

HIST*4140 - SEXUALITY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Fall 2016
University of Guelph
MCKN Room 119A
Tuesday & Thursday 2:30PM - 03:50PM

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Office hours: Tuesdays 4:00PM-6.00PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course we will analyze the meaning of sexuality in medieval Europe. We will focus on the importance of sexuality for individuals as well as for societal organization and ideology. We will analyze the question of sexual identities in the Middle Ages and examine in which ways sexuality and sexual identities are culturally constructed. We will discuss how sexuality formed and forms views on gender identity and social status. We will explore how sexuality helped define hierarchies in the medieval period.

The course is analytical and problem-oriented. Throughout the course we will encounter several different approaches to the history of sexuality. Through comparing differing interpretations of the various topics you will develop your ability to think critically. To critically assess arguments and assumptions that historians make about the past is a fundamental part of the course. You are also encouraged to develop independent opinions on the topics based on the knowledge you have acquired through close analysis of the texts.

Throughout the course we will focus on how we study medieval sexuality. We will start by examining both common sense and theoretical aspects of thinking about sexuality. Simply put, what do we mean by "sexuality" and "sexual identity" now and in the past? Do we believe that humans have always experienced sexuality in the same way? How much is sexuality and gender part of our identity? What are we born with; what changes over time? Many different types of sources are used in studies of medieval sexuality. But what do they actually tell us? How can we understand the differences between sources and between contrasting interpretations?

This course will allow you to explore the topic of medieval sexuality through scholarly works as well as primary sources. This course is seminar based and student discussions and debates in class are crucial in order to fully explore the material.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

To develop and improve your:

- critical thinking and ability to assess and evaluate scholarly arguments
- ability to express arguments and opinions orally and in writing
- ability to analyze and interpret primary sources
- theoretical analysis of gender and sexuality
- knowledge of the importance of gender and sexuality in any historical society
- ability to examine historiographical differences and debates

REQUIRED TEXTS

Ruth Mazo Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing unto Others*, (New York: Routledge, 2012)

The book is available at the University Bookstore. It is also available as an e-book in the library.

All other required texts are available on E-Reserve through the Courselink site.

EVALUATION:

- Participation: 20%
- Seminar presentation: 5%
- Written assignments: 75%

Participation (20%):

Students are required to attend classes and actively participate in discussions. It is essential that readings are done before class. The participation grade is not solely judged by quantity (though the number of times a student makes comments indicates active participation) instead participation is graded based on the level of preparation before class; ability to actively listen to other students and the instructor; ability to respond respectfully to other students; ability to further the discussion by asking questions and presenting other possible views and interpretations. The final participation grade will be marked out of 20.

Students will be asked to hand in a midterm self-assessment stating areas of strength as well as areas for improvement. This assessment will be used in order to provide feedback regarding the participation grade.

Seminar presentation (5%)

Each student will be responsible for leading the seminars during one week. This is done in pairs or in small groups of three. The seminar leaders will lead a discussion of the most important topics and issues and shall come prepared with questions to the other students. This assignment also includes making a very brief presentation of the primary sources we encountered that week. The presenters shall post a few questions on the discussion board for the other students the day before class. After the seminars the seminar leaders shall hand in a self-assessment and a peer-review (of the other student/-s) stating their strengths and weaknesses as seminar leaders, what they learnt from leading a seminar, how the communication between the seminar leaders functioned and whether the work was distributed equally. The seminar presentation will be marked out of 10. More information will be provided in class.

Written assignments (75%):

Students are required to hand in a total of seven written assignments (they shall be uploaded to the dropbox, no paper copy is needed). Six of these assignments consist of reading reports from weeks 4 to 12; they are worth 10% each. The first assignment (week 3) is mandatory for all to hand in. The due date for this assignment is Sunday September 25 at 11.59 pm (midnight).

Students can choose which other five assignments they want to write. They are to be uploaded to the drop box on the Courselink site before midnight (11.59 pm) Sunday the same week. The reading reports shall be approximately 5 pages. The assignments shall briefly present and evaluate the main arguments in the readings. If you are aiming for the highest grades you should also contextualize them by referring to theories on sexuality and gender and/or to other readings. All weekly readings must be discussed except the textbook (Karras) and the primary sources. References to the readings with specific page numbers are required.

The seventh final assignment is also mandatory for all to hand in. It consists of an evaluation of the primary sources we have read throughout the course. You may include sources we met in the articles or in the textbook. Students can choose to discuss either the topic of gender and sexual inequality; the question of sexual identities or a source criticism of different medieval sources. More information will be posted on-line and discussed in seminars. This assignment is worth 15% of the final grade and should be approximately 5-7 pages in length. References to the sources, primary and secondary, are required. The deadline for the eighth assignment is Thursday December 8 at midnight (11.59pm).

All assignments will be marked out of 20. A late penalty of 1 mark per day will apply (a day being 24 hours). The six weekly reading reports will primarily be graded based on: knowledge of the readings; clarity of arguments; a critical but fair assessment of the authors' arguments and the ability to contextualize these arguments. The final assignment will be graded based on ability to synthesize and contextualize the various primary sources: that is the ability to connect the sources to readings

throughout the course and the ability to present them in the framework of general theories on gender and sexuality. The final assignment will also be graded based on the ability to present arguments and counter-arguments.

Week 3 assignment	10%	Due date: Sunday Sep 25 at 11.59pm (midnight)
Five reading reports, chosen from weeks 4-13	10%	Due dates: Sunday the same week at midnight (11.59 pm.
Primary source assignment	15%	Due date: December 8 at midnight.

Note: *In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph.*

THESE SEVEN WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRE STUDENTS TO MANAGE THEIR TIME WISELY.

GROUND RULES

Class discussions during this course will be based on tolerance and respect for others. We are all responsible for creating an environment that is safe and inclusive. This makes classes more fun and improves learning substantially. All students should feel comfortable to express their arguments and views even if they differ from the views of the authors, instructor or fellow students. However heterosexist, homophobic, sexist, ableist and racist comments will not be tolerated.

I might also ask you to shut down your laptop if you seem too distracted by the riches of the Internet.

SCHEDULE:

Week 1	Introduction
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Sep 8 Presentation of the course and the instructor

Week 2	Methodology & Theory: Understanding Constructivism
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Sep 13 Studying the history of sexuality: methodology & theories

What is sexuality? What is sexual orientation and sexual identity? What is constructivism? What is essentialism? Which biases do we carry with us?

Sep 15 Ruth M. Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing unto Others*, (New York: Routledge, 2007) [Henceforth: Karras] ch 1: "Sex and the Middle ages".

Week 3	Methodology & Theory: Understanding Constructivism
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Sep 20 Jacqueline Murray, "Historicizing Sex: Sexualizing History" in *Writing Medieval History*, ed. N. Partner, (London: Hodder, 2005), p. 133-152

Sep 22 David Halperin, "Sex Before Sexuality: Pederasty, Politics and Power in Classical Athens" in *Hidden from History*, ed. M Duberman, M. Vicinus, G Chauncey, (New York: Penguin, 1989) p. 37-53

→ First paper due on September 25 at midnight (uploaded to the dropbox).

Week 4.	Sexuality and the Medieval Church
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Sep 27 Joyce E Salisbury, "The Latin Doctors of the Church on Sexuality", *Journal of Medieval History* 12:4 (Dec 1986), p. 279-289.

James Brundage, "'Allas That Every Love Was Synne': Sex and Medieval Canon Law, in *Catholic Historical Review* 72:1 (Jan 1986), p. 1-1

Sep 29 Vern L Bullough, "Formation of Medieval Ideals: Christian Theory and Christian Practice", *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church*, ed. V. Bullough & J. Brundage, (Buffalo, N.Y: Prometheus Books 1982), p. 14-21.

Primary sources:

The Bible, Leviticus 18, 20 & 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Augustinus, "The Good of Marriage & The City of God" in Martha Brozyna, *Gender and Sexuality: a Medieval Source Documents Reader*, (Jefferson NC: McFarland & Co, 2005) [henceforth: Brozyna] p. 31-35.

Penitentials in Brozyna, p. 123-127.

Week 5	Virginity, Chastity & Celibacy
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- Oct 4 Karras, ch 2: "The Sexuality of Chastity".
- Clarissa Atkinson, "'Precious Balsam in a Fragile Glass': The Ideology of Virginity in the Later Middle Ages", in *Journal of Family History* 8:2 (June 1983), p. 131-143
- Kim M Phillips, "Four Virgins' Tales: Sex and Power in Medieval Law", in *Medieval Virginites*, ed. A. Bernau, R. Evans, S. Salih, (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2003) p. 80-101
- Oct 6 Katharine Lewis, "Becoming a Virgin King. Richard II and Edward the Confessor" in *Gender and Holiness*, ed. S. Riches & S. Salih, (London; New York: Routledge, 2002) p. 86-100
- Primary sources:
- The Apostolic Penitentiary (extracts) in *Auctoritate Papae*, ed. S Risberg, (Stockholm: National Archives of Sweden, 2008) cases 84, 95, 203, 205-206, 210, 211, 215, 382, 399.

Week 6	The Sexual Body
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- No class on October 11 – Happy Thanksgiving! (This class will be replaced with a class on December 1)
- Oct 13 Joan Cadden, "Is sex necessary?" & "Conclusions" in Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference*, (New York: Cambridge University press, 1993) p. 259-281
- Jacqueline Murray, "The law of sin that is in my members. The Problem of Male Embodiment", in *Gender and Holiness*, ed. S. Riches & S. Salih, (London; New York: Routledge 2002) p. 9-22.
- Primary sources:
- Galenus, in Brozyna, p. 141-144.
- Constantine the African, in Brozyna, p. 150-152.

Hildegard of Bingen, in Brozyna, p. 152-156.

→ The midterm self-assessment is due on Friday October 14 at 5pm. Upload the assessment to the dropbox.

Week 7	Marital Sexuality
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Oct 18

Karras, Ch. 3: "Sex and Marriage".

James Brundage, "Sexual Equality in Medieval Canon Law", in James Brundage, *Sex, Law and Marriage in the Middle Ages* (Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain: Variorum, 1993) p. 66-79

James Brundage, "Let me count the ways", in James Brundage, *Sex, Law and Marriage in the Middle Ages* (Aldershot, Hampshire, Great Britain: Variorum, 1993) p. 81-92

Oct 20

Dyan Elliot, "Bernardino of Siena versus the Marriage Debt" in *Desire and Discipline, Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West*, ed. K. Eisenbichler, & J. Murray, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) p. 168-200

Primary sources:

Orderic of Vitalis, in Brozyna, p. 89

Week 8	Female Sexuality I
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Oct 25

Karras, ch 4: "Women Outside of Marriage".

John M Riddle, "Contraception and Early Abortion in the Middle Ages", in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. V. Bullough & J. Brundage, (New York: Garland Pub. 1996), p. 261-277

Oct 27

Leah Otis-Cour, "De jure novo: Dealing with Adultery in the Fifteenth-Century Toulousain" in *Speculum* 84:2 (2009), p. 347-392

Primary sources:

London City Archives, in Brozyna, p. 117-120

Marie de France, *Equitan*

Week 9	Female Sexuality II
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- Nov 1 (Karras, ch 4: "Women Outside of Marriage")
- Jacqueline Murray, "Twice Marginal and Twice Invisible" in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, V. Bullough & J Brundage, (New York: Garland, 1996), p. 191-222
- Michelle M. Sauer, "Representing the Negative: Positing the Lesbian Void in Medieval English Anchoritism," *thirdspace: a journal of feminist theory & culture*, volume 3 issue 2 (March 2004):
- Nov 3 Helmut Puff, "Female Sodomy: the Trial of Katherina Hetzeldorfer," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, (2000), Vol. 30:1, p. 41-61.

Week 10	Male Sexuality I
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- Nov 8 Karras, ch 5: "Men Outside of Marriage".
- Vern Bullough, "On Being a Male in the Middle Ages", in *Medieval Masculinities*, ed. C. Lee, T. Fenster, & J. McNamara, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994) p. 31-45.
- Jacqueline Murray, "Sexual Mutilation and Castration Anxiety: A Medieval Perspective" in *The Boswell Thesis*, ed. Mathew Kuefler, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) p. 254-272.
- Nov 10 John H Arnold, "The Labour of Continence: Masculinity and Clerical Virginity", in *Medieval Virginites*, ed. A. Bernau, R. Evans, S. Salih, (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2003) p. 101-118

Week 11	Male Sexuality II
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- Nov 15 (Karras, ch 5: "Men Outside of Marriage")
- Vern Bullough, "The Sin Against Nature", in *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church*, ed. V. Bullough & J. Brundage, (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1982), p. 55-71
- Mathew Kuefler, "Male friendship and the Suspicion of Sodomy" in *Gender and difference in the Middle Ages*, ed. C. Pasternack, & S. Farmer, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) p. 179-212.

Nov 17

Ruth Mazo Karras, "Knighthood, Compulsory Heterosexuality and Sodomy" in *The Boswell Thesis*, ed. Mathew Kuefler, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) p. 273-286

Primary sources:

The Bible, Leviticus 18, 20 [again] & Genesis 19 (Sodom)

Peter Damian, The Book of Gomorrah, in Brozyna, p. 38-40

Jean Froissart, Chronicles, in Brozyna, p. 95-96.

Marie de France, *Lanval*

Week 12	Normativity, Boundaries and Transgressions
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Nov 22

Ruth Mazo Karras & David Lorenzo Boyd, "'Ut Cum Muliere'. A Male Transvestite Prostitute in 14th Century London." in *Premodern Sexualities*, ed. A Fradenburg, C. Freccero, (New York: Routledge, 1996) p. 101-116

Joyce E Salisbury, "Bestiality in the Middle Ages" in *Sex in the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Salisbury (New York: Garland Pub., 1991), p. 173-186

Nov 24

Simon Gaunt, "Straight Minds/ 'Queer' Wishes in Old French Hagiography" in *Premodern Sexualities*, ed. Louise Fradenburg, (New York: Routledge, 1996)

Week 13	Individuality and Sexual Identities
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Nov 29

Nancy Partner, "No Sex, No Gender" in *Speculum* 68:2, (1993) p. 419-443

Dec 1

David Halperin, "Forgetting Foucault: Acts, Identities and the History of Sexuality" in *Representations* 63, (summer 1998), p. 93-120

Primary sources:

Chaucer's "The Wife of Bath" (Prologue and tale) in *The Canterbury Tales*

→ Primary source assignment due on December 8 at midnight.



COLLEGE OF ARTS GENERAL STATEMENTS

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their uoguelph.ca email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

WHEN YOU CANNOT MEET A COURSE REQUIREMENT

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and email contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar's information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

DROP DATE

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is November 4, 2016. See the Undergraduate Calendar's regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses.

COPIES OF OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Keep paper and/or other reliable backup copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email sas@uoguelph.ca or refer to the SAS website.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the

responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

RECORDING OF MATERIALS

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

RESOURCES

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars>