

**Sexual Behavior, Sexually Transmitted Infections, and
Scientific Measurement**

SOCIOLOGY 381w, Fall 2020

Thursdays, 9-15am - 12 noon

All classes will be conducted on ZOOM this semester

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Office Hours

Thursdays, 1pm to 3pm by ZOOM

Other times by appointment

The onset of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s spurred the fielding of major national surveys of patterns of sexual behavior. In contrast to the pioneering work of Alfred Kinsey earlier in the 20th century, these surveys used probability sampling techniques to characterize (with known margins of sampling error) the behavior of national populations — rather than purposively recruited or accidental collections of volunteers. This seminar will discuss the methods and findings of major surveys of sexual behavior conducted in the United States and in the United Kingdom (UK) between 1990 and today.

The results of these surveys are reported in:

Laumann E, Gagnon J, Michael R, Michaels S. *Social Organization of Sexuality* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. **[LAUMANN - the NLSHS survey]**

Johnson A, Wadsworth J, Wellings K, Field J. *Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles*. London: Blackwell, 1994. **[JOHNSON - the NATSAL survey]**

Journal articles from 2000 and 2010 NATSAL.

Journal articles from the National Survey of Family Growth [NSFG]

DATASETS AVAILABLE FOR ANALYSIS.

1972 to 2018 General Social Survey of the Adult USA population, N = 64,814.

2018 NYC Community Health Survey of Adult NYC population, N = 10,076

2010 National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles II; UK adults ages 16-74, N = 15,162

2000 National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles II; UK adults ages 16-44, N = 12,110

1990 National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles II; UK adults ages 16-59, N = 18,876

COURSE GOAL. Students will learn the history, methods and findings of scientific research on the sexual behaviors of national populations.

ACCESSING CLASS READINGS. The Johnson et al. book is required, and it is out of print. (The Laumann et al. book is *optional* and available on Amazon.) Students will be provided with a password-protected copy of the Johnson book and articles reporting results from the NATSAL and NSFG surveys. All readings will be posted on the Soc381 class tab of my personal website: www.popepi.org .

CLASS ANALYSES OF SURVEY DATA. In addition to class readings, students will design analyses of survey data on sexual behavior in the USA and Great Britain. These analyses will explore suspicions, hunches, and formal hypotheses that emerge from class discussions of our readings. In past semesters, students used the QC computer labs to conduct these analysis during class. Since that is not possible due to the pandemic lockdown, students will design these analyses in class, and I will run them myself prior to the next class meeting.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS. As this is a writing intensive course, students will be required to draft synopses of selected readings. These synopses will be shared with the class and critiqued in class. When assigned, these synopses will be due by 11-59pm on the Monday before our Thursday class. These assignments should be sent by email to: **Soc381.CFTurner@gmail.com**. Student groups will also be required to write a 15 to 25 page paper at the end of the term. Tentative details of the requirements for this group analysis paper can be found at the end of this syllabus. The final paper is due by email on December 23rd by 11:59 pm.

GRADES. Student's grade will be based on: student presentations (20%), two evaluative quizzes designed to insure that seminar participants have completed their reading assignments (20%), timely submission of *ungraded* writing assignments (20%), and student group analysis project in survey analysis (40%).

PLAGIARISM. The use of other people's work or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment is a serious breach of the standards of academic scholarship. Students who engage in such behavior may be given a grade of F, and they may be subject to other disciplinary action. The university's academic integrity policy is published in full at:

web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf

TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED. Students must have a computer with a working microphone, camera, web browsing software, and a highspeed internet connection.

QC COMPUTER SUPPORT. Call 718-997-4444, or email helpdesk@qc.cuny.edu.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Please contact the QC Office of Special Services which offers comprehensive support services. See: <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/services/specialserv/Pages/default.aspx>

CONTACTING PROF TURNER. The best way to contact me is to send E-Mail to Soc381.CFTurner@gmail.com. Voicemail may be left on 917-243-4806. If you need to have a conversation, send me email with your telephone number and the hours you are available to talk.

REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL READINGS (Starred entries are required.)

NOTE: Course schedule and content may change.

Aug. 27	Overview of Course
Sept. 3	Why do we care about Patterns of Sexual Behavior in a Population? Documentary shown in Class: And the Band Played on. *Monitoring Epidemics *Review of: And the Band Played On, See: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/And_the_Band_Played_On
Sept. 10	Introduction to History and Analysis of Sexual Behavior in Populations Documentary shown in Class: Kinsey. PBS-American Experience ALL Readings must be completed before this class. Readings are posted on class website *Twenge JM, Possible Reasons US Adults Are Not Having Sex as Much as They Used To. <i>JAMA Network Open</i> , 2020;3(6):e203889. *Ueda P, Mercer CH, Ghaznavi C, Herbenick D. Trends in Frequency of Sexual Activity and Number of Sexual Partners Among Adults Aged 18 to 44 Years in the US, 2000-2018. <i>JAMA Network Open</i> , 2020 ;3(6):e203833. *Boseley S. Britons having less sex and digital life may be to blame – Research finds drop in sexual activity steepest for married and cohabiting couples. <i>The Guardian</i> , May 17, 2019. *GSS Subject's Index
Sept 17	Study Background: Deficiencies of Kinsey's Methods and an Example of Modern Methods *American Statistical Association review of Kinsey Report *NAS Comments on Kinsey *Johnson et al., Ch. 1-3
Sept. 24 & Oct. 1	Initiation of Sexual Behavior *Johnson et al., Ch. 4 *NATSAL – G, K
Oct. 8 & 15	Male - Female Sexual Behaviors *Johnson et al., Ch. 5-6 *NSFG, pp - 11 - 55 *NATSAL – D, H, J NOTE: In-class quiz on October 15.
Oct. 22 & 29	Sexually Transmitted Infections and Health *Johnson et al., Ch. 9 *SUPPL – A, B *NATSAL – B
Nov. 5 & 12	Same-Gender Sexual Behaviors Documentaries: Before Stonewall & Stonewall Uprising. PBS-American Experience *Johnson et al., Ch. 9 *NSFG, pp. 13-17 *NATSAL – A, C *SUPPL – C, D
Nov. 19 & Dec 3	Methodological Issues in Surveys of AIDS Risk Behaviors *NATSAL – E *SUPPL – E, F, G NOTE — Nov. 26 No Class - Thanksgiving Break NOTE: In-class quiz on December 3rd.
Dec. 11	Student Presentations of Project Findings

REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUP PAPER (tentative).

A group analysis project will be a major component of your final grade. It must be:

- The work of a working group of 5 or 6 students from our seminar.
 - An original report of the results of *secondary data analyses* your group has designed. It is NOT to be library research or student-conducted original research, e.g., using new data obtained by interviewing respondents.
 - It must be between 15 and 25 pages in length (double-spaced) including figures and tables.
 - It must be on a topic that has been approved by the instructor.
 - The paper must begin with a cogent statement of the area you will be investigating and either:
 - The hypotheses you will test, e.g., “young people who have received sex education are no more likely to begin having consensual sex at an early age, but they are more likely to use condoms and/or other contraception at first intercourse, report the experience to be ‘wanted’, etc.”.
- OR
- The particular areas you wish to explore — even though you do not have an initial notion of what you will find, e.g., “we wish to explore whether or not receiving sex education prior to initiation of consensual sex was associated with: age at first sex, the likelihood condoms/contraceptives were used at first sex, likelihood first sexual experience was wanted, etc.”)
 - We will begin working on the data analyses for your group projects no later than October 15th.
 - A rough first draft of the paper is due on November 22nd. This draft will not be graded and need not be complete — but at least 50% of the text, tables, and figures should be done. Your group’s preliminary findings will be discussed in the seminar.