

COMS 411/541 Sexuality and Public Discourse

Concordia University

Department of Communication Studies

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Fall 2019

Calendar Description

This course analyzes and explores the ways sexuality circulates in and as public discourses. Through a variety of conceptual formations and critical conceptualizations of “the public” and “sexuality,” this course analyzes conceptually and critically how sexuality and the notion of the public are mutually constitutive. The seminar is interdisciplinary and draws upon works in feminist studies, queer theory, political philosophy, history, cultural studies, and communication theory.

Prerequisites

400-level courses, unless otherwise indicated, are open to students who have successfully completed 48 university credits or who have received permission from the Department.

Course Description

To describe sexuality and public discourse as mutually constitutive is to understand how these two facets of society create, shape, reinforce, and perpetuate each other. On one hand, sexuality can refer to physical acts, orientations of desire, and aspects of identity. On the other, public discourse is that which constitutes a worldview or a set of beliefs, values, norms, and rituals. Public discourse is often generated through language, spread in the media, and entrenched within institutions. Multiple elements of sexuality generate public discourse, such as young people’s sexual conduct leading to widespread sex panics in the news (and on Oprah, Dr. Phil, etc). In turn, public discourse fuels the labels, categories, and moral judgements that shape views about sexuality. Media is produced that aims to provoke sexual desires (e.g. pornography), represent sexual identities (e.g. Queer Eye), and also convey self-representations of sexuality (e.g. YouTube coming out videos). Both public discourse and sexuality are shaped by and contextualized within historical and contemporary social, political and economic conditions as well as relations of race, class, ability, and gender. This course explores these messy overlaps by first approaching foundational concepts relating to publics and sexuality and then moving into topics of historic and current relevance that explore how public discourses of sexuality influence our relationships, media, sense of self, and livelihood.

Course objectives/learning outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Identify how sexuality and public discourse are mutually constitutive across multiple areas of public life;
- Critically analyze constructions of sexuality in relation to public space, media, and cultural artifacts;
- Use multi-disciplinary historical and theoretical lenses to investigate complex topics relating to sexuality and public discourse;
- Demonstrate fortified skills related to critical thinking, analytic reflection and discussion, writing, creativity, and time management.

Course materials

All readings and related materials will be available through Concordia Reserve. Required readings are listed first for each week; additional readings are provided for further exploration and for application to course assignments. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the semester as necessary, with the goal of fully addressing class needs and improving your learning experience.

Assignments and Grading

Assignment	Weighting (%)	Due Date
Participation	10	Ongoing
Discussion leader	20	Sign-up
Reading reflections (4 x 5%)	20	Weeks 2-11
Research and analysis project		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research topic proposal 	5	September 26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artifact analysis (Paper 20%, Response 5%) 	25	First draft Oct. 28; Response Nov. 1; Final Nov. 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourse Fair (Display 5%, Explanation 10%, Literature Review 5%) 	20	Reference list due Nov. 28; Fair on December 2 & 3

Course Participation – 10%

This is an interactive seminar course. Your participation is what fuels the learning that will occur. I will be asking questions and guiding discussions but if you do not do the readings, you will not get much out of the class time. To fully understand the concepts and topics covered, you will need to do the readings, reflect upon them, and participate in class. Participation constitutes arriving for class on time and prepared with the readings done and having thought about them. It also includes responding to questions, participating in group discussions, contributing to in-class activities, and exercising ethical, compassionate conduct in relation to yourself and others.

Discussion Leader – 20%

Once during the semester, you will lead the discussion for that week's topic. Along with 1-2 other students, depending on class size, you will guide us in expanding our knowledge of the topic and analyzing it more deeply. This means that each discussion leader will pick one "additional" reading from the syllabus to summarize and outline key points. Working together, you will identify overlaps, comparisons, and contrasts among the week's readings and share them with the class. You will not be responsible for covering the required reading, though you should assume that everyone has read it and you will be able to build on it (generally, I will review and discuss the required reading with the class beforehand). You will be responsible for introducing outside materials (videos, memes, GIFs, books, news articles, etc) that help explain key concepts and for linking the readings to real life examples. You will have **20-30 minutes** for your discussion leader session. This is not a formal presentation – you will need to incorporate creativity and enthusiasm to engage people in the topic and you must pose relevant questions for discussion while managing your time. If you create slides or other materials for distribution to the class, you must send them to me by email **before** class.

Note: If you miss your assigned discussion leader day, no make-up assignment is available.

Reading Reflections – 20%

For four weeks of your choosing, you will need to submit a reflection about one of the required readings (or videos, etc) for that week. Your submission should be 300-500 words and should:

- a) Reflect upon something that caught your attention in the reading, such as an important point or concept, something you agree or disagree with, or a new idea. Bring in other ideas or readings we have covered and examples from real life to deepen your reflection; and
- b) End with a **question** that will contribute to our conversations in class. Your question should be open-ended (not yes/no) and well-structured. It should provoke further thought and discussion.

To receive full marks, it must be clear that you have done the reading and paid close attention – you can make this clear by referring to page numbers, quoting the text, discussing specific ideas, and defining all concepts included in your reflection. If it is not clear that you have done the reading, or if either part of the reflection is missing, you will receive partial marks.

Your reflection must be submitted in Moodle by **3:00pm on Sunday** in advance of the class to which it relates. Each reflection is worth 5%

Research and Analysis Project

Your major project throughout the semester will be to pick a topic relating to sexuality and public discourse, research it in-depth, and provide an analysis of it using the course concepts as a starting point. You can pick a topic that we are covering and investigate it to greater extent or you can pick something that has inevitably been left off the syllabus (since there is only so much we can cover!). You are expected to access relevant literature about the topic, draw on course concepts, and use examples from everyday life to formulate your analysis. The project's final outputs will involve a research paper as well as an engaging display at the "Discourse Fair" we will hold in class. You can work in groups of two or individually on this project, except for the artifact analysis, which must be conducted separately. This project will involve multiple steps and deliverables:

1. Research topic proposal – 5%

You will select a topic of focus and submit a proposal detailing: your project title, the topic you have chosen and why, how the topic relates to the course (identifying course readings that will likely be useful starting points), ideas for the Discourse Fair display, a timeline for researching the topic and completing the rest of the deliverables, and a mitigation strategy for addressing unanticipated issues or setbacks. The proposal should be single-spaced (note - this is different from the other assignment guidelines) and maximum **2 pages**.

If working in a group of 2, submit the group contract in Moodle along with your topic proposal.

2. Artifact analysis – 25%

You will choose a cultural artifact related to your topic and analyze it using relevant course concepts. Broadly defined, a cultural artifact is discourse in material form. It can be an item (e.g. clothing, food), image, book, or other media (e.g. film, tv show, website, social media post), building, or arrangement of public space. In your written piece, identify the artifact, its relation to your topic, and draw on course concepts and outside research to analyze its role in sexuality and public discourse.

- You will post a first draft of your written piece as a discussion thread in Moodle and bring your artifact or something representative of it (e.g. a picture, video clip,

etc) to class. Be prepared to speak about your artifact, giving an easy-to-follow summary of your written piece. You will not be graded on this first draft, but the more rigorous it is, the better the feedback you receive will be.

- In or after class, you will respond to another student's draft of their Artifact Analysis paper, using the discussion thread on Moodle. Provide constructive feedback, identifying what resonated with you and what might require more clarification. Make suggestions of further avenues to explore or other literature and ideas that may be relevant to the artifact and/or the student's overarching topic.
- You will then submit your final Artifact Analysis paper in Moodle for grading.

For groups: each of you must pick a different artifact to analyze that is related to your topic. You will carry out this assignment's steps individually and submit individual papers that are different from each other and show no signs of plagiarism.

Written analysis of 1,200 words maximum (excluding reference list), worth 20%
One Moodle response of 300-500 words (excluding references recommended), worth 5%

3. Discourse Fair display, explanation, and literature review – 20%

Across two classes, we will have a "Discourse Fair," which is modelled on "science fair" types of events (or a more creative rendition of the academic poster presentation). Half of the class will present their research project on either day. You will be given a designated space to set up a display about your research project. Then students and myself will circulate to hear about your project. I will stop to discuss your project with you for 8 minutes, during this time you will have 5 minutes for your explanation and 3 minutes to answer questions about your research topic (times are doubled for groups). You will be evaluated on:

- A visual display that engages others in the research topic. This can include related cultural artifacts, media pieces – found or that you have created, posters, hand-outs, interactive displays on a computer or device that you bring, etc. We will discuss in class what is appropriate for this kind of visual display;
- Your verbal explanation that provides: a background of the topic, a review of literature, especially drawing on feminist, queer, and intersectional sources; and an analysis of the topic that integrates class concepts and outside literature. Your analysis can include and build on aspects of your earlier Artifact Analysis paper. You can practice this explanation as other students come by to look at your exhibit;
- A reference list of literature used to research and analyze your topic, which you have incorporated into your display and explanation. This should include a minimum of 10 outside academic sources, or 20 for groups (e.g. journal articles, scholarly books) in addition to class literature, any of which I may ask you about during our discussion. Include any non-academic sources (e.g. videos, news articles) that you incorporate into your project in the list as well. The reference list should be submitted in Moodle ahead of time.

Please note: Unless you make specific bookings, you will not have access to the Communication Department's production labs and equipment for this project. Use of personal devices and non-professional equipment is completely acceptable. You should plan to arrive early on the day that you need to set up your display. A presentation schedule will be circulated in the week prior to the fair days, but you should be ready to present on either day and plan to be present on both days.

In-class display (5%), verbal explanation (10%), literature review (5%)

Guidelines for all written assignments:

- Unless otherwise specified, all written work must follow APA formatting and referencing (<https://library.concordia.ca/help/citing/apa.php>)
- Respect the word limit and include your total word count at the end of the paper before your reference list; word counts exceeding +/- 10% of the word limit will affect your grade
- All written work should be in 12-point font, Times New Roman (Arial, Calibri, and Cambria are also acceptable) and double-spaced with regular (MS Word default) page margins
- Include page numbers at the bottom of each page
- Electronic submissions **must** be Microsoft Word documents (**not PDF** or other formats)

Attendance and participation – Classes will rely on active learning through participation, which will require you to discuss topics with other students and contribute to group work. Through this format, you will learn from each other as well as the lectures and course readings. Participation is also generally correlated with greater learning success. However, I understand that sometimes it is not possible to attend every class – you may be absent **one time** during the semester without it affecting your participation grade. If you will miss any further classes, you will need to **notify me in advance** and we may need to discuss how you can prioritize your participation in the course. You will be responsible for catching up on the lesson by contacting classmates, doing the readings and reviewing the slides. Coming late to class or leaving halfway through will be considered an absence unless you provide a substantial reason for these disruptions.

Late assignments – All assignments are due on the date specified and must be submitted by the deadline. There will be no make-up date for your Discussion Leader day or for the Discourse Fair days. Assignment extensions may be granted only in rare and unavoidable circumstances. If you will require an extension, you must bring this to my attention by email **in advance** of the deadline and generally **one week or more in advance**. If I have not granted an extension, the following late policy will apply: 1 grade point will be deducted from the total grade for every 24 hours that an assignment is late for up to 72 hours (accumulating a maximum 3-point deduction). Assignments more than three days late will receive a **zero** grade. Late assignments may not receive written comments or feedback.

Questions, emails, and grade reassessment – If you have a question about any aspect of the course, assignments, readings, or concepts, please ask it in class so that others can also benefit from hearing the response. If you do not wish to ask your question during the class, please discuss it with me immediately following the class or during my office hours. I will stay for 5-10 minutes after class or until I have addressed all questions. Discussing questions in person is the easiest and quickest way to ensure that we are on the same page. If you must send a question by email, you may have to wait up to 24 business hours for a response. I will not discuss grades over email. If you wish for an assignment to be reassessed, you will need to send me a written explanation for why the piece should be reassessed and then arrange an appointment to discuss the assignment face-to-face during office hours or after class.

[Official university policies removed from this version – if you are a student in this course, please use the version distributed to you]

Schedule

WEEK 1: September 9 – Everyone’s talking about sex

We will kick off the class with a discussion of what is associated with sexuality in our society as well as what forms public discourse takes. Then we will look at how sexuality and public discourse are mutually constitutive. This will involve a gentle introduction of Foucault’s genealogy of sexuality and his observations about the incitement to produce discourse about sexuality.

Required reading:

Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality, Volume 1*. New York: Random House
The Incitement to Discourse pp. 17-35

WEEK 2: September 16 – Sex as public, private, both?

We will be making sense of the relationship of sex to public spaces and institutions, even though it is often constructed as something relegated to the private sphere.

Required reading:

Berlant, L. & Warner, M. (1998). Sex in public. *Critical Inquiry*, 24(2), 547-566.

Additional reading:

- a) Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the closet*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
Chapter 1 “Epistemology of the closet” pp. 67-90.
- b) Warner, M. (2002). *Publics and counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.
Chapter 2 “Publics and counterpublics” pp. 65-124

Course add/drop deadline

WEEK 3: September 23 – Sexual orientations and identities

How do sexual identities come to be understood in our society? What are orientations? We will return to Foucault’s writings to understand the development of discourse around sexual identity. We will also delve into Sara Ahmed’s phenomenological analysis of orientations, which identifies deviations from the straight line of heterosexuality.

Required reading:

- a) Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality, Volume 1*. New York: Random House
pp. 42-44 (section number 2 only)
- b) Ahmed, S. (2006). Orientations: Toward a queer phenomenology. *GLQ*, 12(4), 543-574.

Additional Readings:

- a) Esterberg, K.G. (1996). “A certain swagger when I walk”: Performing lesbian identity. In S. Seidman (Ed.), *Queer Theory/Sociology*, pp. 259-279. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- b) Weeks, J. (1996). The construction of homosexuality. In S. Seidman (Ed.), *Queer Theory/Sociology*, pp. 41-63. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

- c) Cover, R. (2019). Competing contestations of the norm: Emerging sexualities and digital identities. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*. doi. 10.1080/10304312.2019.1641583

*****Research Topic Proposal due in Moodle on Thursday, September 26 by 9:00pm*****

WEEK 4: September 30 – Hook up culture, sexual double standards, and the charmed circle

In the 1980s, Gayle Rubin identified how some sexual practices become normal or even privileged while others are defined as deviant or off limits. Kath Albury uses this framework to discuss the contemporary hook up culture facilitated through dating apps and explain the shock and panic that Tinder often garners. This discussion of hook up culture necessitates reflecting on enduring and shifting sexual double standards within heterosexual roles as well as a history of sex panics.

Required reading:

- a) Albury, K. (2018). Heterosexual casual sex: From free love to Tinder. In C. Smith, F. Attwood, and B. McNair (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to media, sex and sexuality*, pp. 81-90. New York: Routledge.
- b) Rubin, G. (1984). Thinking sex: Notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality. In C. Vance (Ed.), *Pleasure and danger*. New York: Routledge.
“Sexual thoughts” pp. 148-155 only

Additional reading:

- a) Bogle, K. (2008). *Hooking up: Sex, dating, and relationships on campus*. New York and London: New York University.
Chapter 6 “Men, women, and the sexual double standard” pp. 96-127
- b) Irvine, J. M. (2007). Transient feelings: Sex panics and the politics of emotions. *GLQ*, 14(1), 1-40.
- c) Wade, L. (2017). *American hookup: The new culture of sex on campus*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
Introduction: “The new culture of sex” pp. 13-26
Chapter 1 “Hooking up, a how-to” pp. 27-49

WEEK 5: October 7 – Sexuality and racism

“They’re just not my type.” This class interrogates claims of sexual preference that are based on racist discourses and investigates the intersection of sexual bias and racial bias. Class will take place at the [Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery](#) (1400 Maisonneuve Blvd W, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8) and will include a commented tour of the exhibit, “Counter-narratives and other fallacies” by Jonathas de Andrade. Read the artist’s interview in preparation:

<https://cargocollective.com/jonathasdeandrade-eng/me-mestizo> Following this tour, we will discuss this week’s readings and identify connections with the artwork.

Required reading:

- a) Carlson, B. (2019). Love and hate at the cultural interface: Indigenous Australians and dating apps. *Journal of Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319833181>
- b) LISTEN: CBC. (2015). How one woman called out racist guys on Tinder [2:07]. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/newfire/the-highs-and-lows-of-dating-while-indigenous-1.3152695/how-one-woman-called-out-racist-guys-on-tinder-1.3158872>

Additional reading:

- a) Daroya, E. 2018. "Not into chopsticks or curries": Erotic capital and the psychic life of racism on Grindr. In D. W. Riggs. Ed, *The psychic life of racism in gay men's communities*, pp. 67-80. London: Lexington Books.
- b) Mason, C. L. (2016). Tinder and humanitarian hook-ups: The erotics of social media racism. *Feminist Media Studies*, 16(5), 822-837.
- c) Schroeder, E. R. (2006). "Sexual racism" and reality television: Privileging the white male prerogative on MTV's *The Real World*: Philadelphia. In D.S. Escoffery (Ed.), *How real is reality TV? Essays on representation and truth*, pp. 180-194. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc.

October 14 – Thanksgiving Day – No class**WEEK 6: October 21 – AIDS: A legacy of stigmatization, medicalization, and activism**

The development of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s reflected deep-seated stigmatization and homophobia as well as political negligence and pharmaceutical companies looking to profit from an epidemic. The inaction of public institutions to save the lives of people living with AIDS sparked a new wave of queer activism that was less focused on identity politics and more about radical action and challenges to structures of inequality. This class also looks at how the legacy of AIDS still affects gay men's lives and sexual practices today.

Required reading:

- a) Warner, T. (2002). *Never going back: A history of queer activism in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Chapter 11 "AIDS radicalization, queer nation, and identity politics" pp. 247-265
- b) Bryne, J. (2015). When condoms aren't enough. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/12/truvada-hiv-prep-stigma/418119/?fbclid=IwAR3IYS3Qenb5EdVHFp2S2ovGh0M08QFhx-1ZGonDD9f5VIKSUxNjE9iy3vU>

Additional reading:

- a) Cohen, C. J. (2005). Punks, bulldaggers, and welfare queens: The radical potential of queer politics? In E. P. Johnson & M. G. Henderson, *Black queer studies: A critical anthology*, pp. 21-52. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- b) Spieldenner, A. (2016). PrEP whores and HIV prevention: The queer communication of HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). *Journal of Homosexuality*, 63(12), 1685-1697.
- c) Race, K. (2010). Click here for HIV status: Shifting templates of sexual negotiation. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 3, 7-14.
- d) Neuman, S. (2018). Grindr admits it shared HIV status of users. *NPR*. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/04/03/599069424/grindr-admits-it-shared-hiv-status-of-users>

WEEK 7: October 28 - Homonormativity, commercialization, and post-gay possibilities

Recent social and economic developments have led to the rise of homonormativity, as an aspiration toward full citizenship for LGBTQ people attained through individualized consumption, assimilation to dominant norms, and privatized domesticity. We will discuss the prevalence of homonormative attitudes, the commercial targeting of LGBTQ consumers, and notions that we may be entering a post-gay era without further need for LGBTQ political organizing.

Required reading:

- a) Lovelock, M. (2017). 'Is every YouTuber going to make a coming out video eventually?' YouTube celebrity video bloggers and lesbian and gay identity. *Celebrity Studies*, 8(1), 87-108.
- b) WATCH: Ingrid Nilsen. (2015). Something I want you to know (Coming out). [YouTube video, 19:12]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/Eh7WRYXVh9M>
- c) WATCH: ConnorFranta. (2014). Coming out [YouTube video, 6:27]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/WYodBfRxKWI>

Additional reading:

- a) Squires, K.K. (2019). Rethinking the homonormative? Lesbian and Hispanic Pride events and the uneven geographies of commoditized identities. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 20(3), 367-386.
- b) Duggan, L. (2002). The new homonormativity: The sexual politics of neoliberalism. In R. Castronovo & D. Nelson (Eds.), *Materializing democracy: Toward a revitalized culture politics*, pp. 175-194. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (Andrew Sullivan, who Duggan critiques at length, is still perpetuating many of his longstanding ideas in 2019, see for example "[The next step for gay Pride](#)").
- c) Nash, C. J. (2013). The age of the "post-mo"? Toronto's Gay Village and a new generation. *Geoforum*, 49, 243-252.

*****First draft Artifact Analysis due in Moodle by 9:00am, Monday, October 28 – arrive in class prepared to speak about it*****

*****Response to one Artifact Analysis draft due in Moodle by Friday, November 1 at 9:00pm*****

WEEK 8: November 4 - (In)visibility and media representation

Kevin Barnhurst describes LGBTQ visibility in the media as a paradox: it simultaneously raises awareness and can foster tolerance but it can also give rise to assimilation and commercialized, apolitical representations. While this paradox must be considered in relation to the increasing representation of some sexual minorities, others remain almost completely unrepresented in mainstream and formal media outlets. At the same time, particular representations of heterosexuality perpetuate gender and sexual scripts. We will investigate these multiple factors pertaining to the media representation of sexualities.

Required reading:

- a) Himberg, J. (2017). *The new gay for pay: The sexual politics of American television production*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Introduction "The new gay for pay" pp. 1-14 only (until "The chapters that follow")

And one of the following chapters from *The Routledge companion to media, sex and sexuality*, ebook available through Concordia:

https://encore.concordia.ca/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3432771?lang=eng

- Asexualities and media
- Representing trans sexualities
- Representing lesbians in film and television
- Representing gay sexualities
- Fifty shades of ambivalence: BDSM representation in pop culture
- The politics of fluidity: Representing bisexualities in twenty-first century screen media
- Sex in sitcoms: Unravelling discourses on sex in *Friends*

Be prepared to share about the reading you have chosen with the rest of the class

Additional reading:

- a) Kohnen, M. (2015). *Queer representation, visibility, and race in American film and television: Screening the closet*. New York: Routledge.
Chapter 1 "All that visibility allows, or mapping the discourses of queer visibility"
pp. 12-37
- b) Waggoner, E. B. (2018). Bury your gays and social media fan response: Television, LGBTQ representation, and communitarian ethics. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 65(13), 1877-1891.
- c) Barnhurst, K. (2007). Visibility as paradox: Representation and simultaneous contrast. In K. Barnhursts (Ed.), *Media Queered: Visibility and its discontents*, pp. 1-22. New York: Peter Lang.

*****Final Artifact Analysis due in Moodle on Friday, November 8 by 9:00pm*****

WEEK 9: November 11 – Social media and sexual self-representation

Although today's social media platforms and apps enable people to represent themselves and their sexuality, these technologies also provide particular contexts for these self-representations. We will discuss how sexuality is represented through digital media, touching on the history of online sexual self-representation and considering the technical features, algorithms, and social norms that shape today's practices of communicating sexuality and sexual identity.

Required reading:

Cho, A. (2018). Default publicness: Queer youth of color, social media, and being outed by the machine. *New Media & Society*, 20(9), 3183-3200.

Additional reading:

- a) Renninger, B. (2015). "Where I can be myself...where I can speak my mind": Networked counterpublics in a polymedia environment. *New Media & Society*, 17(9), 1513-1529.
- b) Herrera, A. P. (2017). Theorizing the lesbian hashtag: Identity, community, and the technological imperative to name the self. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 22(3), 313-328.
- c) Dhoest, A. & Szulc, L. (2016). Navigating online selves: Social, cultural, and material contexts of social media use by diasporic gay men. *Social Media + Society*, 2(4), 1-10.
- d) Tiidenberg, K. (2017). "Nude selfies til I die" – making of 'sexy' in selfies. In P.G. Nixon & I.K. Düsterhöft (Eds.), *Sex in the digital age*, pp. 78-88. London: Routledge.

WEEK 10: November 18 - Pornography: Pornification, regulation, and media technologies

The idea that society is becoming increasingly "pornified" is often circulated to instill worry about "protecting the children" from obscene content. These worries obscure changes in media technologies, regulation, and the actual visibility of sexual content that require further academic attention and should shape how we understand pornography in our society. Panic about pornography and calls for prohibition are nothing new, as illustrated by the feminist sex wars of the 1980s and 1990s, but today regulation takes new forms as digital platforms and governments establish technological means of influencing pornography consumption.

Required reading:

- a) Paasonen, S. (2016). Pornification and the mainstreaming of sex. *Oxford Research Encyclopedias*. Retrieved from

<https://oxfordre.com/criminology/criminology/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264079-e-159>

- b) LISTEN and READ: Lonsdorf, K. (2019). What we (don't) talk about when we talk about porn [8:13]. *NPR*. Retrieved from https://www.npr.org/2019/05/25/723192364/what-we-dont-talk-about-when-we-talk-about-porn?utm_source=instagram.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=npr&utm_term=nprnews&utm_content=20190709

Additional reading:

- a) Byron, P. (2019). 'How could you write your name below that?' The queer life and death of Tumblr. *Porn Studies*. Published online before print, June 21. doi. [10.1080/23268743.2019.1613925](https://doi.org/10.1080/23268743.2019.1613925)
- b) Chancer, L. S. (2000). From pornography to sadomasochism: Reconciling feminist differences. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 571(1), 77-88.
- c) Albury, K. (2014). Porn and sex education, porn as sex education. *Porn Studies*, 1(1-2), 172-181.

WEEK 11: November 25 – Politics, laws, and technologies of sex work

This week will provide a brief introduction to the multiple factors that shape sex work with particular attention to how digital technologies and media are shaping sex-related forms of labour. We will consider the laws affecting sex workers in Canada and draw on the readings to discuss perspectives from sex workers.

Required reading:

- a) Henry, M. V. & Farvid, P. (2017). 'Always hot, always live': Computer-mediated sex work in the era of 'camming'. *Women's Studies Journal*, 31(2), 113-128.
- b) Picard, A. (2018). Canada's new prostitution laws may not make sex work safer: research. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-canadas-new-prostitution-laws-may-not-make-sex-work-safer-research/>

Additional reading:

- a) Smith, M. & Mac, J. (2018). *Revolting prostitutes: The fight for sex workers' rights*. London and New York: Verso.
Introduction pp. 1-21
- b) White, A.G. (2018). The porn performer. In C. Smith, F. Attwood, and B. McNair (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to media, sex and sexuality*, pp. 394-404. New York: Routledge.
- c) Sanders, T., Connelly, L., & King, L. J. (2016). On our own terms: The working conditions of internet-based sex workers in the UK. *Sociological Research Online*, 21(4), 1-14.

*****Research and Analysis Project reference list due in Moodle on Thursday, November 28 by 9:00pm*****

WEEK 12: December 2 – Discourse Fair – Day 1

WEEK 13: Tuesday, December 3 – Discourse Fair – Day 2