

Modern Romance

SOC 1170
Cornell University

Spring 2018
3 Credit Hours

Tuesday &
Thursday
2:55-4:10pm
Uris Hall G20

Instructor: Ms.
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(and Blackboard)

“PEOPLE HAVE
ALWAYS LOVED A
LOVE STORY. BUT FOR
MOST OF THE PAST
OUR ANCESTORS DID
NOT TRY TO LIVE IN
ONE.”
—STEPHANIE COONTZ

Modern Romance: Dating and Relationships Among Young Adults

Course Description

Have hookups fundamentally changed the dating scene on college campuses? Should we be concerned about the rise of cohabitation and the retreat from marriage? This course will explore romantic relationships among young adults using a sociological perspective. We will draft and revise papers on topics such as dating, hookups, virginity, online dating, pornography, birth control, nonmarital childbearing, marriage, cohabitation, and singlehood. Through writing and discussion, we will critically examine the role of race, class, gender, and sexuality in intimate relationship dynamics. Course readings will draw on research articles, book excerpts, and recent news articles. This course will equip you with the skills to analyze social scientific research, write compelling evidence-based papers, and craft informed responses to arguments in the popular media about families and relationships. Please be sure to talk with me should you have any questions or difficulties with this course. I look forward to learning with you!

Learning Objectives

As a result of taking this course, you will be expected to:

1. Develop papers using preparatory writing strategies such as outlining, drafting, and revising
2. Summarize and reflect on social scientific theories and findings in writing by using thesis statements, organization, support, and language suitable to the social sciences
3. Appropriately reference scholarly sources using standard citation methods
4. Formulate a research question and construct a coherent argument on an approved topic through selecting and evaluating secondary sociological research
5. Respond to popular arguments about families and relationships by applying scholarly research to the topic
6. Demonstrate the relevance of course topics to everyday life through application to current events

Required Texts

All reading materials will be accessible online. It is your responsibility to complete the assigned readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss. You may want to consider purchasing a copy of *They Say/I Say* by Graff & Birkenstein.

Course Components

A. Reflection Paper: 5-6 pages (15%)

You will be asked to summarize and reflect on the major themes in recent course readings.

B. Op-Ed: 2-3 pages (15%)

You will write an op-ed about a current controversial topic, with the option to submit it as a column in the Cornell Sun.

C. Position Paper: 5-6 pages (15%)

You will respond to a prompt related to a popular argument about families and relationships in society today.

D. Congressional Debate: 3-4 pages (15%)

You will act as a member of Congress to debate a family-related federal initiative and then translate your arguments into writing.

E. Research Proposal: 6-8 pages (20%)

For the final paper, you will choose one of the course topics to explore in greater depth through a research proposal. You will craft your own research question and can draw heavily on the material covered in class to answer it, but must also find at least three additional empirical sources for support.

F. Class Engagement (20%)

Regular, active engagement in class discussions, informal writing assignments, and other in-class activities (including presentations and peer review) is required. There are a wide range of possibilities for getting involved, all of which are detailed on the [class website](#) and in the Class Engagement Rubric.

Guidelines for Written Work

- Word-process all assignments
- Use standard 12-point font
- Double-space, using 1-inch margins
- Format using [ASA Style](#) citations
- Number your pages
- Include your name, course number, and assignment title at the top of the first page
- Proofread and spellcheck all drafts
- Staple or paper-clip your pages together before turning in hard copies of assignments

Grading Scheme	
A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	< 70

Need Help?

Office Hours: Thursday 11:00am-12:00pm in Uris 379, or by appointment – bring your questions!

Coffee Hours: Tuesday 10:45am-11:30am in Temple of Zeus – come stop by for an informal chat!

Peer Groups

Please write down the contact information for your assigned peer groups. If you have a question about an assignment or course logistics, first consult the syllabus, handouts, and [class website](#). If you can't find the answer, check with your peers before emailing me. This ensures that our communication outside of class is productive and allows me to focus my time on helping you learn in more substantive ways.

1. Name: _____

Email: _____

2. Name: _____

Email: _____

Course Policies

Academic Integrity

Submitting work that uses the ideas or words of others without acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. For all assignments, doing your own work is absolutely essential. You must reference the sources of any information, quotations, or ideas which are not your own, using standard citation methods.

Accommodations

Your accessibility in this course is important. If you have a disability (learning or otherwise), and you need a reasonable accommodation, please consult with me as soon as possible so we can design a solution that will help you be successful in the class.

Attendance & Submissions

Attendance is mandatory and all assignments are expected to be submitted on time. However, I recognize that students sometimes encounter unforeseen difficulties that require absences or extensions. You are allowed two excused absences during the semester and one two-day grace period on any assignment deadline, no questions asked—though you are still responsible for making up missed work. Please inform me if you are struggling with the course or other issues so I can work with you to facilitate your continued success. If you are feeling lost or overwhelmed, some options for additional resources can be found on the [class website](#).

Inclusivity

The members of our classroom represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We support an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are respected and recognized as a source of strength. While working together to build this community we ask all members to (1) share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs, (2) be open to the views of others, and (3) communicate in a respectful and professional manner.

Office Hours

Office hours are intended to provide you with time to ask questions about readings or the course generally, or get individual help with assignments. If you are unable to attend office hours and need help, please email me to schedule a time to meet. I also encourage you to talk with me before or after class.

24/7 Policy on Grades

You are asked to wait 24 hours after receiving a grade before discussing it with me, and then are given 7 days to question the grade in writing. Please attend my office hours to discuss grades, rather than contacting me by email.

+More Info

Further information about course policies regarding grading, extra credit, and difficult subjects can be found on the [class website](#).

Date	Reading	Writing
Dating & Sex		
Virginity		
Tuesday 1/30	Lehmiller (2017) "'Common Sense' Isn't A Substitute For Scientific Research", Excerpt from Carpenter (2005) <i>Virginity Lost</i> , Optional: They Say/I Say Preface & Chapter 1	Assignment #1 Final Draft , KA@C Mod 1
Thursday 2/1	Excerpt from Carpenter (2005) <i>Virginity Lost</i> , Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 12	KA@C Mod 2
Hookup Culture		
Tuesday 2/6	Armstrong, Hamilton, & England (2010), "Is Hooking Up Bad for Young Women?", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 2	Assignment #2 Rough Draft , KA@C Mod 3
Thursday 2/8	Excerpt from Wade (2017) <i>American Hookup</i> , Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 3	KA@C Mod 4
Tuesday 2/13	Excerpt from Wade (2017) <i>American Hookup</i> , Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 4	Assignment #2 Final Draft , KA@C Mod 5
The Online World		
Online Dating		
Thursday 2/15	Ellison, Heino & Gibbs (2006) "Managing Impressions Online", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 5	KA@C Mod 6
Thursday 2/22	*No class—peer review meetings	Assignment #3 Rough Draft , KA@C Mod 7
Tuesday 2/27	Rosenfeld & Thomas (2012) "Searching for a Mate", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 6	KA@C Mod 8
Thursday 3/1	Robnett & Feliciano (2011) "Patterns of Racial-Ethnic Exclusion by Internet Daters", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 7	KA@C Mod 9
Pornography		
Tuesday 3/6	Excerpt from Tarrant (2016) "The Pornography Industry", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 17	Assignment #3 Final Draft
Fertility & Unions		
Birth Control & Nonmarital Childbearing		
Thursday 3/8	Goldin & Katz (2000), "The Power of the Pill", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 8	
Tuesday 3/13	Excerpt from Edin & Kefalas (2011) <i>Promises I Can Keep</i> , Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 10	Assignment #4 Rough Draft
Courtship		

Thursday 3/15	Lamont (2004) "Negotiating Courtship", Optional: They Say/I Say Chapter 11	
Cohabitation		
Tuesday 3/20	Smock (2000) "Cohabitation in the United States" *Library visit (meet in Uris Library)	Assignment #4 Final Draft
Thursday 3/22	Excerpt from Sassler & Miller (2017) <i>Cohabitation Nation</i>	Assignment #6 Task 1
Tuesday 3/27	Excerpt from Sassler & Miller (2017) <i>Cohabitation Nation</i>	Assignment #6 Tasks 2 & 3
Thursday 3/29	*No class—individual meetings on research projects (please complete tasks 1-5 before your meeting)	Assignment #6 Tasks 4 & 5
Marriage		
Tuesday 4/10	Coontz (2004) "The World Historical Transformation of Marriage" and Cherlin (2004) "The Deinstitutionalization of American Marriage"	Assignment #6 Task 6
Thursday 4/12	Excerpt from Otnes & Pleck (2003) <i>Cinderella Dreams</i>	
Tuesday 4/17	Excerpt from Ingraham (2009) <i>White Weddings</i> *In-class debate	Assignment #5 Outline & Debate
Moving On & Moving Out		
Living Arrangements		
Thursday 4/19	Qian (2012) "During the Great Recession, More Young Adults Lived with Parents"	
Tuesday 4/24	Excerpt from Klinenberg (2012) "Going Solo"	Assignment #5 Final Draft
The Sexual & Gender Revolutions		
Thursday 4/26	Excerpt from Gerson (2010) <i>The Unfinished Revolution</i> *This class needs to be rescheduled	Assignment #6 Tasks 7 & 8
Tuesday 5/1	England (2010) "The Gender Revolution" and Risman & Schwartz (2002) "After the Sexual Revolution"	Assignment #6 Task 9
Thursday 5/3	Excerpt from Sheff (2013) <i>The Polyamorists Next Door</i>	Assignment #6 Task 10
Tuesday 5/8	Excerpt from Schippers (2016) <i>Beyond Monogamy</i>	KA@C Mod 10

5/11: (Optional) Assignment #6 Tasks 11 & 12 Due 12:00am EST

5/17: Assignment #6 Final Draft Due at 12:00am EST