SOCI-ANTH 375/4 A **THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF SEXUALITIES** **Winter 2016**

Tuesday and Thursday 1:15 – 2:30 / Hall 509

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES: Although rooted in biology, beliefs and practices regarding human sexuality are not universal. What is taken to be normal and healthy in one situation may be deemed base and sinful in another. Sexuality, like notions of gender, are socially constructed and directed.

This course provides a cross-cultural, inter-disciplinary approach to the study of human sexuality. The main objective, however, is to expand our understanding of human sexualities through an empirically grounded social science perspective. Topics to be addressed include: the components of sexual expression, sexual beliefs and attitudes, theories and methodologies in sexuality research, cross-gender patterns, sexual orientations/behaviours, sexual coercion, sex work, and sexuality education.

CLASS ROOM ENVIRONMENT: Sexuality is a controversial topic and tensions and divergent viewpoints are an inevitable part of the learning process. As a consequence, care must be taken to develop and maintain a supportive classroom environment. Whenever conflict arises, remember to keep channels of listening, exchanging, and learning open. *Our learning environment will be enhanced if we remember not to express disagreement on a level of personal blame or take differences in values, feelings, or opinions personally.* All ethical positions, from feminism to the moral majority, are open to critical examination. In addition, you are asked to critically evaluate your own ways of knowing.

In some classes, explicit sexual references and imagery will be part of the discussions and learning materials. No student is expected to comply with any set of sexual values and you may always retain the right to disagree. Nonetheless, *you are expected to approach sexual references and images in a spirit of scientific inquiry and open-mindedness, respecting the positions and feelings of others in the classroom and those expressed in the materials presented in the course.*

No student will be required to relate personal sexual information of any kind in the course work or group discussions. All, however, *are expected to keep confidential any information garnered from those who do.* You should also be aware that the tension created during discussions about sexuality is often defused by laughter. Unfortunately this may produce even more tension: what one person finds funny, another may not. In this situation you are expected to use the rules of open-mindedness and respect for others outlined above.

COURSE EVALUATION AND EXPECTATIONS: You are expected to attend all classes, to prepare the assigned readings and to complete all assignments by the indicated deadlines (a summary schedule of due dates is provided at the end of this syllabus). Changes to the schedule must be made in advance with the instructor and are normally granted only in the case of medical reasons. Work may be submitted in English or French. Typing (double-spaced) is mandatory for all submitted course work. For the purpose of measuring the length of your submissions, a "page" is considered to be approximately 250 words.

Assignments: There will be an Evaluation of Individual Patterns of Sexual Knowledge (5%), six Reading Reports (20%); one Mid-Term Quiz (25%); and one Final Exam (40%). Ten percent (10%) is set aside for

Class Participation and will be based on attendance, participation in class discussions, and a willingness to undertake the additional small home and class assignments that are initiated during class discussions (Assignment details to be announced).

Assignment Option: You may, if you wish, substitute a Research Paper (40%) for the Final Exam. Students interested in writing a research paper must declare their intention to do so early in the term by submitting an outline/proposal and list of references (details to be announced).

Moodle Site for SOCI-ANTH 375: You are expected to become familiar with the Moodle site for this course. It is available through your MyConcordia Portal. This is where more details about the course and our bi-weekly activities will be posted. Be sure to check it out at least twice a week.

Required Readings: These are listed below with each Unit and Section and can be found in the text book and the course pack. I expect you to have read these materials *before* coming to the class for which they are relevant.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All students are expected to be honest in all of their academic endeavours and relationships with the University (Article 1, *Academic Code of Conduct*). This means that every student must be honest and accurate when presenting work as their own. The *Academic Code of Conduct* sets standards for the behaviour for all members of the University community, defines the offences that constitute academic misconduct, and sets out procedures to deal with offences. To learn more about academic integrity and plagiarism—the presentation of the work of another person as one's own or without proper acknowledgement (Article 16a)—refer to http://www.concordia.ca/students/academic-integrity.html

LATE SUBMISSION / EXTENSION POLICY: Any request for an extension must be received *before* the deadline or it will not be accepted. In fairness to all students, there will not be any exceptions to this policy. If you are unable to submit your assignments by the deadline or complete the mid-term exam on the assigned date, it is your responsibility to request an extension *before* the due date. Make your request to the Instructor.

Extensions will only be granted to students who are able to provide reasonable and verifiable documents supporting the reason for the request. Medical notes, for example, must include dates within which you are excused from work/school along with the signature and contact information for the medical professional writing the note. Note as well, that the dates identified must overlap with the period required for completing the assignment. Vacations and travel plans (work-related or otherwise) are not considered valid reasons for late submissions, or for an inability to complete assignments and exams.

In the case of emergencies, it is your responsibility to notify the Instructor via e-mail as soon as the issue arises in order to determine the course of action required for the matter at hand.

Organize your time effectively to ensure that you submit your work on time. *Any work submitted after the deadline is considered late and will incur a penalty of 10% per day (weekends included) if applicable*. So, if the work submitted one day late is evaluated at 80% the grade will be reduced to 70%. If it is submitted two days late, the grade will be reduced 60%. *The due dates for all the assignments (including the Assignment Option) are listed in the table on the last page of this syllabus.*

REQUIRED READING:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Selected chapters from Hyde, J.S., J.D. DeLamater & E. Sandra Byers. (2015) *Understanding Human Sexuality*, 6th Canadian Edition. McGraw-Hill Ryerson. Print copies and e-Book versions of the bundled chapters are available at the Concordia University Bookstore.

Readings for SOCI-ANTH 375: A course-pack for The Social Construction of Sexualities. Available at the Concordia University Bookstore

Copies of the text and course pack are on reserve in the Sociology-Anthropology Reading Room (Hall 1132).

RECOMMENDED READING:

Vanwesenbeeck, Ine (2009) "Doing gender in Sex and Sex Research." *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 38:883-898.
Shaver, Frances M. (2005) "Sex Work Research: Methodological and Ethical Challenges." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 20(3):296-319.
Crawford, Mary and Danielle Popp (2003) "Sexual Double Standards: A Review and Methodological Critique of Two Decades of Research." *The Journal of Sex Research* 40(1):13-26.
Herbenick, Debra et al. (2011) "Beliefs about Women's Vibrator Use: Results from a Nationally Representative Probability Survey in the United States." *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy* 37 (5):329-345.
Struckman-Johnson, Cindy and David Struckman-Johnson (2003) "Tactics of Sexual Coercion: When Men and Women Won't Take No for an Answer." *The Journal of Sex Research* 40 (1):76-86.
Lewis et al. (2005) Managing Risk and Safety on the Job: The Experiences of Canadian Sex Workers. *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality* 17(1/2): 147-167.

COURSE OUTLINE:

UNIT I : Introduction to Sexuality Studies

This part of the course provides a general introduction to the sociological study of human sexuality. Issues to be covered include: common sense and science as well as an evaluation of your own patterns of sexual knowledge.

Unit I.1: Introduction to Sexuality Studies

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter 1
Tiefer (2004) "'Am I Normal?' The Question of Sex"

Lesson #1 (Thur Jan 7): An Introduction to the course
Lesson #2 (Tue Jan 12): "Let's Talk about Sex"

Completed Sexual Attitude Survey due January 12

Unit I.2: Common Sense & Science

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities Chapters 2 & 3
Weeks (1986) "The Invention of Sexuality"
Evaluation of Individual Patterns of Sexual Knowledge (T-F Quiz Part 2)

T-F Quiz Part 2 due January 14

Lesson #3 (Thur Jan 14): Tools of the Trade
Lesson #4 (Tue Jan 19): Tools of the Trade con't

UNIT II: Critical Thinking and Research Tools

This Unit focuses on theoretical perspectives on sexuality and issues in sexuality research. Both essentialist and social constructionist theories will be discussed and you will be expected to apply them to what we learn in Units III and IV. We begin this Unit by thinking critically about our own beliefs and attitudes.

Unit II.1: Thinking Critically about Our Own Beliefs and Attitudes

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter 3: L04 (pp. 58-66)
Walsh et al. (2011) "Awkward or Amazing: Gender and Age Trends in First Intercourse Experiences"

Reading Report due January 21

Lesson #5 (Thur Jan 21): Is Canada a Sex Positive Society? Part 1
Lesson #6 (Tue Jan 26): Is Canada a Sex Positive Society? Part 2 (this time with help from the students)

Unit II.2: Theoretical Perspectives and Sex Research

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapters 2 & 3

Kleinplatz (2013) "Three decades of sex: Reflections on sexuality and sexology"

Recommended Reading:

Vanwesenbeeck (2009) "Doing gender in Sex and Sex Research"

Shaver (2005) "Sex Work Research: Methodological and Ethical Challenges"

Lesson #7 (Thur Jan 28): Theoretical Perspectives

Lesson #8 (Tue Feb 2): Methodological Challenges

UNIT III: Components of Sexual Expression

During this part of the course, we focus on several components of sexual expression: gender and sexuality; sexuality and the life cycle, and sexual arousal and response. The critical thinking, theoretical, and methodological skills learned in Unit II will facilitate our analysis of the topics raised here and in Unit IV. During this time students will also be expected to familiarize themselves with some aspects of the social and biological foundations of human sexual response systems.

Unit III.1: Gender and Sexuality

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapters 4 & 5

Allison & Risman (2013) "A double standard for "Hooking Up'"

Blumstein and Schwartz (1989) "Intimate relationships and the creation of sexuality."

Reading Report due February 4

Recommended Reading:

Crawford & Popp (2003) "Sexual Double Standards: A Review and Methodological Critique"

Lesson #9 (Thur Feb 4): Gender & Sexuality Part 1—Gender roles and male and female sexuality

Lesson #10 (Tue Feb 9): Gender & Sexuality Part 2 – Exploring the double sexual standard

Unit III.2: Sexuality and the Life Cycle

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapters 6 & 7

Kaestle & Allen (2011) "The Role of Masturbation in Healthy Sexual Development: Perceptions of Young Adults"

Muehlenhard & Shippee (2010) "Men's and Women's Reports of Pretending Orgasm"

Reading Report due February 11

Lesson #11 (Thur Feb 11): Sexuality and the Life Cycle: childhood and adolescence

Lesson #12 (Tue Feb 16): Sexuality and the Life Cycle: adulthood

Unit III.3: Sexual Arousal and Response

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter 8

Conley et al. (2013) Backlash from the Bedroom: Stigma Mediates Gender Differences in Acceptance of Casual Sex Offers"

Recommended Reading:

Herbenick, Debra et al. (2011) "Beliefs about Women's Vibrator Use"

Lesson #13 (Thur Feb 18): Sexual Arousal and Sexual Response

MIDTERM BREAK (Reading Week: No classes on Tue Feb 23 or Thur Feb 24)

Lesson #14: **Tuesday March 1: Mid-term Quiz** (in class)

The *Best* of the first set of 3 RRs due March 1

UNIT IV: The Social Organization and Shaping of Sexualities

This part of the course will focus on some of the ways that sexual beliefs and attitudes are organized and shaped in our own society. Five different issues will be discussed. In the process you will learn to evaluate some of the theoretical and methodological issues raised in UNIT I.

Unit IV.1: Sexual Orientations / Behaviours

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter 9

Holmberg & Blair (2009) "Sexual Desire, Communication, Satisfaction, and Preferences of Men and Women in Same-Sex versus Mixed-Sex Relationships"

Rich (1996) "Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence"

Reading Report due March 3

Lesson #15 (Thur Mar 3): Sexual Orientations / Behaviours – An introduction

Lesson #16 (Tue Mar 8): Guest TBA

Unit IV.2: Sexual Coercion

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter 10

Schatzel-Murphy et al. (2009) "Sexual Coercion in Men and Women: Similar Behaviors, Different Predictors"

Geller (1977) "The sexually assaulted female: innocent victim or temptress?"

Reading Report due March 10

Recommended Reading:

Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson (2003) "Tactics of Sexual Coercion

Lesson #17 (Thur Mar 10): Sexual Coercion – An Introduction

Lesson #18 (Tue Mar 15): Guest TBA

Unit IV.3: Cross-gender Patterns

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Re-read Chapter: 4 L06-L08 (pp.89-99) & Chapter 5 (pp.116-117)

Namaste (2012) "Making the Lives of Transsexual People Visible"

Diamond (2009) "Human Intersexuality: Difference or Disorder?"

Lesson #19 (Thur Mar 17): *Trans* (a feature documentary by SexSmartFilms)

Lesson #20 (Tue Mar 22): *Trans:* Follow-up & discussion

Unit IV.4: Sex Work (sexual services and fantasies for sale)

Required Reading:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter 11

Shaver (2012) "Sex Work and the Law: A Critical Analysis of Four Policy Approaches to Adult Prostitution"

Shaver, Lewis & Maticka-Tyndale (2011) "Rising to the Challenge: Addressing the Concerns of People Working in the Sex Industry"

Reading Report due March 24

Recommended Reading:

Lewis et al. (2005) Managing Risk and Safety on the Job

Lesson #21 (Thur Mar 24): Sex for Sale (Myth-busting the Canadian Sex Industry)

Lesson #22 (Tue Mar 29): Guest TBA

Unit IV.5: Sexuality Education

Required Readings:

The Social Construction of Sexualities. Chapter12

Martin & Luke (2010) "Gender Differences in the ABCs of the Birds and the Bees: What Mothers Teach Young Children about Sexuality and Reproduction"

The *Best* of the second set of 3 RRs due March 31

Lesson #23 (Thur Mar 31): Sexuality Education - Introduction

Lesson #24 (Tue Apr 5): Guest TBA

Review / Makeup

Lesson #25 (Thur Apr 7): Review / Exam Preparation / Make-up Time 1

Lesson #26 (Tue Apr 12): Review / Exam Preparation / Make-up Time 2 (if necessary)

Table for Conversion of Percentages to Letter Grades / Grade Points					
%	Letter Grade/GPA	%	Letter Grade/GPA	%	Letter Grade/GPA
90-100	A+ / 4.3	70-72	B- / 2.7	53-56	D / 1
85-89	A / 4	67-69	C+ / 2.3	50-52	D- / .7
80-84	A- / 3.7	63-66	C / 2	30-49	FNS / 0
77-79	B+ / 3.3	60-62	C- / 1.7	0-29	R / 0
73-76	B / 3	57-59	D+ / 1.3		

Evaluated Activities	**Due Date**	**Grade**
Patterns of Sexual Knowledge (T-F Quiz Part II)	Thur January 14	5%
Six Reading Reports: - Walsh et al. (2011) - Blumstein & Schwartz (1989) - Muehlenhard & Shippee (2010) - Rich (1996) - Geller (1977) - Shaver et al. (2011)	Thur Jan 21) **Set 1**: Re-submit Thur Feb 4) the best of these 3 Thur Feb 11) on Tue March 1 Thur Mar 3) **Set 2**: Re-submit Thur Mar 10) the best of these 3 Thur Mar 24) on Thur Mach 31	Each report is worth 1 point and will be returned to you with comments (6/20). You are to return the best one from each set for grading (14/20). 20%
Mid-term Quiz (in class after Reading Week)	Tuesday March 1	25%
Paper Proposal (if taking this option)	Tuesday March 8	
Final Exam or Research Paper	Final paper due Thursday April 1 Final Exam during exam period (Wed April 13 – Sun May 1)	40%
Class Participation & Attendance	Usually initiated (during) and due (following) class discussions	10%