

ENGL 215: 11: Sexuality in Literature

Fall 2023

T/Th 1-2:30 pm



Image description: On the left is an image of a pair of lips kissing; the person on the right has a beard. The second image depicts a set of different-colored hands with the writing "#MeToo" or "Me Too" inscribed on them, against a black background. The third image is a black-and-white pen-and-ink drawing of a harp. Image sources: *The New Yorker*, Google Images, Rupi Kaur (via Instagram)

Reading Schedule

Hidden Sex

T 9/5:

In class: introductions & syllabus

Class code-setting: "Let's talk about sex"

Th 9/7:

Read "Coded Sex" packet:

Emily Dickinson, "Come slowly – Eden!"

Dickinson, "Wild Nights"

Elizabeth Gaskell, from *Cranford*

George Eliot, from *Middlemarch*

Thomas Hardy, from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

H.D., "Sea Poppies"

Illicit Sex

T 9/12:

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Jenny"

Anon., "The Great Social Evil"

Th 9/14:

"The Wilde Trials, 1895"

Lord Alfred Douglas, "Two Loves"

T 9/19:

In class: Amy Levy, "Sinfonia Eroica"

Sexy Sex

- Th 9/21: Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power"
Audre Lorde, "Recreation"
- T 9/26: ***Adios America visit***
- Th 9/28: Joan Morgan, "Why We Get Off"
Adrienne Maree Brown, "Sex Ed"
Rupi Kaur, "the very thought of you," "you wrap your fingers," "he moved her hand"
Eileen Myles, "Peanut Butter"
- T 10/3: Cameron Awkward-Rich, "A Prude's Manifesto"
Ela Przybylo, from *Asexual Erotics*
- Th 10/5: Deesha Philyaw, "How to Make Love to a Physicist"
- T 10/10: Anonymous, "History Lesson"

Bad (?) Sex

- Th 10/12: *Read the following three essays, with particular focus on the essay designated by your last name*
Christine Emba, from *Rethinking Sex* (A-F)
Charlotte Shane, "In Defense of Bad Sex" (G-M)
Rebecca Traister, "Why Consensual Sex Can Still Be Bad" (N-Z)
- T 10/17: Kristen Roupenian, "Cat Person"
CW: sexual violence
- Th 10/19: Larissa Pham, "Trust"
- T 10/24: *In class: Watch excerpts from "Girls" S1E1, "Fleabag" S1E1, "Sex Education" S1E1, Booksmart, and "Sex Lives of College Girls" S1E1*

Sexual Violence (CW: rape, incest, sexual violence)

- T 10/31: Catharine MacKinnon, "#MeToo Has Done What the Law Could Not"
Tarana Burke, "Prologue" from *Unbound*
Elissa Schappell, "Re: Your Rape Story"
- Th 11/2: Chanel Miller, Victim Impact Statement

T 11/7: June Jordan, "Poem About My Rights"
Caroline Randall Williams, "You Want a Confederate Monument?
My Body is a Confederate Monument"
Jericho Brown, "Duplex" & "Layover"
CW: racial violence

Sexual Identity

T 11/14: Pat Parker, "My Lover is a Woman"
Danez Smith, "The 17-Year-Old and the Gay Bar"
Hera Lindsay Bird, "Bisexuality Poem"

Th 11/16: Melissa Febos, "The Cure"
CW: brief mention of rape on pg. 5

T 11/21: *In class:* Chen Chen, "I Invite My Parents to a Dinner Party"

T 11/28: Zeyn Joukhadar, "The Voyeurs"
CW: mentions of transphobia

Th 11/30: Angela Chen, from *Ace* (*longer reading, plan ahead*)
Nikki Viveca, "Asexual Love Poem"

T 12/5: *Last class!*
Ursula K. Le Guin, "Coming of Age in Karhide"