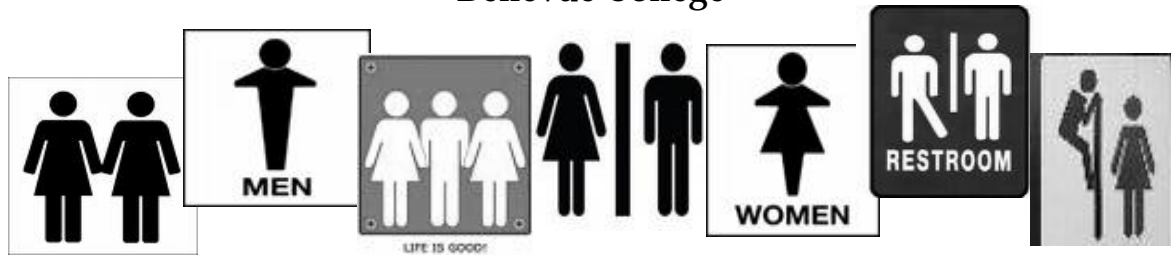


Introduction to Sex & Sexuality
SOC 256, Fall 2009
Bellevue College



Instructor: Dr. Lori Saffin
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Office Hours: 12:30 – 1:30 daily
or by appointment

Office Location: D110- I
Class Meets: Daily 11:30-12:20
Class Location: R-310

Course Introduction:

- Are all people clearly either “male” or “female”?
- Why do women and men appear to think so differently about sex?
- Does everyone around the world “have sex” in the same ways?
- Is sexual orientation learned?
- Why is penis size so important to men and breast size so important to women?
- Is there a sexual double standard for women and men?
- Are prostitution, pornography, and the adult sex industry harmful to society?
- Why do some men rape?

If any or all of these questions interest you, then you are in the right place! Over the course of the quarter, we will explore these questions as well as many other fascinating topics pertaining to sex and sexuality. I look forward to working with you and sharing my enthusiasm for the sociology of sexuality. I have a passion for this subject matter, and I hope that you have a passion too.

This class is about sex. But it’s not just about sex. It is also about gender, culture, and “deviance.” It is about the body. It’s about power, politics, inequality, and social change. Sociologists know that sex does not happen in a vacuum (although that might be appealing to some people!). To the contrary, sex is tied up with history, culture, politics, and power. We will explore these connections over the next several weeks. Our major goal is to understand how the larger social environment fundamentally shapes our intimate, private sex lives for better or worse.

We live in a society where sex is everywhere – on television and radio, in movies and the arts, on bus stop billboards and magazine advertisements. We talk about sex at home, in school, with our friends, and at work. We call people studs, sluts, pimps, players, whores, and prudes. We hear about sex drives, sex scandals, sex toys, sex addicts, and sex slaves. Sex is all around us, touching nearly every aspect of our lives – yet, we rarely take time to study it. In fact, we are often misinformed about sex. This course is designed to untangle sexual myths from sexual realities. You will probably look at sex and sexuality in a very different way after taking this class.

As we all come to the course with strong ideas and beliefs about sexuality, the subject matter can be personally as well as intellectually challenging. Some of what you will learn might be shocking, surprising, or even make you angry. Nevertheless, I hope that you will learn from each class experience and take these lessons with you on your future endeavors.

Required Texts:

1. Michael Kimmel and Rebecca Plante, Sexualities: Identities, Behaviors, and Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
2. Additional articles or handouts will be posted on the course website (My BC under “Shared documents”) or distributed in class

Learning Atmosphere:

I believe that students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this is an active and interactive course where you will often learn by doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our class as a collaborative learning community where we all teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning – I think you’ll enjoy it and learn a lot in the process.

A note about course content: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we will sometimes talk about provocative material in class. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will be framed in an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it’s an opportunity for learning. You may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. You are free to leave the room at any time, but please know you will be responsible for any course material you may have missed while you were gone. Also, profanity exists in our social world and thus will be used throughout this course - so please be advised. If you have any questions or concerns about course content or climate, don’t hesitate to let me know.

Learning and Course Outcomes:

After completing the course, a successful student will be able to:

1. Explain the difference between key concepts in the field, such as “sex,” “gender,” “sexuality,” and “sexual orientation”;
2. Confront the limits and special problems of scientific research on sex and sexuality;
3. Compare norms and cultural perspectives on sexual behavior across societies;
4. Describe the ways in which our culture and society shape our sexual opinions and experiences;
5. Illustrate how gender influences sexual attitudes and behaviors;
6. Better understand sexual practices and perspectives that are outside of your own;
7. Recognize how sex and sexualities are marketed, packaged, and sold by society;
8. Critically examine how societies regulate sexual behavior;
9. Describe what “social construction” means and look at sexuality from a sociological perspective.

General Education Outcomes:

This course’s General Education ratings are: 3 in Critical Thinking; 2 in Reading; 2 in Ethics; 2 in Historical and Intellectual Perspectives, and 2 in Cultural Diversity.

General Course Rules and Expectations:

- **Attendance:** Attend all class meetings and come to class on time. Your presence in class contributes significantly toward your final grade in the course as I cover a lot of material in

class that cannot be found in the readings. More than three unexcused absences or late attendances will lower your grade, and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with me prior to the absence or tardy, unless it is an emergency. Excused absences include doctor's visits, family emergencies, and sometimes work-related issues. If you miss class, please connect with your colleagues to find out what you missed. I highly recommend that you get the names and contact information of one or two of your classmates so you can contact them for any assignments or notes you may have missed while absent.

- **Preparation:** You should come to class having done all the assigned reading and homework and you should always bring the proper supplies with you, including your textbook. Note that the BC guideline for homework is two hours outside of class for each hour spent in class.
- **Assignments:** All assignments are due at the start of the class period. Assignments, papers, homework, or exams must be typed, printed out, stapled, and handed in at the beginning of class. Emailed assignments are not accepted. If you know you are going to be absent on the day an assignment is due, then turn it in early. Please see the writing guidelines for the format of submitting all written assignments.
- **Late Work:** I believe that one of the major lessons students take away from college is the importance of meeting deadlines. As a result, **no late work will be accepted** unless you have had it approved by me BEFORE the due date. Late work will receive a zero grade.
- **Contribution:** Learning about each other's experiences and perspectives is an integral part of the learning process in this course. I believe that you will learn a lot about yourself and your fellow classmates. Therefore, you are expected to be an active participant in our learning environment. An active participant can include contributing to discussions, but can also mean getting to class on time, taking notes, listening to your peers, and coming to class prepared. You should do your best to contribute to class discussions and activities.
- **Respect and Classroom Etiquette:** All electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom at all times. This includes cell phones, blackberries, laptops, i-pods/mp3 players, etc. If you need a laptop to take notes, I will need verification. Furthermore, I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Learning about diverse experiences is central to this course, so it is of the utmost importance that you respect your classmates' experiences, differences, and opinions. In order for us to learn from each other, we have to allow each other to make mistakes and to offer unpopular positions for debate. This is a college classroom and as such, I expect students to behave as adults. I do not tolerate excessive talking or whispering, consistent late arrivals, or early departures. Students who are disrespectful to their classmates or the instructor will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent until arrangements are made with the instructor to return to class and will result in your participation credit lowering.
- **Honesty:** Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in a failing grade for the course and a report to Student Affairs. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge in your papers if you borrowed any ideas, terms, or phrases, even if you have borrowed from a classmate. See the BC handbook on academic dishonesty for further details and if you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me.

Students with Disabilities:

All students are responsible for all requirements of the class, but the way they meet these requirements may vary. If you need specific academic accommodations due to a disability, please speak with me and with Disability Support Services (425)564-2498. You will need to obtain the

appropriate documentation from DSS in room B233. The disability accommodation documentation must be given to me before it is needed rather than afterward, so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Grading:

Grades are based on five factors. (1) Participation and Discussion, (2) Quizzes, (3) Homework/Reflection Papers, (4) Group Research Project and Presentation, and (5) Exams. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

Participation/Discussion	50 points
In-Class Quizzes (5 at 20 points/each)	100 points
Homework/Reflection Paper (10 at 10 points/each)	100 points
Group Research Project and Presentation	150 points
Exams (2 at 100 points/each)	200 points

TOTAL	600 points
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Grade	Points	Percentage
A	555-600	100–93%
A–	543-554	92–90%
B+	525–542	89–87%
B	501–524	86–83%
B–	477–500	82–80%
C+	465–476	79–77%

C	435–464	76–73%
C–	417–434	72–70%
D+	405–416	69–67%
D	357–404	66–60%
F	356 & Below	59% & Below

The following is a brief description of each of the 5 components:

1. Participation/Discussion (50/600 points):

Participation is essential to the format of this class and will therefore contribute significantly toward your grade. In short, your success in this class depends on your active participation. Participation

includes attendance, class discussions, group work, and independent in-class assignments. Accountability for the readings is also taken into consideration. Do not take this portion of your grade lightly!

2. In-Class Quizzes (100/600 points):

At several points throughout the quarter, there will be quizzes based upon the readings for that week. Quiz dates are provided on the syllabus. Note that quizzes can not be made up. They will begin at the start of class and if you are absent or tardy, you will lose full points.

3. Homework/Reflection Papers (100/600 points):

Over the course of the quarter, you will be asked to submit ten 1-page reflection papers or homework assignments. Due dates are listed in the syllabus. Handouts will be given out the week that each assignment is due explaining the question, experiment, or activity that you need to complete.

4. Group Research Project and Presentation (200/600 points):

You will form into groups (of 4 to 5 students each) and conduct original social research as a team. This is not traditional library research; rather, your team will go out into the world and collect data about a course-related topic of your choice. You might decide, for example, to survey BC students about their sexual preferences and prejudices. You might go to a public library and analyze the messages found in children's sex education books. You might analyze how condoms (or tampons) are marketed. Or, you might visit a strip club and conduct a "content analysis" of how sex is sold. Your group will present your research to the class at the end of the quarter. More details about this project will be distributed early in the quarter.

5. Exams (200/600 points):

Over the course of the quarter, you will take two exams that integrate the course's in-class activities (lectures, films, etc.) and readings. Exams are designed to make sure you understand important course concepts and themes. Exams might include multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Please note that you cannot make up missed exams. Exam dates are on the syllabus, so please plan ahead.

General Written Work Guidelines:

All papers or written work should be in Times New Roman, 12 point font, with 1" margins on all sides. Your work must be cited in MLA style and you must always give proper credit to the texts from which you draw and formulate your ideas. Title pages and bibliographies are not counted toward the minimum page requirements. Papers should be written from an academic perspective – so no colloquial language please!

General Grading Guidelines for Written Work:

A Paper - An A paper shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class. It's a paper free from grammar and spelling errors, and a paper that demonstrated your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work.

Your arguments are solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You've demonstrated a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class materials and how they intersect with one another.

B Paper – The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a few grammar issues, but your paper is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a relatively firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well versed in the readings or materials as you could be. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others, but I would like to see you challenge yourself a bit more with the course issues and themes.

C Paper – The C paper means that you're not as invested in the class as I'd like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I'd like you to. Some of what you point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

D Paper – A D paper is not proofread and it does not deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is no integration of material or questions raised in class. The course materials are not presented clearly, or at all. I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows. Please note: a D paper or below may be resubmitted once during the quarter for a better grade.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONSIDERATIONS, OR COMPLAINTS ABOUT A GRADE YOU RECEIVED, I ASK YOU TO TAKE 24 HOURS TO REEXAMINE THE ANSWERS OR THE WRITING THAT YOU SUBMITTED AND THEN COME AND TALK WITH ME.

Syllabus:

You are expected to have read the readings assigned for the current day by the time you arrive in class!

****Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance in class. ****

Week 1:

Monday, Sept. 21st: Introduction to the Course

Go over syllabus; class introductions; beginning definitions

Tuesday, Sept. 22nd: Thinking Critically about Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

Readings: "Introduction," pp. xi-xv

Wednesday, Sept. 23rd: The Social Construction of Sex

Readings: "The Five Sexes: Revisited," pp. 39-44



Thursday, Sept. 24th: Intersexuality: Where Science Meets Sex

Readings: "Making the Cut," on course website

Friday, Sept. 25th: Male ... Female... And? Sex is not so Simple

Readings: "Creating Good-Looking Genitals in the Service of Gender," pp. 64-70

Homework/Reflection Paper # 1 Due



Week 2:

Monday, Sept. 28th: Beyond the Sexual Binary

Readings: "M/F Boxes," pp. 250-253

"Coming Out and Crossing Over," pp. 230-247

Tuesday, Sept. 29th: Contemporary "Issues" Surrounding Sex

Readings: "Labor of Love," course website

"The Question of Caster Semenya's Sex," follow website

<http://contexts.org/socimages/2009/08/22/the-question-of-caster-semenyas-sex/>



Wednesday, Sept. 30th: "Doing Gender"

Readings: "Night to His Day: The Social Construction of Gender," on course website

Quiz #1

Thursday, Oct. 1st: Social Construction of Gender: Cultural Influences

Readings: "Hijras," on course website

Friday, Oct. 2nd: Thinking Outside the Gendered Box

Readings: "Lesbians, Men-Women, and Two-Spirits: Homosexuality and Gender in Native American Cultures," on course website

Homework/Reflection Paper #2 Due



Week 3:

Monday, Oct. 5th: No Class – College Issues Day

Tuesday, Oct. 6th: Social Construction of Sexuality

Readings: "The Social Constructionist's 'Essential' Guide to Sex," on course website

Wednesday, Oct. 7th: Queering Sexualities

Readings: "Homosexual' and 'Heterosexual'" pp. 44-46
"The Heterosexual Questionnaire," pg. 136

Homework/Reflection Paper #3 Due



Thursday, Oct. 8th: Heteronormativity

Readings: "Ritualizing Heterosexuality: Weddings as Performance," on course website
"Do Women Choose Their Sexual Identity?" on course website

Friday, Oct. 9th: Bisexualities

Readings: "Too Many and Not Enough: The Meanings of Bisexual Identities," pp. 216-229
"Bisexualities," on course website

Week 4:

Monday, Oct. 12th: Social Construction of Racialized Sexualities

Readings: "Reconstructing Black Masculinity," on course website
"Black Sexuality: A Taboo Subject," on course website

Quiz #2



Tuesday, Oct. 13th: Black Womanhood: Reconfiguring Stereotypes

Readings: "The Sexual Politics of Black Womanhood," on course website

Wednesday, Oct. 14th: Chicano/a and Latino/a Sexual Representation

Readings: "The Cultural and Historical Influences of Sexuality in 'Hispanic'/'Latin' Women," on course website

Homework/Reflection Paper #4 Due



Thursday, Oct. 15th: Asian American Sexual Identities

Readings: "The Racial Construction of Asian American Women and Men," on course website

Friday, Oct. 16th: Wrap up and Review for Exam #1

Week 5:

Monday, Oct. 19th: Exam 1

Tuesday, Oct. 20th: "Becoming" Sexual

Readings: "Becoming Sexual," pg. 73
"Sexuality and Gender in Children's Daily Worlds," pp. 74-85



Wednesday, Oct. 21st: Debunking Childhood "Innocence"

Readings: "Doing Desire," pp. 87-98
Homework/Reflection Paper #5 Due

Thursday, Oct. 22nd: Adolescent Expressions of Sexual Identity

Readings: "Asian American Adolescents: Issues in the Expression of Sexuality," pp. 106-113



Friday, Oct 23rd: Coming of Age Identities in Queer Youth

Readings: "Dating and Romantic Relationships among Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth," pp. 113-121

Week 6:

Monday, Oct. 26th: Orgasms and Adolescence

Readings: "Faking It," pp. 266-273

Tuesday, Oct. 27th: The Sexual Body and Masculinity

Readings: "The Size Question," on course website

Quiz #3



Wednesday, Oct. 28th: Demystifying the Power of the Penis

Readings: "Pills and Power Tools," on course website

**IT'S THE
LITTLE
PRICK
YOU CAN
DEAL WITH**

Thursday, Oct. 29th: Rationale for Circumcision

Readings: "The Sorcerer's Apprentice: Why Can't We Stop Circumcising Boys?"
on course website

Homework/Reflection Paper #6 Due

Friday, Oct. 30th: The Vagina (ssshhhh!)

Readings: "Socio-cultural Representations of the Vagina," on course website

Week 7:

Monday, Nov. 2nd: Sexual Variations – Paraphilia and Sadomasochism

Readings: "Variations and Adaptations," pg. 257

Visit <http://sexuality.org/1/bdsm/bdsmfaq.html>

"Sadomasochistically Oriented Behavior," pp. 258-265



Tuesday, Nov. 3rd: BDSM Play

Readings: "The Pleasure of the Pain," on course website

Visit <http://www.mistressmatisse.com/welcome.html> to read about one of the
Seattle area's more infamous dominatrixes. Pay particular attention to the
Rules and Boundaries.

Homework/Reflection Paper #7 Due

Wednesday, Nov. 4th: Polyamory/Swinging

Readings: Visit <http://www.sexuality.org/swinging.html> and read what
swinging is, who participates, different types of swinging, and
why people/couples swing

Visit <http://www.polyamorysociety.org/> and learn what
polyamory is, how it differs from swinging, explore the types of
polyamory and other background



Thursday, Nov. 5th: Negotiating Sexual Identities in Public Spaces

Readings: "The Production of Identity and the Negotiation of Intimacy
in a 'Gentleman's Club,'" pp. 300-309

Friday, Nov. 6th: Commercial Sex: Prostitution

Readings: "Prostitution and Fellatio," pp. 310-316
"Fantasy Islands," pp. 331-341



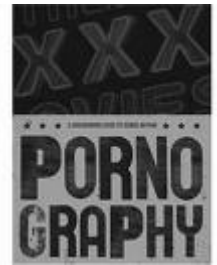
Week 8:

Monday, Nov. 9th: Pornography

Readings: "Pornography," pg. 342

"Sexual Violence in Three Pornographic Media," pp. 343-351

Quiz 4



Tuesday, Nov. 10th: Pornography and the Internet

Readings: "Internet Pornography: A Social Psychological Perspective on Internet Sexuality," pp. 354-366



Wednesday, Nov. 11th: No Class –Professional Development Day

Thursday, Nov. 12th: Pornography and the Media

Readings: "Pornography and the Media," pp. 369-379

Homework/Reflection Paper #8 Due

Friday, Nov. 13th: Performing Sex

Readings: "The Worst Thing is the Screwing," pp. 317-328

Week 9

Monday, Nov. 16th: Sex Work: New Perspectives

Readings: "Creating a Scene: The Work of Performing Sex," pp. 380-389

Tuesday, Nov. 17th: Rape: Beginning Conversations – Lecture

Homework/Reflection Paper #9 Due

Wednesday, Nov. 18th: Sexual Assault and Violence

Readings: "Sexual Terrorism," pp. 409-421



Thursday, Nov. 19th: Rape as a Culture

Readings: "Rape Culture," on course website

Friday, Nov. 20th: I'm Not a Rapist! Men's Responses

Readings: "Men on Rape: What they have to Say about Sexual Violence," on course website

"Men: Comrades in Struggle," on course website

Quiz 5

Week 10

Monday, Nov. 23rd: Wrap up and Review for Exam #2

Tuesday, Nov. 24th: Exam #2

Wednesday, Nov. 25th: No Class

Thursday, Nov. 26th: No Class

Friday, Nov. 27th: No Class



Week 11

Monday, Nov. 30th: Group Presentations

Tuesday, Dec. 1st: Group Presentations

Wednesday, Dec. 2nd: Group Presentations

Thursday, Dec. 3rd: Group Presentations

Friday, Dec. 4th: Group Presentations



Week 12

Monday, Dec. 7th: Sexuality and Social Change – Wrap up and Discussion

Potluck and Discussion of Where Do We Go From Here

Homework/Reflection Paper #10 Due

11:30-1:20

