

Sex Panics in the US and UK Since 1890

University of Michigan

Winter 2017

ANTHRCUL WOMENSTD RCSSCI 428.001

Tu-Th 4PM - 5:30PM

Professor: Gayle Rubin

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Hours: Monday 1:30- 3PM and by appointment

3356 MH

104B West Hall

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Periodically, large scale social movements provoked or mobilized by anxiety about sexuality have raged through British or American society. These “sex panics” generally leave in their wake durable deposits of social policy, law, attitude, and practice. This course will examine the paradigm of “sex panics” and examine several case studies, including anti-prostitution movements in Britain and the US, progressive era conflicts over age of consent, female sexual precocity and juvenile justice in the US, the eruption of concern over sexual psychopaths in the 1930s-1950s, and anti-homosexual crusades in the 1940s and 1950s. The lingering legacies of these conflicts and their imprint on more contemporary conflicts will be explored.

REQUIREMENTS and GRADING

The class is a seminar, so participation in discussion will be part of your grade. Seminars are relatively unstructured but intense investigations of a particular topic. They are designed for people who like to read and discuss the material in an intense and focused way, with the aim of understanding a body of work and sharpening their analytical tools. A seminar is a chance for members of the class to express their points of view and articulate their perspectives. The professor organizes the material, directs the discussions, and provides additional information, but the work is a collective undertaking. You need to be prepared to actively engage in the learning experience. Thus, you are expected to keep up with the reading, formulate and bring to class your questions and concerns, and contribute to the class discussions. Plan to bring a question about the reading, or a topic raised by it, to each session. You may be asked to take the lead in preparing discussions for one session during the semester.

The primary requirement is that you read the assigned texts before each class, and bring those texts to class so you can refer to them. If you do not print out those readings posted on Canvas, you may bring your laptop or tablet to class in order to have access to the texts. However, any web browsing, email, texting, etc. is strictly prohibited and, if detected, will negatively affect your final grade.

A brief comment on the readings should be posted to Canvas by 9PM, the night before each class. These comments will not be graded, but I will read them to help shape class discussion and see how the readings are being absorbed. Comments on the readings should be brief– a paragraph or a few sentences will suffice. The comment can be something you found especially interesting, or a question you have about the texts, or a topic you’d like to discuss in class.

On days when a film is shown, a brief response to the film should be posted to Canvas by 9PM the following day. Comments could note something you learned, or some new perspective that the film introduced, or a question it raised for you.

Over the course of the term, you may skip any two classes without explanation or consequences. Please notify me of any additional absences.

Written work will consist of a short research paper of 8-12 pages. For the paper, students will each “pick a panic” subject to my approval. A one paragraph abstract of the project and a preliminary list of sources is due at the start of class on **February 23**.]Please note: Google searches are not sufficient for a serious research paper. You should plan to spend some time in the library, and to consult written, documentary, archival, artifactual, or similar kinds of sources. The paper is due on at the beginning of class on **April 18**.

Your grade will be based on your participation in class, evidence of preparation and knowledge of the readings, regular attendance, and the research paper. Although the research paper will have a substantial impact on your final grade, grades are not based on precise percentages. Final grade will reflect your work over the course of the term, the seriousness and thoughtfulness of your contributions, your level of engagement and intellectual growth, your understanding of the material, and the quality of your research paper.

BOOKS:

The following books are available at **Common Language**, 317 Braun Court, 734 663-0036. For your convenience, **Common Language** will come to class to sell the books on site, **January 10**. You may pre-order the books on their website: <http://www.glbttbooks.com/xcart/home.php?cat=679> You’ll have the option for them to deliver them to class on January 10.

Mary Odem, *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the US, 1885– 1920*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1995.

David Langum, *Crossing over the Line: Legislating Morality and the Mann Act*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

David K Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Joel Best, *Threatened Children: Rhetoric and Concern about Child Victims*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

Didi Herman, *The Antigay Agenda: Orthodox Vision and the Christian Right*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Recommended:

Paula Fass. *Kidnapped: Child Abduction in America*. Oxford, 1997.

Judith Levine. *Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children from Sex*. Minnesota, 2002.

Neil Miller, *Sex Crime Panic: A Journey to the Paranoid Heart of the 1950s*. Alyson, 2002 (OP)

Janice Irvine. *Talk About Sex: The Battles over Sex Education in the United States*. California, 2002.

Roger Lancaster: *Sex Panic and the Punitive State*. California, 2011.

Jessica R. Pliley, *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI*. Harvard, 2014

Canvas:

Additional course readings will be available electronically on Canvas. Any reading not in one of the books will be posted to Canvas.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

January 5: **Introduction and Course Logistics**

WEEK 2

January 10: **An Exemplary Panic**

Film: *The Legacy: Murder and Media, Politics and Prisons* (2004) 77 Minutes

Common Language will be at class to sell the books and deliver pre-ordered books at 4PM.

January 12: **What's in the News? Porn, Pedophiles, Prostitutes, and Pizza**

Assorted recent news articles

"Culture of Fear" clippings

Lancaster, Sex Panic, Introduction, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-72). Canvas

WEEK 3

January 17: **Sex and the Law: What is illegal? Where? And When?**

Planned Parenthood, *Sex Code of California: A Compendium*, 1973 and 1977. Selected areas of sexual regulation before and after 1976 Consenting Adults legislation in California. Canvas

January 19: **The Sex Panic Paradigm**

Philip Jenkins, "Approaching Social Problems," *Intimate Enemies: Moral Panics in Contemporary Great Britain*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1992, pp. 1-22. Canvas

Lancaster, Sex Panic, Chapters 3 (pp. 73-139). Canvas

Judith Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue: Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell and Sharon Thompson, eds. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983, pp. 419-438. Canvas

WEEK 4

January 24: **Progressive Era US: Female Sexuality, Age of Consent, and Statutory Rape**

Odem, Introduction, Chapters 1, 2 & 3, pp. 1-94.

January 26: **Sexual Precocity, Female Delinquency, and Juvenile Justice**

Odem, Chapters 4, 5 & Conclusion, pp. 95-156, 185-190

WEEK 5

January 31: **Federalizing Sexual Regulation: Prostitution, "White Slavery," and the Mann Act**

Langum, Chapters 1,2,3 and Appendix: White Slave Traffic (Mann Act) Act of 1910, pp. 1-76, 261-264.

February 2: **Collateral consequences: Enforcement of the Mann Act and the Growth of FBI**

Langum, chapters 5, 6, 7, pp. 97-160.

Recommended:

Film. *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson* (2004), directed by Ken Burns.

WEEK 6

February 7: **The Mann Act Lives**

Clippings on Eliot Spitzer and the Mann Act, Canvas

Film: *Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer* (2011) dir. Alex Gibney.

February 9: **Trafficking Then and Now**

Langum, Chapter 8, 10, 11 (pp. 161-197; 221-259).

Gayle Rubin, "The Trouble with Trafficking," from *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*. Duke University Press, 2011, pp. 66-86. Canvas

Government Accounting Office, "Human Trafficking: Better Data, Strategy and Reporting Needed."

WEEK 7

February 14: **Library Research: Session with Women's Studies Subject Librarian Meredith Kahn.**

Room to be determined.

February 16: **Constructing Sex Offenders in the Mid-Century US: Sexual Psychopaths and Homosexuals**

Estelle Freedman, "Uncontrolled Desires: The Response to the Sexual Psychopath, 1920-1960," *Feminism, Sexuality and Politics*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2006, pp. 121-139. Canvas

George Chauncey, "The Post War Sex Crimes Panic," *True Stories from the American Past*, William Graebner, ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993, pp. 160-178. Canvas

Clippings on Sex Offenders. Expansion of classification. Public Notification. Restrictions on residence locations. Bans on Pell Grants. Generlow Wilson. Canvas

WEEK 8

February 21: **Sex offenses Then and Now: Homosexuals, Molesters, and Dangerous Strangers**

Lancaster, Chapter 4 (pp. 104-136). Canvas

Amanda Agan, "Sex Offender Registries: Fear Without Function?" *Journal of Law and Economics*, Feb 2011. Canvas

Brochure on "Camera Surveillance of Sex Deviates." Canvas

Short Films:

Police Training Film Mansfield Ohio 1963.

Boys Beware and Girls Beware

Red Light, Green Light: Meeting Strangers.

February 23: **Research Project Proposal Due**

Film: *The Great Pink Scare* (2006) dir. Tug Yourgrau and Dan Miller

WEEK 9

February 28- March 2: **NO CLASS– SPRING BREAK**

WEEK 10

March 7: **The Lavender Scare**

Johnson: Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4, pp. 1-99.

March 9: **Anti-Gay Crusades in Michigan**

Guest Speakers: Tim Retzlaff and special guest

Daniel Tsang, Anti-gay purges at UM. Canvas

"Bag a Fag Report" Canvas

Week 11

March 14: **Persecuting Homosexuals: The Local and the Federal**

Jonathan Katz, Selections from *Gay American History*. New York: Avon, 1976. Canvas

"Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government" Canvas

Film: *Fall of '55* (2006), dir. Seth Randal.

Recommended: Neil Miller, Sex Crime Panic: A Journey to the Paranoid Heart of the 1950s. Alyson, 2009.

March 16: **Threatened Children and Stranger Danger in the 1980s**

Best: Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-86.

Recommended: Paula Fass, Kidnapped: Child Abduction in America, Oxford University Press, 1997.

WEEK 12

March 21: **Hard Cases, Big Numbers, and the Making of Social Problems**

Best, Chapters 5-9, pp. 87-188.

Clippings and articles on missing children, mid-1980s: More on sex offenders (Halloween).

Expansion of areas of concern: pre-scholars, children as offenders; teens; visual sexual aggression; anti-pedophile tests; photography as perversion. Yearning for Zion Raid and Immigration Raids. Canvas

Recommended:

Janice Irvine, Talk About Sex: The Battles over Sex Education in the United States. University of California Press, 2004

Janice Levine, Harmful to Minors The Perils of Protecting Children from Sex, De Capo Press, 2003

March 23: **Feminist photography, porn, and censorship**

Special guests: Carol Jacobsen and Marilyn Zimmerman

Carole Vance, "Feminist Fundamentalism"

Carol Jacobsen, "Redefining Censorship," "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Sex Workers" and

Anti-porn Feminism vs. Feminist Art

Marilyn Zimmerman, articles

WEEK 13

March 28: **Anti-Gay Mobilization After Stonewall**

Herman: Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-91.

March 30: **Institutionalizing Homo-hatred**

Herman: Chapters 5-7, pp. 111-193

WEEK 14

April 4: Film: *Ballot Measure 9* (1995), dir. Heather MacDonald

April 6: **Anti-Gay Crusades: From Oregon to Uganda**

Herman: Afterword, pp. 194-200.

Samples of primary texts: Cameron, Dannemeyer, extreme right; letter to Dr. Laura. Canvas

WEEK 15

April 11: Film: *God Loves Uganda* (2013) dir. Roger Ross Williams

April 13: TBA

WEEK 16

April 18: Last Class: wrap up

FINAL PAPER DUE

LSA COMMUNITY STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The LSA undergraduate academic community, like all communities, functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. The College holds all members of its community to high standards of scholarship and integrity. To accomplish its mission of providing an optimal educational environment and developing leaders of society, the College promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct. Academic dishonesty may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Conduct, without regard to motive, that violates the academic integrity and ethical standards of the College community cannot be tolerated. The College seeks vigorously to achieve compliance with its community standards of academic integrity. Violations of the standards will not be tolerated and will result in serious consequences and disciplinary action.

For a list of actions that constitute misconduct, and possible sanctions for those actions, please see the Code of Conduct at www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity.

English Department statement on plagiarism:

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/advising/plagNote.asp>