This seminar explores the complex links between sexuality, capitalism and power. Sexuality has long represented a central domain for the creation and contestation of subjects and sovereignties, labor and capital, relatedness and belonging, desire and development, security and violence. With the publication of Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality* (1976), the role of modern forms of power that work to discipline subjects and regulate populations has become central to how scholars conceptualize sexuality. By comparison, however, the relation between sexuality, the capitalist economy, and the myriad forms of postcolonial sovereignties has only recently become the topic of rigorous analysis. In this seminar, we revisit classic theories by Freud, Foucault, Lacan and Fanon as well as texts in feminist, queer, and postcolonial theory in order to craft a conceptual vocabulary for understanding emerging configurations of sex and politics in late capitalism. We ask: Under what historical circumstances does sexuality become a marker of inclusion, exclusion or exceptionalism in relation to race, ethnicity, culture, and state politics? What are the relations between commodities, discourses of sexuality, and the erotic practices of concrete historical actors? And what do we learn about globalization when we think of sexuality as a central domain of economic production, social reproduction, and political belonging?

**Course Requirements**

Grades will reflect the students’ level of engagement with the readings and assignments of this seminar as well as the extent to which students will have acquired critical knowledge and analytical skills throughout the semester.

- **Attendance and participation (30%).** Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to participate in class discussions by formulating questions, responses, and critiques relevant to the assigned readings. To help you participate actively in class discussions, I would like you to write as you read. For each class, please prepare a short review question concerning one or more of the assigned readings. A good review question should very briefly sum up a selected argument of the reading(s). Then, it should unpack the argument critically, either by treating it on its own terms or by comparing it to issues emerging in discussions, lectures, and other readings covered for this class. To make your time in class a productive and pleasant experience for everyone, I ask that you do not use phones, laptops, or tablets.

- **In-Class Presentation: Introducing the Readings (10%).** Each week a group of two or three students will initiate discussion by raising a set of issues and questions related to the readings. Students will briefly introduce some of the main points of the readings assigned for that day and pose
some questions for class discussion. Then, they will contribute to the discussion by raising new questions and critical points. Students will be graded according to how well they prepared to discuss the readings. The goal of this exercise is to encourage students to engage rigorously with the readings, unpack their arguments, and discover their significance. A sign-up sheet is circulated during the first and second week of classes.

- **Writing Assignment (60%).** There are two options for completing the writing assignment.

  **Option A—Two Response Papers** (each worth 30% of the final grade): Response papers must deal with a concept or question that has emerged in the readings of the first half and second half of the seminar respectively. You are encouraged to choose no more than three authors and, through a close reading of each, make an argument about their respective perspectives on a specific concept and—most importantly—on what we can learn from comparing/contrastng them. Each paper must be 7-8 pages, double-spaced. The first paper is due March 9, the second is due May 3.

  **Option B—Research Paper (60%):** This option is open only to graduate students who find it helpful at this point to research and write a rigorous paper that engages directly with sexuality studies or queer theory. Research papers must be based on original, in-depth ethnographic or library research. They must address current conceptual concerns and also reflect a strong engagement with the readings, lectures, and discussions for this seminar. Papers must be 16-20 pages long. In order to choose this option, students must submit a 250-word proposal with a tentative bibliography by February 15. Research papers are due on May 3.

  Please drop off your paper in the professor’s mail box in Tozzer 205. Late submissions will result in the loss of 5% per day from the final grade.

**Required Texts**

The following texts are available for purchase at the Coop Bookstore and for consultation on a three-hour reserve at the Tozzer Library.


All other readings will be available on the course website (on Canvas).
Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1
January 25
INTRODUCTION TO THE SEMINAR
No readings

Film: “Luchando” (2007); directed by Noelle Stout (55 min).

WEEK 2
February 1
THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SEX – towards a working definition


PART I
THE SUBJECT OF SEXUALITY: KEY THEORIES

WEEK 3
February 8
FOUCAULT – discourse, discipline, and regulation


WEEK 4
February 15
FREUD – libido, repression, and the unconscious


WEEK 5
February 22
LACAN – language, desire, and the ‘big other’


WEEK 6
March 1

FANON – race, consciousness, and the fetish

  (Read Pp. 1-63)


March 2
(3-5:30pm)

*Movie Viewing and Discussion*

*Movie: “Paradise: Love” (2013); directed by Ulrich Seidl (120 min)*

PART II
SEX, POLITICS, AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY:
THEORIZING THE LINKS

WEEK 7
March 8

COMMODITY – sex, risk, and consumption in late capitalism


March 9

*First Response Paper Due*
March 10-18  
*Spring Break*

**WEEK 8**  
March 22


**WEEK 9**  
March 29


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK 10</th>
<th>April 5</th>
<th>THE GLOBAL NATION – <em>language, nationalism, and globalization</em></th>
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<th>WEEK 11</th>
<th>April 12</th>
<th>HOMONATIONALISM – <em>the dialectics of liberalism and terrorism</em></th>
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<th>WEEK 12</th>
<th>April 19</th>
<th>THE HUMAN-SECURITY STATE – <em>populism, rescue, and moral securitization</em></th>
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<th>WEEK 13</th>
<th>April 26</th>
<th>EROTIC ECONOMIES – <em>sex, money, and consumerist fantasies</em></th>
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May 3  
Second Response Paper (or, Research Paper) Due.