HON 416  
Sex, Self, Society  

Catalog Description:
Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor. This course explores the ways in which macro and micro institutions structure gender and sexual relations in society and how gender and sexual practices in turn structures and stratifies the social order. It addresses our sexual socialization, gender identities and the social consequences of gender stratification. It seeks to promote greater literacy regarding our lives as sexual beings, as gendered beings, and as romantic beings. This course is best suited for mature upper division students. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits.

Course Learning Outcomes:
Students who complete this course should be able to:
1. Describe the key methodological paradigms of the social and psychological sciences studying human sexuality.
2. Design, conduct, and evaluate research employing a variety of different methodologies.
3. Evaluate competing “knowledge claims” regarding the foundations and interpretations of human sexuality.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes:
Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:
 a. Obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
 b. Sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
 c. Understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
 d. Developed effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.
Content:
One of our guiding ‘mantras’ will be, “It’s a lot easier to have sex than it is to talk about it.” We will inquire into the barriers to sexual communication and also promote cross-gender understanding and appreciation. We will explore the distinction between conditioned, habitual sexuality and conscious sexuality. We will examine the achievement of intimacy, the labor of romance and relationship, and the spiritual aspects of eroticism.

Sociologically we will address how conventional sex education reinforces sexual ignorance and how, even in this most private and intimate of spheres, the fingers of society are relentlessly present. Is it possible to reduce or eliminate the socially acquired sexual suspicion and mistrust between men and women in contemporary society? Can contemporary western males connect with their “inner female”? Can females connect with their “inner male”? For our culture and for our history, a woman is an object of desires—not a subject with desires. What is the relation between sexuality and power over others? What is “sacred sexuality” and what is the relation between sexuality as pleasure, sexuality as power and sexuality as spiritual practice?

Education is a journey, not a destination, hence students will be highly encouraged to integrate their formal readings with their own personal life experiences and to practice doing sociology rather than merely learning about it. We will also be doing various “experiments” in “de-socialization” wherein we will use ourselves as a laboratory and we will, to some degree, become our own sociological experiments. Our whole overly medieval, academic, educational tradition is that you acquire knowledge through collecting stuff from text books and “knowing” it (especially for “tests”). We will attempt to contest the authority of that tradition and celebrate first hand investigation, thinking, and creating rather than collecting and memorizing.

Major Study Units:
1. The theory of repression and the relationship of sexuality and society
2. Sex education itself as a medium reinforcing ignorance and suppression
3. Male Sexual Body, Sexual Mind
4. Female Sexual Body, Sexual Mind
5. Interviews on American’s sexual fantasy life
6. Sexuality and Spirituality
7. Sexualities: Fear, Ignorance, and Repression
8. Sex is not natural; Heterosexuality is not innate; Society is inside of sex
9. Communication across the Sex Divide
10. Sociological Conceptions of Gender
11. The “R” word: Relationship, Love and Marriage

Current Required Texts:
2. Michel Foucault. The History of Sexuality
5. Friday, Nancy. *My Secret Garden, An Anthology of Women’s Sexual Fantasies.* (selections)
   _____. *Women on Top.* (selections)
   _____. *Men in Love.* (selections)
7. Carnes, Patrick. *Out of the Shadows, Understanding Sexual Addiction*
9. Harville Hendricks – *Getting the Love You Want*
10. Charlotte Davis Kasl – *If The Buddha Dated*
11. Planned Parenthood Website: *BetterThanSexED.org*

**Instructional Strategies:**
A variety of instructional strategies should be specified. These may include lectures, written assignments, oral presentations by students, and exercises in critical thinking.
1. Writing assignments that integrate materials every few weeks around a central theme.
2. Seminar-style discussions.
3. Team Projects.
4. Exploriments.
5. Presentations.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

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**Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy:**
The course syllabus should include the following statement:
Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university.

**Students with Disabilities Policy:**
The course syllabus should include the following statement:
In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Center for Academic Success, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to
provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Prepared by:  Barney McGrane, Ph.D

Last revised:  Spring 2013