



GNDR_ST 331/SOCIOLOG 376
Heterosexualities
Past, Present & Future

SPRING 2020
T –Th 9:30 – 10:50 AM, Fisk Hall 114

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Office hours: Tuesdays 2-3 PM or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How and when did the identities that we know today as “straight” or “heterosexual” come into existence? And how have those identities differed across time and space? Drawing on the academic literature and representations in videos and other popular media, we will examine the “invention of heterosexuality” and its transformation and diversification over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries. By paying attention to multiple definitions of heterosexuality—including those that coexist within a single historical moment and location—we will problematize the notion that heterosexuality can be simply conceived as a single, unitary sexual identity. Among other topics, we will discuss the increasingly blurring boundaries between heterosexuality and other sexual identities; heteroflexibility, sexual fluidity, and other challenges to conventional definitions of heterosexuality; the power associated with heterosexuality, masculinity, and femininity; the effects of sexual inequality; contemporary problems and issues, including hookup culture and definitions of sexual consent; and imagined futures of the notions of sexual identity and sexual orientation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be expected to:

- Do all **required readings** prior to each class session.
- Write **critical summaries of four readings**. Each summary should be 1 to 2 pages long (following the format specified below). The readings you must summarize are listed below. The summaries are due on **Monday, April 13; Wednesday, April 22; Monday, May 11; and Monday, May 25**. Students must submit an electronic copy of the summary via Canvas and Turnitin before

midnight on the due date. Further instructions for these assignments will be posted on Canvas.

- Write **two critical review essays**, due **Monday, April 27** and **Tuesday, June 2**. Students must submit an electronic copy of the critical review essay via Canvas and Turnitin before midnight on the due date. Further instructions for these assignments will be posted on Canvas.
- **Attend** class and section on a regular basis and participate in class discussion.
- Use the following **format** for all written assignments: one-inch margins, double spaced, font: Times Roman 12. Include page numbers on all pages, and don't forget to write your name on the first page.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Grading

In this class you will earn a grade by completing the following assignments:

Class attendance and participation	30% of the final grade
Critical summary of four readings	20% of the final grade
Critical review essay #1	25% of the final grade
Critical review essay #2	25% of the final grade

Penalties will apply to any assignments that you turn in late, unless you have a medical excuse of comparably serious justification. Please note that there is no excuse for failing to keep electronic backups of your data (for example, on flash drives, CDs, external hard drives, or other computers) in case your primary computer fails or your hard drive crashes.

Attendance and participation

You are expected to attend class and section sessions on a regular basis. Attendance will be taken. Students are responsible for all material presented in the readings, videos, and class sessions. You must come to class having already read the assigned readings for that day. Please bring your copies of the readings so that you can refer to them during class. I strongly encourage you to ask questions and offer opinions and comments. I see class discussion as an important component of adult learning.

I will make available some class materials on Canvas, but students are expected to attend class in order to learn the course material. Students are also expected to be not just physically present in the classroom but also mentally present. Students should not be otherwise occupied with email, texting, computer games, or other online activities that are not part of the class goals and activities.

Diversity of opinions

In this course we will discuss several topics that can be controversial. Please keep in mind that you may be exposed to opinions that differ considerably from your own. Disagreement with the instructor or other students is fine, as long as you are respectful in how you present your own points of view.

Sexuality-related material

The goals of this class require that we speak frankly about sexuality. In lectures, videos, and class discussion, you may be exposed to sexually explicit language and you will learn information about a variety of sexual interpretations, ideas, practices, and lifestyles that may differ considerably from your own. For the purposes of the class, it is important to maintain a neutral, non-judgmental tone in relation to sexuality.

Communication

This course will use the [Canvas course management system](#). You are responsible for logging in, checking regularly for posted announcements, and obtaining readings and assignments from the site. You will receive course announcements that will be sent to the students' registered campus email address. You are responsible for checking your registered email accounts regularly.

Safety and Security

Students can find useful resources for safety and security, academic support, and mental and physical health and well-being at the [NUhelp website](#) and [app](#).

Syllabus is subject to change

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of unforeseen circumstances. I will post announcements of changes on Canvas and include them in email messages to students.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental for this course, and plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

I strictly follow university regulations concerning academic integrity, which means that I report all suspected violations of the policy (including suspicion of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, obtaining an unfair advantage, and aiding and abetting dishonesty) to the Assistant Dean for Advising and Academic Integrity, who then carries out a formal investigation. Please familiarize yourself with the university's policy on [Academic Integrity](#). You should understand that examples of plagiarism include obtaining text from any source (including the Internet), and passing off such text as your own work, rather than citing the source of the material. In addition, while I encourage students to collaborate when studying or learning course material or when working on any group projects, it should be clear that no collaboration is permitted on written work or exams, and any collaboration in those cases constitutes academic dishonesty.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, I strongly encourage you to speak to me about it. Confirmed violations of academic integrity will result in both an administrative penalty and an academic penalty. The administrative penalty, assigned by university officials, typically is suspension for one quarter; any such suspension becomes part of your record, which is made available on request to potential employers and graduate school admissions committees. The academic penalty is assigned by the instructor and can severely affect your grade for the course.

Turnitin

This course makes use of Turnitin, a software program that compares your work against other texts in its database in order to safeguard academic integrity. Therefore you will be required to submit your written essays electronically via Canvas and Turnitin. All student work may be analyzed electronically for violations of the university's academic integrity policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content. Please contact me if you have any questions about Turnitin.

Accessibility

Any student with a documented disability needing accommodations is requested to contact the [Accesible NU Center](#). Please also speak with me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first two weeks of class). All discussions will remain confidential.

My office is wheelchair-accessible via a ramp from the parking lot in the back of the building. Let me know if you plan to drop by during office hours so that I can open the door to the building for you.

Courtesy toward others

Make sure your cell phone is turned off or set to vibrate. Don't engage in conversation with other students that is not part of the class discussion. Please keep to a minimum interruptions and distractions caused by late arrivals or early departures.

Class materials and lectures

Students are prohibited from selling (or being paid for taking) notes during this course to or by any person or commercial firm without my express written permission. No audio or video recordings of class are permitted without my permission.

Recording

No recording of lectures and class discussions is allowed without prior authorization by the instructor.

READINGS

All readings will be available in Canvas as PDFs.

CLASS SCHEDULE

PART I – The Heterosexual Category and Identities

Week 1

Class 1 – Thursday, April 2: Introduction

(No readings)

Week 2

Class 2 – Tuesday, April 7: The Social Construction of Heterosexuality

Wilkinson, Sue and Celia Kitzinger. 1994. "The Social Construction of Heterosexuality." *Journal of Gender Studies* 3, no. 3: 307-316. (10 pages).

Dean, James Joseph. 2014. *Straights: Heterosexuality in Post-Closeted Culture* (New York: New York University Press). Ch. 2: "From 'Normal' to Heterosexual: The Historical Making of Heterosexualities." **Focus especially on pages 47-72.** (26 pages)

Class 3 – Thursday, April 9: The Social Construction of Heterosexuality: Shifting Sexual Cultures across Time and Space

Chauncey, George. ([1985] 1993). "Christian Brotherhood or Sexual Perversion? Homosexual Identities and the Construction of Sexual Boundaries in the World War I Era." In *Gender and American History Since 1890*, ed. Barbara Melosh, 72-105. New York: Routledge. (28 pages)

Herdt, Gilbert. 1987. *The Sambia: Ritual and Gender in New Guinea*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, read 101-10, 145-55.

Week 3

Monday, April 13

Summary of reading #1 due. You must write a critical summary of the Class 4 readings. An electronic copy must be submitted before midnight via Turnitin on Canvas.

Class 4 – Tuesday, April 14: The Social Construction of Heterosexuality: Shifting Sexual Cultures across Time and Space

Carrillo, Héctor. 2002. *The Night Is Young: Sexuality in Mexico in the Time of AIDS* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). Ch. 2: "I Am Normal: Gender-Based Categories of Sexual Identity," and Ch. 3: "New Freedoms, New Boundaries: Becoming *Homosexuales*, *Bisexuales* and *Heterosexuales*," read 37-78. (42 pages).

Class 5 – Thursday, April 16: Heteronormativity and Gender

Schilt, Kristen and Laurel Westbrook. 2009. "Doing Gender, Doing Heteronormativity: 'Gender Normals,' Transgender People, and the Social Maintenance of Heterosexuality." *Gender & Society* 23: 440-464. (22 pages)

Jackson, Stevi. 2006. "Gender, Sexuality and Heterosexuality: The Complexity (and Limits) of Heteronormativity." *Feminist Theory* 7, No.1: 105–121. (13 pages)

Week 4

Class 6 – Tuesday, April 21: Heteroflexibility and the Boundaries of Heterosexuality

Hoy, Aaron & Andrew S. London 2018. "The Experience and Meaning of Same-Sex Sexuality among Heterosexually Identified Men and Women: An Analytic Review." *Sociology Compass*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12596>: 1-17 (13 pages)

Rupp, Leila J. 2012. "Sexual Fluidity 'Before Sex.'" *Signs*, 37, no. 4: 849-856 (7 pages).

Rupp, Leila J. and Verta Taylor. 2010. "Straight Girls Kissing" *Contexts* 9, no. 3: 28-32. (5 pages).

Wednesday, April 22

Summary of reading #2 due. You must write a critical summary of the Class 7 readings. An electronic copy must be submitted before midnight via Turnitin on Canvas.

Class 7 – Thursday, April 23: Heteroflexibility and the Boundaries of Heterosexuality (continued).

Carrillo, Héctor and Amanda Hoffman. 2018. "'Straight with a Pinch of Bi': The Construction of Heterosexuality as an Elastic Category among Adult U.S. Men." *Sexualities* 21, No. 1–2: 90–108. (17 pages).

Silva, Tony. 2017. "Bud-Sex: Constructing Normative Masculinity among Rural Straight Men That Have Sex with Men." *Gender & Society* 31, no. 1: 51-73. (20 pages).

Part II: Shifting Heterosexualities?

Week 5

Class 8 – Tuesday, April 28: Heterosexuality, Social Stratification, and Privilege

Jackson, Stevi. 2011. "Heterosexual Hierarchies: A Commentary on Class and Sexuality." *Sexualities* 14, No.1: 12–20. (7 pages)

Stokes, Mason. 2005. "White Heterosexuality: A Romance of the Straight Man's Burden." In *Thinking Straight*, edited by Chrys Ingraham, pp. 131-149. (18 pages). New York: Routledge.

Class 9 – Thursday, April 30: Heterosexual Scripts and Socialization

Martin, Karin A. and Emily Kazyak. 2009. "Hetero-Romantic Love and Heterosexiness in Children's G-Rated Films." *Gender & Society* 23, no.3: 315-336. (19 pages)

Solebello, Nicholas and Sinikka Elliott. 2011. "'We Want Them to Be as Heterosexual as Possible': Fathers Talk about Their Teen Children's Sexuality." *Gender & Society* 25, no.3: 293-315. (20 pages).

Optional:

Cokely, Carrie L. 2005. "'Someday My Prince Will Come': Disney, the Heterosexual Imaginary and Animated Film." In *Thinking Straight*, edited by Chrys Ingraham, pp. 167-181. (13 pages). New York: Routledge.

Monday, April 27

Critical review essay #1 due. An electronic copy must be submitted before midnight via Turnitin on Canvas.

Week 6

Class 10 – Tuesday, May 5: Heterosexual Scripts (continued)

Best, Amy L. 2005 "The Production of Heterosexuality at the High School Prom." In *Thinking Straight*, edited by Chrys Ingraham, pp. 193-213. (19 pages). New York: Routledge.

Wade, Lisa. 2017. *American Hookup: The New Culture of Sex on Campus*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company. Chapter 1: "Hooking Up, a How-To." (23 pages)

Class 11 – Thursday, May 7: Heterosexual Scripts (continued)

Tolman, Deborah. 2006. "In a Different Position: Conceptualizing Female Adolescent Sexuality Development within Compulsory Heterosexuality." *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* No. 112: 71-89. (17 pages)

Burke, Kelsy. 2014. "What Makes a Man: Gender and Sexual Boundaries on Evangelical Christian Sexuality Websites." *Sexualities* 17, No.1-2: 3–22. (17 pages)

Week 7

Monday, May 11

Summary of reading #3 due. You must summarize the Class 12 readings. An electronic copy must be submitted before midnight via Turnitin on Canvas.

Class 12 – Tuesday, May 12: The Expansion of Sexual Repertoires

Aguilar, Jade. "Pegging and the Heterosexualization of Anal Sex: An Analysis of *Savage Love* Advice." *Queer Studies in Media & Popular Culture* 2, No.3: 275-292. (15 pages).

Schippers, Mimi. 2018. "The Monogamous Couple, Gender Hegemony, and Polyamory." In *Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research*, edited by James W. Messerschmitt et al., pp. 314-327. New York: New York University Press. (12 pages).

Class 13 – Thursday, May 14: Heterosexual Aesthetics and Hybrid Masculinities

Bridges, Tristan. 2014. "A Very 'Gay' Straight? Hybrid Masculinities, Sexual Aesthetics, and the Changing Relationship between Masculinity and Homophobia." *Gender & Society* 28, no. 1: 58-82. (23 pages)

Barber, Kristen. 2016. "'Men Wanted': Heterosexual Aesthetic Labor in the Masculinization of the Hair Salon." *Gender & Society* 30, no. 4: 618–642. (21 pages).

Week 8

Class 14 – Tuesday, May 19: Dating and Courtship

Eaton, Asia Anna and Suzanna Rose. 2011. "Has Dating Become More Egalitarian? A 35 Year Review Using Sex Roles." *Sex Roles*: 1-20. DOI 10.1007/s11199-011-9957-9. (16 pages)

Lamont, Ellen. 2014. "Negotiating Courtship: Reconciling Egalitarian Ideals with Traditional Gender Norms." *Gender & Society* 28, no. 2: 189-211. (20 pages)

Class 15 – Thursday, May 21: No class

Week 9

Monday, May 25

Summary of reading #4 due. You must summarize the Class 16 readings. An electronic copy must be submitted before midnight via Turnitin on Canvas.

Class 16 – Tuesday, May 26: Casual Hookups: Agency vs. Power

Reid, Julie A., Sinikka Elliott and Gretchen R. Webber. 2011. “Casual Hookups to Formal Dates: Refining the Boundaries of the Sexual Double Standard.” *Gender & Society* 25, no. 5: 545-568. (21 pages)

Hamilton, Laura and Elizabeth A. Armstrong. 2009. “Gendered Sexuality in Young Adulthood: Double Binds and Flawed Options.” *Gender & Society* 23, no.5: 589-616. (24 pages).

Class 17 – Thursday, May 28: Heterosexual Marriage: Love vs. Power vs. Structural Stability

Heath, Melanie. 2013. “Sexual Misgivings: Producing Un/Marked Knowledge in Neoliberal Marriage Promotion Policies.” *The Sociological Quarterly* 54: 561–583. (20 pages).

Diefendorf, Sarah. 2015. “After the Wedding Night: Sexual Abstinence and Masculinities over the Life Course.” *Gender & Society* 29, no.5: 647-669. (21 pages).

Week 10

Class 18 – Tuesday, June 2: Reimagining Long Term Relations and Marriage

Ortyl, Timothy A. 2013. “Long-Term Heterosexual Cohabitors and Attitudes toward Marriage.” *The Sociological Quarterly* 54: 584–609. (23 pages)

Wolkomir, Michelle. 2009. “Making Heteronormative Reconciliations: The Story of Romantic Love, Sexuality, and Gender in Mixed-Orientation Marriages.” *Gender & Society* 23, No. 4: 494-519. (23 pages)

Tuesday, June 2

Critical review essay #2 due. An electronic copy must be submitted before midnight via Turnitin on Canvas.