SEX AND THE STATE

IDSEM-UG1710
Mondays 3:30-6:10
1 Washington PL, 527
NYU Gallatin School
Fall 2012

Professor Lauren Kaminsky
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays
12-2 by appointment: http://goo.gl/zHwXI

Why are gay marriage and family planning at the heart of the cultural divide that polarizes contemporary American politics? What is at stake in debates about family values and the right to choose, and what subject positions do these debates produce and refuse? This course will take a comparative look at the ways citizens inhabit categories of sex, gender, and sexuality, with attention to the fact that some identities are made more legible than others. We will call into question the separation of the so-called public and private spheres, asking what is gained and what is lost by imagining a 'private' sphere as somehow outside of politics and the market. If we understand registered marriage as one mode of addressing the state, how does it both generate and violate fantasies of privacy? What is the relationship between private property and the sanctity of the home? What bodily practices are at stake in asserting a relationship between sex, dignity and humanity?

Weekly responses to the assigned readings are due every Sunday night before a class meeting. (If there is no class meeting scheduled, no response is required.) You are expected to post one concise, well-edited paragraph to the 'Chat Room' section of the NYU Classes course site. Note that pressing enter/return will post your text, so keep each response to one well-developed idea. In addition, you are encouraged to respond to other posts and use this space to discuss news items or continue class discussions. Commentary on other postings or news items is a welcome supplement to your weekly response, but it does not replace your thoughtful reflection on some aspect of the assigned readings.

Essay prompts will be circulated two weeks before the due date. Essays must be submitted using the ‘File Drop’ section of the NYU Classes course site on the due date. Late work will not be accepted unless extraordinary circumstances merit prior approval. Incompletes in the course are extremely rare and will only be considered upon submission of a formal request for a grade of incomplete.

Attendance is required, and more than one absence may result in a significantly lower course grade.

Plagiarism will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Read Gallatin’s academic integrity policy: www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html

Grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation in class discussions (including weekly responses online)</th>
<th>25% of final grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 due October 8</td>
<td>25% of final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2 due November 19</td>
<td>25% of final grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 3 due December 12</td>
<td>25% of final grade</td>
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Required readings are as follows. Books are available at Shakespeare & Co. (716 Broadway) and at the Course Reserve Desk in Bobst Library. Other readings are available in the ‘Resources’ section of the NYU Classes course site. You must bring a copy of the assigned readings to class each week.
September 10 - introductions
“Sexuality” and “State” from New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society (2005)

September 17 - the state
Nancy Cott, Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation (2002)
Timothy Mitchell, “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics” (1991)

September 24 – sex
Nancy Cott, Chapters 4, 5 and 6 in Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation (2002)
Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis” (1986)

October 1 – marriage
Nancy Cott, Chapters 7, 8 and 9 in Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation (2002)
Mary Anne Case, “Marriage Licenses” (2005)

October 8 (no class meeting) – ESSAY 1 DUE

October 22 – normal
Pat Califia, selections from Public Sex: The Culture of Radical Sex (1994)

October 29 – private
Wendy Brown and Janet Halley, eds., selections from Left Legalism/Left Critique (2002)

November 5 – consent
Shahla Haeri, “Temporary Marriage and the State in Iran: An Islamic Discourse on Female Sexuality” (1992)

November 12 – freedom

November 19 (no class meeting) – ESSAY 2 DUE

November 26 – the prison

December 3 – the military
Janet Halley, selections from Don’t (1999)

December 10 – the toilet
Harvey Molotch and Laura Noren, eds., selections from Toilet: Public Restrooms and the Politics of Sharing (2010)

December 12 – ESSAY 3 DUE