Dec. 5 **Position Paper 3 Due**

Dec. 12 **Literature Review 3 Due**