

## Dept of Philosophy: Winter Session 2013

### PHL243S PHILOSOPHY OF SEXUALITY

M6-9; LM159

**Instructor:** Ronald de Sousa (sousa@chass.utoronto.ca):

**Office Hour:** M1-3 pm or by appointment JHB #424

**TA's:**

#### Course Topics and Objectives

"Sex" denotes three different areas: gender-sex, erotic sex, and the ethics/politics of sexuality. The course will attend roughly equally to all three. The first defines questions about sexual dimorphism (or polymorphism) at the biological level (female, male, hermaphrodite) and at the cultural level (feminine, masculine, transvestite, berdache, etc....) and the complicated relations between the two (e.g. do transsexuals change sex or do they change gender?) The second requires that we think about the nature of sexual desire and its objects. What, if anything, is a perversion of sexual desire? What is pornography and its significance for understanding sexuality? The third domain picks up the evaluative controversies raised by political and moral attitudes towards the issues of the first two: sexual (in)equality; prostitution; juvenile & inter-generational sex; gay rights and identity, the question of censorship of porn, etc. We'll have time only for a sampling.

#### REQUIRED READINGS will be from the following:

**(PS)** : Alan Soble, ed. *The Philosophy of Sex: Contemporary readings* 5th edition (2008).

**(RP)**: A Reading Package available **on Jan 15 at Alicos Copy Centre, 203A College Street.**

**(W)**: Some texts will be accessible on the web through Blackboard.

These three sources contain all the core reading for which you will be responsible in your essays and exams. Other readings may be recommended as we go. We will also view a few movies.

In preparing summaries and essays, pay close attention to the advice available in the **GUIDES** folder on Blackboard. On the same **HELP ON WRITING** frame, you will also find information about the Philosophy Department **ESSAY CLINIC**

**Evaluation:** Two (600-word) critical reading summaries **DUE BEFORE CLASS: No late submissions** accepted, but replacements allowed if justified. (15% each =**30%** total);  
1 (2500-3000 word) analytical essay (**30%**); Final Exam (**40%**).

**NOTE:** **All work will be submitted electronically directly** to Blackboard, with a copy to sousa@chass.utoronto.ca. A grader may request a paper copy in addition to the electronic one. In addition, the **FINAL ESSAY**, but **NOT** the Summaries, will be submitted via Turnitin. By taking this course, students agree -- unless they notify me within the first week and propose alternative arrangements -- that the final paper may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

**DETAILED READINGS AND ASSIGNMENT LIST: Assigned texts must be read BEFORE the class date.**

**WEEK OF**

Jan 7 Introduction: What is Philosophy? What is Philosophy of Sex? No readings.

Jan 14 Some Classical Theories of Sex: Plato's *Symposium*;

READ: de Sousa & Morgan: "Philosophy, Sex and Feminism" (W); Plato's *Symposium*, esp. from "Aristophanes professed to open another vein of discourse" to "Agathon and Socrates are the only ones left", and from "Socrates then proceeded as follows" to the end (W).

Jan 21. The "Natural Law" theory of sex. **MOVIE: *Kinsey***

READ: Aquinas (W); Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II) (PS 155-162)

**First Summary Due: *the argument of Aquinas***

Jan 28 Some Biological Background:

READ: Maynard Smith & Szathmáry "The Origin of sex" (Origins of Life 79-99) (RP); Baker & Bellis, "Primate legacy..." (RP)

Feb 4 Dimorphism in Sex and Gender **MOVIE: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch***

READ Fausto-Sterling 1993, "The five sexes" *Sciences*, 33(2):20-25; (W); Leonard Sax on Fausto-Sterling: "How common is intersex?" *The Journal of Sex Research*, August 2002 v39 i3 p174(5) (W); Roughgarden on "Sex and Diversity" (RP)

Feb 11 Erotic Sex: What is it? When is it good? Normal? Perverse? **MOVIE: *Shortbus***

READ: Tom Nagel; Janice Moulton; Alan Goldman (PS 31-75)

**Second Critical Summary due: Goldman, "Plain Sex".**

Feb 18 READING WEEK -- NO CLASSES

Feb 25 Sex and morality

READ: Kant "Duties towards the body" (RP); Soble (PS 259-288) Halwani (PS 337-346)

PAPER TOPICS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TODAY

March 3 Sexual Choices: Homosexuality **MOVIE: *Paris is Burning***

READ: Levin (W); Finnis (PS 135-140) Corvino (PS 163-179); Calhoun (PS 197-212).

March 11 Sex and love

READ: Vannoy, "Sex with love vs. Sex without Love" (RP); de Sousa "Love as Theatre" (W):

[For anyone to whom permission has been granted, a Make-up Critical Summary will be accepted today on the excerpt from *Sex Without Love*]

March 18 Pornography

**MOVIE: *Romance***

READ: Tisdale (PS 419-432); Nussbaum (PS 367-400).

March 25 Prostitution

READ Estes (PS353-365); Schrage on "Sex Markets" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (W):

April 1 Transgenerational sex. Benatar (PS 325-336); Hannon: "Men Loving Boys Loving Men" (W).

**FINAL ESSAY DUE** Friday April 5 by midnight. LATENESS PENALTY will start accumulating at 0:01 am on April 6 at a rate of 5 POINTS (out of 100) PER CALENDAR DAY.