**Does Sex Have a History?**

**Sexuality and Gender in the United States**

**Arts & Sciences 1137, Freshman Seminar**

**1 Semester-hour Credit**

**Fall 2016, Tuesdays 11am-12pm**

**Prof. Daniel Rivers**

**Rivers.91@osu.edu**

**Office Hours:**

**Course Description:**

Often, it is assumed that sexuality is the same across human history – an aspect of our biology that is expressed in the same way by people in different times and places. However, in the last thirty years, the study of how human sexuality has differed throughout history has grown into an important and far-ranging field. This seminar will look at human sexual practices, identities, and concepts in the United States to encourage students to think critically about the ways that sexuality has been historically constructed. Each week students will read and discuss a number of very short readings that shed light onto some aspect of this history. Topics will include: sexuality and gender in Colonial America; Native American cultures; sexuality and slavery; the increased sexualization of American advertising and consumerism; World War Two and cultural shifts around sexuality and gender; the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender freedom struggle and the women’s movement; sexual and reproductive revolutions in the 1960s; and contemporary issues and debates around sexuality and gender.

**Course Policies:**

The most critical requirement for the course is participation. You will be required to do the readings assigned for each class and to come to class on time prepared to ask questions and participate in our discussion. Most of our readings will be short primary sources. This means that they derive directly from the period we are discussing and range from advertising to excerpts of speeches and pamphlets. In the reading schedule listed below I have indicated all primary sources by listing the year written. If a title is not followed by a year of origin, it is a secondary source written by a historian.Since most of the readings are only a few pages in length—some even as short as a few paragraphs—students will be expected to have read carefully and to come prepared to actively participate.

Attendance is crucial – since the class only meets once a week, more than one unexcused absence will reduce your participation grade by 15% an absence and if you have more than 3 unexcused absences you will fail the course. A pattern of tardiness will also result in a reduced grade for this aspect of the course.

You will also be required to watch (outside of class) at least two of the films listed in the class schedule below and to write a short (3-5 page) response on each of the two films you choose.

**Grading:**

This will be a one (1) credit class. You will receive a letter grade upon completion of the course.

Your grade will be based on your attendance, participation and written work. Come to class. Listen, discuss, ask questions, contribute your ideas. It is part of learning and it is part of your grade. Again, more than one unexcused absence will reduce your participation grade by 15% an absence and if you have more than 3 unexcused absences you will fail the course and a pattern of tardiness will also result in a reduced grade for this aspect of the course.

The following percentages represent the relative weight that will be given to each component of the course. These are guidelines, not hard and fast rules. I reward progress and effort. Please feel free to discuss your general standing with me at any time during the quarter.

Class participation: 70%

Film response # 1: 15%

Film response # 2: 15%

Required Texts: All readings will be posted on the class Carmen page

**Academic Misconduct**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf>).

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

**Weekly Class Schedule:**

**8/23: Course Introduction**

**8/30: Sexuality as a Historical Category**

Reading: David Halperin, “Is There a History of Sexuality?”

**9/6: Sexuality in the British American Colonies**

Readings: Virginia Regulates Sex Among Servants, Slaves, and Masters (1642-1769); Thomas or Thomasina? A Case of Tranvestism in Virginia; William Bradford Witnesses “Wickedness Breaking Forth” in Puritan Plymouth (1642); Massachusetts Colony’s Laws on Sexual Offenses (1641-1660)

**9/13: Native American Sexualities and Genders in the Colonial Period**

Readings: Memoir of De Gannes Concerning the Illinois Country (1704); Of the First Voyage Made by Father Marquette toward New Mexico, and How the Idea Thereof was Conceived (1674); John Lawson on Native American Women, North Carolina (1709)

**9/20: Slavery, Gender, and Sexuality**

Readings: Fugitive Slave Lewis Clarke Explains Why “A Slave Can’t Be a Man” (1842); J.W. Lindsay Describes Sexual and Family Relations Under Slavery (1863);

**9/27: Nineteenth Century Reform Movements**

Readings: Boston Female Moral Reformers Condemn “Licentious Men” (1838); Harriet Jacobs Relates Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861); The Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments (1848)

**10/4: Victorian Sexualities**

Readings: A Smith College Student Discusses Her “Crush” (1881); Julia Deane Freeman Praises “Woman-Friendship” (1861); Victoria C. Woodhull Denounces “The Scare-Crows of Sexual Slavery” (1873); *National Police Gazette* Advertisements for Sexual Literature and Devices (1867, 1886, 1893); Anthony Comstock Condemns Obscene Literature (1883)

Film: *America’s Victoria - Remembering Victoria Woodhull* (1998)

**10/11: Working-Class Fin-de-Siècle Sexualities**

Readings: Reformers Condemn “Tough Dancing” (1910); An Immigrant Newspaper Defends Czech Dance Halls (1917); Kathy Piess, “‘Charity Girls’ and City Pleasures: Historical Notes on Working-Class Sexuality, 1880-1920”; Jane Addams, *The Spirit of Youth* (1909)

**10/18: The Invention of Homosexuality and Heterosexuality**

Readings: New York State Report “They are Called Lady So and So and the Duchess of Marlboro” (1899); The Civil Responsibility of Sexual Perverts (1896); Jonathan Ned Katz, “The Invention of Heterosexuality”

**10/25: Reproductive Politics**

Readings: Margaret Sanger Argues “The Case for Birth Control” (1917); The Supreme Court Upholds Forced Sterilization (1927); Walter J. Hoffman Describes Childbirth and Abortion Among the Absaroka (Crow) and Dakota Indians (1888); Horatio R. Storer *Criminal Abortion* (1868)

Film: *Margaret Sanger* (1998)

**11/1: Race, Immigration, and Sexuality**

Readings: Ida B. Wells-Barnett Exposes the Myth of the Black Rapist (1892); Anti-Immigration Cartoons (1880-1910); The Lynching of A Mexican-American Woman in California (1851); Pacific Northwest Male Prostitution/Truancy (1913);

**11/8: Commercialism, The Blues, and Change**

Readings: Advertisements (1920s); Young Women Discuss Petting (1930); Black Entertainer Mabel Hampton Recalls Lesbian Life in the 1920s and 1930s; A Filipino’s Impression of America in the 1920s; Dr. La Forest Potter Describes a Drag Ball (1933); Paul Cadmus paintings; Bessie Smith, “Kitchen Man” (1929)

Film: *T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s* (2011)

**11/15: World War Two**

Readings: Cannon Towel Ads (1943-1945); Interview with Helen Harder about Lesbianism in the WACS; Allan Berube, “Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs During WWII”; World War Two War Department Pamphlet on Venereal Disease (1940)

Film: *Coming Out Under Fire* (1994)

**11/22: The 1950s – Conformity and the Roots of Revolution**

Readings: Alfred Kinsey Reports on Americans’ Sexual Behavior (1948-1953); Women Write *Life* and *Look* about the Kinsey Report (1953); Marge McDonald Enters the Lesbian Community of Columbus, Ohio (1955); The US Senate Investigates “Sex Perverts in Government (1950)

Film: *American Experience: Kinsey* (2005)

**11/29: Revolutions**

Readings: *Gay Flames* Pamphlets (1970-71); Issues of *The San Francisco Free Press* (1967-1970); A Memoir of “Jane,” an Illegal Abortion Service from 1969 to 1973; Feminist Anselma Dell’Olio Argues that “The Sexual Revolution Wasn’t Our War” (1971); “The Woman-Identified Woman” (1970); Barbara Mehrhof and Pamela Kearon, “Rape: An Act of Terror” (1971); Transvestite and Transsexual Liberation (1971)

Film: *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton’s Cafeteria* (2005)

**12/6: Contemporary Voices and Issues**

Readings: The Denver Principles to Empower People with AIDS (1983); ACT UP Activist Robert Garcia Faces AIDS (1991); African American Women in Defense of Ourselves (1991); *Lawrence v Texas* (2003); *Obergefell v Hodges* (2015); Sexual Offenders Team Checks Sex Offenders Homes (2007); Congressional Report on Abstinence-Only Education (2004)

Film: *The Virgin Daughters* (2008)