Anthropology 124P
The Evolution of Human Sexual Behavior
Winter 2001
MW 8:30-9:45 a.m. Bunche 2209A

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Office: 3130 Hershey Hall
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The key to understanding human sexuality is to recognize
that it is a problem in evolutionary biology -- Jared Diamond

Introduction
Sexuality is a pervasive theme across time and across cultures. Although there is
considerable variation in sexual behavior around the world, such variation is built upon a
panhuman sexual nature. Our sexual nature might be said to be one of the most important
factors determining our experience of ourselves, and the structures of our societies.
Darwinian theory presents a powerful means of understanding the origins and nature of
human sexuality. In this course we will explore some of the many ways in which evolution
has shaped our sexual bodies and our sexual minds.

A word of warning
This is a demanding course, intended for dedicated students who want to get the most out
of a university education. We will be grappling with complex theory and state-of-the-art
research. Much of the reading consists of journal articles and book chapters written for a
professional scientific audience. This is not a titillating, casual survey of sex. If that is what
you are looking for, you are strongly advised to drop the course.

General Principles
I encourage questions and comments, and will attempt to make time for them during lecture.
However, extensive discussion may sometimes not be possible due to the size of the
group. You are welcome to visit me during office hours if you wish to discuss an issue in
greater depth. Please note that many of the subjects covered in this course are of a
sensitive nature. I make every effort to explore material in a manner which will not give
offense, and I expect students to do likewise in their questions and comments. Feedback
concerning these and other aspects of the course is always welcome, but is best conveyed
outside of class.

Grading
Evaluation will be based on the following: a midterm exam, worth 30% of your grade; a final
exam, worth 45% of your grade; section attendance and homework, worth 15% of your
grade; and an unspecified number of pop quizzes, which together will be worth 10% of
your grade (the latter are intended to assist you in keeping up with the reading on a regular
basis, as this will help you to get the most out of the course).

Policies
Lectures
Attendance at all lectures is mandatory. In order to maximize your own learning and avoid
interrupting that of your peers, please arrive promptly, and do not depart before the end of
lecture. **Pop quizzes will be given in the first few minutes of class -- late arrivals will be unable to participate.** It is a good idea to establish a note-taking partnership with someone in the class so that you can assist one another in the event of an unavoidable absence (the professor’s ‘notes’ consist principally of obscure and illegible ramblings, doodles, etc., and will not be made available to students). You are responsible for all material presented in the readings, and all material presented in the lectures and sections.

**Sections**
Attendance at sections is mandatory. For each meeting, you are required to prepare questions concerning the material to be discussed that week (your TA will specify the exact number of questions needed). The questions are to be sent via email to your TA by 5 p.m. the evening before your section. The TA will use students’ questions in guiding the discussion. Especially insightful and clever questions will no doubt earn you the admiration of your peers.

**Quizzes**

**No make-up quizzes will be given.** Quizzes will not be regraded. In calculating your course grade, one quiz grade (the lowest, or the one you missed because of that ugly little traffic mishap, etc.) will be dropped.

**Exams**
Exams will principally follow a short-answer / short-essay format. Make-up exams will be given only in the event of documented catastrophic hardship, and only at the professor’s discretion. Requests for regrading must be submitted in writing, specifying the exact issues which are contested, and providing tangible reasons for a regrade. A separate request must be submitted for each contested question. Any such requests are to be submitted directly to the TA who graded the question; if you are unsatisfied with the result, you may discuss the matter with me during office hours.

**Materials**
There are two required texts for this course:
-- *Sex, evolution, and behavior* (abbreviated as S.E.B.) by Martin Daly and Margo Wilson, (1983, 2nd ed.). Available at the University Bookstore.
-- *Anthro 124P Fessler Reader* -- Available at Westwood Copies, 1001 Gayley Ave., tel. 208-3233

You must bring a #2 pencil and a Scan-tron sheet #882-ES, available for purchase at the Bookstore, to every class meeting. These will be used to record answers on quizzes. **IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PENCIL AND A SCAN-TRON SHEET AT THE TIME OF A QUIZ, YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO -- NO EXCEPTIONS.**

F.G. Bailey, an eminent and prolific social anthropologist, recommends reading from a novel every night so as to sharpen your analytic and writing skills in a relaxing fashion. *Glory season* by David Brin (Bantam paperback 1994, ISBN: 0-553-56767-5, available through Amazon.com, the University Bookstore, and many other retailers), is a science fiction novel which cleverly addresses a number of the themes covered in this course. It is recommended. Don’t be surprised if at least one extra-credit question concerning this book appears on the final exam.

**Schedule**
Schedule

Daily topics are underlined -- readings follow. Note that some days have multiple topics. Read all of the readings assigned for a given day. Also, note that some assignments are lengthier than others -- plan your time accordingly.

1/8  Introduction to Evolutionary Anthropology & Evolutionary Psychology

1/10 Evolutionary principles  -- S.E.B. Ch. 1-3

1/17 Evolution of sex; Sexual selection I  -- S.E.B. Ch. 4-5

1/22 Sperm competition  -- Bellis & Baker ‘90; Baker & Bellis ‘93

1/24 Male aggression and violence  -- Daly & Wilson ‘88

1/29 Sexual selection II  -- S.E.B. Ch. 6
Female mate selection  -- Ellis ‘92
Female orgasm  -- Baker & Bellis ‘93

1/31 Facial attractiveness  -- Jones ‘95
Breast morphology  -- Marlow ‘98

2/5 Reproductive strategies  -- S.E.B. Ch. 7
Jealousy  -- Buss et al. ‘92

2/7 Male proprietary attitudes  -- Wilson & Daly ‘92

2/12 Midterm Exam

2/14 Life history theory  -- S.E.B. Ch. 8
Female life history  -- Belsky et al. ‘91

2/21 Rape  -- Thornhill & Thornhill ‘92

2/26 Ontogeny & differentiation  -- S.E.B. Ch. 10
Olfaction I  -- Herz & Cahill ‘97

2/28 Olfaction II  -- Gangestad & Thornhill ‘98; Wedekind et al. ‘95

3/5 Homosexuality  -- Bailey et al. ‘94
Emotions  -- Fisher ‘98

3/7 Inbreeding & incest  -- Wolf ‘93

3/12 Menstrual synchrony/pheromones  -- Weller ‘98; Stern & McClintock ‘98
Reproductive investment  -- S.E.B. Ch. 12

3/14 Waist-to-hip ratio  -- Singh ‘93

Final Exam Wednesday, March 21st, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.