

Welcome to Power and Sexuality

CLASS DESCRIPTION

This course challenges students to examine taken-for-granted beliefs about the naturalness of sexuality and to, instead, consider the relationship between individual sexualities, (sub)cultures, institutions, and the nation-state. In doing so, we will link the contemporary context for our sexual lives, experiences, and feelings with the history of sexuality in the United States. As we go, we'll focus on how sex and power interact. The course will ask questions such as: Why and how do we control sexual behavior? Whose behavior do we attempt to control? How is the control of sexuality related to the preservation or disruption of race, gender, and class boundaries? How are our own sexualities contingent on our history and our present? And, finally, what is the state of our "sexual revolution" and how might we evaluate it?

REQUIRED READING

Textbook. *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality: Intimate Intersections, Forbidden Frontiers* by Joane Nagel. Available at the Occidental College Bookstore.

Textbook. *The History of Sexuality* by Michel Foucault. Available at the Occidental College Bookstore.

Course Reader. The course reader can be assessed through Moodle (<http://moodle.oxy.edu/>).

You will be split into four groups. On some days, you will all read the same material, on other days, you will read the material assigned to your group, and on still other days, you will do a combination of both. While your group may do more reading than another group on some days, I have carefully distributed the readings so that the reading load is even across the semester.

For group-specific material, you should come to class prepared to explain your reading(s) to the 3/4ths of the students who did not read the same material. You are responsible for knowing, however, all of the material in the class. Thus, other students will depend on your explanation of your readings and you will depend on theirs. In many cases, readings that you were not directly assigned might be useful for your papers and I will expect you to use them accordingly. As you might imagine, this makes regular class attendance essential.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Assignment	Percent of Grade
Attendance and Participation:	15
Position Papers:	
Bodies and Discourse	15
Power Over Life	15
The State of the Sexual Revolution	15
Foucauldian Movie Analysis:	40
Total	100

COURSE POLICIES

- *Office Hours:* I encourage you to make an appointment outside of office hours or come by my office anytime. I am happy to discuss class concepts, college more generally, musings about majors, future planning, or graduate school.
- *Feedback:* I love getting feedback on my teaching and how the class is going. I value your input and I am willing to make changes to the class according to your preferences. Please share with me any comments, suggestions, and ideas you may have, and help me make this a great class. If you would like to do so anonymously, you can type and print out a note and drop it in my mailbox in Swan.
- *Class Demeanor:* As a student at Occidental and as a member of this class you must hold yourself and your peers to the highest standards of civil engagement and discourse. Chatting with your neighbor is frowned upon when I am lecturing and it is absolutely impermissible when other students are trying to participate. While we may find ourselves disagreeing, we must do so with respect, a commitment to hearing what others have to say, and a willingness to think and rethink our own positions. Personal insults have no place in the college classroom.
- *Special Accommodations/Learning Differences:* If you require assistance for classes or exams, please let me know as soon as possible. I will do whatever I can to help. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes a learning disability, I encourage you to contact the friendly folks over at the Center for Academic Excellence.
- *Accessibility:* I want my course to be as accessible to as many different people as possible. If there is any reason why the standard approach to college classrooms or coursework is difficult for you to accomplish, please come talk to me. This includes those of you with a learning or physical disability (as discussed above), those of you who have other emotional or psychological challenges, those of you who have had past experiences that make college attendance or class content anxiety-producing, those of you whose parents did not go to college (and can't help you understand the system as well as other parents might), those of you who are too shy to actively participate, those of you who have more responsibility than the typical college student (such as dependent parents, children, or an especially heavy workload outside of school), and other situations I can't anticipate. The earlier you come to see me, the more I can do to try to work with you to alleviate the unique disadvantages you might face. I prefer that you come in the first two weeks but, if you do not and you decide you would like to, please do not hesitate to come to me at any time.

- *Grading Inquires*: All inquires/disagreements regarding grades will be handled during my office hours or at another mutually agreeable time.
- *Make-up Exams*: Make-up exams will generally not be given without appropriate official documentation excusing the absence. Bring documentation with you to my office when you inquire about a make-up.
- *Assignments*: Papers/assignments must be handed in at the scheduled time and by the assigned mode. Late assignments are docked ½ grade per day. Computer and printing problems are not a good excuse for missing a deadline; make sure to print your papers early to avoid any such problems. Keep a paper and electronic copy of everything you hand in until you receive your course grade.
- *Academic Integrity*: Academic integrity violations, including plagiarism, will be taken very seriously. If you are not sure about what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, please see me as soon as possible. A description of Occidental’s academic ethics policies is available in the Student Handbook and on the following webpage: www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/academic-ethics
- *Flexibility*: This syllabus only provides an approximate schedule for the course. I will discuss changes to the syllabus in class. It is your responsibility to keep up to date on class events and requirements. In addition, I reserve the right to give in-class quizzes on the readings if necessary (and re-calculate the distribution of graded material in accordance with this change).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Jan. 20 – Introduction

No Readings.

Power and Discourse: Speaking Ourselves

Thursday, Jan. 22 – What is Sex?

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| Group One: | • <i>Whorified Virgins</i> by Amico |
| Group Two: | • <i>Are We Having Sex Now or What?</i> by Christina |
| Group Three: | • <i>Oral Sex Among Adolescents</i> by Remez |
| Group Four: | • <i>Defining Heterosex</i> by McPhillips et al |
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Tuesday, Jan. 27 – What is Gender? What is Sexual Orientation?

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| Group One: | • <i>The Gender of Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes</i> by Kulick |
| Group Two: | • <i>Sexuality and Gender in Certain Native American Tribes</i> by Blackwood |
| Group Three: | • <i>Hijra and Sadhin</i> by Nanda |
| Group Four: | • <i>Lesbians, Men-Women and Two-Spirits</i> by Lang |

Thursday, Jan. 29 – What is Gender? What is Sexual Orientation?

All: • *Capitalism and Gay Identity* by D’Emilio

Group One: • *Transsexuals’ Sexual Stories* by Schrock & Reid

Group Two: • *Sexual Identity and Bisexual Identities* by Rust

Group Three: • *A Low Down Dirty Shame* by Sanders

Group Four: • *Straight Dude Seeks Same* by Ward

Tuesday, Feb. 3 – Introducing Discourse

All: • Chapter 1: The Incitement to Discourse in *The History of Sexuality*
• Chapter 2: The Perverse Implantation in *The History of Sexuality*

Thursday, Feb. 5 – NO CLASS

Tuesday, Feb. 10 – What of the Body?

No readings.

Films in class: • *Breasts and Private Dicks*

Thursday, Feb. 12 – What of the Body?

All: • *If Men Could Menstruate* by Steinem

Group One: • *Sperm, That Loveable Character* by Moore

Group Two: • “*It’s Only a Penis*” by Helliwell

Group Three: • *Telling It Straight* by Braun & Kitzinger

Group Four: • *Little White Lies* by Alavi

Power and Knowledge: Sourcing the Language

Tuesday, Feb. 17 – A Science of Sexuality

All: • Part Three: Scientia Sexualis in *The History of Sexuality*

Group One: • *Medicine, Morality, and the Public Management of Sexual Matters* by Tiefer

Group Two: • *Asking Questions About Sex* by Erickson & Steffen

Group Three: • *The Surface and the Depth* by Pitts

Group Four: • *Historical, Scientific, Clinical, and Feminist Criticisms of ‘The Human Sexual Response Cycle’ Model* by Tiefer

Thursday, Feb. 19 – Bodies, Discourses, and You

No Readings.

REMINDER: ♦ FIRST POSITION PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Power and Population: Sex Makes Babies, Or Did You Forget?

Tuesday, Feb. 24 – Power Over Life

All: • Part Five: Right of Death and Power over Life in *The History of Sexuality*

Thursday, Feb. 26 – Power Over Life

Group One: • “Close Your Eyes and Think of England” by Brown & Ferree
Group Two: • *The Quiverfull Conviction* by Joyce
Group Three: • Will the “Real Mother” Please Stand Up by Collins
Group Four: • *Dr. Ehrlich’s Magic Bullet* by Brandt

Tuesday, Mar. 3 – Power Over Life

Choose two: • Chapter Three: Sex and Conquest in *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality* [on Native Americans]
• Chapter Four: Sex and Race in *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality* [on African Americans]
• *The Third Sex* by Lee [on Asian Americans]

Coercion and Cathexis

Thursday, Mar. 5 – Racialized Sexual Identities and (Inter)Racial Relationships

All: • Chapter Seven: Sex and Tourism in *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality*

Group One: • *Selling Hot Pussy* by Collins
Group Two: • *Puerto Rican Wannabes* by Wilkins
Group Three: • *The Population Bomb and the Sexual Revolution Toward Choice* by Solinger
Group Four: • *My Meidel is the Centerfold* by Kolben

SPRING BREAK (March 9 to March 13)

Tuesday, Mar. 17 – Gendered Sexual Identities and (Hetero)(Sexual) Relationships

All: • *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence* by Rich

Group One: • “If It’s Not On, It’s Not On” by Gavey et al.
Group Two: • *Trading on Heterosexuality* by Hamilton
Group Three: • *Faking It* by Roberts et al.
Group Four: • *I Couldn’t Ever Picture Myself Having Sex* by Martin

Thursday, Mar. 19 – Gendered Sexual Identities and (Hetero)(Sexual) Relationships

All: • *Masculinity as Homophobia* by Kimmel

Group One: • *American Men's Hidden Crisis* by Wade

Group Two: • *Hard Issues and Soft Spots* by Fracher & Kimmel

Group Three: • *The Feminization of Love* by Cancion

Group Four: • *Eroticizing Equality* by Schultz

Tuesday, Mar. 24 – Power Over Lives

No Readings.

REMINDER: ♦ SECOND POSITION PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Thursday, Mar. 26 – NO CLASS

Tuesday, Mar. 31 – NO CLASS

Thursday, Apr. 2 – Sex Commodified

No Readings.

Film in class: • *The Annabel Chong Story*

Tuesday, Apr. 7 – Sex Commodified

No Readings.

Film in class: • *Live Nude Girls Unite!*

Thursday, Apr. 9 – Sex Commodified

All: • *Rescued for Their Own Good* by Almodovar

Group One: • *Pornography and the Industrialization of Sex* by Dines

Group Two: • *Black Men and Pornography* by Dines

Group Three: • *In the Flesh* by Hartley

Group Four: • *Odyssey of a Feminist Pornographer* by Sheiner

Tuesday, Apr. 14 – Sex Commodified

No readings.

Special Event: *Norma Jean Almodovar*

Thursday, Apr. 16 – Sexualized Violence

All: • Chapter Six: Sex and War in *Race, Ethnicity and Sexuality*

• *Pleasure Under Patriarchy* by MacKinnon

About that “Sexual Revolution”

Tuesday, Apr. 21 – Critiques of the Revolution

- Group One: • My Baby Just Cares for Me, by Robinson
Group Two: • *Beyond the Closet* by Seidman et al.
Group Three: • *The Origins of Hookup Culture* by Wade
Group Four: • *Against Love* by Kipnis
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Thursday, Apr. 23 – Ideas for a Better Revolution

- Group One: • *Tired of Hot Sex* by Jensen <http://www.xyonline.net/content/tired-hot-sex>
Group Two: • *The Uses of the Erotic* by Lourde
Group Three: • *Sexual Values Revisited* by Weeks
Group Four: • *The Naked Truth* by Zeidenstein
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Tuesday, Apr. 28 – You and the Revolution

REMINDER: ♦ **THIRD POSITION PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**

Thursday, Apr. 30 – Thinking About Sexual Empowerment

No readings.

DATE TBA - Final Exam

REMINDER: ♦ **MOVIE ANALYSIS PAPER DUE BY EMAIL to lwade@oxy.edu AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD**

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance and Participation (15%)

You will earn ½ point for every day that you attend class and ½ point for participation that day. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late or otherwise miss more than 10 minutes of class, you may not be awarded the ½ point for attendance. Since only about five people read each reading most days, it is imperative that you come to class prepared to talk about them.

Position Papers (3 at 15% each)

You will write three position papers in which you will explain the position of Michel Foucault and then apply his thinking to your own life. Each position paper should be between two and three pages single-spaced, but no longer than three (strictly enforced). In preparing your answer, make sure to explicitly discuss and cite at least three other readings from the semester.

Notice that Position Papers #1 and #2 have two parts. Part One of this position paper asks you to demonstrate that you understand the material we've covered in class so far. Remember that to demonstrate this you must use your own words in answering the posed questions. Do not assume I know that you know what you're talking about. You must articulate each piece of your answer as if I, your reader, am unfamiliar with the ideas. Relatedly, if you quote an author we have read, you must interpret the quote for your reader. If you include a quote, but do not tell your reader what it means, it is possible that *you* don't know what it means.

When you use the ideas of other people (that is, me, Foucault, or other authors you've read), you **MUST** acknowledge through citation that you are using their ideas. Otherwise, it is plagiarism. So when you are saying something Foucauldian, for example, make sure your reader knows it.

Ultimately your task in Part One is to distill and present the best possible answer to the question. There is some leeway in how to answer these questions. This does not mean that **ALL** answers are equally good. Part of the test, here, is to figure out what a really great answer would be.

Part Two of this position paper asks you to *analyze* your experiences in light of course material. *To analyze means to apply the ideas in a way that reveals insights that would not have otherwise been obvious.* The more insight you can offer me into real life experience (yours) with the concepts, the more impressed I will be with your paper.

Grading will consider the extent to which you conform to the assignment, your understanding of the concept(s), and the sophistication of your analysis. An "A" paper is not a good paper, it is a great paper. See **GENERAL PAPER GUIDELINES AND TIPS** in this syllabus for ideas.

Position Paper One: Bodies and Discourse

Part One

1. According to Foucault, why is discourse powerful?
2. What is the relationship between discourses and bodies?

Part Two

3. What discourses have most powerfully affected how you think about sexuality?
4. How have these discourses shaped how you experience your particular body?

Position Paper Two: Power Over Life

Part One

1. What does Foucault mean by “power over life” (also: bio-power)? How is it related to the “deployment of sexuality”?
2. Explain how bio-power is exerted at the level of the nation (policy and public discourse) and the level of the individual (cathexis). Use examples.

Part Two

1. How do you think the “deployment of sexuality” shapes/incites (or will shape/incite) your sexual feelings and choices? (Hint: Don’t forget how broadly we define sexuality in this class.)
2. How will your choices contribute to the shape of the nation?

Position Paper Three: The State of the Sexual Revolution

Many Americans would say that a sexual revolution occurred in the 1960s and 1970s and that, today, we live in a sexually liberated society. Considering our class material, your life, contemporary events, and other knowledges, compose a response to this assertion.

In other words, have we come somewhere since the 1950s? If so, where are we?

A Foucauldian Analysis of a Romantic Comedy (40%)

Your final exam will be a take-home exam in which you offer a Foucauldian analysis of a romantic comedy.

1. Choose a movie that generally fits into the genre of romantic comedy. I recommend reviewing more than one and choosing one that you think offers the most to work with.
2. Watch the movie with a Foucauldian lens. That is, ask yourself what function Foucault might think the movie serves and how it fulfills that function.
3. Considering all the Foucauldian insights you collected in analyzing the movie, compose a concise argument. Address...

- a. ...the meta message of the movie (that is, above and beyond the plot and the characters, what is the “moral of the story” or the lesson that the movie is trying to get across to viewers).
 - b. ...how the meta message functions discursively (that is, how might impact us as individuals and as a collectivity).
4. Offer evidence at each stage of your argument. Your movie is your evidence. Therefore, your evidence might include the overall plot, plot twists, close analyses of individual scenes, characters, how characters change over the course of the movie, and quotations.
 - a. As we have discussed, this is an analytical paper. Therefore, you do not want to simply describe the movie, its characters, etc. Instead, while offering enough information for me to understand the gist of the plot, mobilize the movie as *evidence* for an analytical argument. Your analysis should drive the argument of your paper, not the plot.
 5. This is a comprehensive final paper. Your task is to offer an analysis of this movie that is informed by our *entire semester of learning*. Thus, I expect to see references to at least four readings (generally more is better) in addition to Foucault, with proper citations. Remember, if I spoke about a reading in class, it's not sufficient to cite me, you must cite the source.
 6. Your analysis cannot be more than three single-spaced pages. The more analysis you can pack into three pages, the better your grade will likely be. Using less than all three pages is a red flag that your paper may not be as sophisticated as others. You should struggle to get everything you want to say into three pages. To maximize your grade, you'll want to write a full three pages of dense, concise argumentation with evidence.

DUE BY EMAIL to lwade@oxy.edu AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD

GENERAL PAPER GUIDELINES AND TIPS

1. Expectations and grading:
 - a. In papers you are expected to take concepts raised in the readings and apply them to analyze some sort of empirical material in the way that sociologists would. Thus you are looking at and for evidence of particular social processes in the material of everyday life.
 - b. To maximize your chance of getting a high grade, concentrate on writing an analysis that is sociological. Consider what is distinct about a sociological perspective on the case at hand. Be sure that you provide an analytic description of what you are studying: focus on drawing an overall conclusion about the case you are looking at; choose details that relate to the points you making (rather than trying to say everything about it); and organize your presentation so that the relationship between the details and your overall point is clear.
 - c. Do not be concerned with being “right.” These papers are an exercise in applying sociological concepts. Feel free to speculate, posit, consider, even boldly guess about what is going on. Absolutely nothing rides on whether you are right in your analysis... not your grade, not your relationships with the people you care about, not the future of the human race, not world peace, nothing! So don't worry! Just experiment with the ideas. I am not expecting you to be right, I am concerned with your understanding of the ideas, your open-mindedness in applying them, and the depth of your analysis.

- d. Productive disagreement with theory is good. Productive disagreement builds on or expands the theory. Non-productive disagreement rejects it without improving it. If you know of an instance in which the theory doesn't seem to apply, fix it instead of dismissing it.
 - e. Further, you'll need to be careful to not confuse your own subjective interpretation with sociological ones and to not make value statements in substitution for critical thinking. For example, if you are an ardent individualist and think that everyone's lives are impacted only by their personal decisions, you still have to write a sociological paper that considers the impact of the social world on individuals in order to demonstrate that you understand the class material. Writing such a paper may be frustrating if you don't believe it, but it isn't going to hurt you and is consequence-less (e.g., no one will get an unfair free ride from the system if you write a sociological paper). My concern is that you understand the material *and you must demonstrate that you do*. In contrast, *whether you believe it is not central to this course* and you can write a disclaimer on the paper if that makes you feel better.
2. Since these are short papers, concision is key. The best papers will pack a lot of interesting material into just a few pages. I recommend writing a longer paper and then shortening it by cutting out the redundant material and wordiness. Here are some ideas.
- a. Introductions and Conclusions. I care most about your critical thinking. Tell me what you're going to do in the introduction and what you have done in the conclusion. Otherwise, stick to the case. *Please* do not waste time on flowery and optimistic introductions or damning and pessimistic conclusions. I'm more interested in your analysis than in your predictions about the future or moral commitments. This is satisfying to write but doesn't help your grade, so be stingy and save the space you have for the analysis itself.
 - b. You should always be specific about where the material you are discussing comes from: provide the citation not only for direct quotes but also for paraphrases in your own words. You need not give a full reference for material that is on the syllabus, but the author's name, publication year, and the page number if it references less than the author's whole argument – are always required. When citing your sources, use only the last name, year of publication, and page number if needed (for example, Brown 1999: p. 2). Do not write in the title or full name, this wastes your precious space.
 - c. Edit several times. Reading your paper over (especially out loud) will allow you to cut out redundancies and find shorter ways to say the same thing. Having a friend read it is also very helpful.
 - d. Make sure you never say the same thing twice. Read is closely and make sure. Never say "In other words..." or "That is..." Just say it clearly the first time. Don't use synonyms in a row when you could just use one well-chosen word.
 - e. Try to think of some ways that you can cut down on how long each sentence. Can I make this sentence less wordy?
 - f. Does my introduction and/or conclusion have some "fluff" in it? Is everything in those two paragraphs really important to the content of my paper? If not, cut it and don't worry about it sounding smooth.

- g. Definitely complain a lot. Just kidding. Concision in writing is an extremely frustrating skill to develop, but incredibly valuable to have. I feel your pain. I struggle with it still... which is why I think it's so important to encourage you to work on it.
3. Grading will consider the extent to which you conform to the assignment, your understanding of the concepts, and the sophistication of your analysis. An "A" paper is not a good paper, it is a great paper. If you want to improve your grade:
- a. Don't underestimate how hard you might have to think. Think hard about your case before you start to write and be willing to learn something in the process of writing your paper. Sometimes, when ideas are complicated, your mind is too unstructured a place to make sense of things and paper is much more concrete.
 - b. Be willing to expand what you already know. Don't assume you already know everything about the case. Ask yourself, what can this case teach me?
 - c. Ask yourself, is it really so simple? Can this be made more complex/sophisticated? Is there more going on here?
 - d. Stay up on class material and review it with your case in mind.
 - e. Write a minimum of three drafts.
 - f. Go to the writing center (<http://departments.oxy.edu/cae>) and get help with your papers whether you're a good writer or not. Everyone can get better. Make your appointments early.
 - g. Come see me! I'm nice.