In 1959 C. Wright Mills conceptualized a sociological imagination as that which “enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society” (6). This course employs the sociological imagination in the critical analysis of love, intimacy, and sexuality, all deeply personal and historically specific social constructs. In fact, the grouping of these three concepts together can only be made intelligible by an examination of their meaning in historical perspective. In our contemporary society, how, for example, do we understand the relationship between love, intimacy and sexuality when sexual relations often have nothing to do with either love or intimacy (hooking up, one night stands, etc.) and where some people deeply in love are strongly discouraged from expressing that love through sexual relations (gay people, the unmarried, teens, etc.)? Is it reasonable to expect love, intimacy, and regular orgasms from one person? If so, why have divorce rates risen as these expectations have become attached to marriage? This course will explore these questions as well as love, intimacy and sexuality in relation to such topics as: capitalism, fantasy, identity, culture, gender, race, and politics.

Course Requirements:

I. Attendance – I will take roles in the class. You are allowed two absences. Any unexcused absences after this will result in a lowering of your final grade by one-third of a mark. Thus, your third absence would lower your grade from that of an A to an A−, your fourth absence would lower it again from an A− to a B+, and so on. Excused absences, including approved athletic events, medical appointments, and absences cleared by the dean will not lower your grade.

II. Readings – All readings can be found through the online course reserve system of O’Neill Library. Please make every effort to print double-sided. Each student is expected to complete the readings. This is essential for passing the class. We will reference the readings closely, both in discussion and in your written assignments.

III. Journals – You are required to keep a journal for this course, in which you write most weeks. I will give you a handout with specific instructions including questions for reflection. Each week you write you need to articulate an intimate understanding of the issues presented in the reading as well as reflect on how those issues relate to your own life. I strongly recommend that you keep a diary chronicling your thoughts, dreams, fantasies, etc. on love, intimacy, and sexuality in addition to the journals you submit for grades. You will see a dramatic improvement in your writing and awareness of your own life. The first set of journals will be due as a group at midterm and the second during final exams.

IV. Collaborative Ethnographic Research Project – Together in groups you will design and execute a sociological study of love, intimacy and/or sexuality. Requirements include a written proposal, class presentation, and final 20-30 page paper.
For all written work:
   a. Papers should be double-spaced.
   b. Margins should be standard, unless previously agreed upon in special circumstances.
   c. The font of all papers will be 12 point, either Times New Roman or Arial. If you want to use other specifications, check with me first.
   d. All assignments should demonstrate knowledge of style, grammar and punctuation appropriate to college level writing.

**Grading Summary and Paper Guidelines**

In addition to attendance, your grade for this class will be based on the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journals 1</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journals 2</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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I assume you will do your own work; any plagiarized work will be referred to the dean. See also the following link for more information:

http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**Section I. Critical Concepts: All About Love**

Wednesday, January 17: Introduction to the course

1. Contemporary Images of Love and Intimacy

Monday, January 22:

Wednesday, January 24:
   “Questions Couples Should Ask (Or Wish They Had) Before Marrying” *NY Times*. 12/17/06

2. Marriage: What’s Love Got To Do With It?

Monday, January 29:
In Class Film: Marriage

Wednesday, January 31:

3. Workshop: Researching Love, Intimacy and Sexuality

Monday, February 5:
Chapter Two from Sex Matters: The Sexuality and Society Reader. 2nd Ed. Allyn and Bacon.

Wednesday, February 7:
No assigned reading. To prep for class write at least five pages each on your thoughts about your ethnographic research project. This is not a formal paper, but a thought exercise. Feel free to write stream of consciousness, brainstorm, make lists, etc. Bring your writing to class.

4. Fantasy, Romance, and the White Wedding

Monday, February 12:

Wednesday, February 14:

Section II. Critical Concepts: All About Sexuality

1. Histories of Sexuality

Monday, February 19:
Monday, February 19th continued.


Wednesday, February 21: Research Proposals Due Today


2. Acts and Identities

Monday, February 26:


Wednesday, February, 28: Journals Due Today


Film: Chasing Amy

**No Class: Spring Break March 5th and 7th**

Section III. Sexuality and Society

Monday, March 12: In-class workshop on ethnographic research projects

1. Compulsory Heterosexuality

Wednesday, March 14:


2. Social Constructions of Virginity

Monday, March 19:


3. Sexuality Inscribed: Pop Culture

Wednesday, March 21:
In class film: *The Celluloid Closet*

Monday, March 26:

Wednesday, March 28:

4. Inscriptions on the Body Part I: Does Size Matter?

Monday, April 2:

Wednesday, April 4:

5. Inscriptions on the Body, Part II: Medicine, Biology

Monday, April 9:

Wednesday, April 11:
**Wednesday, April 11th continued**

**No class: Patriot’s Day April 16th**

6. Intersections of Heterosexuality and Violence

**Wednesday April 18:**

**Monday: April 23:** **Ethnographic Research Papers Due**


**Wednesday, April 25:**
Ethnographic Research Presentations

**Monday, April 30:**
Ethnographic Research Presentations

**Wednesday, May 2:**
Ethnographic Research Presentations

**Wednesday, May 9: Journals Due**