Columbia University
Department of Psychology

Psychology of Sexuality and Gender
PSYC S3696 (3 points), Summer 2019

Course Information
Location: Schermerhorn, Room 608 (TBD)
Term Dates: May 28-July 5
Time: T, TR 9:00AM-12:10pm

Instructor Information
Nadav Antebi-Gruszka, PhD, MA, MHC
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Office Hours: By appointment only

Brief Course Description: Seminar reviewing seminal and current theoretical and empirical writings about the psychology of sex, sexuality, and gender. We will review and discuss readings across various fields in psychology, such as clinical, developmental, social, and health psychology.

Prerequisites: Science of Psychology (PSYC 1001) or Mind, Brain, & Behavior (PSYC 1010), or equivalent introductory psychology course. Students who have not taken one of these courses will require instructor permission. A prior course in research methods is highly recommended, but not mandatory. If you do not have a psychology background and are interested in this course, please contact me to determine fit and obtain permission before enrolling.

Full Description: This seminar critically reviews seminal and current theoretical and empirical literature about sexuality and gender from a psychological perspective. Within the field of psychology, we will review writings from across various sub-disciplines, including social, developmental, counseling, and positive psychology. Furthermore, we will supplement our review with readings from other disciplines in the social sciences, including sociology and public health. This multidisciplinary approach will allow us to holistically investigate the multidimensional nature of human sexuality and gender.

This class will be taught with the underlying belief that academic knowledge can be a driving mechanism for social change. This approach for teaching and learning has several implications for this course. The readings in this syllabus focus both on mainstream topics in sexuality and gender and on topics that are often left underexamined in psychology and related fields. Many readings will look at the psychological realities of non-heteronormative (LGBQ+) and non-cisgender (i.e., transgender and gender nonconforming) individuals. Towards the end of the course, we will review related issues that have broad and significant implications for the psychological experiences of individuals, including potentially controversial topics, such as sex work and pornography. Throughout, we will be adopting a balanced approach that will allow us to examine the complex nature of phenomena and their effects on individuals and communities.

Furthermore, we will focus on real world practical implications of these topics both in the context of the larger, public world (i.e., current events) and in the context of our individual, personal experiences. You will be encouraged to apply the concepts explored throughout the course to current events (e.g., Chechnya’s treatment of its LGBTQ citizens), public discourses (e.g., bathroom use for transgender people), and social movements (e.g., The Pride Parade). This will facilitate our understanding of the broad social implications of the psychology of sexuality and gender and will also help us to situate these topics in relation to our lives. Similarly, this
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The course will include several experiential activities (e.g., assessment of attitudes towards certain groups, role plays). These activities are designed to encourage a more personal experience. It is my hope that you will gain a profound intellectual and personal understanding of human sexuality and gender.

Each class period will consist of an interactive lecture along with an in-depth critical discussion of the assigned readings and material covered in class. This is a seminar-style course where sessions will be student-led. In the first two sessions, I will lead the short lecture and discussion to model the format of presentations that will be expected from all students for the remaining sessions (see Course Requirements for further details on student session leadership).

Role of PSYC S3696 in the Psychology Curriculum: PSYC S3696 is a seminar designed especially for undergraduates majoring in Psychology and for students participating in the Psychology Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program. It will fulfill the following degree requirements:

- For the Psychology major or concentration in the College and in the School of General Studies and for the Psychology Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program, this class will meet the Group 3 distribution requirement.
- For the Psychology Post-Baccalaureate students and for Psychology majors who enter Columbia in Fall 2013 or later, it will fulfill the seminar requirement.

Readings: No textbook is required for this course. Most weeks the readings will comprise theoretical and empirical articles, literature reviews, and other readings from non-academic sources (e.g., popular media). All assigned readings are listed in the Schedule below and will be posted on CourseWorks.

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate broad knowledge about both “mainstream” and underexamined topics in the psychological inquiry of sexuality and gender
- Gain an in-depth perspective of human sexuality and gender informed by multiple sub-fields in psychology and related fields
- Expand your understanding of LGBTQ+ individuals, groups, and experiences
- Apply concepts related to sexuality and gender to real-world events and current affairs
- Critically analyze theoretical writings and empirical research findings in the social sciences
- Synthesize theoretical and scientific findings into a coherent essay of high-quality academic writing
- Identify current gaps in the extant literature about a topic of choice in the psychology of sexuality and gender
- Challenge your own biases and assumptions towards yourself and other people

Course Requirements
Class Participation: The assigned readings are designed to expand your current knowledge, spark your curiosity, and improve your critical thinking and analysis skills. The various topics addressed in this course are complex and multidimensional, and thus, “unpacking” them via in-depth discussion is warranted. To that end, you are expected to come prepared to class having
read ALL assigned readings. This will enable you to contribute to class discussion and offer high-level, critical, and thought-provoking commentary.

Discussing topics and participating in class activities related to sexuality and gender is very likely to not only spark your intellectual curiosity, but also your personal reflection and emotional reaction and even at times some discomfort. This is expected given the sensitive nature of the topics. As such, apart from being an active and collaborative member of the class group, you are also expected to be respectful and kind towards your fellow classmates.

Please note that class attendance is insufficient for full credit. I acknowledge that we all have different learning practices, and as such, there is no right or wrong method of participation in class. I strive to create a cohesive and friendly learning environment in class so that everyone will feel comfortable taking part in the success of the class. I am aware that some students are not comfortable participating in class. If that is the case with you, please see me and we will discuss alternative ways to demonstrate your engagement with the course material. Generally, effective class preparation and participation could include:

- Asking insightful or clarifying questions
- Connecting the assigned readings to other readings we have reviewed in the course, or reading you have done on your own, while drawing parallels and/or contrasts among findings or concepts
- Actively listening to fellow classmates and responding to their ideas in a constructive and respectful manner
- Offering thoughtful critiques of the reviewed research and providing convincing arguments and suggestions for how it might be improved
- Bringing in other academic and non-academic sources that shed light and facilitate the gaining of new insights on the topics covered
- Applying the various concepts and research findings discussed to current events, domestically and globally, in a way that further illustrates these concepts and findings

Brief Critical Response Papers (BRPs): Reading can be a passive endeavor. In order to facilitate a more active and thoughtful analysis and integration of the topics discussed in the assigned readings, you will be asked to submit a total of 6 brief critical response papers. In addition to promoting active engagement, these response papers will help you keep current on course topics and readings and help me monitor the class’ progress and students’ understanding of the material.

Your paper will consist of two sections. In the first section, you will briefly and critically discuss a topic/concept/finding that sparked your curiosity and interest. It is essential that you respond thoughtfully to the readings. Do not simply summarize, but rather offer a critical analysis and/or synthesis of the readings. Also, a simplistic critique, such as “the sample size is not big enough” is insufficient. Here are some ideas for ways to critique:

- Making connections/links between different concepts, theories, ideas, and findings (within or between class sessions)
- Addressing relationships between the presented material in this course to other academic or non-academic material you were exposed to outside of this course
- Applying the various concepts, and ideally the research findings, to current events, policies, social groups, and social movements (but not to personal experiences)
- Proposing novel theories or insights
- Identifying gaps in current academic knowledge and literature
In the second section, you will pose two questions that are of further interest to you after reading the assigned material. These questions should be specifically related to the readings. Your questions will demonstrate your critical analysis and understanding of the readings and should not be vague, overly general, or simplistic, such as “what are the limitations of the study?” (too vague), or “what is pansexuality?” (too general). Here are some ideas to help you write good questions:

- Identify areas of specific confusion about theoretical or methodological issues
- Speculate about conducting the same or a similar study in a different context
- Consider ecological factors that may impact the findings
- Ask about specific implications of the ideas you discussed in part 1

Note that these papers are strictly academic and analytical in nature. Personal reflections, accounts, or experiences should not be included. During the first/second session, I will review the components of a high-quality Brief Critical Response Paper and provide an example.

All 6 response papers are to be submitted no later than 8am on the day of class on CourseWorks. You can choose the dates on which you submit your BCRPs. In addition, please bring a copy of your BCRP with you to class as you are encouraged to contribute to the class discussion by sharing your critical analysis and posing your questions to the group. Remember: reading assignments are mandatory and you are always encouraged to bring your thoughtful questions to class. Note that you are not required to submit a Brief Critical Response Paper on days that you serve as the discussion leader.

Finally, the following format should be used for your Brief Critical Response papers: Up to 1 page, Double-space, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1” margins (Normal in Word). Please write your first and last name at the top header of the BCRP and name the file using the following format: your initials_BCRP(number)—for example, NAG_BCRP3. As with other assignments in this course, all 6 Brief Critical Response Papers will be graded (0-100 scale), and you are expected to review my feedback on prior submissions before submitting your most recent response paper. The grade breakdown is as follows: section 1 is worth 80 points; section 2 is worth 20 points.

Session Leadership: You will be responsible for leading the class session for two class meetings. Leading a session includes presenting (in a format of your choice) the topics and research covered in the assigned readings, and facilitating a lively and respectful class discussion. In the first three sessions of the course, I will lead the short lecture and discussion to model the format of presentations that will be expected from you as a leader or co-leader.

Having fun while learning allows for better absorption and retention of the material. You are encouraged to be creative and innovative in your presenting the material and leading the class discussion. Additionally, your session leadership must include an activity that will facilitate in-depth learning. Experiential and reflective activities, use of audiovisual media (e.g., short YouTube videos, TED talks), knowledge-based games (e.g., Sexuality Jeopardy) are just a few of the many ways you can enrich and enhance the quality of your presentation.

I will circulate a course schedule in the second class for you to sign up for leading your two sessions. At the end of the class prior to your presentation, you will briefly meet with me to discuss the focus of your presentation where I can offer further guidance and advice. In order to ensure a high-quality presentation that addresses the contents of the assigned readings for the class you will be leading, you are required to e-mail me your PowerPoint slides and any other ideas you might have by 12pm a day before your presentation. I will then review the slides and
offer my feedback to improve your presentation, which you will be asked to address prior to your presentation. Therefore, please remain open to getting feedback from me prior to your presentation and allow time to address my comments. As always, you are welcome to run your ideas by me as soon as possible.

Review Essay of Extant Literature: A successful scholar is expected to demonstrate broad and in-depth knowledge of existing theoretical and empirical literature. This knowledge includes three parts: (1) familiarity with both seminal and most current writings on a specific topic of expertise; (2) an ability to discuss, integrate, and synthesize different perspectives, theories, and findings; and (3) identifying gaps in the literature that require closer attention and further investigation.

During the fourth class (June 6), we will dedicate a brief portion of the class to workshop and share ideas for possible topics. Please come prepared with a topic of interest, which we may refine or change together as a group in case such changes may be required. It is advisable that you discuss your selected topic with me to make sure the focus of this essay is appropriate in scope and clear to you.

To develop your expertise in a specific topic in the psychology of sexuality and gender that is of particular interest to you, you will be required to submit three assignments:

1. The first assignment is an outline of the review paper you will write about your topic of interest. This outline should include the following headings and subheadings:
   a. General background: the broadest lens of presenting your topic of interest
   b. Theoretical review: what theories are most relevant to further explain your topic of interest; what theories have been used thus far to shed light on your topic of interest; what are the strengths and limitations of each of the presented theories. This section should consist of a critical analysis of the existing theories.
   c. Empirical review: empirical findings pertinent to your topic of interest—in this section, you are encouraged to identify both similarities and differences across different studies and describe the most well-documented findings/factors/variables. This section should consist of a critical analysis of the existing empirical findings.
   d. Problem statement: what is missing in the literature? What are some gaps of knowledge that were possibly overlooked this far in research about your topic of interest?
   e. Recommendations for further study: based on the gaps you identified in the previous section, what are some pressing lines of inquiry that were underexplored and underexamined thus far? What would be the best way to address these gaps of knowledge?

   The first assignment will be submitted by June 15 at 10am via CourseWorks.

2. The second assignment is a references list of the seminal and up-to-date writings published about your topic of interest. This list should contain at least 12 peer-reviewed articles published in scholarly peer-reviewed journals in psychology and related fields about your topic of interest. You may choose up to two references from this course syllabus (if relevant), which means that the other 10 references (at minimum) should be new and not in this syllabus. Along with the references list, I encourage you to include 1-2 sentences about the relevance of each reference to your topic of interest. All references should be formatted according to the American
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Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual (6th Edition). This list will be submitted via CourseWorks on June 18 (the day of the seventh period). I encourage you to use the various resources available at the library for searching relevant literature for your assignment. I am of course also available to assist you in finding academic literature.

3. The **third** assignment will include a coherent and comprehensive review of the existing theoretical and empirical literature (including the articles identified in the first assignment) about your topic of choice. In addition to summarizing the extant literature pertinent to your selected topic, you must demonstrate critical analysis of the material and identify current gaps in the literature as well as questions left unanswered thus far.

The third assignment will be submitted by July 7 at 11pm via CourseWorks. The following format should be used for your Literature Review Essay: 6 pages max (including references list), double-space, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1” margins (Normal in Word), and include page numbers. As in the first assignment, the in-text citations and references list must be formatted according to the APA Publication Manual (6th Edition) guidelines.

**Grading**: All assignments will be graded on a 0-100 scale. Final grades will be calculated based on the percentages outlined below.

Class Participation....................................................10%
Brief Critical Response Papers.....................................21% (Each of the 6 papers is worth 3.5%)
First Session Leadership...............................................10%
Second Session Leadership.........................................14%
Outline for Literature Review Essay..........................10%
References List for Literature Review Essay.................10%
Literature Review Essay............................................25%

**Grading Scale**:  
97-100= A+  87-89= B+  77-79= C+  
94-96= A  84-86= B  74-76= C  
90-93= A-  80-83= B-  70-73= C-  
60-69= D

**Class Policies**:  
Academic Integrity: As members of this academic community, we are expected to maintain the highest level of personal and academic integrity. Consider this excerpt from the Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity: “[E]ach one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity…. The exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others’ ideas in all of your research papers and projects… [and] you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.” More information about Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity can be found here: https://www.college.columbia.edu/faculty/resourcesforinstructors/academicintegrity/statement).

Plagiarism – whether intentional or inadvertent – is a serious violation of academic integrity, and will thus not be tolerated. You are required to submit exclusively original work
that you wrote, composed, or ideated on your own. If you are uncertain or have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, I encourage you to read the information provided on Columbia’s website about the various forms of plagiarism and ways to avoid it. Here is the link to a relevant webpage on plagiarism: https://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/dishonesty-plagiarism

I am obligated to report any incident of plagiarism to the appropriate channels at the university, which may result in significant penalties that may impact your academic career at Columbia. If you feel overwhelmed, confused, or that you are likely to resort to plagiarism, please talk to me. It is better to inform me beforehand, so we can try and remediate the issue, whatever it might be, than to deal with such a serious offense after the fact.

Attendance: Given the seminar style of this course, class participation, and thus attendance, is mandatory. At times, unplanned absences may occur. Such absences will be excused and not affect your final grade as long as they are documented (e.g., a dean’s or doctor’s note). Ten points (out of 100) will be deducted from your participation grade for any unexcused absence from class. Regardless, you will be responsible for the work due in that class, including reading responses and other requirements. Please inform me of any absences as early as possible so I can plan in advance if any changes might be needed.

Late Assignments: Late submission of assignments will incur a 15-point deduction for every 24 hours. That means that the highest grade for an assignment that is submitted 1 minute to 24 hours after the deadline would be 85 (out of 100). Late assignments should be submitted via email along with an explanation for the late submission. Under very certain emergency circumstances, you will be allowed to submit your assignment within 24 hours of the due date with no penalty. Such circumstances may include a sudden or unplanned event that significantly impacts your ability to submit your assignment on time. Such circumstances should be reported to the instructor as soon as possible, preferably before the submission deadline.

Class Etiquette: If you typically use your laptop for note taking, accessing the assigned readings or response papers, you are welcome to use your laptop for these purposes. In general, as a show of respect to your fellow classmates and instructor, please refrain from using electronic devices during class, including cell phones and laptops for unrelated reasons. If you find yourself being bored, tired, or overwhelmed, which is only normal, I encourage you to sit down quietly with your laptop closed in order to not disrupt the flow of the class.

As stated earlier, discussing sensitive topics and participating in class activities related to sexuality and gender may create some discomfort. As such, apart from being an active and collaborative member of the class group, you are also expected to be respectful and kind towards your fellow classmates.

Students with Disabilities/Exceptionalities: Students with any disability or exceptionality that may require any accommodations are requested to contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Lerner Hall before the start of the course to register for these accommodations. The procedures for registering with ODS can be found at http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods or by calling (212) 854-2388. I also ask that you speak with me on the first class to inform me of any required accommodations, and I would be more than happy to be of service and assistance to address them.
### Class Schedule:

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| 10   | June 27                        | Asexuality and Intersex | **Asexuality:**  
**Intersex:**  
| 11   | July 2                         | Tentative: Guest Lecture by a Gay Male Sex Worker | 1. Pornography  
2. Sex Work | Brief Critical Response Paper |
### Sex Work:


| 12 | Couple and Family | July 5 (Friday) | 1. Barker, M. (2005). This is my partner, and this is my… partner's partner: Constructing a polyamorous identity in a monogamous world. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 18*(1), 75-88.  

| July 7, 2019 | Literature Review Essay Due by 11PM (via CourseWorks) |