Topics in the History of Sexuality:
Sexual Violence in America

This undergraduate/graduate colloquium explores recent historical interpretations of the history of sexuality, with a focus this year on sexual violence. The readings cover changing definitions and laws, cultural representations, and the role of gender, race, and age in the construction of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The course is also concerned more broadly with the ways that historical changes in the economy, the family, and politics have reshaped sexual values and behaviors, and the ways that individuals and groups have responded to these changes. The weekly required reading consists largely of secondary interpretations (books and articles by historians), along with several primary source assignments. In addition to introducing students to the themes of sexual history and the literature on sexual violence, the course attempts to teach critical skills in the analysis of secondary and primary historical texts. Majors and minors in History, Feminist Studies, American Studies, and Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity have priority in admission. Permission of the instructor is required; apply at the first class session.

Required readings ordered at the Stanford Bookstore and Green Library Reserves
Sharon Block, *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006) $23 new
Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (Yale University Press, 1997) $22 new
For other required articles and book chapters, see links on COURSEWORK, including primary sources available through the Women and Social Movements website.

Please let me know by the end of the first week of classes if you need any special accommodations because of physical or learning disabilities. "Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk; phone: 723-1066; web site [http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae](http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae)."

Please make an office hour appointment at least once during the quarter. A sign-up sheet is posted outside my office door and I will circulate additional times in class to meet about papers.
**Student Responsibilities and Grading Guidelines:**
The final grade will be determined equally by the following three contributions:

1. **Class participation**
   Participation includes arriving on time, completing all reading and writing assignments on time, and contributing regularly to class discussions (includes asking questions, responding to others, and listening, as well as talking about your own ideas).

2. **Weekly written reading responses**
   For each week marked on the syllabus, bring an analysis of the readings to class (double-spaced; one-inch margins; up to 3 pages or 800-900 words). The analysis should not simply summarize the readings, although it should reiterate the main arguments. Try to draw out themes about the history of sexual violence and evaluate the use of primary sources and the historical interpretations. As the course progresses, your responses can try to link earlier themes in the reading and class discussions to the current assignment, applying what you have learned thus far to your new reading. *(See guidelines below p. 7.)*

   Graduate students will read one additional secondary source for one class of their choice (sign up at first class), report orally in class about the reading, and incorporate the reading into the written analysis.

   I will provide feedback and a suggested grade for the first writing assignment, but I will not record the grade unless it is an A or A-. The second reading response will be graded for everyone. Of the remaining reading responses, choose at least two other weeks for graded papers for 4 units, three other weeks for 5 units; the remaining papers can be ungraded. Whether graded or not, no late papers except in the case of documented health or family emergencies. If you have an excused absence from a class for one of these reasons, please submit a 3-4 page reading response before the next class meeting.

3. **Final graded paper**
   Undergraduate topical final paper (6-7 pages for 4 units, 9-10 pages for 5 units) based on required readings and at least two additional recommended readings (4 units) or three additional recommended readings (5 units). Choose a particular subject or theme covered in the course and either review this topic over time or compare historians’ approaches. If you prefer to write a paper based on a set of primary sources, please consult with me early in the quarter to design the research. All topics must be approved by November 15 (submit topic and additional readings on email). First drafts are due no later than the last class meeting. Final papers are due by 9. a.m. Friday December 7, by email. No late papers or course incompletes except in cases of documented health or family emergencies.

   Further instructions for the final paper will be distributed in class.

   For the final paper graduate students will write a 10-12 page literature review based on a bibliography submitted by November 15. I will help graduate students design final papers appropriate for their studies.
Dates, Topics, and Assignments

9/25:  INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

I will provide an overview of the historical study of sexual violence and go over course structure and requirements. Students apply in class and I will let you know by email this evening if admitted or not. To secure your place, confirm that you are taking the course by email reply before 9 p.m. Wednesday 9/26.

10/2:  EARLY AMERICA

What do you learn about gender, sexuality, and race in early America from this book, and what do you learn about the ways historians study sexual violence?

Block, Rape and Sexual Power in Early America

Reading analysis due in class, ungraded option (See Guidelines, below)

10/9:  SLAVERY AND RACE IN THE SOUTH

How did race construct the meaning of interracial sexual relations? What role did rape play in the growth of slavery? What if any agency could enslaved women exercise in response to the institutionalization of rape? What kind of evidence do historians use to study rape and slavery?

Annette Gordon-Reed, The Hemingses of Monticello (Norton, 2008), Chap 15, COURSEWORK
Martha Hodes, White Women, Black Men, chaps. 1-4, 6-7

Reading analysis due in class, graded

10/16:  LYNCHING AND ANTI-LYNCHING

What was the relationship between rape and lynching? Who opposed lynching, and why? When and why did white women join the anti-lynching movement?

Hodes, White Women, Black Men, chap 8
Ida B. Wells, excerpts from *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases* (1892) and *A Red Record* (1895), COURSEWORK

Reading analysis due in class, ungraded option

10/23:

**LEGAL REFORM: AGE OF CONSENT CAMPAIGNS**

Why did the sexual vulnerability of adolescent girls become a concern at the turn of the twentieth century? What do you learn about gender and sexuality from statutory rape reform? What difference did race make in these efforts?

Jane E. Larson, "Even a Worm Will Turn at Last": Rape Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century America," *Yale Journal of Law & the Humanities* Winter, 1997, pp. 1-71, COURSEWORK
Helen H. Gardener, "What Shall the Age of Consent Be?" *Arena* (January 1895), pp. 196-98, COURSEWORK (and read at least two other Age of Consent documents in this project)

Reading analysis due in class, ungraded option

10/30:

**BOYS AND MEN**

When and why did boys begin to be understood as sexually vulnerable? How did the image of the child predator change over time? How did race, ethnicity, and sexual identity influence the discourse on sexual crimes against children? Do you see any parallels with the age of consent movement?

Estelle B. Freedman, “‘Uncontrolled Desires’: The Response to the Sexual

11/6: RACE, GENDER, AND ETHNICITY IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY RAPE CASES
*How have historians moved beyond the black/white construction of rape to understand class and ethnic dynamics, and through what kinds have sources?*


Reading analysis due in class, ungraded option

11/13: FROM SCOTTSBORO TO CIVIL RIGHTS
*What role does sexual violence play in the emergence of the modern civil rights movement? How does the rhetoric of “protection of womanhood” influence both blacks and whites in the period? What class dynamics are at play here?*

“Scottsboro: An American Tragedy” (2001), film available at Green Media and screened before class today in Room 307, History, beginning at 12:30 p.m.
Hasia Diner and Sara L. Creed, Introduction to “How Did Women Shape the Discourse and Further Interracial Cooperation in the Worldwide Mass Movement to "Free the Scottsboro Boys"?, COURSEWORK (and read at least two primary document links in this project)

FINAL PAPER TOPICS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL ON EMAIL BY 11/15.

NO CLASS THANKSGIVING WEEK. COMPLETE THE ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR YOUR FINAL PAPERS.
11/27: SECOND-WAVE FEMINIST POLITICS

Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* (1975)  
(read as much as you can but feel free to skim parts of some chapters)  
Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution*, pp. 244-253, COURSEWORK  

Recommended documents project:  
Carrie N. Baker Introduction, “How Did Diverse Activists in the Second Wave of the Women's Movement Shape Emerging Public Policy on Sexual Harassment?” COURSEWORK (and browse documents)

Reading analysis due in class, ungraded option

12/4: COURSE SUMMARY AND FINAL PAPER REPORTS

First drafts of final papers should be completed before class. For drafts submitted on email by 12 p.m. Sunday 12/2 I will return feedback either in class or by 12/5; I will reply to drafts submitted in class by 12/6.

Be prepared to give a brief (5-6 minute) summary of your final paper in class.

FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE ON EMAIL BEFORE 9 A.M. FRIDAY DECEMBER 7.
GUIDELINES FOR WEEKLY READING ANALYSES:
You can choose the questions that are most applicable for the readings each week and address some of the discussion questions raised on the syllabus.

1. Historical context for the subject: links to themes we have been discussing, earlier readings, issues in U.S. history.

2. Author’s approach: questions asked, sources used; scope (time, location)


4. Contributions: What did the book add to the larger themes we have been discussing? What new issues did it raise? What questions did it raise for future research? What more did you want to know, for this period or others?

5. Suggest several discussion questions/topics for the class meeting. Graduate students should also relate additional reading presented orally at one class session.

SELECTED SECONDARY SOURCES for final papers. Undergraduates should consult AT LEAST two (4 units) or three (5 units) of these sources to supplement required readings; graduate students will write more extensive review essays.

HISTORICAL APPROACHES AND OVERVIEWS

EARLY AMERICA
Cohen, Daniel A. "Social Injustice, Sexual Violence, Spiritual Transcendence: Constructions of Interracial Rape in Early American Crime Literature, 1767-1817." *The William and Mary*

FRONTIERS, WEST, NATIVE AMERICANS

LEGAL HISTORY

**RACE, RAPE, LYNCHING**

Bardaglio, Peter w. "Rape and the Law in the Old South: 'Calculated to excite indignation in every heart'." *Journal of Southern History* LX, no. 4 (1994): 749-772.


**CHILD ASSAULT**


**PRISON SEXUALITY**


**SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DATE RAPE**


**OTHER REGIONS**


For further primary sources, explore the Women and Social Movements web site: [http://asp6new.alexanderstreet.com/was2/was2.index.map.aspx](http://asp6new.alexanderstreet.com/was2/was2.index.map.aspx).