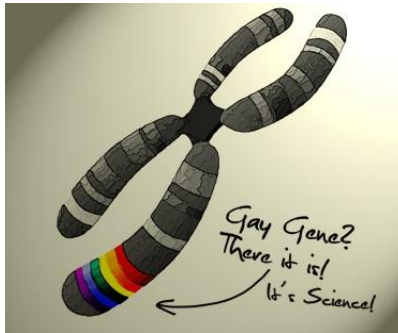


Spring 2015 First Year Seminar
“Born This Way?” Science and the Politics of Sexuality



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Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 10:30–11:30am or by appointment
Office Location: Tribble Hall A115

Course Meeting Time: Tues and Thurs 2:00–3:15pm
Course Meeting Location: Tribble Hall A4

COURSE OVERVIEW

Since at least the late 19th century, scientists have studied various aspects of sexuality, sometimes with the intent to eliminate sexual “deviancy” and sometimes with the goal of learning about sexual diversity in the natural world. At the same time, politicians, commentators, and activists (both conservative and progressive) have long used scientific research and claims about biology to support arguments either for sexual repression or for sexual tolerance. As an example, recently scientists have focused on identifying the genetic and neurobiological causes of sexual orientation, and some gay rights activists have used this research to argue for gay and lesbian civil rights.

In this seminar, we will examine two case studies within the field of scientific research on sexuality: research on sex/gender differences in sexuality and research on sexual orientation. We will read about both the scientific research itself and about how this research has been used by politicians, commentators, and activities. Throughout, we will examine the assumptions being made by both scientists and activists, and how these assumptions are informing both the scientific research and efforts to transform societal attitudes and institutions related to sexuality.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Analyze the role that social norms play in shaping scientific research and evaluate the ethical and political consequences of scientific research.
2. Critically evaluate the arguments made by commentators, politicians, and activists who draw on scientific research and claims about biology to support their political agendas.
3. Demonstrate facility in the areas of critical reading, research, writing, and oral expression.

COURSE TEXTS

All readings will be available on the course website. You must bring a printed or electronic copy of the day's assigned readings to class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading Quizzes: 15%
Critical Response Papers: 30% (10% each)
Media Analysis: 10%
Final Paper: 30%
Participation: 15%

Open-note reading quizzes: It is impossible to have a discussion if students aren't doing the readings. Yet, I have found that because students have so much to do, many don't read for class unless they are encouraged to do so. To provide some encouragement, at least once a week, I will give a short "pop" quiz on the readings. The quiz will assess your understanding of the author's main arguments. You are allowed to use your own notes for the quizzes. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. There will be no make-up quizzes if you are absent.

Three critical response papers (2-3 pages each): You will be asked to select a quotation from one of the readings, briefly situate the quotation in the context of the reading, and then analyze and mount your own argument about the quotation. Additional guidelines will be distributed. At the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned to a group with a specific set of due dates.

Group 1 Reading Response Due Dates: 1/22, 2/19, 3/26

Group 2 Reading Response Due Dates: 1/29, 2/26/, 4/2

Group 3 Reading Response Due Dates: 2/5, 3/3, 4/9

Group 4 Reading Response Due Dates: 2/12, 3/19, 4/14

Media analysis (2-3 pages): You will be asked to choose a "text" from the media or popular culture, such as a movie or TV clip, news article, or music video, and explicitly and critically relate the text to at least one reading from the course. You will also present your media analysis to the class. Additional guidelines will be distributed. You will be assigned a due date at the beginning of the semester.

Final paper (8-10 pages): You will be asked to choose a question of interest to you related to the course, and to answer this question drawing on course readings and outside research. Additional guidelines will be distributed. Over the course of the semester, you will submit different assignments that will prepare you for the final paper.

Preliminary Question Due: 2/17

Annotated Bibliography Due: 3/31

Outline and Draft Due: 4/21

Informal Presentations to Class: 4/23 and 4/28

Final Paper Due: 5/5

Participation: This course is primarily a discussion-based course. Your participation is essential. Quality participation includes both contributing thoughtfully to the discussion and listening and responding respectfully to others. It is important that you not only complete and struggle with the reading for the day, but that you give yourself sufficient opportunity to digest the texts and ponder the ideas and implications of the day's readings. Please expect to be called on at any time.

POLICIES

Absences: Attendance is required. Each student is allowed three (3) absences with no penalties. For each additional absence, the student's participation grade will be lowered. Three (3) late arrivals will be counted as one absence. If you must miss class, I do appreciate knowing when and why you are absent, but notifying me doesn't "excuse" the absence.

Late Work: All work is due at the beginning of class on the due date listed. Late work will not be accepted.

Submitting Assignments: All written assignments must be submitted in the following format:

1. Must be typed, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 point font, black ink
2. Pages must be stapled if a hard copy is submitted
3. Must be submitted as a Word document (.doc or .docx) if submitted electronically

Technology in the Classroom: Please do not answer your phone or text in class unless there is a genuine emergency (e.g. an immediate family member is sick). You may bring a laptop, but only for taking notes or accessing material relevant to the class discussion. Please do not use your laptop to check your email, surf the Internet, update your Facebook status, or shop online. I know that it is hard to avoid doing these things, so occasionally I will ask everyone with a laptop to turn their screen to face me; if I see that you are using your laptop for non-course related activities, you will not be allowed to use a laptop in class for the remainder of the semester.

Help and Resources: If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please email me or come to my office hours. Also, please take advantage of the following resources:

- For assistance with your writing, visit the Writing Center (<http://college.wfu.edu/writingcenter/>)
- For assistance with organization, time management and study strategies, visit the Learning Assistance Center (<http://lac.wfu.edu/>)
- For assistance with research or with citing sources, please visit the Reference Desk at the Z. Smith Reynolds Library (<http://zsr.wfu.edu/>)

Academic Integrity: As signatories to the Wake Forest Honor Code, you are required to uphold academic honesty in all aspects of this course. Please familiarize yourself with the details of the Honor Code. In addition, please make sure that you understand what counts as plagiarism (see below).

Definition of Plagiarism: If you use another person's words or ideas in your own work without appropriately acknowledging them, you are committing plagiarism. According to the Purdue Online Writing Lab, "There are some actions that can almost unquestionably be labeled plagiarism. Some of these include buying, stealing, or borrowing a paper (including, of course, copying an entire paper or article from the Web); hiring someone to write your paper for you; and copying large sections of text from a source without quotation marks or proper citation. But then there are actions that are usually in more of a gray area. Some of these include using the words of a source too closely when paraphrasing (where quotation marks should have been used) or building on someone's ideas without citing their spoken or written work" (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>). If you any questions at any point about plagiarism or other issues related to academic integrity, please ask me.

Special Needs: If you have a disability that may require an accommodation for taking this course, please contact the Learning Assistance Center (758-5929) within the first two weeks of the semester.

Revisions to Syllabus: I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus as needed. Revisions will be posted on the course website.

SCHEDULE

Date	What to Plan For	What to Read	What is Due
Introductions and Key Concepts			
T 1/13	Introductions	Syllabus	
Th 1/15	What is Science?		Bring Something Natural to Class
T 1/20	Feminist Science Studies I	Emily Martin, "The Egg and The Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles" Londa Schiebinger, "More Than Skin Deep: The Scientific Search for Sexual Difference"	
Th 1/22	Feminist Science Studies II	Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective"	Group 1 Reading Response 1
Case Study 1: Sex/Gender Differences in Sexuality			
T 1/27	19 th and Early 20 th Century Views of Male and Female Sexuality	Ben Barker-Benfield, "The Spermatic Economy: A Nineteenth Century View of Sexuality" Peter Laipson, "'Kiss without Shame, for She Desires It': Sexual Foreplay in American Marital Advice Literature, 1900-1925"	
Th 1/29	Masters of Sex	William Masters and Virginia Johnson, "Human Sexual Response" (excerpt) Janice Irvine, "Science, Medicine, and a Market"	Group 2 Reading Response 1
T 2/3	Second Wave Feminists and the Politics of the Orgasm	Anne Koedt, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm" Jane Gerhard, "Revisiting 'The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm': The Female Orgasm in American Sexual Thought and Second Wave Feminism"	
Th 2/5	Sociobiology Meets	Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, "Empathy, Polyandry,	Group 3 Reading

	Feminism	and the Myth of the Coy Female” Donna Haraway, “Sarah Blaffer Hrdy: Investment Strategies for the Evolving Portfolio of Primate Females”	Response 1
T 2/10	Evolutionary Psychology	David Buss, “Sexual Strategies Theory: Historical Origins and Current Status” Ruth Hubbard, “The Political Nature of ‘Human Nature’”	
Th 2/12	Evolutionary Psychology: Rape	Randy Thornhill and Craig T. Palmer, “Why Do Men Rape?” Griet Vandermassen, “Evolution and Rape: A Feminist Darwinian Perspective”	Group 4 Reading Response 1
T 2/17	Evolutionary Psychology: Short-Term Mating	Norman Li and Douglas Kenrick, “Sex Similarities and Differences in Preferences for Short-Term Mates: What, Whether, and Why” Terri Conley et al, “Women, Men, and the Bedroom: Methodological and Conceptual Insights That Narrow, Reframe, and Eliminate Gender Differences in Sexuality”	Research Question
Th 2/19	On the Abuses of Science	Roger Lancaster, “Sex, Science, and Pseudoscience in the Public Sphere”	Group 1 Reading Response 2
Case Study 2: Sexual Orientation			
T 2/24	Early Research on Sexual Orientation I	Jennifer Terry, “Modernity and the Vexing Presence of Homosexuals”	
Th 2/26	Early Research on Sexual Orientation II	Jennifer Terry, “Medicalizing Homosexuality”	Group 2 Reading Response 2
T 3/3	Homosexuality as Mental Disorder?	Evelyn Hooker, “The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual” Ronald Bayer, “Politics, Science, and the Problem of Psychiatric Nomenclature: A Case Study of the American Psychiatric Association Referendum on Homosexuality”	Group 3 Reading Response 2
Th 3/5	Finding Sources for an Academic Research Paper		
T 3/10	Spring Break		
Th 3/12	Spring Break		
T 3/17	Gay Animals I	Paul Vasey, “Same-Sex Sexual Partner Preference in Hormonally and	

		Neurologically Unmanipulated Animals”	
Th 3/19	Gay Animals II	Jennifer Terry, “‘Unnatural Acts’ in Nature: The Scientific Fascination with Queer Animals” Myra Hird, “Animal Transex”	Group 4 Reading Response 2
T 3/24	Genes and Sexual Orientation I	Angela Pattatucci and Dean Hamer, “The Genetics of Sexual Orientation: From Fruit Flies to Humans”	
Th 3/26	Genes and Sexual Orientation II	Udo Schüklenk et al, “The Ethics of Genetic Research on Sexual Orientation” Kathleen LeBesco, “Quest for a Cause: The Fat Gene, the Gay Gene, and the New Eugenics”	Group 1 Reading Response 3
T 3/31	Gay Brains I	Simon LeVay “A Difference in Hypothalamic Structure Between Heterosexual and Homosexual Men” Ivanka Savic and Per Lindström, “PET and MRI Show Differences in Cerebral Asymmetry and Functional Connectivity Between Homo-and Heterosexual Subjects”	Annotated Bibliography
Th 4/2	Gay Brains II	Janet Halley, “Sexual Orientation and the Politics of Biology: A Critique of the Argument from Immutability” (excerpt) Isabelle Dussauge and Anelis Kaiser, “Re-Queering the Brain”	Group 2 Reading Response 3
T 4/7	On the Abuses of Science Redux	Edward Stein, “The Relevance of Scientific Research About Sexual Orientation to Lesbian and Gay Rights”	
Conclusions			
Th 4//9	Science by the People, for the People?	Deboleena Roy, “Asking Different Questions: Feminist Practices for the Natural Sciences” Sari van Anders, “From One Bioscientist to Another: Guidelines for Researching and Writing About Bisexuality for the Lab and Biosciences”	Group 3 Reading Response 3
T 4/14	Science by the People, for the People?	Rob Hagendijk, “The Public Understanding of Science and Public Participation in Regulated Worlds”	Group 4 Reading Response 3
Th 4/16	Constructing an Academic Research		

	paper		
T 4/21	Peer Review of Final Papers		Outline and Draft
Th 4/23	Class Presentations		Come Prepared to Present
T 4/28	Class Presentations Continued		
T 5/5			Final Paper