

AMERICAN STUDIES 01:050:284:02: AMERICAN SEXUALITIES

**BOOKS REQUIRED FOR PURCHASE**

1. Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002. • **ISBN-13: 978-0674009745**. \$26.50.
2. Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* (2007): Mariner Books; Reprint edition (June 5, 2007). • **ISBN-13: 978-0618871711**. \$14.95.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

The design of this course has been assisted by advice from George Chauncey of the Department of History of Yale University and from Marc Stein of the Department of History of York University in Toronto.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

An historical survey of American sexualities and sexual cultures from the colonial era through the present, this course will focus on primary source documents and on classic texts that have helped to shape the emerging field of sexuality studies. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which politics, race, religion, ethnicity, age, region, and gender have influenced American sexual cultures and the efforts to regulate them. The course will employ an interdisciplinary approach to its subject, examining artifacts from visual culture such as cartoons, photographs, paintings, and film as well as printed sources.

**LEARNING GOALS:**

**Departmental learning goals:**

- Students will be able to describe the methods of American Studies and synthesize the debates that have shaped the field.
- Students will learn to investigate American culture and society across time and space by examining history, politics, literature, and the arts.
- This course will contribute to the department's long-term goal that students learn to articulate ideas in well-organized oral presentations and clearly written prose.
- Assignments are designed to help students learn to think critically, analytically, and creatively.

**Additional learning goals met by this course:**

Students will learn:

- to examine primary sources in the history of sexuality to analyze material dealing with sexuality and situate it in a cultural, social, and political context
- to understand and apply a critical vocabulary in sexuality and gender studies to a whole series of texts: Historical, literary, film, and other cultural artifacts
- to do in-depth research on a topic related to sexuality in American cultures
- to identify central concerns about sexuality in primary source documents and write thoughtful response papers, responding critically to the primary text's central concerns or question

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**ABSENCES:**

Regular class attendance is required by Rutgers and is essential to this class. You will be allowed one unexcused absence without grade penalty. The consequences of unexcused absences are as follows:

- 1 unexcused absence = No penalty
- 2 unexcused absences = 20% grade penalty = final grade no higher than a B
- 3 unexcused absences = 30% grade penalty = final grade no higher than a C
- 4 unexcused absences = failure in the course

Excused absences are those that result from documentable family emergencies, illness, religious observance, court dates, jury service, etc., that is, situations over which you have no individual control. Please inform me as soon as possible if you are unable to attend class on a regular basis.

**ABSENCE AND LATENESS POLICY**

**Students are expected to arrive at class promptly and to attend the entire class.**

**Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes for reasons such as jury duty, illness, family funeral, etc., please use the University absence reporting website //**<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra//> **to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.**

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS:**

**All special accommodation requests must be brought to my attention during the first two weeks of class. Full disability policies and procedures are available for review at:** <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>.

**Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at** <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>.

**CURRENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:**

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>. Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

**Honor Pledge:** I pledge on my honor that I will adhere to all aspects of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy.

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American Studies Department  
F.A.S., Rutgers University

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Spring 2014  
Ruth Adams Building 018  
Wednesday: 2:15-5:15 P.M.

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Take interactive-tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: <http://sccweb.scc-net.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/Intro.html>.

Consult Don't Plagiarize: Document Your Research! For tips about how to take notes so that you don't plagiarize by accident:

[http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib\\_instruct/instruct\\_document.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml)

Online Learning Tools from Rutgers University Libraries including Rutgers RIOT, Searchpath and RefWorks: [http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib\\_instruct/lib\\_instruct.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/lib_instruct.shtml); Academic Support Programs: <http://lrc.rutgers.edu/>

**NO CELL PHONES OR COMPUTERS ARE PERMITTED IN THIS SEMINAR EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF STUDENTS WITH CLASSIFIED DISABILITIES THAT REQUIRE SUCH USE.**

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Class participation. This is a seminar. Its success depends on your active and informed participation in our weekly discussions. Therefore, attendance is required at ALL class meetings, and class participation constitutes an essential part of the final grade. (15% of final grade)**

**Each student will be the primary moderator of one class and the assistant moderator of another. (15% of final grade)**

**Three one-page (two-paragraph) responses to assigned reading for each week. You must sign up in advance for the weeks on which you will write these papers. They will be graded on a scale of 1-5, based on the originality of your insights and the clarity, intelligence, wit or humor of your perceptions. They should be posted on the Discussion and Private Messages section of the Sakai course web site and, only if that procedure fails for technical reasons, e-mailed to me at (fishbei@rci.rutgers.edu) no later than 7:00 P.M. on the night preceding class. Make sure to include your name and the text you are discussing on your paper as well as a question intended to stimulate class discussion. These papers will allow us to work on your writing on a regular basis. They also will improve class discussion. (15% of final grade)**

**Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>: first 2-3 page critical paper due. (20% of final grade)** The Puritans have been stereotyped in the American popular imagination as favoring sexual repression, strictly policing sexual expression, and finding no enjoyment in sexual activity. Examining modern cartoons that employ Puritan visual imagery, analyze the degree to which one of these cartoons does or does not perpetuate these stereotypes and the accuracy of that cartoon in terms of what you have

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learned from assigned readings of Edmund S. Morgan's "The Puritans and Sex" and the poetry of Anne Bradstreet of actual Puritan sexuality. Be sure to cite properly the cartoon you have selected and the sources you are using to explicate it according to the format prescribed in Acknowledging Sources. Include the actual image in your paper.

**4-5 page critical paper on either *Dancing Mothers* (1926, 66 minutes) or *Carnal Knowledge* (1971, 98 minutes). (35% of final grade)** Be sure to cite properly the film you have selected and the sources you are using to explicate it according to the format prescribed in Acknowledging Sources. You are not required to use additional sources, but, if you do, they should be cited properly. The papers are due via e-mail to the instructor at [fishbei@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:fishbei@rci.rutgers.edu) and in hard copy in class:

***Dancing Mothers* (1926, 66 minutes): Paper due Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Considering the questions on the question sheet regarding *Dancing Mothers* and closely examining the actual text of the film and Eleanor Rowland Wembridge's "Petting and the Campus" (1925), Ellen Kay Trimberger's "Feminism, Men, and Modern Love: Greenwich Village, 1900-1925" (1983), and Lewis Erenberg's Chapter 8: "Into the Jazz Age" in Lewis Erenberg's *Steppin' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture* (1981). analyze the film in terms of the way in which it employs popularized Freudianism to deal with such social issues as the emergence of "flaming youth" and flapper culture, the rise of nightclubs and the democratizing effects of their social mores, and the influence of cosmopolitan values as the United States officially became an urban nation by the 1920 Census and increasingly became exposed to European cultural values. To what degree, if any, have the sexual and social mores of the younger and older generation been influenced by such factors?

***Carnal Knowledge* (1971, 98 minutes): Paper due Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>:** Considering the questions on the question sheet regarding *Carnal Knowledge* and closely examining the actual text of the film and Regina Markell Morantz's "The Scientist as Sex Crusader: Alfred C. Kinsey and American Culture" (1977), Paul Robinson's chapters on Alfred Kinsey and on William Masters and Virginia Johnson as well as his epilogue in *The Modernization of Sex: Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson* (1989), Anne Koedt's "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm" (1970), and Beth Bailey's *Sex in the Heartland* (2002), analyze the film in terms of the way in it treats the impact of the sexual revolution as the male protagonists, Jonathan and Sandy, age from college youth into middle-aged professionals. Define what you mean by "the sexual revolution." To what degree, if any, has the sexual revolution affected the males and females in this film? Does gender significantly influence the significance of the sexual revolution for the male and female characters in *Carnal Knowledge*? Does the film portray greater access to sex as providing the characters with greater or lesser personal satisfaction?

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Ruth Adams Building 018  
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**Office: Ruth Adams Building 024C**

**Office hours: Wednesday: 12:30-2:00 P.M.**

**Thursday: 3:45-5:15 P.M.**

**and by appointment**

**Office telephone: (848) 932-8650**

**E-mail: [fishbei@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:fishbei@rci.rutgers.edu)**

**GRADING COMPONENTS:**

Moderation.....	15%
Class participation.....	15%
Three one-paragraph reading critiques....	15%
Puritan visual imagery paper.....	20%
Film paper.....	35%

**FILM SHOWINGS:**

**FILM**

**SHOW DATE**

*The Vagina Monologues* (2002, 90 minutes)

Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>

*Before Stonewall* (1984, 87 minutes)

Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>

*Choice Thoughts: Reflections on the Birth Control War*  
(2001, 10 minutes)

Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>

*St. Louis Blues* (1933, 15 minutes)

Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>

*David Halberstam's The Fifties, Volume 4: A Burning Desire* (1997, 50 minutes)

Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>

*Summer of Love* (2007, 60 minutes)

Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>

*Daughters of Dykes* (1994, 14 minutes)

Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

*Ending Silence, Shame, and Stigma: HIV/AIDS in the African American Family* (2012, 27 minutes)

Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

**FILMS ON RESERVE AT MEDIA CENTER, MABEL SMITH DOUGLASS LIBRARY:**

**FILM**

**DATES**

*Dancing Mothers* (1926, 66 minutes)

Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>-  
Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>

*Carnal Knowledge* (1971, 98 minutes)

Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>-  
Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

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**ASSIGNMENTS:** All readings on reserve at Mabel Smith Douglass Reserve Desk and articles available on electronic reserve.

**No.      Week of:                      Readings and Films: (\*on reserve)**  
I.        March 12<sup>th</sup>                      No readings. ***THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES (2002, 90 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS***

II.        March 19<sup>th</sup>                      NO CLASS: MIDSEMESTER BREAK

III.      March 26<sup>th</sup>                      **PURITAN AND COLONIAL SEXUALITIES**  
Lecture on the construction of sexual discourse and on Sigmund Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*.

\*Edmund Morgan, "The Puritans and Sex," *New England Quarterly* 15 (December, 1942): 591-607.

\*Anne Bradstreet, "Before the Birth of One of her Children," p. 24; "To my Dear and Loving Husband," p. 225; "A Letter to her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment," p. 226; "Another," pp. 229-230; "Upon my Dear and Loving Husband and his Going into England Jan. 16, 1661," pp. 265-266; "In my Solitary Hours in my Dear Husband his Absence," pp. 267-268; "Thankful Acknowledgment for the Letters I Received from my Husband out of England," p. 269; "In Thankful Remembrance for my Dear Husband's Safe Arrival. Sept. 3, 1662," p. 270 in Anne Bradstreet, *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*, edited by Jeannine Hensley, foreword by Adrienne Rich. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967.

\*Benjamin Franklin, "Old Mistresses Apologue," pp. 27-31 in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, Vol. 3, edited by Leonard W. Labaree. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961.

\*Herbert G. Gutman, Chapter 2: Because She Was My Cousin in *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1976, pp. 45, 60-86.

\*Winthrop Jordan, "Fruits of Passion: The Dynamics of Interracial Sex," in *White Over Black*. 1968; reprinted Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, Inc., 1969, pp. 136-178. – cont'd. p. 7

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<u>No.</u>	<u>Week of:</u>	<u>Readings and Films:</u> (*on reserve)
III.	March 26 <sup>th</sup> (continued)	*Jonathan Ned Katz, "The Age of Sodomitical Sin, 1607-1740," <i>Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary</i> . New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1983, pp. 23-65, 111-118.
IV.	April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>HOMOSEXUALITY AND LESBIANISM BEFORE STONEWALL AND GAY IDENTITY POLITICS</b>  * Walt Whitman, "Calamus" in <i>Leaves of Grass and Selected Prose</i> , edited by James E. Miller Jr. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959, pp. 83-99.  *Anthony Rotondo, "Romantic Friendship: Male Intimacy and Middle-Class Youth in the Northern United States, 1800-1900," <i>Journal of Social History</i> 23 (1989): 1-25.  *Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," <i>Signs</i> 1 (Autumn 1975): 1-29.  *Sherwood Anderson, "Hands," in Sherwood Anderson, <i>Winesburg, Ohio</i> . 1919; reprinted New York: The Viking Press, 1967, pp. 27- 34.  *George Chauncey, "Building Gay Neighborhood Enclaves: The Village and Harlem," in George Chauncey, <i>Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World</i> . New York: Harper/Collins, 1994. pp. 227-247, 430-437.  <b>BEFORE STONEWALL (1984, 87 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS</b>

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**No.**    **Week of:**  
V.      April 9<sup>th</sup>

**Readings and Films: (\*on reserve)**

**SEXUAL DEVIANCE AND SEXUAL REVOLUTIONS:  
WHITE SLAVERY, PROSTITUTION, THE ORIGINS OF  
THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVEMENT, JAZZ AGE SEX,  
AND BLUES WOMEN'S SEXUALITY**

\*Timothy Gilfoyle, "The Moral Origins of Political Surveillance: The Preventive Society in New York City, 1867-1918," *American Quarterly*, 38 (Fall, 1986): 637-652.

\*Kathy Peiss, "'Charity Girls' and City Pleasures: Historical Notes on Working Class Sexuality, 1880-1920," [1983], in Kathy Peiss and Christina Simmons, eds., *Passion and Power: Sexuality in History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 57-69.

\*Linda Gordon, "Voluntary Motherhood: The Beginnings of the Birth-Control Movement," in Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right: Birth Control in America*. 1976; reprinted New York: Penguins Books, 1990, pp. 93-113, 498-500. (continued p. 8)

\*Eleanor Rowland Wembridge, "Petting and the Campus." *The Survey*, 54 (1 July 1925): 393-395, 412.

\*Ellen Kay Trimberger, "Feminism, Men, and Modern Love: Greenwich Village, 1900-1925," in Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson, ed., *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983, pp. 131-152.

\*Lewis Erenberg, Chapter 8: "Into the Jazz Age," in Lewis Erenberg, *Steppin' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981. pp. 233-263.

\*Hazel Carby, "It Jus Be's Dat Way Sometime: The Sexual Politics of Women's Blues," *Radical America* 20 (1986): 8-22.

**CHOICE THOUGHTS: REFLECTIONS ON THE BIRTH  
CONTROL WAR (2001, 10 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

**ST. LOUIS BLUES (1933, 15 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

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**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**No.    Week of:**  
VI.    April 16<sup>th</sup>

**Readings and Films: (\*on reserve)**

**THE KINSEY REPORT, MASTERS AND JOHNSON, AND ANNE KOEDT'S THE MYTH OF THE VAGINAL ORGASM: SEXUAL SCIENCE AND POPULAR CULTURE**

\*Regina Markell Morantz, "The Scientist as Sex Crusader: Alfred C. Kinsey and American Culture," *American Quarterly* 29 (Winter 1977): 563-589.

\*Paul Robinson, Chapter 3: William Masters and Virginia Johnson, pp. 120-190; Epilogue: Sexual Modernism and Romanticism, pp. 191-195 in *The Modernization of Sex: Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers/Harper Colophon Books, 1989.

\*Anne Koedt, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," pp. 37-41 in Shulamith Firestone and Anne Koedt, eds., *Notes from the Second Year: Woman's Liberation: Major Writings of the Radical Feminists*. New York: Notes (from the Second Year): Radicals Feminism, 1970.

**DAVID HALBERSTAM'S THE FIFTIES, VOLUME 4: A BURNING DESIRE (1997, 50 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

VII.    April 23<sup>rd</sup>

**THE SIXTIES SEXUAL REVOLUTION SEEN THROUGH THE LENS OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS, A UNIVERSITY TOWN IN THE AMERICAN HEARTLAND AND THE HIPPIES IN THE HAIGHT-ASHBURY IN SAN FRANCISCO**

**DANCING  
MOTHERS  
PAPER DUE**

Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002. Poem by Lawrence Ferlinghetti; Introduction: pp. 1-12; pp. 13-215; Epilogue: pp. 216-218; Abbreviations: pp. 221-222; Notes: pp. 223-250; Acknowledgments: pp. 253-255.

**DANCING MOTHERS PAPER DUE IN HARD COPY IN CLASS AND E-MAILED TO INSTRUCTOR AT [FISHBEI@RCI.RUTGERS.EDU](mailto:FISHBEI@RCI.RUTGERS.EDU)**

**SUMMER OF LOVE (2007. 60 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

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**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**No.   Week of:**

**Readings and Films: (\*on reserve)**

VIII.   April 30<sup>th</sup>

**LESBIAN DAUGHTER/CLOSETED GAY FATHER SEEN  
THROUGH THE LENS OF A GRAPHIC NOVEL**

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. 2006; reprinted  
Boston: A Mariner Book, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007. Pp.1-  
232; Acknowledgements: [p. 234].

***CARNAL  
KNOWLEDGE  
PAPER DUE***

\*Seth Stephens-Davidowitz, "How Many American Men Are  
Gay?" *New York Times* 7 December 2013:  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/08/opinion/sunday/how-  
many-american-men-are-gay.html?pagewanted=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/08/opinion/sunday/how-many-american-men-are-gay.html?pagewanted=2).

***ENDING SILENCE, SHAME AND STIGMA: HIV/AIDS IN  
THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY (2012, 27 MINUTES)  
SHOWN IN CLASS***

***DAUGHTERS OF DYKES (1994, 14 MINUTES) SHOWN IN  
CLASS***