

ENG 4936, Honors Seminar: Sexing the Past: American Literature and Sexuality to 1900

Dr. Jodi Schorb

Spring 2015 Contact Info and Office Hours:

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Office: Turlington 4334

Drop-in office hours are held every **Wednesday and Thursday from 4-5:15pm.**

With 1-day advance notice, you can request an appointment most Tuesdays (flexible afternoon appointments, esp. near period 7, 1:55-2:45) and Wednesdays (esp. periods 4-5 (10:40-11:30, 11:45-12:35)).

Course Description and Objectives:

Our class meets Wednesday 12:50-3:50 (periods 4-6) in Matherly 6.

This seminar introduces students to theories, debates, and texts central to the study of sexuality in American literature prior to 1900. We will begin with formative work by Foucault (on the "acts vs. identities" shift) and Thomas Laqueur (on the transition from the ancient "one-sex" model of gender to the modern two-sex model); across the semester, we'll interrogate and to complicate these influential texts, as new arguments and archives continually force us to propose "more nuanced concepts of identity and [sexual] orientation than early social constructivist accounts have allowed" (Traub, "Present Future" 125).

Sodomites, male "brides of Christ," female marines, sporting men, true women, romantic friends, jezebels, inverts, perverts—such figures populate the cultural imagination of American literature prior to the twentieth century. We'll consider the possibilities, desires, and fears these figures embodied as well as how religion, urbanization, the expanding print marketplace, the evolving cultures of sentiment, abolition, and moral reform, and newer scientific and medical discourses helped shape sexual knowledge and possibilities.

Frequent and extensive secondary readings will provide contexts and frameworks for theorizing early sexual knowledges and practices.

Required books: (in order)

- **Julia Ward Howe, *The Hermaphrodite*** (U Nebraska Press, 2009), ISBN 978-0803218871 (list \$19, but many used copies \$8 and up)
- **Nathaniel Hawthorne *The Blithedale Romance*** (Bedford Cultural Edition), ISBN 978-0312118037 (list \$17 but also many used copies of this edition; this is the only title also ordered through UF Bookstore)
- **Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*** (Penguin Classics is the recommended edition), ISBN 978-0140437959 (list \$14 but numerous used copies \$1 and up of the excellent Penguin edition)
- **Edward Prime-Stevenson, *Imre*** (Broadview Press) ISBN, 978-1551113586; Lists \$24 on broadviewpress.com; note in-class announcement about alternative version)

Assignments and Weighting:

Unit 1, 2, 3 Response Papers (4 pages), 15% each (Choose 2, or do all 3 and have your 2 best grades count)	30%
Final research paper (15-20 pages), 32.5%, plus final project proposal and presentation, 2.5%	35%
Participation (weekly discussion/preparation/attendance) (see grading rubric for participation)	30%
2 "show and tell" writeups (1 page), 2.5% each (Choose 2, or do all 3 and have your 2 best grades count, or to boost participation)	5%
Total: 100%	

Extensions, late penalties and late policies:

Assignments will be graded down one half grade (i.e, 5 points) for each calendar day they are late. Late work will be accepted and graded if submitted within one week of deadline, but will NOT contain detailed instructor's comments, just a short explanation of the final grade.

If you feel your situation warrants an extension, you can request an extension; however, I reserve the right to deny the request, especially when poor time management, recurrent tardiness, recurrent requests for extensions, technology failures, or frequent lack of class preparation factor into the need for more time.

Grading Chart (Letter to Number Conversion):

You'll get a letter grade and numeric equivalent on all your papers (and your class participation grade). I will then record this number in my gradebook. This chart is used to convert letter grades to numbers on all assignments. The parentheses include the range of numbers that may apply to the corresponding letter grade. This chart is also used to determine your final grade in the course:

A+	98.5	(97-100)
A	94.5	(93-96)
A-	91	(90-92)
B+	88	(87-89)
B	84.5	(83-86)
B-	81	(80-82)
C+	78	(77-79)
C	74.5	(73-76)
C-	71	(70-72)
D	67.5	(66-69)
F	60	(65 or under)

Grading Expectations for Essays/Response Papers:

A-range papers are thoughtful, carefully developed, and clearly presented. They demonstrate strong comprehension of the materials under discussion, clear engagement with course themes and contexts, and offer a sustained reading that successfully illuminates the text or texts under discussion. A-papers are well-organized, well-supported, well-developed, and written in an engaging, polished, and clear prose style.

B-range papers are solid, competent and capable; they would clearly benefit from either more complex development, fuller explanation or examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), improved organization, or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

C-range papers are passable and often promising, but have **multiple** key areas that require **considerable** improvement: a more rigorous topic, a stronger thesis, stronger development of ideas, improved focus (in identifying the issue or guiding the reader through your analysis), tighter organization, fuller explanation of examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), and/or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

D-level papers are not yet adequate; they are often off track, superficial, or struggle to narrow down a viable topic, or they struggle to organize and sustain a persuasive reading in readable prose.

F papers fail to meet the basic criteria of argument, organization, and mechanics, or they fail to respond in a meaningful way to the assignment, or they contain passages that are plagiarized.

Grading expectations for Course Participation & Preparation:

To earn an "A" for regular participation and preparation, the A level student is **regularly** prepared and engaged. They have their materials handy and are able to refer to specifics in their materials during class. They are able to make connections from the readings and/or build productive discussion from other student's ideas and the instructor's ideas. They contribute to the ongoing discussion by responding thoughtfully to others and/or by asking questions that help build useful and relevant group understanding. They are active listeners and participants in group work. They abide by the attendance policy.

B range participants **mostly** meet the above criteria, C range participants **occasionally** meet the above criteria, D range participants **rarely** meet the above, F range participants **fail** to meet the above criteria.

Grade appeals:

In the unlikely event that a student wishes to appeal his or her final grade, the student should consult Prof. Stephanie Smith, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Dept. of English Main Office. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

For more information, <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Attendance, Participation, Preparation:

I expect you to attend class regularly, to contact me if you miss class for any announcements made in your absence, and, should you miss a class, to make arrangements to get notes from other students. Do not show up next class and ask if you missed anything; find out what was covered beforehand and arrive prepared.

You are allowed 1 absence, no explanation needed. In the rare event of a third absence, your participation grade will be lowered at least one letter grade. Habitual tardiness (i.e. arriving after roll) will be marked as absenteeism. Speak to me in conference if you are facing unusual circumstances that affect your ability to abide by these expectations.

Speak to me early in the semester and provide documentation of travel dates if you are on a university-approved athletic or scholastic team and need the attendance policy adjusted for travel, per university policy.

Online Evaluation Process:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is intellectual theft and fraud. It means passing off someone else's work (including borrowed words and phrases) as one's own. It occurs when one fails to acknowledge the source(s) of ideas, quotations, or information. It also occurs when someone else supplies the content of any part of one's paper, even if the person is unknown (i.e. paper bank, a webpage). When in doubt, cite. If you have concerns or questions about documenting sources, or wish to report a suspected plagiarism, consult with me in office hour.

Plagiarism does not include incorporating feedback from classroom discussion into your essays, as long as you do not another student to significantly contribute language to, or significantly revise, your arguments. The same applies to consultations with writing center staff.

All students are required to abide by the Student Conduct and Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Additional information and Resources:

UF Counseling and Wellness Center offers individual counseling, wellness counseling, couples counseling, problem solving help, CERC crisis services, and other assistance:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

3190 Radio Road; (352) 392-1575 (8am-5pm, Monday through Friday)

UF Disability Resource Center strives to provide quality services to students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, to educate them about their legal rights and responsibilities so that they can make informed decisions, and to foster a sense of empowerment so that they can engage in critical thinking and self-determination.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). For information, call 352-392-8565 or email accessuf@dso.ufl.edu

If you have a documented disability, please set up a confidential discussion with me before week three to discuss how this may impact your performance and how I can best accommodate your needs.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information, see:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/families/applicant-information>

UF Writing Studio (Formerly the UF Reading & Writing Center) offers UF students help becoming better readers and writers, including study skills sessions, test preparation workshops, and 30-minute sessions of individual help with essay drafts. The website includes multiple resources, including MLA citation guides, annotated bibliography writing guides, and resume guides.

<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-center/>
302 Tigert Hall; (352) 846-1138

Sexual Harassment, UF Student Affairs:

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/sexual_harassment/

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WEEKLY SYLLABUS

UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS

1.7

Week 1

Course Introduction

- Bruce Burgett, "Sex" from *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*
- Michel Foucault, from *History of Sexuality v. 1: An Introduction* (Part One: We Other Victorians)
- In class work: William Bradford, from *Of Plymouth Plantation*

1.14

Week 2

The Acts v. Identity Shift

- Michel Foucault, from *History of Sexuality v. 1: An Introduction* (Part Two: The Repressive Hypothesis)
- "Documents from the Sodomy Trial of Nicholas Sension. May 1677," *EAS* 12.2 (2014), ELS.
- Richard Godbeer, "'The Cry of Sodom: Discourse, Intercourse, and Desire in Colonial New England,'" *WMQ* 52.2 (1995).

1.21

Week 3

Gender in History, or From One Sex to Two Sex (or, From Gender Hierarchy to Sex Difference)

- Thomas Laqueur, "New Science, One Flesh" chapter, from *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (1990)
- Elizabeth Dillon, "Nursing Fathers and Brides of Christ: The Feminized Body of the Puritan Convert," in Lindman and Tarter, eds., *A Center of Wonders* (2001)
- Edward Taylor, poems.

3-4 Page Summary/Response Paper Derived from Unit 1 due by Friday 1.23, 11:55pm, to ELS.

UNIT TWO: IMAGINING GENDER DIFFERENCE BEFORE "TRANSGENDER"

1.28

Week 4

- Thomas or Thomasine? A Case of Transvestitism in Virginia (1629), in Kathy Peiss, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Sexuality*.
- Kathleen Brown, "Changed . . . into a Fashion of a Man: The Politics of Sexual Difference" (1995)
- Elizabeth Reis, "Impossible Hermaphrodites: Intersex in America, 1620-1960," in *JHS* (2005).

Group Show and Tell: Pick an interesting factoid culled from *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, the popular midwife manual discussed in Reis.

Submit 1-page show and tell summary to ELS by Friday 1/30, 10:55pm.

2.4

Week 5

- Greta LaFleur, "Precipitous Sensations: Herman Mann's *The Female Review*, Botanical Sexuality, and the Challenge of Queer Historiography" (2013).
- Herman Mann's, *The Female Review; or Memoirs of an American Young Lady* (1797); novel (online edition).

2.11

Week 6

- Julia Ward Howe, *The Hermaphrodite* (c. 1847) (purchased book),
- Julia Saltzer, "The Polarity of Gender in Howe's *Hermaphrodite*" (pdf)

2.18

Week 7

- Anonymous, "The History of Constantia and Pulchra" (1789); link to online scholarly edition: <http://www.common-place.org/justteachone/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/History-of-Constantius-and->

- Pulchera-JTO-PDF-smaller.pdf)
- Anonymous, "The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman" (1857), plus Elizabeth Reis, "Transgender Identity at a Crossroads: A Close Reading of a Story from 1857," (2014), pdf

3-4 Page Summary/Response Paper Derived from Unit 2 due by Friday 2.20, 11:55pm, to ELS. Same guidelines as Unit 1 paper.

UNIT THREE: GEOGRAPHIES OF DESIRE AND DREAD

2.25

Week 8

Sexual Advice Literature

- John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman, from *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* ("Within the Family," "Reproductive Control," "The Quest for Sexual Health," "Utopian Alternatives," "Same Sex Intimacy," "Sexual Commerce")
- Joanne Passett: from *Sex Radicals: The Antebellum Roots of Sex Radicalism*,

Submit 1-page show and tell summary to ELS by Friday 2/27, 10:55pm.

SPRING BREAK

3.11

Week 9

Utopian Communes:

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), purchased book, plus
- Jonathan Beecher, "The New Amorous World," from *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World*, 297-317 (ELS)

3.18

Week 10

Sex and the City:

- Amy Srebnick Gilman, from *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers*, pdf
- Timothy Gilfoyle, "A 'Gay' Literature" from *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920* (1992), pdf
- Edgar Allen Poe, "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (serialized in 1842-3; republished in 1845), pdf

3.25

Week 11

"Racy" Literature and the Lash: Transatlantic Jacobs

- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (purchased book); (read entire narrative, but our discussion will likely prioritize the first half of the narrative, as well as the concluding passages.
- Beverly Guy Sheffall, "The Body Politic: Black Female Sexuality and the Nineteenth Century Euro-American Imagination" OR
- Colette Colligan, "Anti-Abolition Writes Obscenity: The English Vice, Transatlantic Slavery, and England's Obscene Print Culture in International Pornography," in *International Exposure: Perspectives on Modern European Pornography*, ed. Lisa Sigel (67-99), pdf

Summary/Response Paper Derived from Unit 3 Due Friday 3.27 by 11:55pm to ELS (Same criteria as previous)

UNIT FOUR: *Scientia Sexualis*: The Rise of Sexology.

4.1

Week 12

Scientia Sexualis: The Rise of Sexology.

- Anna Katharina Schaffner, introduction to *Modernism and Perversion: Sexual Deviance in Sexology and Literature, 1850-1930* (2011), pdf
- **Submit 1-page show and tell summary to ELS by Friday 4/3, 10:55pm.**

Proposals due by Monday, April 6, 11:55pm, to ELS. See final project guidelines handout.

4.8

Week 13

Scientia Sexualis: Whitman and the Sexologists

- Walt Whitman, "Live Oak with Moss" (unpublished manuscript, circa 1859, online).
- Walt Whitman, "Calamus" cluster of poems; compare the original 45-poem cluster from the 1860 version of *Leaves of Grass*, to the 39-poem cluster from Whitman's final 1891-92 edition.
- Ed Folsom and Kenneth Price, from *Re-Scripting Walt Whitman: An Introduction to His life and Work* (2005), 60-75 and 117-129.
- Correspondence between John Addington Symonds, Walt Whitman, Edward Carpenter (circa 1890-93)
- **Begin student presentations on final projects (2).**

4.15

Week 14

Scientia Sexualis: The Rise of Sexology, continued.

- Edward Prime-Stevenson, *Imre* (1906), Broadview edition book, plus all Appendix materials, choosing an Appendix item of interest that helped your thinking/interpretation for small group work.
- **Continue student presentations on final projects (5).**

4.22

Week 15

Course Wrap.

- **Finish student presentations on final projects (8).**

Reading Days, April 23-24.

Final papers due: Wednesday, April 28, 11:55pm, to ELS.