

DePaul University

Department of Religious Studies

Syllabus

REL 254 THE BODY IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: DIVERGENT MEANINGS, CONFLICTING VALUES

Edward J. Tomaszewicz, C.M. Winter, 1998

Section 201 MW 3:30-5:00 LPC

Instructor's Office Hours: Monday 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM and Wednesday 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM and by Appointment

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REQUIRED TEXTS:

Love's Body, Norman O. Brown, University of California Press, 1966.

Touching, Ashley Montagu, Harper, 1971.

Transforming Sexuality, Ann & Barry Ulanov, Shambhala Press, 1994.

TEXTBOOKS ARE ON RESERVE IN THE LIBRARY.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

"Love and sexuality in biblical and nonbiblical religions, examined cross-culturally, conceptually and ethically." DePaul University Bulletin p. 278.

This course explores and examines the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in regard to the issues of Body, Shame, Guilt, Gender, Masculinity, Femininity, Intimacy, Love, Sex, Death, Disillusionment, Transformation etc. The body is how we understand our being in the world. Much of our bodily/sexual understanding is expressed in symbolic language. This symbolic language has been shaped and interpreted through religious traditions. These varied religious traditions, have helped and hindered our views and influenced our understanding of the body in both positive and negative terms. Present day religious thought and psychological understanding help us to discern the patterns and the problems of these influences and their divergent interpretations. Today's dynamic and diverse religious values are often in a conflicting relationship with each other and with the various psychological interpretations of the body and sexuality. All of these bodily/sexual experiences are saturated with religious and psychological enigmas. There is no one approach or answer to these fundamental human experiences. However, religious and humanistic orientations abound concerning the issues of body and human relationships. This course is structured around the various religious and psychological responses to the mystery of the body and human relationships. This course will strive to explore the meaning/s and the different interpretations found in the various topics to be covered. We

shall examine the diverse approaches to these topics and their impact on our understanding of Bodies and Human Relationships. We need to remember that these dynamic, multi-faceted experiences and viewpoints are saturated with enigmas. These enigmas' of the Human experience have no answers only responses. However, this class will strive to elicit responses to these human encounters.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To come to some understanding of the experience of "Body".
2. To locate and analyze the various religious underpinnings involved in issues pertaining to the body in human relationships.
3. To open a discussion of how the "Body" functions in our human relationships.
4. To gain insights into the patterns and problems of human relationships and their ethical and religious implications.
5. To respond and clarify questions concerning the divergent and conflicting issues involved in these complex topics and their meanings.
6. To respond to and help elucidate the meanings, values and experiences of Human Relationships through a critical thinking process.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Regular Class Attendance:** Attendance is essential to the process of learning and growth. Academics is a discipline and an experience, interaction with the teacher and one's classmates balances the solitary experience of study. **Lateness**, please arrive on time so as not to disrupt the learning process of others.
2. **Class preparation:** It is an assumption of the learning process that one is prepared. Reading and analysis of the assigned texts will be emphasized during the quarter. You will be expected to complete the reading assignment **before** the class meeting and to contribute to the class discussions. What is important in reading the assigned material is the ability to analyze and interact with the material. (Some of you might have to read the assignment more than once to catch the author's point.) The readings are meant to evoke questions and insights into the various topics that we shall be exploring. The lecture material is meant to elicit issues and questions.
3. **Participation:** Active participation helps the learning process. It helps us to meet and experience others and they to experience us. Understanding and Insight are relational. **Respect of Others is a sign of Self-respect. An attitude of openness and a respect of others, their opinions and expressions are essential to any growth process.**

Specific Requirements:

1. The Assigned Reading Material.
2. Class Participation
3. Two Papers

THERE ARE 2: TYPED, DOUBLE SPACED, 7 – 10 page PAPERS DUE FOR THIS CLASS.

The first paper's subject is on the experience of your own Body in relationship to these events: What are your Body Memories?

(birth/family/health/illness) What factors did Religion and Culture exercise with regard to you're: Self-Understanding, Image, Shame and your Body? What Groups do you belong to and what have they conveyed to you concerning your Body, that is, what are your social and cultural roots? THIS PAPER IS DUE ON THE 14 OF MAY.

The second paper is a reflection paper. I would like you to reflect on these issues: What has

been, or is, important to you about your human relationships (i.e., others/society/job/ etc.)? What makes these relationships Human for you? What are the positive and negative aspects of these experiences in relation to your own Body? How did/does it make you feel? What do you think (the use of critical thinking) about these relationships? How do you analyze them? What have you learned about yourself through this process? What is your conclusion so far about human relationships? **THIS PAPER IS DUE THE LAST DAY OF CLASS MARCH 11, 1998.**

REMEMBER! THERE IS A SECRET TO WRITING GOOD PAPERS: REVISION, REVISION, REVISION AND REVISION.

The written work needs to contain a clear purpose, thesis sentence and or paragraph and a thoughtful conclusion. The paper needs to address effectively the complexities found in the assignment. There is need here for some supportive detail, which needs a judicious sense about it. These papers' need to be logically developed and quite well organized. There should be a definite style, which contains developed sentence and paragraph structure. The papers need to be virtually free of spelling, grammar and usage errors.

Plagiarism: you should familiarize yourself with the strong sanctions against plagiarism as stated in the current Bulletin/Student Handbook.

4. **Two Exams: THERE WILL BE A MID-TERM EXAM AND A FINAL EXAM [Which will be a take home exam]**. The mid-term will consist of short essay questions covering the readings and lecture material. The final exam will cover the remaining reading material and lectures. It will consist of three essay questions.

THE MID-TERM EXAM WILL BE ON FEBRUARY 9, 1998.

THE FINAL EXAM WILL BE A Take HOME EXAM DUE IN MY OFFICE March 17, 1998.

5. A **CLASS JOURNAL WILL BE REQUIRED** (any type of notebook will do) You will keep a working journal for this course. This is not a personal diary, but rather a place to work out your thoughts and record your questions while doing the readings and the Focus Papers. You need to read the assigned material with this in mind: **WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR BEING ADDRESSED, AND HOW DOES IT EFFECT/AFFECT MY LIFE?**

These journals are meant for your personal exploration and preparation for sharing with the class.

The purpose of the journal is to help refine and define your questions, reactions, ideas, suggestions, assessments and integration of the reading material and Focus Papers. Think of it as a tool for conversation.

Your careful preparation in the journal will make a huge difference in the quality of class discussion and in the evaluation of your final grade.

The journal may also be a place for you to have more individualized conversations about the readings and the issues they raise. Questions or issues that we don't get to in class, which may be particularly important to you or which you feel awkward raising with the whole group, can be worked out in your journal. However, you need to **REMEMBER** that the journal entries are not a personal diary but a forum for class preparation and integration. The journal is a tool to help us learn about **CRITICAL THINKING and it's ARTICULATION.**

Classes will consist of the following: lecture, discussion and journaling.

GRADING:

Exams: 40%

Papers: 30%

Journal: 15%

Discussion/Participation: 15%

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

A = designates work of extraordinarily high quality; reflects unusually thorough and comprehensive understanding of issues at hand; presents a clearly identifiable thesis and demonstrates cogent and creative development and support of ideas and experience.

B = designates work of high quality; reflects clearly organized and comprehensive understanding of issues; presents substantive thesis and evident development and support of issues and experiences.

C = designates work which meets requirements set forward in assignment; reflects some organization and development of ideas, but develops them superficially or in a simplistic manner; may only address part of the assignment or be otherwise incomplete. Papers which reflect the lower half of the evaluation criteria usually omit a clear purpose or thesis and or a conclusion. The paper is too general or too specific. The points mentioned are trivial or frivolous. These papers contain flaws in spelling, style, grammar or usage.

D = designates work of poor quality which meets only the minimum requirements set forth in the assignment; demonstrates poor organization of ideas and /or inattention to development of ideas, grammar and spelling; treatment of the material is superficial and/or simplistic; indicates the student has done the bare minimum.

F = designates work that does not meet **ANY** standard/s or has not been handed in on time.

Your class and group participation will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

A = Student has read the assignments and asks questions, express judgments and/or poses questions during the discussions. The student is prepared to give a clear summary of the assigned reading(s).

B = Student participates as above 75% of the time.

C = Student does not volunteer, but responds only to direct questions; student's responses demonstrate vague familiarity with the assignment(s).

D = Student never volunteers, cannot respond to direct questions, keeps silent during class discussions, and is unable to summarize the readings.

F = Student is taking up space.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL:

Please consult the required texts, or see me for further information.

CLASS SCHEDULE

PLEASE NOTE THE DATES FOR THE REQUIRED READINGS *(Reading assignments may change due to circumstances.)

You are responsible for knowing what the assignment is and for completing it on time. Please come to class prepared to discuss what you have read

JANUARY 5: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Read for January 7: LB, 3-31, T, P-46.

JANUARY 7: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND CRITICAL THINKING

Read for January 12: LB, 32-55, T, 47-95.

JANUARY 12: THE CONCEPT OF THE "BODY" FACT AND SYMBOL

Read for January 14: LB, 56-79, T, 96-147.

JANUARY 14: THE SYMBOLIC AND FACTUAL BODY

Read for January 19: LB, 80-89, T, 147-197.

JANUARY 19: SEX AND SEXUALITY

Read for January 21: LB, 90-108, T, 198-236.

JANUARY 21: SEX AND SEXUALITY

Read for January 26: LB, 109-125, TS, 1-61.

JANUARY 26: THE CONCEPT OF THE "FEMININE"

Read for January 28: LB, 126-140, TS, 62-101.

JANUARY 28: THE CONCEPT OF THE "MASCULINE"

Read for February 2: LB, 141-155, TS, 102-148.

FEBRUARY 2: GENDER AND GENDER ISSUES

Read for February 4: LB, 155-161, TS, 149-218.

FEBRUARY 4: GENDER AND GENDER ISSUES

Read for February 11: LB, 162-175, T, 237-291.

FEBRUARY 9: MID-TERM EXAM

FEBRUARY 11: RELATIONSHIPS

Read for February 16: LB, 176-190, T, 292-342.

FEBRUARY 16: RELATIONSHIPS HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN

Read for February 18: LB, 191-199, T, 342-392.

FEBRUARY 18: INTIMACY, DEPTH AND THE POSSIBLE

Read for February 23: LB, 199-214, TS, 221-247.

FIRST PAPER DUE

FEBRUARY 23: INTIMACY AND LOVE

Read for February 25: LB, 215-223, TS, 248-293.

FEBRUARY 25: LOVE

Read for March 2: LB, 223-231, TS, 297-337.

MARCH 2: LOVE AND LOVING

Read for March 4: LB, 232-242, T, 393-400, TS, 338-357.

MARCH 4: DISILLUSIONMENT AND SEPERATION

Read for March 9: LB, 243-255, T, 400-411, TS, 358-382.

MARCH 9: TRANSFORMATION

Read for March 11: LB, 255-266, T.412-414.

MARCH 11: ETHICS AND VALUES, SECOND PAPER DUE

FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM DUE IN MY OFFICE ON MARCH

17,1998.