



Anth 173  
Evolution of Human  
Sexuality



**Syllabus Winter 2017: THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SEXUALITY**  
**Anth 173: Tuesday / Thursday 10:00 to 11:20 a.m. Straub 156**

**Professor:** Dr. Frances White  
**Office:** 302C Condon Hall (Lab 304 Condon)  
**Office hours:** Tuesdays 1 to 2 pm, 4 to 5 pm (unless otherwise posted in announcements), by appointment, or by drop-in (if my door is open, please ask if this is an ok time).  
**Telephone:** 346-5278 (but email is better)  
**E-mail:** [fwhite@uoregon.edu](mailto:fwhite@uoregon.edu) (do **not** use the Canvas email system, and send from your uoregon email)  
**Graduate student instructors GEs:** Colin Brand , Alex Hickmott,

**PLEASE put Anth 173 in the subject of any e-mails to help me filter your messages for my attention!**  
**WARNING: emails asking basic information (e.g. "when is the final exam") will be taken as showing that you have not read the syllabus, attended lecture, or reviewed the information available on the Canvas site, and will generally not receive a reply.** In contrast, links to new humorous quips or relevant or useful to the educational content of the class will be received with much appreciation!

**This class, including, material on the Canvas site is for your use in this class. It is not for posting or sale! Notetaking for sale or use of class materials for sale is illegal! Copyright warning: The course Canvas site contains copyrighted works that are included with permission of the copyright owner, or under exemptions provided by U.S. Copyright Law (Sections 110, and/or 107). Copying of any of these copyrighted works is prohibited.**

**Important: This course covers human sex and sexual behavior. Information and images of human male and female genitalia and sexual behavior will be presented in all aspects of this class (lecture, discussions, videos, exams, etc). If you are personally uncomfortable viewing these images, hearing or discussing these topics, or find the modes of presentation offensive (see also the Presentation of Material section at the end of this syllabus), please talk with the Professor or your GE so that we may help you come to understand the intellectual content of this class in a manner that you find more acceptable. We have image-free copies of the notes and image-free written transcripts of videos available for those needing these accommodations.**

**Course syllabus and statement of course policies:**

This course examines the behavior, physiology, and anatomy of human sexuality as traits that have evolved from our primate and mammal ancestors. By first understanding the theory of evolution and then the advantages of sexual reproduction, we can then go on to look at our primate relatives and see how much of our own sexuality has a biological basis and how much (or how little) is truly unique to humans.

Although this is a science course, I do not assume that you have a rigorous scientific background: in fact, I will be assuming the opposite. My aim is to present the scientific foundations of this course in a way that will give you an intuitive understanding of evolution and sociobiology that will

help you look critically at human sexuality from an evolutionary perspective. We will all need, however, a common language and some scientific terminology and definitions will be essential, but it is most important that you understand and see how to apply the concepts.

This course is divided into three sections:

- Section 1 runs from the start of the course to first midterm and will examine the theory of evolution, especially how it is applied to behavior. During this time, discussion sections will work on the scientific method and how to generate and test hypotheses.
- Section 2 begins after the first midterm and runs to the second midterm exam. This section will examine the diversity of sexuality in our primate cousins and look for the evolutionary threads that we can use to understand and interpret human sexuality.
- Section 3 starts after the second midterm and goes to the end of the class. During this time, we will look at sexual traits often considered unique to humans and see how much we can now understand based on the evolution of these traits in primates or on their evolutionary benefits in a variety of human populations.

**Specific goals:** My goal here is to teach you to understand and critically evaluate arguments proposed for the evolution of human sexual behavior. As part of this course we will be watching a series of videos including some by Dr. Desmond Morris that present one view on why humans behave sexually in the ways they do. My hope is that you will not just sit back and enjoy these videos, but instead critically evaluate the presentation of evolutionary theory and its application to the information at hand. Wherever possible, classes based on videos will include a lecture on the hypotheses presented in the video and an examination of whether these hypotheses were addressed. By the end of this class, I think you will look at your own behavior and the behavior of those around you in a very different light.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this course, students will

1. be able to identify the main tenets of the theory of evolution,
2. be able to distinguish between scientific and non-scientific hypotheses on the evolution of human sexuality,
3. be able to apply evolutionary thinking to observations of human behavior
4. be able to evaluate the usefulness of the evolutionary approach in examining the origin of human behaviors

**Required reading materials:**

There are assigned readings for both lectures and discussion groups. The assigned readings will be covered in exams. Readings for the lectures are listed on the outline and schedule on the last page of this syllabus. Readings for Discussion groups are listed towards the end of the syllabus.

**There are required texts and readings:**

1. Small, M (1993) What's love got to do with it?: The Evolution of Human Mating. Anchor books
2. Diamond, J. (1997) Why is Sex Fun? Basic Books
3. Evolution of Human Sexuality. A custom printed set of readings available through the bookstore.
4. Additional readings will be posted on the Canvas site in "Assigned readings"

**Note again:** There are separate readings for lectures and for discussion sections. Readings are listed in the lecture schedule and the Discussion schedule.

**Grading:** Your grade will be based on 2 midterm exams, discussion section attendance, discussion section participation (including a graded worksheet to be handed in during sections), and a final exam. All exams will cover material from both lectures (including the videos), readings (texts and on Canvas), and discussion sections. Exams are online, unless an emergency situation dictates otherwise or students have special accommodations.

**Exams: All exams are online, multiple choice and administered through the Canvas site.** During this class, there will be a total of two midterm examinations and one Final exam. Exams will be online through the Canvas site. These exams are multiple-choice. If you have a learning disability with this type of exam and you are registered or working to become registered with Accessible Education, extended time or an alternate essay format is available. The alternate essay format is also available for those for whom English is not the first language. Please see Dr. White and your GE to arrange alternate exams.

The first Midterm will cover evolutionary theory (Section 1) and will account for a smaller part of your total grade to allow you the opportunity to learn the style of questions. The second midterm will focus on Section 2 of the class but will include questions that require the understanding you obtained in Section 1. The final will contain mostly the material covered in the final section of the class (Section 3) and some questions that draw on knowledge from the whole term. I will use the following guide in assigning letter grades: A = 90-100%, B = 80 – 89%, C = 70 – 69%, D = 60 – 69%, F < 60%, unless this does not yield a reasonable grade distribution. There will be no trick questions on exams but typographic and editing errors do occur.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

|    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| 1. | Midterm 1                               | 10% |
| 2. | Midterm 2                               | 25% |
| 3. | Discussion attendance                   | 5%  |
| 4. | Discussion worksheets and participation | 25% |
| 5. | Final                                   | 35% |

**FINAL EXAM:** The University regulations do not allow faculty to provide early final examinations. The final exam will be posted as early as possible during finals week and be open at least through the time of the scheduled final. The time of final exams are scheduled by the Registrar (<http://registrar.uoregon.edu/> - see Calendars).

**Make-up Exams:** Make-up exams are possible and may be approved ONLY in the event of a documented serious illness, injury, family emergency, an integral part of your undergraduate education (e.g. a field course, participation in an academic conference, or study abroad), or a scheduled university event. DO NOT ASSUME that you can take a make-up until it has been approved. If you have one of these valid reasons for missing an exam, you must notify me and/or your GE prior to or during the scheduled time of the exam. Original notification at the time of the absence may be by e-mail, in writing, by phone or in person, but MUST be followed up with an email notification. A valid reason must include documentation. If you have a legitimate reason for missing an exam, you will be approved to take an online make-up or an assigned an essay question to be completed before the final exam period. If you are absent from campus for a university event during an exam, it may be possible to take the exam away from campus. Please check with the professor and/or your GE if you have questions about the exams.

**Attendance:** In order to get the most out of this class, it is vital that you attend lectures and discussion sections. The notes provided on Canvas are outlines only and much of the material is presented only in lectures. It has been shown many times that class attendance is the most important factor in improving a student's academic performance. Attendance is required (and counts towards your grade) in Discussion sections. If you miss a section, you should contact your GE and you may be able to make-up a section by attending another section. BUT the class and all discussion sections are full, and only the GE in charge can give you permission to sit in on another section that is not your own. You will need to obtain permission to attend another section from the GE before the time of that section. Attendance will not be recorded for lectures. If you miss a lecture due to illness or other legitimate reasons, you will need to obtain the notes for that class from a classmate. You do not need to inform the professor if you miss class but I suggest you make an appointment with your GTF to go over missed material during their office hours.

**During lectures: PLEASE TURN YOUR CELL PHONES OFF DURING ALL CLASSES!** If you must keep a cell phone on for emergency contact, please use silent/vibrate mode and sit on the end of a row near the doors. If you know that you will need to leave a lecture before it ends, I would appreciate you telling me at the start of the class to minimize the disruption / distraction. **Laptops** are permitted ONLY in rows or seats with no-one directly behind you, e.g. rows that open onto an aisle or seats at the end of rows. Students showing inappropriate laptop use (checking email, browsing Facebook, gaming) will be told to leave the lecture.

**Videos and Images:** We will watch a set of videos as an integral part of this class. You will be expected to retain information from videos as much as from lectures. Exam questions will cover material presented in videos. Where possible, copies of videos will be put on reserve for you to review. Some of you may find some of the content of videos (as well as images in lectures) too explicit or offensive. Most notable here are images of male genitalia, the process of penis erection, and one sequence showing human ejaculation. I will try to give a general notice when images that some have found objectionable are coming up. You are not required to watch these images and alternative notes to the videos have been provided.

**Graduate Student Instructors or GEs:** This year we are fortunate to have a set of experienced and qualified Graduate Educators who are an integral part of this teaching team. Along with the professor, these GEs will be running the Discussion Sections and will hold office hours. Office hours are an important resource open to you where you can meet with someone who can help you understand material if you are having difficulties. Please make sure you know your GE's name and contact information as well as your section time and Discussion section CRN number. GE contact information is listed on the course Canvas site.

**Discussion Sections:** As an integral part of this class, you will also be **required** to attend and participate in a Discussion Section. **Discussion sections account for a large proportion of your grade. Attendance will be taken at discussion sections.** As you will be graded on your completion of the discussion section worksheet and your participation, it will be to your advantage to identify yourself to your GE when you participate in discussions and make sure your name appears on your worksheet. Grading on participation in discussions will be based on the effort you put in. These sections serve several roles (see course schedule):

- In some discussion sections, you will cover background material you will need to understand in order to follow evolutionary arguments presented in lectures.

- Several discussion sections provide you with additional material including original research or syntheses to critically evaluate and discuss.
- Discussion sections will also include reviews in preparation for the Midterm exams.
- Discussion sections provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, review, and clarify material with your GE and classmates.

You may be assigned reading and need to present information to your section. Make sure you do the readings and prepare before coming to your Discussion section.

**Class Canvas Site:**

Important information will be posted on the Canvas site. Please check the site regularly during the term to stay in touch with any changes. To keep the amount of paper we have to use as low as possible, we will avoid giving out handouts and instead post material shown as overheads, etc., on the class Canvas site for you to review. The site will also include class schedule and syllabus, reading assignments, and whenever possible, lecture outlines. It will also include additional resources such as web sites and additional readings for those interested. The results from exams will be posted on the web site as soon as they become available.

**Student Code of Conduct, Cheating, and Academic Honesty:** Students need to read, understand and follow the Student Code of Conduct

(<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx>). Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Disruptive students will be ejected from class and will be reported to the appropriate authorities. Anyone found to be cheating or engaged in any form of academic dishonesty will fail this course. As stated in the University of Oregon Policy on Academic Honesty “to present the words, ideas, data or work of another as one’s own, or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced”. This includes the exams in this class that may **not** be taken in cooperation, copied, or shared with others. In taking these exams, you are committing to the following: Under code of honor, I certify when completing these test that I did not give nor receive any type of help, outside that specified by the professor.

**Discrimination:** We are committed to fostering the University of Oregon’s goals of encouraging a caring and supportive atmosphere on campus and of promoting a campus climate that understands and respects the needs of a culturally, ethnically, physically, and socially diverse student body. In addition, the University of Oregon is an Affirmative Action / Equal opportunity Institution. There will be no tolerance of discrimination in this class based on any of the categories described in the University’s anti-discrimination policy. Please let me know if you feel discriminated against in any way. The Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (346-3123) may also be of assistance.

**Language:** If English is not your primary language and you have difficulties with the multiple-choice format, you may elect to take the alternative essay version of the exams. Documentation from your academic advisor or equivalent is required. Please see Dr. White or your GTF to arrange alternate exams.

**Physical and Learning Disabilities:** Please contact The Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/>) if you have a disability that affects your performance in this class so that we can make any reasonable adjustments to improve the learning environment. Alternate forms of exams (essays) are available for those with extra challenges with the multiple-choice format. We will endeavor to find Notetakers if needed.

**Presentation of material: Bloopers and Gaffs** - I feel I must say from the beginning that this is not an easy subject to teach. I do try to present the material in a fair and balanced way, but everyone makes mistakes, especially when I am standing up here talking about such a loaded subject as sex for 10 weeks. I also believe in using humor to interest students, provide a break in a long lecture, and provide an additional way for memory to retain information. Although obviously I will try not to say anything too offensive, mistakes do happen and if you are offended anything I say, I apologize, and please work with me to help each year that I teach this course better than the year before. Some of my best humor-based learning tools (i.e. cartoons and jokes) have come from students in this class and I welcome more if you find them!

**COPYRIGHT: DO NOT POST CLASS NOTES FOR SALE**

Materials written by your instructor are the instructor's (or in some cases the UO's) intellectual property. It is important that everyone respect each other's rights. For instance, you should not copy and redistribute course materials without the instructor's permission. The instructor may also post other copyrighted materials on the course site. It is the instructor's responsibility for ensuring that such posting does not violate copyright law, but you should be aware that you do not have the right to make additional copies or redistribute these materials.

Copyright warning: The Canvas site for this class contains copyrighted works that are included with permission of the copyright owner, or under exemptions provided by U.S. Copyright Law (Sections 110, and/or 107). Copying of any of these copyrighted works is prohibited.

**Discussion Sections by Week - remember to print and bring your Worksheet to your discussion section!**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Discussion Section Subject</b>   | <b>Readings</b>                                |
|-------------|---|--|
| Week 1      | Evolution and how it works: popular use and misconceptions  |  |
| Week 2      | Kin selection and relatives: using the senses   |  |
| Week 3      | Review for Midterm 1  |  |
| Week 4      | Human polygamy (polygyny): why do males and females have plural marriages?  | JD Ch 2  |
| Week 5      | Mating systems and reproductive success   |  |
| Week 6      | The Human face: fathers and babies and who do you look like?  | JD Ch 2  |
| Week 7      | Review for Midterm 2  |  |
| Week 8      | Fathers and hormones: male parenting skills   |  |
| Week 9      | Measures of attractiveness  |  |
| Week 10     | Darwinopoly: time to put your strategy into action and see who wins (also chance to ask questions before the final) | Instructions on Canvas – read before you play! |

| Week  | Date       | Lecture outline and schedule (approximate)  | Readings (Ch=chapter)                                 |
|---|------------|---|---|
| Week 1  | Lecture 1  | Introduction to the course. Evolution and Creationism. Darwin: Evolution and Natural Selection. Inheritance, genes, and behavior. Human evolution, nature, and sociobiology.  | HS Ch 1: Genetics & Evolution,<br>BB Human Evolution  |
|   | Lecture 2  | What animals look (and behave) like: the blueprint at conception (genotype) <i>versus</i> what happens during growth (phenotype). Advantages of sexual reproduction. Meiosis & mitosis. What does evolution act on? The importance of VARIATION. What is male / female? | HS Ch 1: Genetics & Evolution,<br>BB Human Evolution  |
| Week 2  | Lecture 3  | Adaptation, fitness, and reproductive success. The importance of doing better than others of the same sex (intra-sexual selection) compared to getting the best mating (inter-sexual selection). Relatedness: selfish genes and unselfish kin.                          | HS Ch 3 Self sacrificing behavior and 6<br>Adaptation |
|   | Lecture 4  | Introduction to Sexual Selection. Video: The Nature of Sex: Sex and the human animal (covered in week 1, class 1)   | Small Ch 1, 2   |
| Week 3  | Lecture 5  | Sexual selection continued - Video: The Nature of Sex: The Sex Contract.  |   |
|   | Lecture 6  | Evolution of humans, primates (lemurs, monkeys, and apes), and others: where do we fit in and what does everyone else look like?  | HS Ch 2: The Living Primates                          |
| <b>MIDTERM 1 is in week 3 (Exam available Friday 8 am through Sunday at 5 pm)</b> |            |   |   |
| Week 4  | Lecture 7  | Types of mating systems: from pair bonds to harems in non-human primates.   | HS Ch 2: The Living Primates                          |
|   | Lecture 8  | The Comparative Approach: Bonobos, Chimpanzees and humans.  | HS Ch 4: Sex Anatomy                                  |
| Week 5  | Lecture 9  | What happens when one sex gives more - inter- and intra-sexual competition?   | HS Ch 7 Sexual Selection                              |
|   | Lecture 10 | Why is the sex ratio important? Can primates decide on male or female infants?  |   |
| Week 6  | Lecture 11 | Why sexuality? What do primates use sex for other than reproducing? Why hide or show ovulation?   | JD Ch 4   |
|   | Lecture 12 | The mechanics of sex and super-stimuli. Anatomy and physiology of sex. Did orgasms evolve? Video: The Human Animal: the biology of love.  | HS 5: Sexual Arousal...                               |
| <b>MIDTERM 2 is in week 6 (Exam available Friday 8 am through Sunday at 5 pm)</b> |            |   |   |
| Week 7  | Lecture 13 | Human sex differences. Video: The Human Sexes: different but equal.   |   |
|   | Lecture 14 | Reproduction: just how hard is it? (Warning: Video clips on non-human primate and human births).  |   |
| Week 8  | Lecture 15 | Why do women menstruate? Why don't men lactate? Why do both masturbate?   | JD 3, 6, Small 3 and 4                                |
|   | Lecture 16 | Why live after menopause? Monogamy or not? What are humans evolved to do?   |   |
| Week 9  | Lecture 17 | Video Brain Sex: sex differences in brains.   | JD Ch 5, 6  |
|   | Lecture 18 | Evolution of homosexuality, the biology of trans, biological variability of human sexuality.  | Small Ch 6  |
| Week 10   | Lecture 19 | Are human mating systems adaptive? Beauty and attractiveness: Lust and Love.  | JD Ch 7; Small 5                                      |
|   | Lecture 20 | The Evolution of Human Sexuality: after the hypothesis  | Small 7   |
| Final   |            | <b>The online final opens as soon as it is ready and announced on Canvas, and be open for at least three days.</b>  |   |

**Key to readings:**

Small = Small, M (1995) What's love got to do with it?, JD = Diamond, J. (1997) Why is Sex Fun? Basic Books; HS = Evolution of Human Sexuality. A custom printed set of readings available through the bookstore; BB = reading posted on Canvas