Course Overview
Sex and medicine are two constants in contemporary U.S. society, words and concepts that we encounter at both personal and institutional levels. And although most of us have experiences of sex without medicine and vice versa, the two are bound up with each other in ways that are amenable to critical investigation and analysis. How, in other words, are our notions of sexual behavior and “normality” defined or structured by medical discourse? Who and which cultural institutions play the most significant roles in formulating our ideas and definitions of deviance, perversity and tolerated marginality? And, most importantly, how do they do this?

Our work in this class will be to identify some of the major players and historical developments in the field of “sexual medicine” in order to ask questions about how “natural” or appropriate this mostly unquestioned relationship is. What is necessarily included within—and excluded from—our understandings of ourselves as sexual beings when we allow these understandings to be defined by medical authorities? From which sources does this authority originate and how is it culturally produced and sustained?
Organization and Requirements

This course will help us to describe both the scope and the feasibility of a specialty called sexual medicine. Each week we will consider at least one topic—e.g. sexual dysfunction—as it relates to such a specialty, and we will critically evaluate whether and how medicine has shaped its emergence and/or evolution. Readings are intended to provide a combination of factual, historical, clinical and theoretical approaches to each topic, and will always be the basis for both my lectures and our class discussion. In order to properly attend to the amount of empirical data associated with these topics, I will spend about half of our time in a conventional lecture format. I fully expect each of you to come to class with questions and/or ideas about the readings, however, so that we can spend the rest of our time in discussions that I hope will be productive for us all. This means that I expect you to come to class having both read the assigned material, as well as having written 2-3 questions that tie them together in a meaningful way. I expect you to write questions that anticipate a discussion with myself and with your peers.

Reading/Vocabulary: I expect you to read thoughtfully, and one element of successful reading is to learn new vocabulary. To facilitate this goal, I will ask you to identify three words that are new to you from each week’s reading and to define it both on your own and with assistance (write down what you think it means, based on its context, and then look it up and record the formal definition). I will collect these terms each week. This is not only to gauge your obedience, but also so that I can better evaluate how well you are both comprehending and digesting the materials that I assign. Productive class discussion and learning is dependent on all of us being familiar with the readings and ideas at hand; coming to class without having read the assignments will be obvious to those of us who have, and it will detract from our ability to collectively critique the work. If you are having trouble keeping up with the reading, please do not hesitate to speak with me.

Films/audiovisual materials: We will watch several films, videos and clips throughout the semester. Each of these has been chosen to complement or highlight the topics up for discussion for that particular week and so I expect you to both watch and take notes on their content. Critical viewing also involves paying attention to what is represented and what is missing, editorial decisions that are both obvious and subtle, perspective and assumed audience, as well your own idiosyncratic reactions and responses.

Written assignments: You will do a moderate amount of writing for this course, including two papers, a take home exam, and an evaluative summary of your group project. In addition to these, I will frequently assign in-class or overnight response writing related to the issues that we are exploring that day or week. I expect that all of you can skillfully express your ideas in writing, and that if you can’t, you will speak with me about accessing the resources available to you at Rice (the Rice On-line Writing Lab/OWL). Your in-class writing will not be formally graded, but it cannot be made up, which means that it will count towards your class participation grade. Your formal writing will be graded primarily based on organization, clarity, and the cogent expression of your ideas;
this does not mean, however, that I will ignore spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

Class participation: Because our work in this class is to evaluate the legitimacy of a somewhat marginal medical specialty, it is imperative that you each bring your thoughts, questions and arguments (pro and con) to class. Discussing such ideas necessarily includes both careful attention (e.g. What does the author actually say in this piece?) as well as authentic and/or emotional reactions (e.g. I hated this book!, Those ideas/people bother me!). I am open to all of your comments, as long as they are content-based, respectfully communicated, and as open-ended as you can make them (so as to generate further discussion). I expect all of you to have something to say. Your written questions can fill-in for those of you who are more reluctant to speak spontaneously (they will constitute part of your participation grade), but I hope that I will hear something genuinely thoughtful from each of you before the semester is complete. Class participation is worth 12% of your grade.

Formal assignments:
Short papers: You will write two 6-7 papers for this class: the first will be an elaboration of a topic that we cover in class (e.g. circumcision) and the second will entail a small amount of research on a subject that will not be discussed in class (e.g. sexual enhancement drugs). These papers should be straightforward analytical summaries of the topic, and need not use more than 3-5 sources in total (although you are welcome to use more). It is up to you to choose the weeks that most interest you, which might mean that you write about a topic before we cover it in class—this is fine. The due dates are listed on the syllabus, and will also be posted on Owlspace; depending on topical interest, the class can decide if you would like to make them available to each other. These summaries are worth 20% of your grade (10 pts each).

Quizzes: I will administer three short (and unannounced) quizzes throughout the semester, each one based on our reading. While they will be primarily based on that week’s reading assignment, I will also include questions from prior reading, particularly if it is material that has been built upon by other class material (including discussions). The quizzes are worth 18% of your grade (6 pts each).

Take home exam: This will be an opportunity for you to reflect upon and demonstrate your own unique engagement with the course material. I will provide several questions from which each of you will choose, all of them broad enough for you to construct thoughtful and original “answers.” Because it is an exam, I will not expect you to provide an official bibliography, but I will expect you to cite any sources from which you are either directly quoting or deriving the content of your idea(s). Your take home exam is worth 20% of your grade.

Group Project/Sexual History: Depending on our final number, I will divide the class into 4-5 groups, each one made up of 4-5 students. The assignment will be the same for each of you—to devise, substantiate and carry out your own version(s) of a sexual
history. Based on some readings that I will provide, in combination with research that you will carry out yourselves, you will design the most thorough history that you can, basing your choice of questions and categories on the work that we do in class.

I will provide each group with a composite “patient” on the day of your presentation, meaning that you will not know anything about her/him until you conduct the history. Each group should select one person to ask the questions/perform the history and one person to act as the patient. Your grade will be based on how comprehensive, feasible, user-friendly and accurate your history is. I will provide the class with a lengthier set of guidelines as we get closer to our presentations, but you may speak with me about it in the meantime if you are interested in getting started. Model sexual histories will be posted on OwlSpace. I will expect each of you to turn in a 3-4 page summary/reaction paper to the project; your grade will be based on both your individual and your group’s work. Your project will be worth **30% of your grade (20% group; 10% individual)**.

**Extra credit**: I will devise several extra credit assignments throughout the semester, providing you with an opportunity to earn additional points towards your final grade. These will almost always be in the form of a 2-3 page (informal) paper about a news item or event that falls outside of our official class content, but that is topically salient. I am open to your suggestions about possible topics for these assignments—use your sources of medical and popular news to gather ideas.

**A NOTE ABOUT WRITTEN WORK**: I expect all of your written work to be turned in as hard copies; I will NOT accept emailed assignments without a prior written agreement between us, and this will only occur in the case of extenuating or insurmountable circumstances. There are no exceptions to this policy.

**General information and advice**

You will gain most from the course if you take regular notes on the readings, lectures, and class discussions. Everyone will take notes differently, but at a minimum you should be writing down (in addition to the author and year of publication): the body of literature/discipline with which the source is most closely aligned (e.g. gender studies, philosophy, critical race theory), the main or novel concepts introduced or worked with in the piece, and the outline of the author’s argument and/or scholarly contribution. In other words, think about why this document was written/created, and for what audience. Who needs to be convinced of what, in the author’s mind? What is the evidence used by the author to support her/his argument? What conclusions are drawn?

I do not expect nor presume specific prior backgrounds about any of you; rather, I expect that all of us will bring a variety of personal and academic perspectives to this course. Part of why the body lends itself so well to cultural analysis is that we all have and live in one—remember this throughout the course and speak from and through your own bodies and bodily experience(s). Through individual and group discussion, opportunities will be provided to learn from one another, so as to foster interdisciplinary exchange of ideas. General classroom discussions—and your own lived bodies—should ideally provide you
with ideas and material for your individual and group assignments, as well as (hopefully) ideas that you will carry with you into future classes and academic endeavors.

### Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short papers</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group project and presentation—Sexual History</td>
<td>30 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class quizzes</td>
<td>18 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take home exam</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>12 pts</td>
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Please remember that an **A** represents excellent work, going above and beyond what is required for the course. A **B** represents above standard work, doing what is required clearly and thoroughly. A **C** represents standard work, doing what is required to get by. A **D** represents below standard work, incomplete or done with a minimum of effort. An **F** (which I do not expect!) represents doing work that is below the minimum requirements.

### Academic Dishonesty/Honor Code

I expect the work that you turn in to me for this class to be your own. For the purposes of this class, academic dishonesty signifies the act of borrowing ideas from others (classmates, book, journal article etc) and claiming them as your own. Credit for ideas you find elsewhere must be given in your work and the source must be cited. Any confusion or uncertainty about this matter, particularly its most extreme form of plagiarism, should be discussed with me.

Since I expect you to sign the honor code pledge on all of the assignments that you turn in to me, emailed work will not be accepted. LATE ASSIGNMENTS must be discussed with me ahead of time; late work about which I have not been notified 24 hours before the due date will not be accepted. Emergency situations, with written documentation, may be considered.

### Attendance Policy

Our course meets only twice per week, and I anticipate cancellations here and there. For this reason, I am allowing only 2 unexcused absences for the semester, and 2 excused absences before your grade will be penalized. Some of you may not use any excused
absences, but this does not mean that you may miss more than your 2 unexcused ones. Excused absences are made available for unavoidable situations (travel, emergencies etc) and because they extend the number of absences a student may incur, I expect written evidence/documentation of the situation leading to the absence. **You will lose 1 participation point** for every missed class that falls outside of the above described policy. Please note that I may initiate the involuntary withdrawal process if I determine that you have accumulated excessive absences; for this reason, PLEASE speak with me if you find yourself missing more classes than you had anticipated, or that might jeopardize your ability to succeed in this class.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Rice University will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities should also contact Disability Support Services in the Ley Student Center.

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**CALENDAR OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 – Contemporary Context</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>January 12</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to the course; review syllabus.</td>
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| **January 14**                |
### Week 2 – Historical Context

#### January 19


#### January 21


Review tables of contents: van de Velde, Costler and Willy, Krafft-Ebing, Lief et al/AMA; also Hirschfeld’s six orientations (pp. 34-5 in Wolff).

### Week 3 – Medical Treatment of Homosexuality

#### January 26


#### January 28


Review DSM history, criteria.

### Week 4 – Mapping Normal Sexuality

#### February 2


#### February 4


**Watch:** *Kinsey*. Begin Maines book.

### Week 5 – Diagnosing and Measuring Dysfunctions

#### February 9


#### February 11


**DUE – Paper #1 (by 5:00pm February 12)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6 – Genital Cutting</th>
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<td><strong>February 16</strong></td>
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| Begin Colapinto, *As Nature Made Him: The Boy who was Raised as a Girl*. |

| **February 18**         |
| Continue Colapinto, *As Nature Made Him*. |


<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 7 – Intersexuality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>February 23</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finish Colapinto, <em>As Nature Made Him</em>.</td>
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| **February 25**        |


| MIDTERM EXAM – DUE 2/23 IN CLASS |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 8 <strong><strong><strong><strong><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></strong></strong></strong></strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>March 2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>March 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Write a paper, work on your group project, catch up on your reading.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9 – Transgender and Transsexuality</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>March 9</strong></td>
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**March 11**


**Other:** Guest speaker

**Week 10 – Contraception**

**March 16**


**March 18**

Djerassi, C. (2001). *This Man’s Pill: Reflections on the 50th Birthday of the Pill.* Chapter 4: “The View from Tokyo” (pp. 98-113).


**Other:** OHSU Fellowship in Family Planning; Planned Parenthood guest speaker

**Week 11 – Sexually Transmitted Infections**

**March 23**  


Costler and Willy encyclopedia; Hormones and Intersex from *Adam Principle* (Chapter 8: pp.119-29).  

**Gardasil – “I want to be one less.”**  
**March 25**  
Houppert (2007) Who’s Afraid of Gardasil?; Saul and Pollack (NYT); JNCI piece;

**Week 12 – Unplanned Pregnancy**

**March 30**  


**April 1**  
**********NO CLASS**********

**Watch:** *The Last Abortion Clinic*
**Week 13 – Sexual Assault**

**April 6**

**April 8**

Guest speaker: SANE.

**DUE: Paper #2 (by 5:00pm April 8)**

**Week 14 – Sexual/Genital Enhancement**

**April 13**


**April 15**


**Week 15 – Sexual Addiction and Paraphilias**

**April 20**


### Sex Therapy

**April 22**


