

FEMINISM AND SEXUALITY

Semester 2, 20 credits

Please note that this outline is indicative as of Summer 2023 and is subject to change.

Convenor: Dr Boriana Alexandrova (boriana.alexandrova@york.ac.uk). This is usually a team-taught module.

Who should take this module? All taught MA students may choose to take this module as one of their options, and research students are welcome to audit this module. If you wish to audit this module, please discuss it with your supervisor in week 1. ('Audit' here means to participate fully in the module, including presentations, but not to undertake the module assessment.)

Description and aims: Central to feminist politics, sexuality has been theorized and problematized in various ways, generating lively debates and activism within and across disciplines. In this module, we will explore different political and theoretical positions on sexuality, with a continuous focus on feminist engagement within the field, to highlight how 'sexuality' has been mobilized to challenge the gender binary and wider inequalities. The module is chiefly based on taught sessions, whereby each week is dedicated to a topic related to feminism and sexuality and is taught by a different tutor who is an expert on that topic. In the final workshops of the term, students will be given opportunities to develop their assessed essay topic in advance, get feedback and advice on their ideas, and do some preliminary research, planning, and writing towards it before term ends. Students will be asked to bring a mini-presentation on their chosen topic, having done some preliminary research and drafted their essay question and key ideas they wish to explore. Essay/mini-presentation topics may be inspired by a week on the module or you could develop a topic entirely your own. Throughout the module, we will:

- Engage with different theoretical frameworks of sexuality, exploring how the theories 'converse' with one another;
- Identify the complexity emerging in language and cross-cultural studies, drawing on students' own diverse experiences and understandings;
- Draw critical attention to the social constructions of masculinity, femininity, and cis- and heteronormativity, with a focus on how they intersect with, for example, experiences of ageing, class, race, religion, or dis/ability.

Learning Outcomes: After successfully completing this module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of feminist analyses of sexuality, with an understanding of the history and basis of contestation and debate within the field.
- Critically apply theories to interdisciplinary research on sexuality, and to evaluate theories alongside empirical work;
- Research independently on issues of sexuality with sensitivity to difference and diversity, and a critical awareness of local and global contexts;
- Present complex arguments cogently and with nuance, both in oral and written forms.

Assessment: one 3,500 – 4,000 word essay on a topic developed by the students, in discussion with the module convenor and/or tutors.

Indicative Teaching Programme: 2-hour seminar per week

Week 1	Introducing feminism & sexuality
Week 2	Sex, Love, Kinship & Marriage
Week 3	Sex & Capitalism
Week 4	Discourses of Desire
Week 5	Questioning Heterosexualities
Week 6	Sex (and) Education
Week 7	Asexuality
Week 8	Polyamory
Week 9	<i>Student-led session:</i> mini-presentations on essay topics
Week 10	Essay support workshop
Week 11	Essay support workshop

Indicative Reading:

Ahmed, S. (2006) *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

Haberland, Nicole and Deborah Rogow, "Sexuality Education: Emerging Trends in Evidence and Practice." *Journal of Adolescent Health* 56:1 (2015): 15-21.

- Hammack, Phillip L., David M. Frost & Sam D. Hughes, "Queer Intimacies: A New Paradigm for the Study of Relationship Diversity," *The Journal of Sex Research* 56:4-5 (2019): 556-592.
- Jackson, S. and Scott, S. (2010). *Theorising Sexuality*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Kim, H. S., Puri, J., & Kim-Puri, H. J. (2005). Conceptualizing Gender-Sexuality-State-Nation: An Introduction. *Gender and Society*, 19(2), 137–159.
- Lorde, Audre (2007) "Uses of the Erotic." In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde*. Berkeley: Crossing Press
- Maxwell, Danielle (2017) *It's not just about sex: Asexual identity and intimate relationship practices*. PhD thesis, University of York.
- Pai, I. E.-Y. (2017). *Sexual identity and lesbian family life: Lesbianism, patriarchalism and the Asian family in Taiwan*, Springer.
- Pallotta-Chiarolli, Maria (2010) *Border Sexualities, Border Families in Schools*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
- Pereira, P. P. G. (2019). *Queer in the tropics: gender and sexuality in the Global South*. Springer.
- Plummer, K. (1992). *Modern Homosexualities: Fragments of Lesbian and Gay Experiences*. New York: Routledge.
- Richardson, D. and Munro, S. (2012). *Sexuality, Equality, Diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.